

No list of top schools, colleges next year

Says Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

From now on, there will be no list of top 10 or 20 educational institutions based on the results of public examinations, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid announced yesterday.

He said the government was also considering abolishing the multiple-choice question (MCQ) format in board examinations.

"We are seeing an unhealthy competition among some schools to be on the list of best schools prepared on the basis of results of public examinations," Nahid told a press conference at his ministry. The programme was organised to announce the results of this year's SSC and its equivalent examinations.

The minister said they had been preparing such lists to create and encourage a healthy competition among educational institutions.

But, to secure a place in the lists, some schools were taking the "unethical path" as their teachers were leaking questions just before the examinations and telling their students answers during the tests, he alleged.

"We want all schools, not only a few, to do well," Nahid said, adding, they did not want to stop encouraging schools to do good results.

"We will take other measures in future to recognise the schools which would perform well," he mentioned.

Education Secretary Nazrul Islam Khan said the main moto of education is ensuring inclusiveness and equity. "Making a list of some schools contradicts with that moto," he said.

At the programme, some reporters

alleged that capital's Shamsul Haque Khan School and College topped the list of "best schools" with this year's SSC results following "malpractices" there. Nahid did not comment on the matter.

According to sources at the ministry, some schools in the city do not allow students, who get less than GPA-5 in the test exams, to sit for public exams like the SSC and HSC tests.

Those schools were continuing to do the malpractice even though there is restriction from the government on the matter, added the sources.

On abolishing the MCQ format, Nahid said they were mulling over the issue as they had found some "unethical practices" involving the format by a section of teachers.

"But we will do that [cancel the MCQ format] after consulting educationists and teachers," he said.

The teachers resort to the unethical practices which include sneaking intact MCQ question papers out of the exam centres minutes before the tests in a bid to help their students score better marks.

The minister claimed that they had proofs of such malpractices against Borga's Amtali school and Dhaka's BAF Shaheen School and College.

Many other schools, which have secured top positions, are also on the list of "suspects", he said.

The teachers who are involved in such evil acts have left a negative impression on many about the entire teaching fraternity.

"They are not teachers at all... everyone involved in such incidents will be punished," Nahid warned.

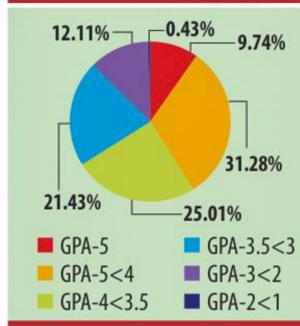


Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina formally releases the SSC results with Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid standing behind her at the PMO yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

SSC results slide for politics, math

CATEGORIES OF GRADES IN PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PASSED : 9,61,405



FROM PAGE 1 and institutions with zero pass rate rose slightly.

The pass percentage of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exams under the eight education boards came down to 86.72, marking a drop of 5.95 percentage points from that of last year.

This time, 93,631 examinees got GPA-5 (Grade Point Average-5) in the eight education boards. Last year it was 1,22,313.

On the drop of the success rate, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid blamed the countrywide non-stop blockade and frequent shutdowns enforced by the BNP-led 20-party alliance during the exams.

"The examinees had to take the tests amid intense fear and uncertainty," he said while disclosing the overall results at a press conference at his ministry.

"The students prepared themselves for a certain paper but came to know that the exam had been postponed [due to hartal]. Then they prepared themselves again for another subject, but it was uncertain whether that exam

would be held," he added.

The SSC and equivalent exams were scheduled to begin on February 2, but the government had to reschedule dates of all exams to the weekends due to hartals.

The minister said it took 23 additional days to complete the tests.

Chairmen of almost all education boards, teachers and guardians also believe this was one of the major reasons for the students' not performing as expected.

Frequent changes in exam schedule baffled the examinees and hindered their preparations, they said, adding that they had felt a lack of security on exam days as well.

"It was a messy situation. My son could not properly prepare as he was not sure what paper to get ready for as the schedule kept on changing," said Afia Anjum, a mother whose son obtained GPA-4.5 from Government Laboratory School, Dhanmondi.

However, almost all board chairmen and teachers said the students did not perform as expected in mathematics.

This year the government introduced creative method in mathematics for the first time and many students found it difficult to answer the questions, which led to the pass rate dropping significantly in all boards.

In Dhaka, the success rate in mathematics came down to 92.80 percent from last year's 98 percent, according to the stats provided by the boards.

Similarly, the pass rate in mathematics is 84.84 percent in Sylhet, where around 97 percent of the students passed last year. In Jessore, the rate is 87.64 and last year it was 97.30 percent.

"In all boards, we have seen an

SSC RESULTS

BOARD	PASS RATE 2015	PASS RATE 2014	GPA-5 2015	GPA-5 2014
DHAKA	93.94	88.65	36,801	46,795
RAJSHAHI	94.97	96.34	15,873	19,815
COMILLA	84.22	89.92	10,195	10,945
JESSORE	84.02	92.19	7,181	10,944
CHITTAGONG	82.77	91.40	7,116	10,884
BARISAL	84.37	90.66	3,171	4,762
SYLHET	81.82	89.23	2,452	3,341
DINAJPUR	85.50	93.26	10,842	14,827
TOTAL	86.72	92.67	93,631	1,22,313

average decline of 10 percent in pass rate in mathematics. This is one of the reasons for the drop of the overall success rate," Abu Bakar Siddique, chairman of Dhaka Board, told The Daily Star.

Echoing similar views, Comilla Board Chairman Prof Indu Bhushan Bhoumick said many students failed to understand the method properly and could not answer the questions.

