

Exams amid fear of political unrest

30 lakh children sit for primary terminal exams today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The primary terminal examinations 2013 for class five students of schools and madrasas will begin today amidst fears of possible political turmoil in the days ahead.

More than 29.50 lakh students -- 26,35,406 from schools, and 3,14,787 from madrasas -- have registered to take the country's largest public examinations to be held simultaneously in 6,566 centres across the country.

The Directorate of Primary Education will conduct the examinations.

Students from both schools and madrasas will take mathematics exams today. The tests will be held from 11:00am to 1:30pm. A total of 774 students will also appear in the exams from eight overseas centres.

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But the ongoing political situation casts a shadow on the parents' minds. The recent spells of hartal had earlier forced the authorities to reschedule four of the 11 exams of the Junior School Certificate and Junior Dakhil Certificate (JDC).

Against this backdrop, the guardians have requested the political parties not to enforce any programme that disrupts exams.

"We don't want our children to face any trouble like the JSC examinees are undergoing. We just want the exams to be held without any interruption," said Abu Raihan, father of a candidate.

The number of girls is higher than the boys this time also like the previous year. More than 50,000 students who were either absent or flunked in last year's exams will re-appear in the tests.

"I have taken my best preparation for the

exams. But some new things have been added to our syllabus and exam method. Therefore, I'm a bit nervous," said one of the examinees from a government primary school in the capital's Mirpur.

This year's terminal exams will have 25 percent 'competency-based' questions in all subjects. Last year's exams had only 10 percent such questions.

Besides, the answer scripts of one upazila will be evaluated by the teachers of another upazila under the same district, according to a new rule. The district and metropolitan committees under the National Steering Committee will decide distribution of the answer sheets.

The students must succeed in the tests to enrol in class six. On the basis of the results, scholarships will be equally distributed to male and female students.

The examinations are scheduled to end on November 28.