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Satellite Schools

In order to make education more attractive to girls the government is toying with the idea of a satellite school programme designed to bring the schools within the proximity of the homes. So far this type of project has been conducted on a limited basis in Bangladesh with some success evidenced by higher enrolment and the retention of students within the educational programme. The poor and the girl students seem to have benefited from this approach.

The initial programme would be confined to about ten Upazilas and would involve the construction of 200 schools. Three to four satellite schools will be clustered around an established government primary school, at a little distance away, but close enough to be properly supervised by the head of the government school. Teachers are likely to be recruited locally with the emphasis on female teachers with the intent of encouraging female participation at student level.

Training of teachers is expected to be given at Upazila level by the Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEO). The avowed emphasis to increase female enrolment in a country where only 19% female literacy as against 40% male exists, is designed to attract girls by employing only female teachers. The programme is also expected to be supervised by a female administrator based in the DPE who will be hopefully sensitive to the needs and requirements of the girl students. If successful the satellite school programme has every possibility of being expanded to cover in time the whole of the countryside.

But success in educational programmes is so elusive yet for us that unless special care is bestowed on the management side of these schools they will make little difference to existing standards of teaching and discipline.