

Congratulations to successful HSC candidate

*Urban-rural gap in education needs
addressing though*

THE results of this year's Higher Secondary Certificate examinations have caused mixed reaction among the students and all others concerned. Mixed because the overall pass rate has gone down by 4.42 per cent compared to that of last year as also the number of students scoring GPA-5. However, it must be emphasised that as much as it is important to ensure that the maximum number of candidates qualify it is also equally important to maintain a high quality of education.

Some colleges, mostly in the urban areas, have achieved 100 per cent success. Figures show that in comparison to the past, this year 81 more colleges have joined the list of cent per cent scorers. But this is a success story of the more privileged institutions and it hardly reflects the reality on the ground, for there are 41 colleges where not a single student could qualify.

Such paradox in performance by the examinees notwithstanding, we congratulate those boys and girls who have come out successfully in this year's HSC exams. At the same time, we express our sympathy for those who failed to make it this time.

The teachers of some colleges across the country have blamed the introduction of new curriculum in English for the poor performance of the students. But apart from introduction of a new topic, that is, grammar, in English, there are also other important issues one can hardly lose sight of in this context. For instance, it has become clear from this year's HSC exams that the urban students are doing better than their rural counterparts, especially in English. One can see this disparity even between the bigger and smaller urban centres.

The most plausible explanation for this anomaly is that the urban schools and colleges have better learning environments, including better teachers, and they can afford private coaching. Such facilities are beyond the dream of the rural students. And such discrepancy has been becoming more pronounced.

With the passage of time, the urban-rural disparity in the sphere of education is becoming wider and deeper. The gap has to be bridged. It is time the government provided special attention to the rural schools and colleges and extended necessary financial and training support for them to get over the situation in the shortest possible time.