

## ADMISSION IN SCHOOLS

# Upset by vicious politics

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Parents' worries over their children's admission to the state-run schools in the capital have multiplied this year as the students yesterday sat for admission tests amid a state of disorder and concerns caused by ongoing political unrest.

School admission has always been a nerve-racking issue for the parents since there are only a handful of good schools in the capital.

This year things have taken a turn for the worse due to political unrest that

has messed up the academic calendar of all educational institutions from primary school to university.

A number of parents said their children did not get enough time to take preparation for admission tests as the school final examinations did not end in time. Exam dates for several papers were deferred several times thanks to the blockade and shutdowns.

"The final examination of my son was supposed to be over in the first week of December, but it ended on December 11. He barely got a week for taking preparation. I don't think he

will make it," said Afsana Rahman, a mother wishing to get her son admitted to class Three at Government Laboratory School in Dhanmondi.

"After all, he is a kid and how much pressure can I put on him? He did not get the time for having a holiday trip as he had to take exams all through this month," she said.

Many parents said they had taken their children to the admission centres amid fear of street violence.

"Parental anxiety goes sky-high whenever the school admission season

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approaches. But this time it has increased manifold. We were frightened whether any violence took place on the roads like last week," said Ayesha Tarrannum, a mother whose daughter sat for the admission test.

She said the political turmoil had already hit her other child, who took the recently concluded primary terminal examinations. "Do the politicians ever care how we are going through due to their power-hungry game?" she asked.

Amid this situation, admission tests for different classes of the government schools in the capital were held yesterday. There are 29 government high schools in Dhaka and 14 of them offer education for class One. These schools usually remain on top of the limited-income parents' wish list.

Like previous years, the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) has divided the schools in three groups -- A, B, and C. The admission tests of the groups were supposed

to be held on December 19, 20 and 21 in a row.

The DSHE has now rescheduled the C group's test. It would be held on December 27.

Children trying to get admitted to class Two to class Eight of the state-run high schools sat for a written test on Bangla, English and mathematics. Candidates for class Nine would be selected on the basis of their performance in the JSC and JDC exams, while the admission to class One was already held in a lottery system last week.

Contacted, Prof Fahima Khatun, director general of DSHE, said they were trying to manage everything amid the huge setback caused by the political programmes like blockades and hartals.

"Neither our teachers nor the students have got some relief this month," she said.

DG of Directorate of Primary Education Shyamal Kanti Ghosh said children usually visit relatives' home or village homes after their final exams, but this year they were totally deprived of such trips.