

SSC RESULTS

Big fall in pass rate

Nahid says new evaluation system getting 'standard right'



Students of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College rejoice after the SSC results were published yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

WASIM BIN HABIB

The success rate in this year's SSC examinations has suffered a significant fall thanks to the introduction of a new method of evaluating answer scripts and students' poor performance in English and Mathematics in Comilla board.

The pass percentage of the Secondary School Certificate exams under the eight education boards has come down to 81.21 percent, dipping 7.49 percentage points from last year, show the results published yesterday.

In a year-on-year comparison, this year has seen the deepest drop in the pass rate since the grading system was introduced for the tests in 2001. In the last 16 years, the rate slipped four times from the previous years.

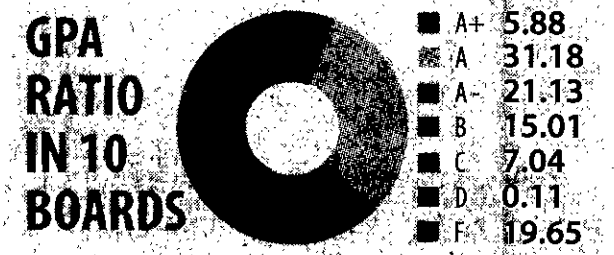
However, the number of students achieving the highest grade -- GPA (Grade Point Average)-5 -- has slightly increased to 97,964 this year from 96,769 last year.

Girls have fared better than boys in terms of success rate. The combined pass rate of all the 10 education boards, including Dakhil examinations under the madrasa board and SSC vocational examinations under the technical board, has also declined to 80.35 percent from 88.29 percent last year.

Similarly, the total number of GPA-5 achievers in the 10 boards has fallen to 1,04,761 from 1,09,761 last year.

"The results might surprise you as it may seem that a huge number of students have failed and that students are not studying properly. But, things are not like that," Education

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Big fall in pass rate

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Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said while announcing the results at a press conference at his ministry.

For the first time, he said, the government this year has introduced a new method of checking answer scripts in the SSC exams. The method is called "standardisation of answer scripts", he said.

The step was taken following a research conducted by the Bangladesh Examination Development Unit (BEDU) on the existing answer evaluating system, he said, adding that they had been working for the last three years to develop a standard for evaluating the scripts.

"Therefore, we were ready to accept such results as we knew that the measure would have an impact on the overall results," Nahid added.

Terming the previous evaluating system "very faulty", the minister claimed that previously, the scripts were not checked properly as "many of the teachers used to give away marks taking the number of pages [of answers] into consideration".

"What has been the usual practice for years is that the listed examiners from the boards would first collect the scripts, then check them and finally return them to the boards. There was no monitoring mechanism or any specific rule on checking the scripts."

The research of BEDU, a part of the Dhaka education board, found out that different examiners were giving different marks to answers written exactly in the same way.

"Some students got poor marks even after writing well while some got good grades despite performing bad," Nahid said.

As part of the new evaluation method, the government trained chief examiners, who later trained other examiners following a guideline.

The chief examiners along with other teachers set model answers to the SSC questions and forwarded them to the examiners. "The examiners checked the answer scripts thinking that the model answers were the standard answers."

Previously, the head examiners did not check the scripts rather they used to give a report on it, but the new method ensures that the examiners would go through the scripts as well, he said, adding all those measures were taken in consultation with academicians.

"We are considering our three-year effort positively. Now the students will be more serious about their studies. The teachers will also be more sincere about teaching and grading answer scripts. Now, we will be able to get the real picture."

Asked who was responsible for the previous "faulty evaluating system", Nahid blamed "the previous method of evaluation" for that.

"No one had ever thought about reforming the evaluating method. We have done this following research of three years."

DEBACLE IN COMILLA BOARD

A deep fall in the pass rate due to students' poor performance in English and Mathematics has pushed down the

overall pass rate in Comilla board this year.

With only 59.03 percent examinees coming out successful, the board is at the bottom of the list of boards with highest success rate.

