

DOWN TO EARTH

Admission Conundrum in Higher Edn

By A S M Nurunnabi

In the Dhaka University the admission crisis in higher education is awful. This is part of the crisis that has engulfed the entire education sector. This crisis is deepening day by day without any sign of abatement. The high rate of population growth in the country has its impact on admission opportunities in educational institutions. Every year thousands of students pass out at lower level and seek admission in educational institutions at higher level where seats are limited. The situation has reached a critical stage which makes the guardians extremely worried and the students bewildered.

We hear a lot about higher spending in the field of education. That much of this claim seems to be without substance as is evidenced from the crucial situation existing in the matter of admission facilities for higher education. Even the students who obtained high marks in the qualifying examinations bear marks of frustration as 18 or 19 candidates will compete for one seat in the university.

This year a record number of applications for admission in the Dhaka University has been submitted. As compared with last year, the total number of applicants is about 18 to 20 thousand more with a total of 63,313. The teachers and others who are associated with the admission process are amazed at the high rise in the number of applicants in one year. Though the number of applicants has increased by such a big margin, the number of available seats in the university has not increased.

The break-up of the total number of educational institutions for higher education is as follows: University-17 (government-11, non-government-6), Medical Colleges-17 (government-13, non-government-4), Engineering Colleges-4, Polytechnic Institutes-18, Degree Colleges-208. Education cost in the non-government universities and medical colleges is high and

the number of seats there is also very limited. Hence the students in general seek admission in general courses in the universities and also in engineering, agriculture, technical and medical subjects. This inclination is natural. But since seats in these institutions are so limited that it is well nigh impossible for a student of ordinary merit to get admission in any such institution.

The aim of every student is to seek admission in such courses as medical, engineering, agriculture, commerce and science. Because these are considered as prize subjects which offer them a high standing in society. But in the race for admission in such sought-after subjects, most of the students who apply fail to qualify in the admission test. Last year for 560 seats in the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), four thousand students applied for admission. In the Dhaka University for 3727 seats the number of applicants last year was 47 thousand. The whole situation presents a frightful picture.

Why has this situation developed? According to experts, government has failed to formulate suitable planning, both short-term and long-term, for expansion of higher education. Our planners associated with education seem to have failed to gauge the fact that these problems will escalate with time. The bane of our education system seems to be that it is not future-oriented. No planning seems to have been done with much-needed foresight.

After independence, it should have been felt necessary to set up a university each year. In that context the number of universities at present would have been 30 to 32. This is no idle dream. Take the case of Pakistan. At the time of the Liberation War, the number of universities in that country was six. Now the number has in-

creased to 30 in that country. In the neighbouring country India, the number of universities and institutions for higher education has increased in the same proportion.

The number of institutions for higher education in our country is so limited that thousands of our students leave for India for higher education, costing huge amounts of foreign exchange.

According to the opinion of the Dean of the Arts Faculty, quoted in a Bangla daily, the admission crisis in higher education is not an isolated phenomenon. This is a national problem. It is held that for want of a comprehensive policy, the admission issue has reached such a critical stage. It is further held that in the matter of admission a central policy is necessary. Admission tests may be held centrally and the qualified candidates may be placed in suitable faculties in order of merit.

It is held by education experts that higher education should not be made open to all. There should be adequate scope for vocational education. Next it is urgently necessary to expand the facilities for higher education in the existing government colleges. If the connected infrastructures are developed, it is not difficult to achieve this objective.

The pressure of admission may be tackled to some extent by introducing double shifts in the university. Such double shifts can be introduced immediately in the general courses.

To sum up, to meet the admission crisis we need to set up new universities under short and long-term plans, create facilities for higher education in the govt degree colleges, introduce double shifts in universities and encourage private initiative in setting up institutions for higher education. The admission crisis has already reached a critical stage. If remedial action is not taken now, the situation may go out of control.

