

20 Patuakhali schools, madrasas under river erosion threat

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Around 20 educational institutions in the district are in danger of being washed away as the rivers are eroding large areas during the rainy season.

Twelve of the institutions are in Mirzaganj upazila, three in Sadar upazila, two in Dashmina, and one each in Baufal, Kalapara and Dumki upazilas.

Piprahali Government Primary School, Sundra Kalikapur Government Primary School, Charkhali Government Primary School, Charkhali Somobay High School, Islamabad Dakhil Madrasa, Rampur Siddiqia Fazil Madrasa in Mirzaganj upazila are

under threat of erosion.

Rampur Siddiqia Fazil Madrasa has already been shifted three times to escape erosion.

Around four months ago, the authorities concerned auctioned Sundra Kalikapur High School and Purbo Rampur Government Primary School in Mirzaganj upazila as sections of the school buildings collapsed into the Payra river. The schools have been shifted to other places.

Headmaster of Piprahali Government Primary School Hosneara Begum said the school building is only 10 to 15 feet away from the Payra river and is in danger of being devoured by the river. Guardians and teachers are

worried about the situation, and attendance of students has decreased, she added.

Upazila Assistant Education Officer Marium Parvin said they have requested the school committee to shift the school to a safe place as soon as possible.

"We also sent a letter last week to the Local Government Engineering Department, seeking immediate steps over the matter," she added.

Nindi Government Primary School in Baufal upazila is only 10 to 15 feet away from the Tentulia river, while Hatemia Dakhil Madrasa, Fultala Government Primary School and Vajna Government Primary School in Sadar upazila, Bashbaria

Government Primary School and Auliapur Government Primary School in Dashmina upazila, and Ranihat Government Primary School in Dumki upazila are facing the threat of erosion.

Md Milon Sikder of Rampur village said they are afraid that the educational institutions might collapse into the river at any time as erosion has taken a serious turn.

Executive Engineer of district Water Development Board Md Hasanuzzaman said they have sent a draft project proposal of Tk 331 crore to the higher authorities for building a 4.50-km-long dyke to protect the area from erosion. Work will start in the next dry season after getting approval, he added.