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Govt schools fail to make their mark

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GOVERNMENT primary, secondary and higher secondary educational institutions mostly fail to make their mark they have failed to compete with non-government and private schools to capture top positions.

No government schools could be in the 10 best institutions in the country and even among schools under the Dhaka education board, according to results of this year's primary completion examinations published published on December 27.

No government schools were placed in top three under the Rajshahi education board, according to results of this year's junior secondary certificate exams published the same day.

Yet again, no government schools captured any of the three positions under the Dhaka and Dinajpur education boards, according to results of the secondary school certificate exams 2012 published on May 7.

Similar is the case with government schools under the Dhaka, Rajshahi, Comilla and Jessore education boards

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in the higher secondary certificate exams 2012 results of which were published on July 18.

Lack of investment, lack of proper attention and supervision, teacher shortage, absence of facilities such as library and laboratory are responsible for the poor performance of government schools, educationist activists said.

They also said investment in government school being less than that in non-government schools started telling on results of students in government educational institutions.

Education authorities, however, said that the overall performance of government schools was satisfactory.

Educationalists say that continued slide in education standards in government schools have forced guardians to send their children to non-government schools, kindergartens and English-medium schools.

Only the people who cannot manage expenses for kindergartens or English-medium send their children to government schools.

The this year's primary completion examinations results show that no government primary schools in the country are in the best 10 institutions. Even no school in the 10 best institutions in the Dhaka division are government institutions.

Students of 37,154 government primary school took the exams and no student from 10 such schools passed the exams.

Dhaka district primary education officer Indu Bhusan Dev said that students who do not get chance in renowned schools usually enrol on government primary schools. 'Most of the guardians are lower middle-class people who hardly can supervise the education of their children,' he said.

Results of the junior secondary certificate exams 2012 also show that only the Mymensingh Zilla School came third in the top three schools under the Dhaka education board.

No government could capture any of the top three positions under the Rajshahi board in the exams.

Under the Jessore education board, the Khulna Zilla School came third in the best three institutions, under the Chittagong board, Dr Khastagir Government Girls' School topped the list, under the Sylhet education board, Government Agragami Girl's High School came third in the list, under the Dinajpur board, Saidpur Government Technical School and College came second in the list.

Barisal Government Girls' High School and Barisal Zilla School could come in the top three positions under the Barisal board. The Comilla Zilla School and Nawab Faizunnessa Government Girls' High School came in the top three positions under the Comilla education board.

This year's SSC results show show that no government school are in the three best institutions under the Dhaka and Dinajpur boards.

Bogra Government Girls' High School topped the list under the Rajshahi board, Comilla Zilla School topped the list under the Comilla board, Barisal Government Girls' High School and the Barisal Zilla School were placed in top three institutions under the Barisal board, Sylhet Government Pilot School was in the list of best schools under the Sylhet board, Government Muslim High School was in the list under the Chittagong board and the Khulna Zilla School was in the list under the Jessore board.

The country has 317 government secondary schools.

The Dhaka district education officer, Abdus Samad, said that government schools were trying their best to improve their position.

The HSC exams results show that no government institutions are in the top three positions under the Dhaka, Rajshahi, Comilla and Jessore education boards.

The Government Commerce College was among the top three under the Chittagong board, Government Syed Hatem Ali College under the Barisal board, Sylhet Government Women's College under the Sylhet board, Saidpur Government Technical School and College under the Dinajpur board.

The Bangladesh Government Secondary Assistant Teachers' Association president, Mofazzal Hossain, told New Age, 'Positions for about 1,200 assistant teachers out of the 9,000 are vacant in government schools. In the schools, 117 positions for headteachers out of the 317 and 109 positions for assistant headteachers out of the 378 are vacant. Teacher shortage hampers academic activities in the institutions,' he said.

The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education director (secondary) Sajal Kanti Mandal said that academic activities were hampered because of teacher shortage. 'We will take necessary action to fill in the vacant positions.'

Former caretaker government adviser Hossain Zillur, who was responsible to oversee the education ministry, told New Age that since independence, policy-makers had paid more attention to expansion of education rather than the quality of education. At the primary level, kindergartens are making investments more than the government does in schools, he said.

There are a small number of government secondary schools and they also suffer from teacher shortage. 'School inspection was limited to auditing only and the quality of education was ignored,' Zillur added.

Another former caretaker government adviser, Rasheda K Chowdhury, who was also responsible to oversee the education ministry, told New Age, 'Non-government schools have more investments, library and laboratory facilities, physical infrastructure and teachers there get paid more than teachers of government schools do.'

She said that at the primary level, there are 3.5 teachers out of the required five and children of solvent family do not get enrolled on primary schools. 'We have to go long way in terms of improving the quality of education.'

Both of the former caretaker government advisers stressed the need for allowing local government organs to monitor schools. They also expressed concern about the quality of teachers in government schools.

The director general of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Noman ur Rashid, and the director general of the Directorate of Primary Education, Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, both, however, expressed satisfaction about the overall result of government educational institutions.

Noman also said that only some 'branded' schools were doing well. 'Guardians send their students to government schools only when they fail to have their children enrolled in branded schools.'

He, however, said, 'The quality of teachers in government schools cannot be questioned as they get job through competitive exams.'