

PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPLETION EXAM

Massive errors in marking detected

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THE authorities detected massive errors in marking scripts affecting the results of thousands of students who took the primary school completion examinations in 2014.

A government scrutiny of scripts of five out of six subjects detected 37 per cent of the students got either less or more marks in Bangla, 25 per cent received less or

more marks in science, 18 per cent more or less marks in English while three per cent of the students received similar marking in Mathematics as well as Bangladesh and Global Studies.

It had serious implications for the primary school completion exams depriving thousands of students of their due results, they said.

Last year, 26,83,781 students appeared in the Pri-

mary Education Completion Examination, the country's largest public examination.

Many of the good students missed scholarships while the non deserving had reasons to celebrate, they said.

The errors were detected by the National Academy of Primary Education while re-checking 1,260 students' scripts covering the five

Continued on page 2 Col. 5

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Continued from page 1

subjects during a three-month sample survey beginning March said NAPE officials.

Government run NAPE, based in Mymensingh, supervises academic performance, management of primary education and the related issues.

The findings accessed by New Age show that there were instances of examiners even giving zero marks for correct answers.

NAPE officials said that they detected instances of incorrect markings in which out of five marks for a question students were given 4.5 or 3.5 though the option was to give five, four or three. They said that there was no option to factionalize marking.

During its sample survey of scripts, NAPE also detected failures on the part of many of the examiners to correctly assess the

scripts, said NAPE director general Fazlur Rahman.

Primary Education Directorate and NAPE officials blamed the examiners' lack of orientation and training for the errors in marking scripts in such a large scale.

They expressed suspicions that some of the examiners might have given more than deserved marks in lieu of money.

'We would thoroughly analyze the study report to stop the flaws,' said director general of primary education Mohammad Alamgir.

'We would also try to find out whether or not the examiners committed the irregularities for money,' he said.

Action would be taken against those found guilty, he said.

Educationists described the errors in marking as alarming and said this could happen due to selecting of less qualified

and incompetent teachers as examiners.

The study shows that the examiners gave less than deserved marks on 12 per cent of Bangla scripts while more than deserved marks were given on 25 per cent of the scripts of the same subject.

In English, 16.80 per cent of the students got more marks than they deserved while 1.20 per cent received less marks than they deserved.

In both the subjects the examiners made the mistakes while giving the marks for letter writing and short questions.

In science, 25 per cent of the students got more marks for answers to short questions than they deserved.

Educationists called the findings an ominous indicator of lack of competence of an unknown number of teachers to evaluate scripts.

Their class room teach-

ing competence and examine scripts are in doubt, said Campaign for Popular Education executive director Rasheda K' Choudhury.

BRAC University's Institute of Educational Development and professor emeritus Manzoor Ahmed said that proper training and guidance could overcome the primary school teachers' deficiencies in evaluating scripts and class room teaching.

Several educationists blamed appointment of less qualified teachers for the situation facing primary education.

Out of around one lakh teachers of 26,000 privately run primary schools that were nationalized in 2013 at least 21,000 primary teachers were absorbed though they passed the SSC Examination but did not get 2nd division, the prerequisite, said primary and mass education ministry officials.