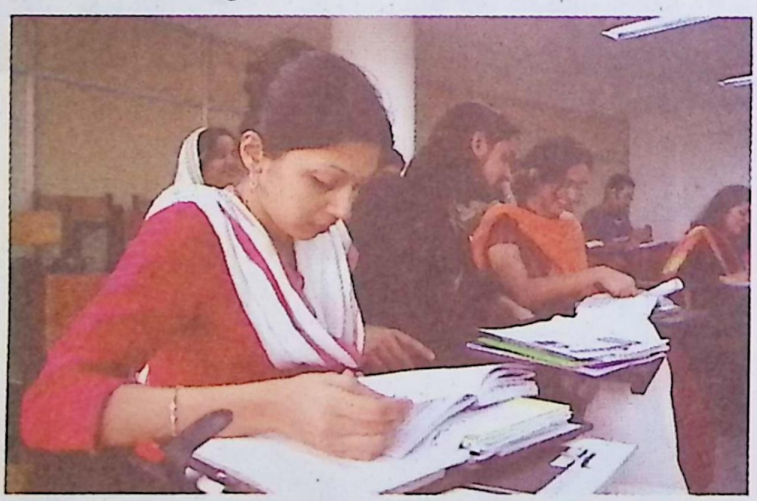
Education in Bangladesh
Its Achilles' Heel

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They say Education is the backbone of a nation. But what if Education becomes a high priced commodity in a developing nation like Bangladesh where the need for educated people is the most to sustain the development of the country? It is quite a known factor that education is one of the major components, contributing to widen the difference between rich and poor. To add more on that, recently it's become an unaffordable need even for middle class people as the cost for proper education is increasing every day. This situation exists in every single level of education from primary school to university, and most evidently in private universities.

After the introduction of Private University Act, 1992 such universities were first established in Bangladesh. This act legalised the formation and operation of private universities in Bangladesh which led to an establishment of 52 new universities in the country within a few years. To safeguard the autonomous character of the universities, University Grant Commission (UGC) was appointed to monitor the private universities, besides already monitoring public universities after its formation under section 4(1) of the President's Order No. 10 of 1973.



Are they winners?

It is clearly stated on the mission and vision of UGC that, "As the statutory apex body in the field of University Education in Bangladesh, the vision of the UGC is to enhance and strengthen the quality of Higher Education. The standards of teaching and research in public and private universities in the country are the main concern. It also aims to bringing in qualitative improvement in the governance and management of the universities by establishing academic discipline, financial accountability and transparency. To ensure high quality education in the public and private universities, keeping in view the needs and aspirations of the people and the society.

- To develop the universities as centres of excellence which in turn will produce trained and skilled manpower capable of resolving socio-economic problems and contribute in economic progress and prosperity of the country.
- To organise and motivate the universities to act as change agent so that they can create new frontiers of knowledge through demand-driven and innovative research to cope with the rapidly changing globalised society.
- To assess the financial needs of the universities and formulate and implement plans and programs for proper and appropriate development of the universities.
- To foster national, regional and international linkages and collaboration in the field of teaching, learning and to ensure exchange of knowledge, and research.
- To help the universities in staff development, student mobility etc."

With regard to enhancement and strengthening of the quality of higher education, do we really see the same quality in every single private university? The answer should be "No" as we are all aware about the differences between the educational qualities of various private universities. A lot of universities were questioned throughout the past few years regarding their educational and administrative qualities. Journals, articles, and reports in mass media further clarified the scenario, reflecting the failure of the promise for high quality education.

Grading Policies in different universities show us how the 'should be emperor' fails to regulate the educational infrastructure. University Grants Commission (UGC) introduced a Uniform Grading Scheme, in the year 2006-2007 to ensure same kind of result preparation which should be followed by every private and public university. In reality top private universities like North South, East West, BRAC, AIUB and IUB completely follow their own grading policy and they refuse to adopt the uniform grading system of UGS as