

## HIGHER EDUCATION

# Tough contest for admission seekers

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ABOUT 26,400 students, who had scored the highest grade point average of 5 in this year's higher secondary certificate and equivalent examinations, will not get seats in the reputed public universities and medical and dental colleges.

In 2012 HSC results, some 61,162 students scored GPA 5 while, according to the University Grants Commission and health ministry source, there are only 34,710

seats available with the 29 public universities except National University, the Open University and public medical colleges.

A 2010 UGC report published last June said that there were some 31,711 seats for first-year students in the 29 public universities and according to health ministry sources, there are about 3,040 seats in the 21 public medical and four dental colleges.

Of the 31,711 seats in public universities, the most

coveted Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology has 965 seats, Dhaka University has 5,787 seats, Rajshahi University has 3,690 seats, Chittagong University 3,263 seats, Jahangirnagar University 1,940 seats and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology has 1,400 seats for the first year honours students.

About 2,00,000 students among some 7,21,979 who passed the HSC examinations this year will have no place in the reputed public

or private universities.

For the higher studies, there are some 4,03,524 seats available in the public educational institutions including 3,69,854 seats in colleges under National University and 33,670 seats in the Open University.

The overall pass percentage and the number of GPA 5 scorers in HSC examinations this year have increased significantly, according to the results published on July 18.

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The combined pass percentage is 78.67, which is 3.59 percentage point higher than last year's figure of 75.08 per cent.

The number of students who scored the grade point average of 5 this year is 61,162, up by 21,393 on the figure of last year, which was 39,761.

A total of 9,17,673 students took the HSC and equivalent examinations under eight general education boards and two others — the Technical Education Board and the Madrasa Education Board.

Meanwhile, public universities have already announced the dates for admission tests. Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University and Jagannath University will hold admission tests in October.

Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Khulna

University of Engineering and Technology and Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology will hold admission tests in November. Admission tests for medical and dental colleges will be held in late September.

Professor Siddiquir Rahman, member of the committee on Education Policy 2010, said there would be an intense competition for admission to renowned public universities, forcing many to choose colleges affiliated with the National University. Many private universities might raise the number of seats to cater to the demand, he said.

In the past, it was observed that many colleges affiliated with NU in rural areas do not get enough students due to poor standard of education while seats in many colleges remain vacant as most students are eager to make it to

the well-known educational institutions in Dhaka and other cities.

Many of the successful students will pursue higher education abroad while even some will not be able to continue higher studies.

The UGC chairman professor AK Azad Chowdhury told New Age that there will be no seat crises for the tertiary level education.

Apart from the public and private universities, there are many private medical and dental colleges, government and non-government polytechnic institutes and nursing schools and other institutions where students will be enrolled.

He said last year UGC had raised about 10,000 seats in the public educational institutions and gave approval to many private universities to open new departments.

Azad Chowdhury said if needed, the universities would enrol more students.

The education minister, Nurul Islam Nahid, observed that all will not go for tertiary level education, but those will aspire to pursue higher studies will get seats. 'There will be no seat crises. All the students who passed the exams will get a chance for higher education,' he said.

Nahid said last year both the public and private universities and degree colleges had raised the number of seats.

'It is true everybody won't be able to get a place in educational institutions of their choice... To solve the problem we have to raise the standard of education in the tertiary level,' he said.

The education minister observed that higher education is competitive all over the world.