

Some city schools refuse freshers, others want them

By Mostafa Kamal

The annual admission rush in Dacca city schools is characterised by two interesting features—one some schools have no alternative but to refuse admission while other schools never say "no".

Over 500 girls rushed to the Dhanmandi Government Girls' High School for admission test in class-VI for only 40 seats vacant.

Similarly, the University Laboratory School had to scrutinise over 100 applications against 20 seats available in its kindergarten class.

But its neighbouring institu-

tion, Nilkhet High School, could, by Saturday, admit only 40 students against a total of 100 seats offered by the institution in classes VI to X.

The admission rush in the city schools followed the same familiar pattern this year too.

While the better known schools, categorised as "standard", faced tough time to scrutinise applications for admitting freshers, the lesser known schools just awaited those students who would be refused admission by the "standard" schools.

40 FACE RUSH

Of the Dacca city's 159 sec-

ondary schools, only about 40 including 30 government schools are facing the annual admission rush because the guardians prefer the "standard" school.

But rush of admission seekers vary also among the standard schools. Khilgaon Government High School, for instance received 350 applications against 43 seats in class VI, whereas the Nawabpur High School got 620 applications against 221 seats in classes VI to X.

Some of the better known schools this year employed a new device to avoid "tremendous pressure" by distributing a limited number of application forms on a first come first serve basis.

The Agrani Balika Bidyalaya, Azimpur, distributed 365 application forms against 120 seats it offered in baby class this year, although several thousand guardians enquired about forms. Similarly, the Residential Model School, Mohammadpur, distributed a little over 1,000 application forms to admit 80 students in classes I and III. Many a guardian was refused application forms be-

cause it was difficult to take admission tests of a large number of applicants, Mr Lutful Haidar Chowdhury, Principal, Residential Model High School, told Times.

Thus in respect of annual admission rush there are two different stories for two categories of schools in Dacca city. As the Inspector of Schools of Dacca Education Board says, one category of schools have no alternative but to refuse admission while another category of school never say "no".

LOW STANDARD

He told Times that the admission pressure would not have been so high in the few standard schools, had the standards of most of the city's other high schools been raised. The demand for admission to the standard schools was higher because guardians felt that their wards would be secure in those schools.

As such there was no area-wise restrictions in matter of admission to the better-known schools. The Agrani Balika Bidyalaya, Udayan School, the Dhanmandi Government Girls' High School, for instance, admit even those students who reside in Mirpur, Banani, Gul-

shan, Sadarghat, Motijheel etc.

The other side of the story, however, is the schools like Plassey Girls' High School, Lalbagh Jamila Khatun Girls' High School, Saleha High School, Hazaribagh High School, Fariduddin Siddiqui High School, Rahmatullah Model High School, Swarighat Islamia High School, Nazneen High School (Green Road), Meherunnessa High School (Bhuter Goli), Yusuf High School (Rayer Bazar), Armanadia High School (Armanitola) and Anandamoyee High School etc., do not actually face any admission rush whatsoever. Such schools never say "no" to any admission seeker.

UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION

The better-known schools are unevenly distributed thus causing rush of students from all areas in those schools. The old city area, for instance, has comparatively a bigger concentration of the government high schools and consequently the rush is also lower. Some of the new city areas like Mirpur, Banani, Gulshan, Basaboo, etc., have no schools worth the name.

But more astounding is the fact that the annual admission problem faced by the guardians of the city is nobody's headache. The authorities concerned do not know how many boys pass out of the city's over 300 primary schools and how many of them could be accommodated in the high schools most of which again have their own attached primary sections.

NO DATA ON PRY. SCHOOLS

When contacted, the District Inspector of Schools, Dacca told the Times that his office did not keep separate data on the primary schools in the city. He, however, said that thana-wise data about the schools and their students could be obtained from the respective thana education officers.

The Office of the Deputy Director of Secondary and Special Education, Dacca Division, which every year holds meetings of the headmasters and headmistresses of the city's high schools to ensure that the schools took admission tests on same dates, also do not keep citywise data.

As early as 1979 the Dacca Municipal Corporation had asked the authorities concerned to transfer the city's schools under it while the education authorities had suggested the creation of a separate autonomous metropolitan education authority. The proposal given by the Dacca Municipal Corporation was opposed by primary teachers, but the alternative proposal has also been shelved.

The students who are refused admission by the standard schools go either to the lesser known schools or the commercially run kindergartens. But they always look for opportunity to enter the standard schools to fill the gaps in those schools caused by mid-term transfers, said a senior assistant teacher of Agrani Balika Bidyalaya.