

Fishing preferred to schooling for children

Most kids of Salmonirhat fishermen's families deprived of education

S DILIP ROY, *Salmonirhat*

Most of the fishermen in the district prefer sending their children for fishing to schooling and so, a large number of children from fishermen's families do not see the light of education.

Fisherman Mohor Ali, 35, of Dharla river basin village Falimari in Sadar upazila said he and his two brothers were trained to catch fish instead of going to school, so they are teaching their children to catch fish. "We know that education does not help us to earn our livelihood, so we don't send our children to school," he added.

Mohor's father Nabiar Hossain, 68, said he did not send his three sons to school due to poverty and also because there was no school in the village at that time.

Mohor's son Suzon Islam, 11, said he goes with his father for catching fish with net, but he does not like the hard work. "I tell my parents that I want to go to school but they do not listen to me," he added.

Ramanath Chandra Das, 62, of Daspara village in Teesta river basin under Aditmari upazila said there are around 3,000 fisher-

men's families in the district and children from only four to five percent of the families go to school. "I didn't educate my children and similarly they are not educating their children," he said, adding that studying in school is not their job, but catching fish is their main job for earning livelihood.

Dhiren Chandra Das, 42, said he is sending his two sons and a daughter to the local school and he wants them to get higher education. "I was deprived of education due to unawareness of my parents," he said, adding that he tells his neighbours to send their children to school.

College student Swapon Chandra Das, 18, son of fisherman Madhob Chandra Das of Teesta Daspara village said most fishermen believe that if they educate their children they will dislike their ancestral job, so they do not send their children to school. "Besides studying, I want to help my father catch fish every day," he added.

District Fisheries Officer Latifur Rahman said he will conduct campaigns to build up awareness among the fishermen for sending their children to school.