Independence Day programmes

By Staff Correspondent

The nation celebrates the Independence and National Day tomorrow.

Elaborate programmes have been taken up to celebrate the day. The day will be heralded in the capital by a 31-gun salute at daybreak. The day will be a public holiday.

The national flag will be hoisted atop all government, non-government institutions and private buildings across the country. Important buildings will be illuminated in the evening and the main roads and road-islands of the city will be decorated with the national flags.

Wreaths will be laid at the FBCCI

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warehouses and insufficient factory supply have brought frustration among the farmers which led to disobedience by an otherwise very law abiding community, it said.

The federation observed that the seizure of fertiliser arose from the government intervention to contain black market. The panic among bonafide traders impeded mobility and the factory failed to supply adequately due to physical and infrastructural limitations.

A series of events led to the shortfall like depletion of stock through unprecedented export, cut back in deliveries leading to price rise, which triggered the government intervention," the FBCCI release said.

It pointed out that the intervention through local administration drew attention of all needy farmers. The scarcity situation released all kinds of non-genuine persons posing to be businessmen which further complicated the situation.

The federation said interest groups hostile to private sector development have launched an unsavoury campaign against the private marketing of fertiliser.

It opposed any efforts towards reverting to public distribution through BADC because of the "long history of inefficiencies and drain on public exchequer." An amount of Tk 124 crore is still outstanding by BADC on that account, it said.

FBCCI, the apex body of the business community, also expressed concern over the food situation and the likelihood of a shortfall in Boro crop.

The concern was expressed in recent meetings between the FBCCI leaders and Agriculture Minister M Majid-ul-Haq, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Food Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moeen Khan.

Manzur's murder

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Magistrate (CMM), Dhaka, Thursday ordered that the accused should be produced in the court of the CMM, Chittagong, since the main documents concerning the case were now lying with that court.

The next date for the hearing of the case has been fixed for April 2.

Police sources hinted that all the three would be shifted to Chittagong before the hearing starts.

Our Chittagong Correspondent adds that arrangements have been made in Chittagong jail to accommodate the accused all of whom have been given special class by the court.

A relative of Col Shamsur Rahman yesterday alleged that they were not allowed to see him even after the court order.

"A jail official said that they did not yet get any copy of the order, so we cannot allow any visit," the wife of Col Rahman told The Daily Star. She said they would try to see him today.

Hasina

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The Muslims, Hindus, Christians and Buddhists, irrespective of their religious faith fought unitedly for liberating the country and establishing a democratic order, she said.

The AL chief was addressing the greater Faridpur traditional Hindu conference.

Hasina blamed the government for 'deviating from the path of secularism and religious freedom.

She also said that the government 'does not allow us to work, nor does it want us to resign from Parliament. We were elected by the people and we have the right to make our own decision based on the people's wishes.'

Computer

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But the EC is yet to distribute all the ID cards among the over 70 thousand voters. "Over 60 thousand cards have already been given and the rest are under process," said another EC official.

When his attention was drawn to an allegation that there were cases in which photograph of a person is printed in other's ID card and address of the voter concerned was not mentioned correctly, he admitted that there might be some lapses. But these errors could be removed, he said.

About another allegation, he said ID cards of a small number of voters could not be prepared as they were not available for taking their photographs. But they would be provided with cards as soon as their photographs would be available to the persons concerned, he added.

JFF

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The problem in the ammonia plant was detected in December last and since then international efforts have been underway to set the fault right, according to officials of the factory.

But the problem remains because of the continued pressure from the nervous bureaucrats in the capital to keep the plant going in this crucial period, they added.

"Now we are producing fertiliser only 40 per cent of our capacity under tremendous risk," said an engineer.

In full operation, the factory produces 1,700 tonnes of granular urea a day, 20 per cent of the total production in the country.

The plant has not been overhauled since 1993. Experts said it is necessary to overhaul the plant every year.

The tension now gripping the factory officials, however, seemed to have little effect on those who through the factory every day demanding fertiliser.

