

## No school for haor kids for nearly a month

MINTU DESHWARA,  
from Tahirpur, Sunamganj

Children in flood-hit areas of Sunamganj have remained absent from school for nearly a month, mostly because there are waters all around making it difficult for them to travel and parents want them to help out in saving crops gone under water.

There is almost zero presence of students in 45 government primary schools located in and around Matian haor, Shonir haor and Tanguar haor, worst affected areas in Sunamganj, said Golam Rabbi, assistant education officer of Tahirpur upazila that has 133 primary schools.

One of them, Jaypur Primary School has 290 students.

Acting headmaster Md Hadiuzzaman said 150 of them would have to come to school by boat if they wanted to attend classes during floods.

"They are unable to come to school when the water in haors increases."

Besides, many students have been working with parents to process the damaged crops, Hadiuzzaman said.

Hiran Das, a student of class four of Ananda Nagar Primary School, was seen

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working with his father yesterday during school hours.

His father Milan Das said most of the only crop he cultivates every year was destroyed by floods. So, they were trying hard to recover whatever quantity of paddy could be harvested and saved.

"We were supposed to get food grains from the crops for the whole year....He [Hiran] is working with me

as it is more important than going to school," said Milan, from Anandanagar village.

Mondiat Primary School has been facing a similar situation.

Its Headmaster Sanju Mia said most of the school students were not attending classes.

Ataur Rahman, upazila education officer, Tahirpur, said the authorities were aware of the low presence of

students at school, but they couldn't do anything given the situation in the flood-hit areas.

Meanwhile, the government opened three Open Market Sale (OMS) points to sell rice at a subsidized rate in Tahirpur upazila.

Still, people living in remote villages are not getting benefits since they are far away from the upazila.

The OMS centres in Tahirpur, one of

the worst affected areas in Sunamganj, can provide up to 1,800 people with subsidized food grains, at Tk 15 a kg, whereas a majority of 2.5 lakh people living in Tahirpur are affected by floods.

"Apart from distributing relief, the government can open more OMS centers in remote areas. People will be more benefitted in that case," said Kamruzzaman Kamrul, upazila chairman of Tahirpur.