

The Prohibitive Cost Of Schooling For Middle Class

This is that time of the year when parents are busily coaching their children in the basic "Three R's" in the hope of getting them admitted to the school of their choice. That this choice is now somewhat limited has not missed them as they run hither and thither for admission overcoming the bugbear of that admission test which decides the fate of their children, (and sometimes their age despite the birth certificate or affidavit required to be submitted with the application).

It is to the established schools that the middle classes flock like bees around a honey pot, in the vain hope of gaining entry to these hallowed halls of education. Those who do succeed in gaining admission are indeed the lucky ones. These schools are still within reach of the pockets of the middle classes. Those who fail, however, have no other alternative but to seek out one of the many private schools, tutorials and institutes which have steadily grown up in the city in past years with the lofty goal to provide service to the public—and our wards.

However, the high cost of schooling in these privately run institutions is usually so prohibitive as to discourage even the hardest heart and it does seem to us that the day has come when the middle classes have nowhere to go for they alone can no longer afford to buy education for their children. Yet, it is said, and more than once, that the middle classes are the backbone of a nation, the born leaders of society and their guide in distress without whom society would flounder. That being so, it is not too much to say that they are representative of the deeply thoughtful well-educated, intellectual forum which exists in most countries in this beleaguered world on whom the people still depend in their time of need.

It goes without saying, therefore, that their chief weapon, for want of a better word, lies in their unending quest for education but, regretfully, we can say the middle classes have now become an endangered species, for the cost of schooling has gone beyond their reach, particularly as many of the so-called educationists have turned education into profitable business ventures, with the intent of raking in money and money alone. Fees today are so exorbitant that middle class parents are being frightened away from the form of education they have in mind for their wards and which for them is fast becoming a thing of the past and the domain of the "Nouveau Riche" who can pay the high charges but whose children, lacking the cultural background needed to make education meaningful find, to their dismay that, although their parents' money bought them an education, it did not buy them acceptance but, despite this sidetrack on to another issue, education has today become out of reach of middle classes. Therefore, where the nation will go from here can be anyone's guess.