

HSC results should be an eye-opener

Fri Oct 17, 2025 09:17 PM

Last update on: Fri Oct 17, 2025 09:25 PM

We can no longer ignore our educational crisis



This year's SSC and HSC results have indeed been a real "eye-opener," as the education adviser said. The average pass rate in this year's HSC and equivalent examinations stands at 58.83 percent, 18.95 percentage point lower than last year and the lowest in 21 years. The number of GPA-5 achievers also fell from 145,911 last year to 69,097 this time around. In July, we saw a similar plunge in the pass rate for this year's SSC and equivalent exams, which dropped to a 16-year low.

The results of both exams expose deep cracks in our education sector, built up over years, if not decades. Educationists believe that inflated results during the previous government's tenure had masked the real learning gaps that have become deeply entrenched over time. However, the neglect of our education system cannot be blamed on the previous government alone. It has, in fact, become far too systemic—a societal problem. At the root of this crisis lies the tendency to rely heavily on rote memorisation rather than analytical thinking, a problem that has plagued our education system for decades. The poor quality of schools, inadequate teacher pay as well as training, and other structural deficiencies have persisted for years, yet little has been done to address them, despite repeated warnings from educationists about the long-term consequences of neglect.



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Sadly, millions of students continue to pass through this same system and they will inevitably suffer the consequences unless the underlying systemic issues are finally addressed. On top of these longstanding problems, many students have suffered from unaddressed learning losses caused by the Covid pandemic. Additionally, the July uprising—and the trauma it inflicted on students, much of which they continue to bear in the absence of proper counselling, ongoing instability, and a lack of a safe environment—was bound to affect them deeply.

Alongside these issues, there is also clear regional disparity. For example, places such as Cumilla, Jashore, Mymensingh, and Sylhet are lagging behind in terms of pass rates. Shockingly, there were even 43 colleges in the Rangpur division with a zero pass rate.



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All of these factors must be studied carefully by policymakers and educationists. If young people hold the key to the future of our country, then we must equip them with the right tools—and education is among the most important of them. Government must invest in this sector improving the quality of education to meet global standards. Clearly, in this respect, there are shortages that must be addressed. It is high time that the government focused on what is one of the greatest crises facing our country today: the state of our education system.