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Mushrooming Kindergarten Schools

Every now and then one sees a new sign-board popping up on the roadside in different parts of Dhaka city indicating the presence of a Kindergarten School. The motive behind running these schools is mostly commercial. This is understandable as any such public institution has to have its solid financial backup for its annual recurring expenditure and on the salaries of its teachers and general staff. These are all provided by tuition fees and other kinds of legitimate revenue.

But what is disquieting particularly for those who belong to fixed middle-income groups is the exorbitant and fantastic rates of fees, 5 to 6 times those charged in traditional schools. Even some schools compel the students to purchase books, exercise books, stationery and uniforms from their schools. All these items are ordinarily available at a fairer price in the open market. This is outrageous and indefensible.

However, the reason for the mushrooming of these sorts of school not only in the metropolis but in all other cities of the country is the fact that the facilities for children's education are too inadequate to cope with the growing demand. Therefore, what is needed is some sort of control over the activities of these schools by the education authorities. The first step should be to rationalise the rates of fees etc. to enable children from lower and middle-income groups to derive benefit from these schools. Anything elitist of the kind should not be allowed to grow at all in the sphere of education. This will set a bad example and breed bad blood in the long run. For cartels for the privileged section of society does more harm than good in any given society.