Contacted, Prof Abdul Khaleque, chairman of the board, said students' performance in the two subjects was extremely poor and that put a negative impact on the overall results.

Of the total 1,82,979 students taking part in the exams, 19 percent students flunked the Mathematics exam while 14 percent the English test, he said.

"Besides, the performance of the students from the humanities group has also been quite poor this year," he told The Daily Star. Only 41.14 percent of the students from that group passed the exams.

"I have already asked my officials to look into the institutions that underperformed," Prof Khaleque added.

Analysing the overall results, it was found that students in all the education boards have done poorly in Mathematics. The average pass rate in the subject came down by 3.84 percent.

BOARD	PASS RATE 2017	PASS RATE 2016	GPA-5 2017	GPA-5 2016
Dhaka	86.39	88.67	49481	40,833
Rajshahi	90.70	95.70	17349	17,594
Comilla	59.03	84.00	4450	6,954
Jessore	80.04	91.85	6460	9,444
Chittagong	83.99	90.44	8344	7,666
Barisal	77.24	79.41	2288	3,113
Sylhet	80.26	84.77	2663	2,266
Dinajpur	83.98	89.59	6929	8,899
Total	81.21	88.70	97,964	96,769

age points from last year, shows data provided by the boards.

MADRASA AND TECHNICAL BOARDS

Madrasa and technical boards have seen a drop in this year's success rate as well as in the number of GPA-5 achievers.

The pass rate in Madrasa board came down to 76.20 percent from last year's 88.22 percent. A total 2,610 students secured GPA-5 this year. The number was 5,895 last year.

Some 1.93 lakh out of 2.53 lakh came out successful in Dakhil examinations.

In Technical board, 106,239 students took part in SSC (vocational) and Dakhil (vocational) exams. The pass rate is 78.69 percent against last year's 83.11 percent. A total of 4,187 students got GPA-5 this year. Some 7,097 got the highest grade last year.

JUBILATIONS

Schools across the country wore a festive look ahead of the results yesterday. Students and their parents, who had been on their nerves for some time, erupted in jubilation as soon as they received the results.

Some danced while some took selfies

flashing V-sign. A feeling of sheer happiness was writ large on their faces.

"I am extremely happy as my hard work has paid off. I would also like to give all the credits to my teachers and parents," said Humayara, a student of the capital's Viqarunnisa Noon School and College. She got GPA-5.

More than 17,81,962 students -- 9,10,373 boys and 8,71,589 girls -- from 28,359 institutions across the country took this year's SSC and its equivalent examinations under the 10 boards. Of them 14,31,722 students passed the tests that began on February 2.

Of the 437 Bangladeshi students who sat for the tests under eight foreign centres, 412 passed, making the pass rate 94.28. A total of 112 of them got GPA-5.

This year, some 2,266 institutions saw a cent percent pass rate. No students passed from 93 institutions and 82 of them were madrasas.

Like the previous year, Rajshahi board topped the charts in terms of success rate with 90.70 percent.

Such successes, however, lead to a concern for many students as they now would have to face stiff competition to

get enrolled in good colleges.

GIRLS DID BETTER

Like in last year's Higher Secondary Certificate exams, girls have fared better than boys in the SSC exams. The pass rate of the girls is 0.85 percentage points higher than that of the boys in all the 10 educational boards.

"This is a very good sign for the society," Nahid said.

The pass rates of the girls and the boys are 80.78 and 79.93 percent.

However, in terms of GPA-5, the girls lagged behind boys. A total of 53,488 boys and 51,273 girls secured the highest grade.

SCIENCE STUDENTS LEAD

As usual, students from the science group in the eight general education boards fared the best with a pass rate of 93.35 percent, followed by 80.21 percent from the business studies and 73.38 percent from the humanities groups.

"Several years ago, the number of students studying science was declining, which was alarming," Nahid said, adding "positive results came after the government took some measures in this regard."