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MATLAB: The staff room of the Dhakirgaon Government Primary School.

Pitiable state of a primary school

Times Report

MATLAB (Chandpur): The Dhakirgaon Government Primary School in Matlab Upazila of Chandpur district is in a pitiable state. The three decade old school is housed in a dilapidated tin-shed. The bamboo made fences on its four sides are mostly broken. The teachers of the school take classes in it even though they apprehend that the school house might collapse if and when there is any storm.

The school, official papers show, is a second grade one. In the centre examinations of 1988 16 of the 26 candidates who had appeared from the school secured first division, seven were placed in second division and three others just passed. Last year one student of the school also secured scholarship. But there seems to be none to take interest to develop its physical facilities.

This correspondent found that the school had only a few broken benches for students and those were used as 'piri' (low wooden seat). There was no table for teachers in any of the class rooms but only broken chairs.

Even the office room does not have furniture worth mentioning. The headmaster sits on a chair with one of its four legs broken. The chair is kept in position by placing it against a pole which supports the tin-roof of the school. If there is a meeting of teachers the broken chairs from the class rooms are brought to the 'staff room' which is nothing but the extension of a class room without any door.

The Dhakirgaon Government Primary School is three miles away from the Matlab Upazila town. Rarely it attracts officials from the Upazila Education Office. As the school is located at an isolated place it receives little support from the villagers around it and there is none to pursue the development of the institution in terms of both physical and academic facilities. When this reporter visited the

school about a fortnight ago it had four teachers including two female teachers.

The headmaster of the school Mr Abul Khaleque told the times that the school house might collapse any time. He said whenever there was any rainfall he had to close the school for the day. The tin-roof of the school has developed many holes which allow rain water to flow into the class rooms thus making the conduct of classes impossible. He had to close the school also if there was any possibility of storm.

A devoted teacher Mr Abdul Khaleque said that the tubewell of the school was stolen about three weeks away and the students did not have any source of safe drinking water as the villages around the school were far away.

He said he was not hopeful about the development of the physical facilities of the school as there was no local people to pursue the same with the local Upazila Education Office or the Upazila level office of the Local Government Engineering Bureau.

The Dhakirgaon Government Primary School would only make a visitor to get the feeling that the authorities concerned have either abandoned their support to it or are planning to do so.