

Other Side Of Euphoric HSC Results

This year's Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) results have apparently sprung quite a few surprises. But in the larger scheme of things, this was quite expected. Each year, the percentage of pass both at the SSC and HSC levels is going up, the number of the grade point average (GPA) - 5 achievers is almost doubling. In the inaugural year that is in 2003, only 20 students got GPA-5 and the percentage of pass was 38.43 per cent. However, the optional fourth subject's number was not added that year. After the addition of the optional subject's number in 2004, the number of GPA-5 increased to 3, 036 and in 2005 the number of GPA frog-jumped to 5, 509 and this year it has shot up to 9,450.

Almost a geometric progression in the GPA-achievement but what really goes behind the spectacular success? Admittedly, the ministry of education has score a big success in that it has almost done away with copying in the SSC and HSC examination halls. But its move to introduce a single-track education at the SSC level met with stiff opposition. Now if it can prove that the increasing improved results at the SSC and HSC examinations are worth celebrating, there was good intention behind the single-track move. In fact, the percentage of pass in such public examinations has to a large extent been guided by political motive. At the last year of its tenure the government is desperate to show that the introduction of the grading system is yielding better results.

What however the government conveniently forgets is that the concentration of better or excellent results is certain urban pockets with Dhaka Board topping the list. Once again Dhaka's share has been more than half the total GPAs in the country. In village schools and colleges the scene is simply pathetic. Even in this year's euphoric results, from as many as 81 colleges no candidate could cross the hurdle. It is exactly because of this we argued for improvement of the infrastructure, appointment of qualified teachers or their training to determine if they were suitable for the challenges. Those who failed were asked for an immediate sack. Here is an area that cannot be manned with unqualified people. They end up misguiding students and the results are for all to see.

Now that the elite of the bunch have started scoring excellent results, it will cause the education planners another headache. Last time the GPA-5 achievers at the S level were discriminated against on flimsy ground of a difference. Students of similar result found their doors closed to the more famed educational institutions because of a few months' seniority. This time the public university will have to invent some excuses to reject the GPA holder's admission. So what fate awaits them? Those with enough money to spare will seek admission to the handful of private universities where arguably the quality of education is not disputed. But what about those who have not enough money at their disposal to buy the costly education at private universities? When a good number of the GPA holders will be turned down from universities, they will plunge into deep frustration. Not a good prospect for a young, ambitious generation. There was a need for tall preparation for this. In fact, we needed more quality rather than private share selling education.