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## Parents baffled Big rush for admission in Ctg schools

Chittagong Office

CHITTAGONG, Jan. 1:—The parents in Chittagong have been facing a baffling situation in getting their children admitted to better schools.

The greater number of parents of primary schoolgoers are now found queuing for admission forms. And their wards are laboriously working over 'sample' questions for facing admission tests.

A recent survey has revealed that about 70,000 boys and girls of primary level have been crambling here for admission to good schools for the next academic session. But the maximum number of seats for new admission in the Port City's 104 primary schools is 17,000. The survey was based on the rush of students for admission to different nurseries, kindergartens and other schools in the Port City.

The so-called good schools are broadly divided into a handful of Bengali-medium school and English-medium ones. The students from higher group families usually prefer English-medium schools. There is also increasing rush for better Bengali-medium schools. Only lower middle class parents seemingly prefer to send their children to the government and Chittagong City Corporation schools.

Nowadays, an increasing trend also persists among a section of affluent families in Chittagong City to send their wards to neighbouring country India for primary level studies. As many as five thousand children are now studying in the neigh-

bouring country from Chittagong, according to a rough estimate.

Since this year's admission to most of these schools is still under process, a missionary school here issued over 5,000 forms for admission test for next session. Of the candidates, 200 were selected. Similarly, another English-medium school of average fame received over 2000 applications for 100 seats in its nursery and class one. A Bengali-medium school considered to be one of the best schools here received nearly 3000 applications for 100 seats in class one. Again, a reputed government school has got 1000 applications for about 200 seats in three junior classes.

However, to get their wards admitted to a better school, parents here engage influential school teachers as private tutors for their children. They believe that one cannot get one's child admitted to a reputed school unless one pays handsome "donations".

A headmaster agreed that the tests by virtue of which a handful of candidates were chosen out of thousands were hardly scientific. But the authorities of these schools were helpless in the face of an unmanageable number of candidates. The only way to ensure fair competition is to have more schools so that the pressure on them was evenly distributed.

The Principal of an English-medium school dismissed the donation story as totally untrue. Those who failed to get their wards admitted to these schools spread this canard, the Principal said.