On Public and Private University

Afsaruzzaman Noor (Jyoti)

LAST Sunday on 'Star Campus' I read an article named 'On behalf of private universities' written by Abu Noman Md. Atahar Ali. As a student of a public university I have the urge to write something in response.

Till now the number of private universities is 53 (according to the article). It seems that the number will go up in near future resulting in the increase of the number of private university students. I am a new university student and have a bit of experience about the private university students' comments over the issue of 'pubic and private university'. I will here tell you about a personal experience. In my residential area there is a BBA student of a certain private university. He entered the university this year. So, from this point he is my batch mate. But actually he will be 3-4 years my senior as he failed to pass the S.S.C. or H.S.C. a few times. One day while we were talking he started to blame the public universities. According to him in public universities the environment is 'so Bengali' that though the students have good brains they cannot compete in the present world. Whereas in private universities everyone is westernized as a result students are fit for the modern world. He said that the so-called brilliant students are 'khets' as most of them can't speak English fluently.

He also said 'why should I go to a public university? Our VC is a teacher of one.' What he wanted to mean is that one former teacher of that particular university is his university's VC. But can his private university be compared with that famous public sector university just for one teacher? Similarly, if you bring one or more teachers from Oxford or Cambridge University to your university will that mean that your university will become equal to Oxford or Cambridge!

This is how most of the private university students who are proud of their university comment. There is nothing wrong to be proud of your institution but tell me is it the right way to assess? Is it smartness to neglect your own language and use English in everything - is that all we have to do to be globally fit?

Let us talk about the problems of public university, which the private university students as well as their guardians want to project in a big way. It is said that the public universities have become too much politicized. As a result, session jam has hampered the education process. Definitely the nasty politics of our country and violence on campus are big issues. But are these excuses enough to ignore the best talents of the nation that come out of here?

The best teachers of the country belong to these universities. Only the very best students of the country can get into the top public universities (which are politicized). Don't they work hard to achieve academic excellence? Don't the teachers take classes in those universities? The writer of the above mentioned article wrote "merit lies in the capacity for hard labour and patience". He wrote "Most meritorious students get admitted in public universities." Surprisingly he also put private universities ahead of public ones. Isn't it contradictory? If his arguments are true then you have to assume that the 'meritorious' public university students in their university life just sit back, relax and see the advancement of the students of private universities.

The top public university students get their places there on account of their merit, hard work and perseverance. On their way they have proved themselves better than most of the private university students as they (private university students) also took part in the battle for admission in public universities. More to say that most of the public university students have better academic records in schools and colleges. That certainly is another indicator of their previous hard work. If they can prove themselves better all the way through to the admission test, what's the problem with the university? What do the private universities do to turn their students into brilliant pupils when most of them have average record? What are the special things they are doing to overtake the better ones in public universities where they (the better ones) are working hard to uphold their standard?

Once I have heard an English-medium student saying that one must join a political party to be able to study in Dhaka University. Now, ask the DU students whether it is true or false. I am sure that this is a misconception. Yes there is politics and unfortunately in our country politics means violence.

Any discourse on merits and demerits of private and public university should be logical and fact-based. We shall heavily edit if any attempt to denigrate any institute is made by any writer.

Editor
Star campus