Prof Ahmed Hossain, chairman of Dinajpur Board, said there was a scarcity of trained teachers of mathematics in many rural schools. "May be the teachers could not teach the students properly," he said.

Some school teachers in Dhaka said the trial of creative method was disastrous in the first-term tests of Class-X and many parents opposed the new method.

Despite the drops, the schools across the country had a festive look yesterday. Students and parents, who had been anxious about the results, erupted in jubilation as soon as they received it.

The results, published 57 days after the exams, were available in schools, on education boards' websites and on mobile phones via text messages since

2:00pm.

Earlier, the education minister handed over a copy of the results to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban.

Under the eight education boards, 11,08,683 students -- 5,48,362 boys and 5,60,321 girls -- passed the SSC exams this year and 1,47,278 students failed.

The combined pass rate under 10 education boards, including madrasa and technical boards, came down to 87.04 percent, a 4.3 percent point drop.

A total of 1,11,901 students under 10 boards secured GPA-5 this year, last year it was 1,42,282.

The number of institutions with cent percent pass rate decreased to 5,095 from last year's 6,210. No students passed from 47 institutions and 38 of them were madrasas.

Like last year, Rajshahi board topped the charts and Sylhet board was at the bottom.

In Dhaka, Shamsul Haque Khan School and College topped the list of 20 best institutions, surprising many. Rajuk Uttara Model College, Ideal School and College Motijheel, and Viqarunnisa Noon School ranked second, third and fourth.

Indian cabinet

FROM PAGE 1

trafficking in women and children, and rescue, recovery, repatriation and reintegration of the victims.

"Human trafficking has emerged as a big problem. The MoU is an effort in the direction of preventing trafficking," Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told reporters after the meeting.

An official statement said the MoU would help strengthen cooperation to prevent all forms of the human trafficking, especially that of women and children and ensure speedy investigation and prosecution of traffickers and organised crime syndicates in both the neighbouring nations.

The pact will also ensure repatriation of victims as expeditiously as possible. After repatriation, the home country will ensure safe and effective reintegration of the victims with their families, the statement said.

A taskforce of India and Bangladesh was constituted to take coordinated action against individuals, touts and agents involved in human trafficking.

The taskforce has met four times so far. During its fourth meeting held in Mumbai on April 6-7 last year, both sides finalised the text of the draft MoU on prevention of human trafficking, the statement pointed out.

The cabinet also cleared the agreement on coastal shipping between India and Bangladesh for movement of goods between the two countries.

Indian ports serving as trans-shipment points for Bangladeshi cargo will benefit by the enhanced through-

put as a result of Indo-Bangladesh coastal trade, the statement said, adding that both nations will render the same treatment to the other country's vessels as it would have done to its national vessels used in international sea transportation.

"Exim trade between India and Bangladesh would be benefited by way of reduction in freight charges. It will also improve the utilisation of port capacities of Indian ports and open up new opportunity for Indian coastal vessels. It will also help in decongestion of roads especially at land custom stations/integrated check posts at the Indo-Bangladesh border," the statement said.

Currently, there is no significant cargo movement between the sea ports of Bangladesh and India as it isn't deemed profitable for the big ocean-going vessels to operate between the ports of the two countries.

Therefore, to reduce the cost of shipping operations, a lower but pragmatic standard of vessel known as River Sea Vessel (RSV) has been prescribed for the job.

The RSV category has significantly lower construction and operation costs without compromising on safety. Both countries have agreed on this.

Bangladesh is now India's largest trade partner in South Asia, thanks to the rapid growth in the past few years.

The commencement of coastal shipping between the India and Bangladesh will increase bilateral trade between the two countries and cut the cost of transportation.



The devastation left by a gas explosion at a house in Kalabagan Lake Circus in the capital yesterday. At least seven people were burnt in the incident.

PHOTO: SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Seven of a family burnt in explosion

Titas says Wasa work left gas pipeline at Kalabagan damaged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven members of a family were burnt after an explosion in their household gas pipeline at the capital's Kalabagan yesterday.

While the victims, six of them in a critical state, writhe in pain at hospital, utility service providers trade blame for the explosion that blew away a tin-shed house and partially damaged at least five adjacent buildings.

The injured are -- Mamataj Begum, 65; her son Sumon, 30, his wife Reshma Begum, 26, and their son Rabbi, 10; Mamataj's daughter Rosy Begum, 34, and Rosy's children Yousuf Ayon, 17, and Farhana Akter Bithi, 12.

All but Rabbi are fighting for their lives at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, doctors said.

Injured Sumon said Rosy, a garment worker, went to the kitchen of the two-bedroom house for making breakfast around 5:15am. Just as she lighted a matchstick to fire up the gas stove, the room exploded with a loud bang and a huge fireball engulfed the house instantly.

"I woke up from sleep having felt extreme heat. The fire engulfed the entire house before I managed to come

out," Sumon's nephew Ayon told The Daily Star.

It took around an hour for four firefighting units to douse the flame, said Inspector Syed Monirul Islam of Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Gas leaked from a faulty pipeline accumulated inside the house and exploded the moment it came in contact with the matchstick flame, he said.

While all fingers point to Titas Gas, the utility service provider, the company officials accuse Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) for damaging the pipeline.

"We've found three of the five nearby service lines disconnected where the WASA is working. Through the leakage, gas seeped into the house through the sewage lines," said Patrolman SM Saiful Islam of Titas Gas.

"The accident took place as the Wasa damaged the gas pipe here during their work. We are trying to repair it," HM Ali Ashraf, director (operations) Titas Gas told reporters while visiting the spot.

Contacted, Deputy Managing Director Quamrul Alam Chowdhury of Wasa told The Daily Star that he was not aware of any such work as claimed by the Titas officials in that area.