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# Admission seekers crowd city schools

Staff Reporter

Admission tests in different city schools attracted a large number of candidates yesterday once again focussing on the problem: too few seats and too many students.

Guardians flocking the school premises were seen waiting with the expectation that their wards would do well in the tests and begin the march along the road to success in life.

But the road is increasingly becoming difficult to approach. There are over 300 schools in the metropolis, now inhabited, according to various esti-

mates, by at least 6.5 million people.

And the number is increasing.

But there had not been  
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any proportionate rise in the number of seats in the schools to prepare the boys and girls for their future role as educated citizens.

As the seats become elusive for the wards of middle and lower middle class and poor parents at various high schools, run by the government and privately, the latter began a profitable business.

The wards of 'donors' providing handsome amounts are welcome at many schools.

Out of more than 1800 applicants vying for 300 seats in class I at a premier city girls school prompted the school authorities to go for the hunt to attract top bidders. Allegations are there that some guardians paid even Taka 40-50 thousand each to ensure seats for their daughters.

Similarly, at another institution for boys at nearby Motijheel, 100 boys are in the rat race for one seat in the elementary class. Similar situation prevailed in other major prestigious city schools run privately but receiving state grants and facilities.

Apart from the 'donations' asked by the private institutions, the education business has allegedly crept into government-run schools also, including some prestigious institutions. 'Donations' are taken by teachers to enroll 'particular' students, the system sometimes runs under contract to get those students 'safely through the tunnel of SSC. The contract works well as the teachers of these powerful institutions set question papers and examine the scripts. Although the government has of late decided to plug this hole in the education system the damages it has done is enormous.

A section of educationists concerned with the problem, however, argues that it is not the question of availability of seats in schools but the question of which schools. They say the number of schools are quite reasonable to accommodate the learners. But the choosy parents feel that it is the well known institutions that ensures their children's better future. But there are many institutions which are under utilised the remains ill financially and unable to attract both good students and better teachers. If the authorities take up plans to upgrade the standard of teaching at different schools with equal distribution of grants and other help it may help solve the problem, a senior educationist says.

He also observed that the government should bring the kindergartens and English medium schools under an uniform discipline in matters of fixing their fees and curriculum.

The policy in this regard should be strictly enforced. It would help ease the situation, he added.

Meanwhile, the kindergartens and other English medium schools have allegedly raised their fees and other charges without bothering about government directives.

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