Officials from different districts, members of Parliament from various constituencies and leaders of various political parties are giving pressure for more fertiliser.

Worried farmers were seen waiting at the factory gate to have the precious soil nutrient that would save their next paddy harvest.

Meanwhile, market sources say, a section of traders is creating artificial crisis by hoarding the available cement to sell it at exorbitant prices.

Seven ring brand cement from China now sells at Taka 247 per bag of 50 kg, as against Taka 198 to 200 a week ago, market sources said.

Indonesian cement now costs Taka 260 per bag, an increase by Taka 30 to 40 per bag compared with the price a week before.

Cement price

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from China and Indonesia meets most of the requirement in the country.

The two private cement factories - Chittagong Cement and Confidence Cement Ltd - suspended production due to shortage of polycrystalline bags.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing the fifth Regional Conference of the United Nations Associations in Asia and the Pacific at the Osmani Memorial Hall in the city yesterday. - PID photo

PM opens WFUNA confce

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an important role in UN peacekeeping operations," she said.

The Prime Minister observed that all programmes of the UN were being directed towards these ends and said there is no alternative to UN to build a better world tomorrow.

Recalling the establishment of the UN, Begum Zia said the UN began its maiden sojourn 50 years ago with a pledge to save future generation from another catastrophic world war and today it has become the most effective global platform.

President of the World Federation of UN Associations (WFUNA) Ms Androula Vassiliou chaired the inaugural session of the five-day conference.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, State Minister for Women's Affairs and Vice President of the UN Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) Sarwar Rahman, WFUNA Secretary General Dr Merek Hagmajer, WFUNA Regional Director Sitarum Sharma, UNAB President Prof Inna Ali and Secretary General Syed Ahmad Hossain also spoke on the occasion.

The Prime Minister said environmental pollution is threatening the very existence of the earth. "Affluence and excessive consumption in industrially developed countries are resulting in large-scale pollution of the environment. But the developing countries are being blamed for the pollution."

She said the industrially developed countries are putting up various hindrances in the way of transfer of technology and underlined the importance of free flow of information and technology for building a balanced global village.

Begum Zia observed regional cooperation can play a crucial role as a complement to UN based multilateral cooperation for a secure and stable global order.

The collaboration between the countries of Asia and the Pacific can usher in a new tide of development in the region, she said.

Begum Zia, who is the current chairperson of the SAARC, said that the seven-nation forum is capable of making more effective contribution in the fields of education, culture, technology, information, industry and commerce.

At about 11 am, they attacked a fertiliser-laden truck bound for Mahasthang in Bogra and looted 200 bags of urea.

A police-peasant clash ensued when the agitating farmers also attacked six more trucks carrying urea from Sirajganj to Ullapara and looted 50 bags from one of the trucks.

As police and farmers chased each other several times during the clash, at least 30 people suffered minor injuries.

The barricades were withdrawn at about 1 pm allowing movement of vehicles on the highway after Sirajganj DC Syed Abdul Malek and SP Mukhlisur Rahman went to the troubled area and assured the farmers of immediate supply of fertiliser.

But the agitating farmers and their family members armed with wooden and bamboo staves stayed on the road-sides, saying that they would not return home without the much-needed agri-input.

Two brothers shot dead in Savar

By DMCH Correspondent

Two brothers were killed and three others injured when some unidentified gunmen opened fire during a function at a school in Savar yesterday morning.

The deceased were identified as Enayet Hossain, 24 and Mujibur Rahman, 32.

Sources say a group of local people started shooting to show their anger at not being invited to the annual sports meet of the Ashulia High School in Savar.

Farmers blocked highway

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blocked eight kilometres of the highway from Ullapara bus stand to Chaireshaka since 9 in the morning.

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Business team leaves for Delhi

A six-member Bangladesh delegation left Dhaka for New Delhi yesterday to attend a conference on "Dynamic Asia Business Opportunities" to be held in the Indian capital on March 26-29, reports UNB.

