

Govt pry schools in city for the poor only

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GOVERNMENT primary schools in the capital virtually have become schools for the poor as students enrolled at the schools either are from low-income families or have failed to enrol at other schools, said teachers of the schools.

Parents argued that they did not send their children to government primary schools as the schools lacked quality of classroom teaching and other facilities and students from those schools lacked competences.

Teachers concerned, however, blamed guardians' apathy towards city government primary schools for keeping their children away from those schools.

The guardians who fail to enrol their kids at reputed private and non-government schools, English medium schools, government secondary schools and kindergarten get their children enrolled at city government primary schools, said Sulekha Basu, the head teacher of Bhajahari Saha Street Government primary school on Tipu Sultan Road.

Hazi Golam Mawla government primary school head teacher Khodeja Begum said that students from solvent families rarely came to government schools in the city.

Teachers at 10 government primary schools of Mohammapur, Mirpur and old Dhaka in the capital said that almost all of their

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students were from low-income families.

Parents of the students are either low-salaried employees or workers, including rickshaw-pullers, rickshaw-van-pullers, vegetable sellers, grocery businesses, bus conductors and drivers, auto rickshaw drivers and housemaids, they said.

'Our school is for the poor,' said the Banglabazar Government Primary School teacher Aminur Rahman.

Banglabazar Government Primary School acting head teacher Sadia Mou said, 'Upper class, middle class and educated section of the society do not send their kids to government primary school as they think that their children may get used to slang languages and bad habits from students from the low-income families.'

Faridabad Govern-

ment Primary School head teacher Mohammad Alaudin said that the poor were more willing to engage their children in jobs rather than sending them to school regularly and most of these poorly educated guardians could not take care of education of their children at home.

Guardians, however, said that they lost faith in the government schools as their quality of teaching were substandard. Many of such schools are housed in risky and dilapidated buildings, they lack proper academic atmosphere and some are grabbed by influential quarters, they said.

Rezaur a resident of Banagram road in old Dhaka said that Islami UP Government Primary School at his locality was housed in a run-down building that might collapse anytime.

Some of the primary schools in old Dhaka are

housed in risky and run-down buildings and at least 54 state-run primary schools in the capital are under the illegal occupation of powerful individuals, fully or partially, for years or even decades. Water pumps, kitchen markets, shops, garages, mosques and Eidgahs have been set up set up on some school lands.

Government primary school teachers pass their time in gossiping, come to the school at their whim, none are serious about imparting education at classrooms, parents alleged.

At least five head teachers, however, denied the allegations. Sadia and Alaudin said that government primary schools have the most qualified and trained teachers and their classroom teaching was good.

According to the Directorate of Primary Education, there are 945 government primary schools in the coun-

try having about 3.8 lakh students, as of 2014.

Some government and non government secondary schools and several thousand kindergartens, English medium schools, ibtedayi and quaomi madrassahs also offers primary education in the capital.

Dhaka Statistics book of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics said that there were 2,684 kindergartens having about 3.9 lakh students in the district.

The latest National Student Assessment, conducted by the Directorate of Primary Education, which was released in March, showed that 75 per cent of Class-V students lacked required competence in Mathematics and Bangla.'

The assessment conducted in 2011 showed that 67 per cent of the same graders lacked required competence in Mathematics and 75 per cent in Bangla.