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School admission—A test of merit or donation ?

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"You good for nothing. I have been teaching you all these things for the last one year and yet you cannot pass the admission test. Wait till we go home".

This is a part of the conversation which I overheard at Viquarunnessa School premise just a couple of days back. Many small children had to hear such abuses from their parents. Are these children at fault?

300 schools for 65 million students so the situation can well be imagined.

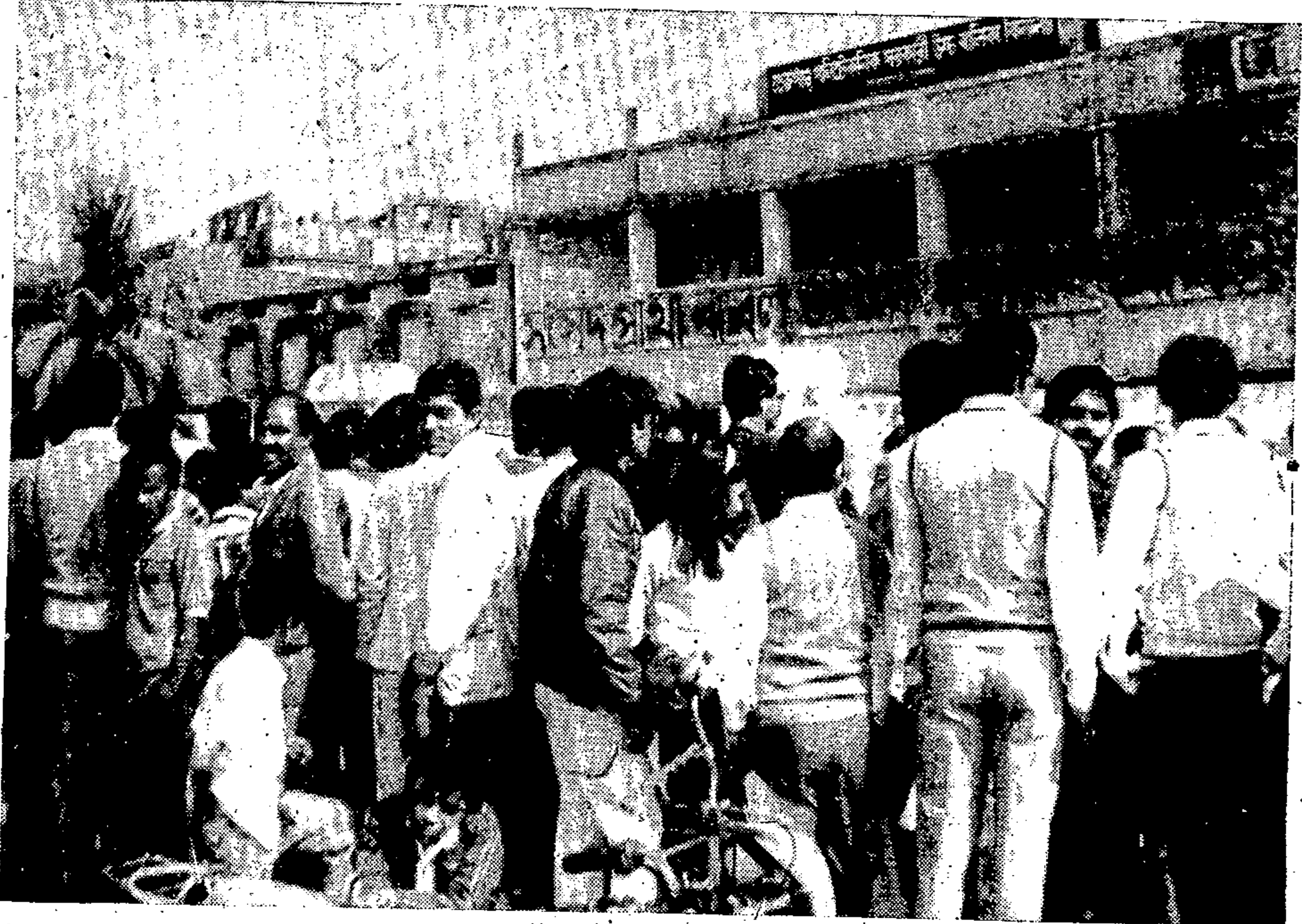
At Viquarunnessa, 1200 forms were sold for class one students numbering 300 seats. The admission process had to be completed in 4 days. At Motijheel Ideal High School, more than a thousand forms have been sold for 120 seats. For 70 seats at University Laboratory School including 50% seats reserved for teachers

round. Due to less students and vacant seats such schools suffer financially.

The teachers of reputed schools are in an advantageous position themselves. Parents flock to them, with the firm conviction that if their children are taught by such teachers these children will surely be successful in the admission test.

They are willing to pay as much as Tk 500 per child

Due to this new mode of admission, children of the middle or lower income groups are finding it next-to-impossible to qualify in such competitive admission examinations. They are trailing far behind. This is creating two distinct class of school students. The reputed schools with good affluent children and the ordinary schools with ordinary children of ordinary background. Such differen-



Parents are anxiously waiting in front of a city school during admission tests yesterday. A boy in foreground, resting on a bicycle, reflects the agonies and frustrations of the problems posed by the huge rush for admission to the overcrowded city schools.

Unfortunately the parents who rebuke and chide their offsprings are more at fault themselves because they have the tendency to flock to the well known schools of the metropolis. As the number of such schools falls short of the demand, the rush for a seat is terrible. The state is also at fault to some extent, because we have not been able to open new schools as needed due to fund constraints although the member of children particularly of the school going age is going up every year.

In the capital there are

1100 students appeared at the admission test and 600 students contested for 45 seats in Class VI.

The same was more or less similar at Govt Laboratory, Uddayan, Willes Little Flower and Agrani Girls School.

For reasons best known to the guardians, most parents like to queue at schools which have good result in the SSC examination. As a result the less known schools suffer badly. There are some schools in the capital itself where admission is open all the year

in a batch of six or Tk 1000 per child individually for a month. On average such tuition varies from six months to a year. The longer the duration of tuition the better are chances for the children to be successful in the admission tussle.

The more affluent supplement tuition with donation. They are ready to dish out as much as Tk 30,000 per child to get a child admitted in the school of their choice. The rate of donation has varied this year from Tk 5000-30,000 per child.

tiations from early childhood has serious drawbacks in later life.

At the same time, govt should take care so as not to concentrate all good teachers in one particular institution but to spread them in different institutions so that all schools can have good teachers and strive for better result. This will help to lessen admission rush in some particular school and also give a chance to other schools to get the privilege of having good teachers and impart good education thereby improving their standard of education.