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পঞ্জি কলাম

*The Bangladesh Observer*Schools damaged in cyclone, flood not yet repaired

Teacher shortage, accommodation problem hinder primary education

From Our Correspondent

MAJDEE COURT (Noakhali), Jan. 10.—Although sadar thana of Noakhali district has been brought under the Compulsory Primary Education Programme, many non-govt. primary schools established in rural areas of thana have been lying in a deplorable condition since long hampering the education of children.

The Bhatirtek non-government registered primary school under sadar thana established in the year 1975, has been lying in a deplorable condition since long. The school has now 350 students with 4 teachers and the classes are held in a thatched house having no fencing.

The small space with a few benches and chairs cannot accommodate the students who attended their classes and sit on the floor. There is no room or sitting arrangement for the teachers.

The school was badly damaged in the cyclone several times and may collapse at any moment.

People urged the concerned authority to take up a plan for the construction of the school for the promotion and development of primary education in the district.

Rajshahi

Our Rajshahi correspondent reports : The Compulsory Primary Education Programme (CPEP) is being hampered due to multifarious problems.

A recent survey conducted by the Divisional Primary Education office showed that the number of school going children in the division is 11,96,675 of whom 1008013 have been enrolled in different schools in 16 northern districts of the country and 1,88,662 boys and girls are not going to school. Out of the enrolled students, 1,68,013 discontinued their study.

The district-wise percentage of dropouts is : 26 per cent in Rajshahi, 24 per cent in Natore; 21 per cent in Chapainawabgonj; 13 per cent in Naogaon; 24 per cent in Pabna; 18 per cent in Sirajgonj; 26 per cent in Bogra; 25 per cent in Joypurhat; 30 per cent in Rangpur; 30 per cent in Gaibandha; 38 per cent in Nilphamari; 19 per cent in Kurigram; 25 per cent in Lalmonirhat; 17 per cent in Dinajpur; 25 per cent in Thakurgaon and 25 per cent in Panchagarh.

Due to shortage of teachers in many schools, specially in rural areas, normal education of children is being hampered. As many as 960 posts of teachers including 192 posts of headmasters are lying vacant in the division.

Accommodation problem prevails in almost all the schools. In many schools, students take lessons standing for want of benches.

Shortage of tables, chair, and almirahs is also hindering the education.

Dilapidated condition of school buildings

The dilapidated condition of most of the primary school buildings, inadequate furniture and shortage of teachers are the main reasons for hampering the education of children.

The primary schools damaged in floods, storms, cyclones and other natural calamities during the last few years have not yet been repaired.

High prices of paper and other educational appliances, poverty and social factors are also hampering the education of children.

The quota of teachers in government primary schools in the district is not maintained properly. Some schools with large number of students have been facing shortage of teachers while many schools with requisite number of students have excess teachers.

The absence of subject-wise recruitment of teachers is another factor responsible for the deterioration of the standard of education. There are many schools where madrasa degree holders are appointed as teachers who are not capable of teaching Bengali, English, Arithmetic, Social Science, General Science.

As a result the students are promoted to the next higher class with little knowledge.

Religious education is now compulsory in the primary schools. But the religious teachers are not recruited.

The attendance of teachers satisfactory in the schools situated in the city or by the side of the highway or in a place connecting with good roads with thana and zilla headquarters. The situation is reverse in the schools located in the remote areas with bad communication, where inspecting personnel hardly pay visit.

Teacher attendance

The teachers are not methodical to make the lessons interesting. About 80 per cent teachers impart lessons to

the students ignoring the black board work to the students because of their pre-occupation with household work.

Late attendance of teachers is another problem and routine is not maintained properly.

Almost all the primary schools have no playgrounds and sports facilities. The students are deprived of sports.

Absence of proper sanitation is another impediment. Pupils and teachers are to go to the bushes or by the side of the canals in response to the call of nature.

Scarcity of drinking water has been prevailing in the educational institutions as most of the tubewells sunk in the schools are out of order.

Faridpur

Our Faridpur correspondent reports : The Primary education in the district is being hampered owing to shortage of teachers, paucity of accommodation, inadequate furniture and dearth of materials needed for imparting practical education. Besides, the number of schools in the district is not adequate for the primary school going children of the district.

In eight thanas of the district there are 546 govt. primary schools and 168 non-govt. primary schools for

2,57,245 boys and girls of primary school going age group ranging from six to ten years. Of these children 2,23,303 go to either govt. or non-govt. primary schools and the rest 33,942 children do not go to schools, according to district primary office source.

The source said that the average attendance of the enrolled students is 75 per cent but in fact this attendance is not more than 50 to 60 per cent. The number of dropout is far greater than the official record.

The source also disclosed that 85 posts of teachers out of 2399 have been lying vacant for a long time.

Though the ratio of teachers and the taught as per govt. rule should be 1:40 but in reality this ratio is 1:84.

There is hardly any school where there is no accommodation problem, dearth of education materials and want of other facilities indispensable for proper academic atmosphere.

The condition of 168 non-govt. primary schools where 54,885 children go beggars description. Minimum teaching facilities are not available in any of these 168 schools. Teachers work without pay.

Though the present government has laid special emphasis on primary education, the statistical data depict a very dismal picture of primary education in the district.