Mahabubur Rahman, former President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry and vice-president of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, is leading the delegation.

The delegation includes DCCI President Rashed Maksum Khan, former DCCI president A Rob Chowdhury, former MCCI president and executive committee member of SAARC chamber Latifur Rahman, DCCI Director A S M Quahem, and A K M Shamsuddoha, President of the Bangladesh Independent Agents Association and executive committee member of the SAARC chamber.

Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao will inaugurate the conference, organised by the International Chamber of Commerce.

CIDA chief in city, happy over aid utilisation

Madame Huguette Labelle, President of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) arrived in Dhaka yesterday afternoon on a five-day visit to see the progress of the Canadian-aided development projects in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Talking to newsmen at the airport, Madame Labelle expressed satisfaction at the utilisation of Canadian aid in Bangladesh. This is her first visit to Bangladesh.

Canada, through the CIDA, has been providing assistance to Bangladesh in different sectors, including health and family planning, flood control, agriculture, rural electrification, primary education and rural development.

Dhaka experiences

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Local weather experts said the temperature throughout the country is higher than usual during this time of the year.

They predicted that the current heat wave may continue for a few more days and warned that the weather behaviour may cause severe nor'westers in many parts of the country.

Attack on Anwar

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opened fire from a car near Magdonald Chinese restaurant on the Mirpur road at about 1:30 am.

Three bullets hit Manju's Mercedes-Benz jeep but the two leaders were unhurt.

It was learnt that they had earlier dropped JSD leader Hasanul Huq Inu near his residence at the Elephant Road.

A case was filed with Dhankandi police station in this connection.

The Midnight File

Tiwari for collective leadership in Congress (I)

NEW DELHI, Mar 24: Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao has lost direction at the helm of the ruling Congress (I) party and should give in to collective leadership, a rebel leader said in remarks published today. Narain Dutt Tiwari, a top Congress leader, made the comments at a mass rally for expelled Congress leader Arjun Singh in the northern town of Bhatinda on Thursday. The Hindu and other newspapers reported, says AFP.

Mitterrand's wife denied entry to US Senate office

WASHINGTON, Mar 24: The wife of French President Francois Mitterrand was reportedly denied entry to a US Senate office building after she refused to walk through a metal detector because she has a heart pacemaker. Danielle Mitterrand and her entourage were heading for a meeting with Senator Paul Simon on Thursday to talk about human rights violations in Turkey and Iran when she was stopped by authorities. The Washington Post quoted congressional sources as saying, reports AP.

Pak businessmen call nationwide strike today

KARACHI, Mar 24: Pakistani business leaders have appealed to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to drop her opposition to a general strike called for Saturday to protest against violence in Karachi, reports Reuter.

Instead of opposing the strike, the government should declare March 25 as a day of national mourning to express grief over the merciless killings in Karachi," M Muneer, president of the Pakistan Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FCCI), said in a statement on Friday.

The government has condemned the strike as politically motivated and FCCI leaders have gone into hiding.

Businessmen issued the strike call after a meeting on March 15 to draw attention to what they see as the government's failure to halt bloodshed in Karachi, where more than 100 people, including two Americans, have been killed this month.

One killed as villagers clash

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 24: A young man was killed and two others were injured in a clash between two rival groups of villagers at Chhanogaon under Doarabazar thana in Sunamganj district yesterday.

Niamat Ali, 18, was killed on the spot while Arafat Ali, 16, and Samar Ali, 15, have been admitted to the Doarabazar Thana Health Complex.

10 die of diarrhoea in greater Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 24: At least 10 people died in an outbreak of diarrhoea in Pirajpur, Barguna and Bholia during the last 24 hours.

The LDF brought out a torch procession in the city yesterday evening and held a rally at the Nur Hossain Square to drum up public support for today's hartal.

