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300 pry schools in Jessore have no headmaster

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The posts of headmaster at 300 government primary schools in Jessore district are vacant, disrupting academic and office work.

Of the 1,285 government primary schools in eight upazilas of the district, 985 have regular headmasters, sources at the office of the district primary education officer (DPEO) said.

In the absence of regular headmasters, assistant teachers are working as in-charge headmasters. Most of them lack experience and their colleagues are sometimes reluctant to follow their instructions, parents of some students said.

The schools run without headmaster are 46 in Jessore Sadar upazila, 26 in Sharsha upazila, 72 in Monirampur upazila, 33 in Bagharpara upazila, 25 in Jhikargachha upazila, 30 in Chougachha upazila, 36 in Keshabpur upazila, and 32 in Abhoynagar upazila.

Abul Kalam, acting head-

master of Dihi Government Primary School, said six teachers, including a regular headmaster, are needed to impart lessons properly to 350 students of the school.

"As there is no headmaster, I'm working as acting headmaster. Often I have to remain outside the school for programmes in upazila and district offices. Then our four assistant teachers find it difficult to manage all the classes," he added.

The absence of a regular headmaster hampers coordination among the teachers, said Manjur Rahman, a member of the school management committee.

Osman Gani, acting headmaster of Bosotpur Government Primary School in Sharsha upazila and general secretary of Sharsha upazila unit of Government Primary School Teachers' Association, said only 11 teachers are working there, while 17 teachers are required to properly cater for the school's 700 students.

As per government rules, 65 percent of the headmasters are appointed through promotion of senior teachers and the remaining 35 percent are directly appointed, said teachers and officials.

Due to various complexities in the promotion system and a lack of initiative for direct appointment, the headmaster posts of 300 schools have remained vacant for one to five years.

Students Babu, Rahima and Sajib of Bosotpur Government Primary School said their classes are not held regularly due to shortage of teachers.

Osman Gani said they have raised the issue in the headmasters' monthly meetings in presence of high officials on several occasions, but to no avail.

Tapos Kumar Adhikari, Jessore District Primary Education Officer, said his office had brought the matter to the notice of higher authorities and they are waiting for a government decision.