

EDUCATIONISTS ON HSC RESULTS

Record success does not mean qualitative change

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Eminent educationists say the record growth in percentage of pass and GPA-5 achievers in this year's HSC examinations does not necessarily reflect qualitative improvement of education in the country.

Principals of some renowned colleges however said comparatively good academic atmosphere and guardians' increased interest in education of their children contributed to the outstanding results.

Some academics alleged that examiners were instructed to give more marks than the students deserved. They however could not explain why this was done.

About 6.2 lakh students took the HSC and equivalent examinations

HSC Results in Last 4 Years

Year	Pass Rate		GPA 5	
	Total (%)	Growth (%)	Total	Growth (%)
2005	59.74	11.88	5534	81.61
2006	65.65	5.91	9864	78.24
2007	65.60	(-) 0.05	11,140	12.93
2008	76.19	10.59	22,045	97.89

under the nine education boards this year and about 4.66 lakh or 76.19 percent passed. Pass rate was 65.6 percent last year.

Moreover, 22,045 students secured GPA-5 this year compared to last year's 11,140.

The pass rate in both papers of

English this year is nearly 90 percent as against around 70 percent in the last couple of years. The number of A+ achievers in English this year is more than that in Bengali, according to sources in the education boards.

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Record success

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"I congratulate the students on their success. But I think this is merely a quantitative change, not a qualitative one. Because, I have come to know that examiners were asked to give more marks than they would normally give," said eminent academician and writer Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal.

"Giving such instructions (for more marks) could be considered by a political government for cheap popularity, but I have no idea why a caretaker government should do this. It is a sort of cheating with the nation," said Zafar Iqbal, professor of Computer Science and Engineering at Shah Jalal University, Sylhet.

Contacted, Benjamin Costa, principal of Notre Dame College, said the record pass rate this year does not necessarily reflect overall improvement of quality of education in the country. "It is bad if any instructions are given to check examination papers liberally," he added.

Besides, parents and guardians are now more aware of the importance of investing in education of their children. And this is likely to improve their performance in examinations, the principal said.

He noted that teachers' training and designing questions that require

more analytical and creative capabilities of students should get emphasis, but that has not happened in Bangladesh.

Renowned educationist Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury said giving such instructions, if any, especially in case of public examinations, is not wise.

"It is true that in developed countries, examiners check exam papers liberally, but that is not the case in our country. Change of attitude requires time and adequate training among teachers. Any directive in this regard is not desirable," he said.

Principal of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College Rokeya Akhter appeared skeptical of the claim that the HSC results this year showed a qualitative change in education.

She however said there were instructions to examiners, which meant in case of fully correct answers to questions, full marks should be given.

"Traditionally, it is observed that examiners give marks a bit miserly. I think they tried to check papers accurately this year and that might have contributed to better results."

Rokeya Akhter also said comparatively good academic atmosphere last year was another major factor behind this.