

# Slide in edn quality at public univs worrying

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EDUCATIONISTS are worried about the sharp decline in the quality of education at public universities of the country.

Around 95 per cent students pass graduation from these universities but their performance in Bangladesh Civil Service exams is appalling as evident in the last four exams, they have observed.

Academics also lament that the position of Bangladeshi universities in different international ranking is

falling further and further, which is another pointer of how the quality of education at 39 public universities is nosediving.

Low pass rate at competitive BCS examinations also proves that the students are failing to keep abreast of issues outside their syllabus and are less innovative, they point out.

University Grants Commission in its latest annual report for 2015 described the quality of graduates from many institutions, especially those under National University, as 'questionable'.

For the grim picture, educationists have blamed lack of motivation, both among teachers and students, exacerbated by recruitment of teachers on political consideration.

This they blamed for the dwindling number of research works, shrinking library facilities and inadequate laboratories at public universities.

'This is unfortunate that quality of higher education in Bangladesh is low,' said former University Grants Commission chairman AK Azad Chowdhury

'Despite the rapid rise in enrolment in higher education in the last decade, the quality of education remains a serious cause of concern,' said another former University Grants Commission chairman Nazrul Islam.

Incumbent UGC chairman Abdul Mannan said that he hoped that each university would be more attentive and plan ways for improving their education standard.

Bangladesh Public Service Commission annual report for 2016 shows that percentage of applicants

passing the screening test for the Bangladesh Civil Service examinations dropped to 3.50 per cent in the 37th exam in June 2016, from 20.87 per cent of the 34th exam held in May 2013.

Failing to acquiring the minimum number to pass the preliminary test, based on MCQ, indicates that most of graduates are not equipped to handle one of the more elementary tests of their abilities.

Only 20.87 per cent of 2.22 lakh applicants passed the preliminary exam in the 34th BCS exam, 8.35 per

cent of 2.44 lakh in the 35th, 6.54 per cent of 2.11 lakh in the 36th and 3.50 per cent of 2.43 lakh in the 37th exam.

Not a single Bangladeshi university is among the top 700 universities in the world, according to Quacquarelli Symonds rankings of universities, as of June 2017.

Dhaka University was ranked 365th in 2005 and between 550 and 600 in 2010.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology was ranked 2025th, Continued on page 2 Col. 5

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Dhaka University 2283th and Bangladesh Agricultural University 3243th in the January 2017 edition of the Webometrics ranking of world universities, a chart based on the number of electronic publications relating to a university, on the internet.

Former Dhaka University vice-chancellor Ema-juddin Ahmed said that in the past it was hard for a student to obtain first class (at least 60 per cent marks),

and an overwhelming proportion of students got second class (at least 45 per cent marks).

'After the introduction of grading system in universities, the number of student with CGPA 3, scoring at least 60 per cent marks, has increased manifold, but what about their quality,' he asked.

The veteran teacher also blamed partisan administrators, including vice-chancellors, poor budgetary allocation, and a fall in the quality

of education at schools and colleges for the present state of affairs.

Improvement in quality of education at public universities was not taking place keeping pace with time, said Mohammad Alauddin, immediate past president Association of Universities of Bangladesh, a platform of the public university vice-chancellors.

Many new public universities and old universities that have opened new

subjects are suffering from shortage of teachers, less higher education budget allocation, less research, he added.

UGC chairman Abdul Manna said that that the commission, through projects like the Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project, was trying to improve the quality.

In 1994, there were only 62,095 students in 10 public universities which shot at up to 34 lakh in 2016 in 39 universities.