

English Medium Schools Must Be Relevant

There are many aspects about the rush for admission into one of the city's most prestigious or even one of the not so prestigious, English Medium tutorials, that tends to disturb our equilibrium. We have on more than one occasion dealt with this issue but there is yet another aspect that needs attention, that is, the cultural gap that is growing ever wider between the parents and the students of these English medium schools. This is due mainly to the textbooks with their "foreign" stories and rhymes.

The inability of both children and their parents to cope with factor is becoming alarming for there is now a discernible discrepancy between the contact with an "English" culture as perceived by the schools—and the parents who find themselves lost in a mazé of the unknown. That a clash of cultures would be inevitable should have been foreseen by the education department and the schools' administrators but it appears to us it has eluded everybody, including teachers and parents for it has left both parents and their wards unable to cope.

Yet another aspect affecting students' well-being is the inability of parents to guide their wards in their studies for most find they are way out of their depth. In most cases, these parents have to depend on tutors to take their place.

Although many blame the schools themselves, for their lack of standards and their inappropriate course of studies for the Bangladeshi child, when we look deeper into it, we find that those children from a traditional background, those who are not exposed to what may now be called an "international" environment are themselves unable to keep up with the growing competition.

If English medium schools are to be preferred for their emphasis on this important international language, let us at least tailor the curriculum to suit our background, even while preparing the children for the world.