

EDUCATION IN PERIL

Blockade extension upsets salvage plan

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The extension of the opposition enforced blockade has pushed children, parents and teachers into further difficulties as exams that had been rescheduled for today due to the blockade could be postponed again.

Many schools failed to inform parents and children about their decision on classes or exams for today since the announcement for the blockade being extended until 6:00pm today reached them around

5:00pm yesterday. Late at night yesterday, the opposition extended the blockade again until 5:00am Friday.

Many children and parents would probably have to brave their way to schools and colleges today to know whether the exams would be held today at all.

However, the government yesterday evening rescheduled today's primary and ebtedai terminal exams. Those will be at 11:00am on Saturday.

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Blockade extension

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More than 29 lakh class-V students are sitting for the tests that began on November 20.

Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, director general of Directorate of Primary Education, told The Daily Star that it was quite difficult to notify all schools in such a short period of time.

Shahan Ara, principal of Ideal School and College, Motijheel, told The Daily Star that there were scheduled tests for class-II, -IV, -VI, -VII and -IX today and they have to reschedule them this morning because they heard about the extension of the blockade rather late.

Unsure whether they would be able to publish the results on time, she said, "The violent political programmes may jeopardise the entire academic calendar."

The opposition's agitation programmes had put the education sector in disarray at the crucial time when almost all schools and colleges were scheduled to have their final and half-yearly exams.

Guardians were particularly upset with the messed up academic calendar.

"I have to take my daughter either by a rickshaw or an auto rickshaw as there is an exam tomorrow [today]. But I have a feeling of

extreme insecurity seeing violence on the streets. I am scared," said Tahmina Rahman Rimi.

Mother of a class-I student of Shaheed Anwar Girls' High School and College, Tahmina told The Daily Star, "We are more concerned about our children's future and our lives than the game of thrones in politics."

Selina Parvin, a mother of primary terminal examinee of Sherpur, Bogra, did not even know that her daughter's exam was rescheduled until The Daily Star correspondent told her about it.

She said, "My daughter is losing interest in studies due to repeated changes in the exam schedule."

A father of a school-going child said students prepare for an exam and once they come to know that the test has been postponed, it breaks their hearts.

"We have been requesting not to hold such programmes but to no avail. The politicians are playing their game with our children's future," he said.

Earlier this year, several board exams of the secondary, higher secondary, ISC and JDC had to be postponed due to opposition-sponsored shutdowns. Even freshmen exams at universities were also affected.