100 shops gutted in Habiganj

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 24: A devastating fire reportedly gutted property worth five crore taka at Madhabpur in Habiganj district yesterday.

More than hundred business establishments were burnt to cinders in a fire originating from a house near the bus stand area. The fire soon engulfed adjacent rows of shops reducing them to ashes.

Fire service personnel from Habiganj, Ashuganj and Srimangal extinguished the fire at 2 am. Scores of people and police personnel also took part in fighting the blaze.

No casualty was reported.

12 killed

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red, 16 were admitted to Jhenidah hospital.

Our correspondent in Comilla says, a driver and a helper of a truck were killed when a Dhaka-bound truck hit their parked vehicle from behind at Badabaria on Dhaka-Chittagong highway early yesterday.

The driver was identified as Nasir, while the name of the helper could not be known. A case was filed with Kotwali thana.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
কয়লা পরিদপ্তর (বিলুপ্ত) বিলুপ্তিকরণ সেল
৪৮, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা
ক-সি/কলা বিক্র/৭৪/৭/২৪/১০০৪
জন্ ০১-১২-১৪০১ বা/এ
২২-০৩-১৯৯৫ইং

কয়লা বিক্রয়ের সংক্ষিপ্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

৮ইমাম-১ নম্বর সরকারী কয়লা ডিপোতে সম্বন্ধিত কয়লা সিঙ টেনারের মাধ্যমে বিক্রয়ের জন্য অর্পিত ক্রেতাদের নিকট হইতে সীলসোহকৃত বামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাইতেছে। উক্ত মঙ্গল কয়লার পরিবাহক সহ বিক্রিত তথ্যাবলী দরপত্র তফসিলে উল্লিখিত আছে। নিম্নলিখিতকরার দরপত্র, ৮ইমাম জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয় এবং সরকার অনুমোদিত নিলামকারী মেসার্স এজ্ঞাপো ট্রেডার্স, ১২-কন্দরা মার্কেট, বাৎসামটর, ঢাকা হইতে নগদ ২০০/- (দুইশত) টাকা (অক্ষয়করযোগ্য) প্রদান করিয়া আগামী ০১-০৪-৯৫ ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে দরপত্র তফসিল সম্বন্ধি করা যাইবে।

২। দরপত্র তফসিলের সহিত সেল প্রধান, কয়লা পরিদপ্তর (বিলুপ্ত), বিলুপ্তিকরণ সেলের অনুকূলে প্রদর্শিত মূল্যের উপর ২ ½% (আড়াই শতাংশ) হারে জারিজিলাই যে কোন তফসিলভূত ব্যাংক কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত পে-ডাডারের মাধ্যমে দাখিল করিতে হইবে।

৩। আগামী ০১-০৪-৯৫ ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময় ডিপোয় কয়লা পরিদপ্তর করা যাইবে।

৪। নিম্নলিখিতকরার দরপত্র এবং ৮ইমাম জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়ে রফিক টেডার ব্যারে আগামী ০২-০৪-৯৫ ইং তারিখ সকাল ১০-০০ ঘটিকা হইতে সুপার ১২-৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত দরপত্র দাখিল করা যাইবে। উক্ত দিন বেলা ১২-৩০ ঘটিকার পরপরাত্মকভাবে উপস্থিত হইতে যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন তাহলে তাহা সীলিত হইবে।

৫। প্রকৃত দরপত্রের ডিপোয় সম্পূর্ণ মন্ত্রসের জন্য বা ১,০০০ খেটের কয়লা দরপত্র দাখিল করিতে পারিবেন। সম্পূর্ণ মন্ত্রসের জন্য সন্তোষজনক দরপত্রের পত্রিকা সেলে তাহা প্রদর্শন পাইবে।

৬। হার দরপত্র সম্পর্কে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্ত অতি জরুরী ভিত্তিতে প্রদান করা হইবে।

৭। কোন কয়লা দরপত্র হাড়াই কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

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