

## HSC results cheery

*Uniformity of standards imperative now*

**T**HE highest pass figure in six years at the HSC examinations is a welcome development and indication of greater commitment on the part of the students and the teachers to the process of learning and imparting education.

The education authorities also deserve credit for the effective steps they had taken to stop large scale cheating at the examination halls which had become an annual feature. Their success lies in eradicating to a great extent a social malady that had a crippling effect on the entire system of education.

That said, the high percentage of success means there will be greater pressure for admission to universities and similar institutions. Access to quality education facilities is limited. Through the process of elimination a large number of eligible candidates will be left out, as the good universities cannot accommodate all of them. So where will the left out students go? What plan do the education authorities have for those students?

There is no room for any complacency despite the figures showing by the students. In fact, the problems in the education sector assume quite a different character when the percentage of success at the HSC level becomes quite high. On the other hand, we can ill afford to forget that nearly 40 percent students failed and these students are going to be a burden unless alternative arrangements are made for them to remain afloat in a setting where unemployment is already a major problem.

Another noticeable aspect of the HSC results is that students of colleges in the rural areas have given a poor account of themselves. This is a problem that is indicative of the asymmetry existing between the standard of the colleges in urban centres and those in remote areas. If nothing is done to remove this imbalance, the edge that students from urban areas have over their rural counterparts will become all the more marked in the days ahead.

The education authorities have quite rightly been trying to set things right in some important areas. However, they must also strive to attain a uniform standard that can ensure equal opportunity for all.