

SSC Results 2008: Let Thousand Flowers Bloom in Future Too

Md. Ali Akbar

MANY congratulations to SSC passed students, particularly those who have scored GPA-5 and lesser high grade points. They have not only done laudable service to themselves and their guardians, but also done us proud. We do share the glory of their stupendous success. As shining examples of flourishing talent, they show the way to bring about a qualitative change in education standards through care and determined effort. Record number of GPA-5 achievers this year (52,500 as against last year's 26,000 plus) apart, there have been improvements on many counts, such as increased number of GPA 4-5 & 3-4 achievers, 70% plus average pass percentage (16% higher than last year's), increased number of schools registering 100% success and 50% fall in number of schools with 100% fail ignominy. The record will remain a trend-setter to take heart from.

As it is, the 'grand success' has many claimants, quite rightly though. Our hearts go out to all in hearty admiration. Guardians, Boards, schools, students, teachers and above all, overall uninterrupted academic programs courtesy the emergency rule have to be credited and reckoned with for wholesome roles toward advancing the cause of education.

Over Evaluation?

Amid general mood of celebrations there was however a feeble voice of criticism that pointed accusing fingers at what they termed as Boards' deliberate ploy of liberalized evaluation. The Boards have genuine explanations in this regard. They say last year's mathematics and English question papers had caused serious difficulty even for the most brilliant, and that reflected in less-than-expected results. In an after-scrutiny by competent committees it was proved to the hilt, the said question papers were extra-ordinarily tougher than the rationally desired ask for SSC candidates. And this time question paper standards were moderated a bit coupled with 'harsh' evaluation replaced, as the Boards have clarified, strictly as per recommendations by the committee of academics. **Grumbings of compromise on evaluation standard by some quarters have indeed no substance and don't carry conviction.** This is at best liable to be called a kind of skepticism. Let's forget that and forgive the skeptics, and wish the successful all the best in their onward march on the path of education.

Experiment

The SSC curriculums as also the examination system have undergone kind of experimenting over the last few decades. One should recall the first SSC results under the new system were out and out frustrating, miserly-24 GPA-5 scorers in all the nine Boards. The present objective-elective combined system has been in the run through the years. It is but natural that the system should be matured in the meantime, and all concerned come to terms with its requirements. Today's explosive results barely leave any space of surprise as it is no fluke. By dint of hard work and devotion what the students have earned themselves is precious something we welcome with all our heart. **If measure of a system's efficacy is not the results it delivers in the end, then what else is? And hence no need to go for further experiment with the current system.** The high achievers like the rest stand at the threshold of setting foot on the first rung of higher education after having secured their long-awaited dream success, fulfillment of parents' first round dream. In the absence of adequate number of good colleges, prospect of thousands of brilliant students getting admitted into good colleges is hanging in the balance. The intake capacity of all renowned colleges worth the name is going to be outstripped by the number of admission-seekers. That's what fetches the chances of 'admission business' by some colleges in high demands. They must not be let to toy with our progeny's future. Country's anti-corruption commission has sniffed gross irregularities in the running of high profile schools. A thorough probe into allegations on record will help right the wrongs. The anti-corruption commission has professed to keep watch on doings of the leading colleges during admission times. Nothing can be more relieving to HSC admission-seekers and their guardians. And we welcome the promised move.

Foster Talents

The possibility of thousand flowers blooming in our academia has to transform into reality. The successful are about to step on the second rung of education ladder. Amenities of providing quality education have to be created in all other colleges than the countable few. Thousands of promising young learners with high SSC GPA will surely land in many lesser colleges owing to critical lack of absorption capacity of the city-based elite colleges. Their dream to come out with flying colors in HSC level like they have in SSC

examination must realize. Many a talented student end up with 'poor HSC results for lack of fostering, and lose their way to fulfilling the cherished goal. This must not recur. Otherwise genius among the GPA-5 achievers will waste away, a sad prospect indeed.

And those among the top scorers who have put behind all barriers of extreme poverty and deprivation to do wonderful SSC results need support to repeat equal feat in future. The government and the philanthropists in society should come to their aid. **Let thousand flowers bloom and take this proud nation of ours to an astounding height of glory unmatched, we long for.**

Lay Foundation

The SSC and HSC levels are crucial stages in which to build the very foundation of higher education edifice. If foundation is weak, sound higher education cannot stand on it. Consequently the nation's backbone that is education cannot be strong. Again, teachers are euphemistically called the 'conscience' of the nation. They have a greater role to play towards laying the desired foundation of higher education. Neglect of duty in imparting lessons inside classrooms does immense disservice to the students, and tarnishes teachers' image.

Increasing dependence on 'private coaching' has to go or lessen. Those who cannot afford special off-class coaching are sure to be losers in race with the ones who can avail the same. **Here one-sided remarks will sound like hollow sermons.** Teachers' tendency to devote more to off-class coaching than classroom teaching has to be addressed from practical point of view. Their due remuneration in terms of pay and other emoluments enough to suffice it to meet their needs of decent living got to be ensured as a priority. Their social standing has to be recognized too. Then, they would find enough self-motivation to engage fully in their professional duties. Only then teachers as the 'conscience of the nation' will prove equal to the task of building the nation's backbone. People hope the education directorate also will rise to the occasion by taking care of teachers' legitimate interests-administrative or otherwise in the most transparent way. **Education must cease to be as saleable as any commodity in kitchen markets. Teachers have to revert to the sublime role of 'man-making architects.' It must be made to happen.**

Job linkage

Most people don't bother about the unlucky boys and girls with poor results. Some two

lakh SSC students have got plucked. Nobody knows how many of them will reappear after lapse of another year. Perhaps many will drop out if only for sheer poverty reason. Who will come of help to these luck-torn lots? The corporate bodies boast of various promotional activities as part of their oft-quoted social responsibility, and part of the same can be diverted to philanthropic purposes of running some job-oriented training centers. They may institute stipends a bit more than some of them are doing for the poor but meritorious students. That will give them no mean sense of accomplishment.

The govt. may mean to activate the existing vocational facilities that will open up definite openings for academic drop-outs. Trained technical hands will serve to meet the rising demands of growing industrial sector. Besides, huge scope of overseas employment beckons the trained hands more than others. **I know all this is easier said than done. It makes a tremendous challenge for us, but we must act without loss of any more time.** The incremental loads of uneducated and half-educated youths are a veritable threat to social peace and tranquility. Out of desperation they will be forced to despicable ways of living like mugging, thieving, drug peddling etc. Drop-outs and poor graders need to be helped with technical training.

Keep up Trends

The budding flowers we discern in SSC high graders should be helped to bloom into full blossoms in future. Let them enrich and glorify the nation with meritorious services. Granted that guardians' conscious effort and teachers' aiding role will continue as expected, the education authority would ensure all it takes to keep up the illustrious trends set by the record SSC results. Education is now recognized as the best investment by parents as well as the society as a whole. Highest allocation for education is not a sufficient factor for quality education. The 'most productive use of resources' is all the more important. Wide ranging pragmatic reforms in cleaning up the years' mess and rot within must be initiated. The earlier the better it is for the nation. We cannot wish away the mismatch in the sector. Prompt action is what is imperative. Now is the time to hit as the care-taker govt. is arguably wedded to national reforms all round.

(The writer is a Deputy Secretary to the Government)