


PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

# Caught in the Quota Conundrum

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## Dreams, Sufferance and Reality

Ali Hosen, who has graduated from Dhaka University (DU) a year ago, recalls his childhood memories that exemplify the eternal poverty ridden pastoral Bangladesh. With his father a landless farmer and mother, a day labourer, Ali always had to struggle in school. He recalls the days when the thought of dropping out haunted him.

Add to that was the backbreaking work that he sometimes had to do in the field with his father. But after doing astoundingly well in the SSC and HSC exams, he dreamt of studying in the highest echelon of education in Bangladesh-- DU, which he made possible with his regular meritorious effort. Hosen finally got admitted to the Department of Political Science and became a resident of SM Hall.

His life has been full of suffering, and a new one now awaits him. He says, "We always had to save ourselves from the wrath of our political big brothers. Besides our study and exams we were compelled to participate in all political programmes of the ruling party whether violent or not. Many a times we had to sacrifice our classes and study time."

Such unwanted political involvement is a regular affliction for the residential students of the DU. But braving such difficulties, most of these meritorious students continue to study hard for a better future. Asked about his goal, Ali says, "Of course serving my country and the best way to serve is to go get a government job through BCS." Not only Ali but 90 percent students of the public universities dream of joining the public service. Their relentless study for the BCS exams shows their passion for serving the country.

But how is our government evaluating their efforts? The Public Service Commission has already put a lot of hurdles in their way to the BCS. According to the students, the main obstruction they face is the quota system and the procrastinated selection process.