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# *//School without regular teacher//*

MINTU DESHWARA with ANDREW EAGLE

The two hundred students of No. 44 Basudeb Saran Government Primary School in Baudharaan village in Jagannathpur upazila of Sunamganj regularly face an insurmountable problem: no regular teacher. For almost three years severe staff shortages at the institution mean that many classes are cancelled, with students unable to properly cover the syllabus and prepare for exams.

"We had a headmaster join in 2009," says Siraj Ali, president of the school's management committee. "He was transferred and replaced by an assistant teacher, who was also transferred in 2015. Thereafter another assistant teacher joined the school, but he too was subsequently transferred. Ultimately we have had to appoint three volunteers to run classes."

Currently Farid Ahmed is the only qualified teacher responsible for the school. He attends the premises two or three days per week. "I am responsible for all 200 students from class KG through to class five," he says. "I also have to do office work so it isn't possible to conduct every class on every day. Now I have ten days' training so I haven't been to the school."

"Our class routine is not followed," says a



disappointed class-four student Rima Akhter. "We have a shortage of teachers and classrooms."

"We mostly have only one class that is actually held," says a class-five student Sabia Begum.

Meanwhile, the children's guardians are worried. "I am concerned about the future of our children," says one parent, Rahman Mia. "Classes are all too irregular."

"To have only one teacher appointed to teach 200

students is hardly a permanent solution," says local councillor Takan Mia. "We have written to government authorities requesting them to address the problem but have had no positive response. It's to the point where it is really a challenge to continue academic activities at the school."

The upazila's primary education officer Md Joynal Abedin confirmed to The Daily Star that there is a teacher shortage.