

The high and low of SSC results

Need for uniformity emphasised

THE results of the SSC examinations under eight education boards show that the total number of GPA-5 achievers has gone up by around 4,000, compared to last year's, but the overall pass rate has dropped by three percent.

That more students are getting the highest grade is both an indicator of the rise in the number of high performing students as well as that of better performing teachers and schools. That is good news. We congratulate both the high achievers as well as high performing teachers and schools on their successes.

At the same time however we cannot overlook the fact that the pass rate has dropped. So, it is a mixed bag there.

The number of schools with cent per cent pass figure has increased to 2,726 from last year's 2,272. Also, the schools with zero pass has dropped from 91 to 72, so has the number of expelled students. Thus, the general standard has improved, though still falling far short of our expectations.

The education minister has stated that they would look into the schools performing very poorly and are contemplating to take action against them. But what is really important is to make sure that schools across the country are properly equipped in terms of teaching staff and educational aids to cater for increasing demand of secondary education. There is no doubt that the schools in rural areas are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain a minimum standard. It is these schools that the education ministry must concentrate on, and work towards providing better-managed schools both in public and private sectors.

Then comes the big question of absorbing the successful students into the higher stream of education. There is an acute shortage of seats in colleges. Nothing can be more tragic than a GPA-5 achiever failing to get admission in a reasonably good college. So, the decision makers have to think in terms of a holistic plan for accommodating the students in the system taking into account the increasing number of students passing the SSC or HSC exams every year. As for now, introduction of two shifts in colleges appears to be the only solution, provided, of course, the standard of teaching is not compromised.

Finally, time has come to introduce terminal education, so that a large number of students can avail themselves of opportunities for vocational training after completing a certain level of education, ensuring thereby that those who failed did not slip into oblivion.