

Condition of rural primary schools

Primary schools are the main educational institutions in so many areas of rural Bangladesh. But it is very unfortunate that a great number of primary schools are in a very miserable condition in different areas of the country. Very discouraging reports about these schools are often found in different news papers. We have almost been accustomed to reading news headlines like: 'schools without benches and tables', 'school with only one teacher or 'want of teachers in school', 'classroom without roof', 'classes in open space or under trees', 'school having no teaching material' etc.

No detailed description of the above reports is necessary as the headlines themselves are self-explanatory. Everybody can imagine under what an environment our rural children carry on their studies.

The majority of these schools have no pucca building and are generally housed in thatched or mud-walled houses having roofs of tin or hay. During any strong storm or cyclone the roofs of these schools are blown away first of all and the walls are also not spared in most cases.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Furniture are never adequately supplied to these schools. But when the school houses are destroyed very ordinary or cheap type of furniture that a primary school generally possesses can no more be preserved and got wasted in rain and sun.

The school houses and furniture once demolished or destroyed are not easily repaired by the authorities concerned even after repeated reminders. The small children become serious victims of the circumstances.

In rural areas almost all the children go to their school by walking a long distance. But even in their schools they can hardly get a tolerable atmosphere (not to say, an encouraging atmosphere). Specially during the summer and rainy season the suffering of the rural school children reaches an extreme.

Under the circumstances we feel that the main problem of these schools are the absence of proper school building, want of teachers and furniture and dearth of teaching appliances etc. We think that these school build-

ings should be constructed at least with pucca walls and tin roof, if pucca roof is not possible.

There is no dearth of trained primary school teachers in the country. So we do not understand why so many posts of teachers in these schools should remain vacant.

As the condition of these schools is not being improved the rural children lose all their interest in education and this is causing great harm to the nation. We therefore hope that the authorities concerned would look into the problem and try to improve the condition of rural primary schools as far as possible.

AN OBSERVER
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Educational programmes of Radio and T.V.

The Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television have been broadcasting and telecasting a number of educational and motivational programmes on education, agriculture, health and family

planning etc. But I wonder if the Radio or T.V. authorities have ever conducted any evaluation to determine the impact of the above programmes on the intended audience, i.e. mainly farmers and the rural people.

In certain countries like Pakistan, India, Radio and T.V. Departments have separate Listeners Research and Programme Development Cell which carries out periodical evaluation on the impact and achievements of their programmes, publishes reports and recommends measures for further improvement. I don't know if the Radio Bangladesh and BTV have any such Listener Research Cell or Division. If there is one, what role is it playing in reducing the listener-broadcaster communication gap?

I strongly feel that in a country like Bangladesh where a major motivational and educational task is being done by the radio and T.V. networks, the Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television should have a separate listener/viewers research cell

which will perform the function of evaluating radio/T.V. programmes, implementation of the audience's constructive suggestions, publication of reports, formation of radio clubs especially in the rural areas and perform all other related activities.

As a radio and T.V. listener or viewer, I have marked one great fault in our broadcasting system. When educational programmes are put on the air, the commercial service competes with it through another channel. Hence, the majority of the intended listeners actually listen to the commercial service because it offers more attractive programmes like film songs, drama etc. The broadcasting time of the educational and motivational programmes of both Radio and T.V. seem not suitable for the intended audience.

There are many more drawbacks which need immediate redress.

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