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NILPHAMARI

## 264 primary schools run without regular headmasters

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Nilphamari

The posts of headmasters at 264 government primary schools in the district are lying vacant, much to the disturbance in schooling and office work.

Of the 939 government primary schools in the district, 675 have regular headmasters, said sources of the office of district primary education officer (DPEO).

In absence of regular headmasters, assistant teachers are working as in-charge headmasters at 31 primary schools in Kishoreganj upazila, 82 schools in Jaldhaka, 45 in Dimla, 50 in Domar, 47 in Sadar, and 9 in Saidpur upazila.

Most of them lack experience and their colleagues sometimes show reluctance

to follow their instructions, said stakeholders.

Nazrul Islam, acting headmaster of Sit Razib Government Primary School, said six teachers including a regular headmaster are needed to impart lessons properly to 350 students of the school.

"As the post of regular headmaster is vacant, I'm working as acting headmaster. Often I've to remain outside the school for programmes in upazila and district offices. Then four assistant teachers find it difficult to manage all the classes," he said.

The absence of a regular headmaster hampers coordination among the teachers, said Dulal Hossain, a member of the school management committee.

Saidul Islam, acting headmaster of Bahalipara

Government Primary School in Sadar upazila, said only six teachers are working there against the need of eight persons for 500 students.

Only 27 new headmasters for primary schools were appointed directly through written and viva voce examinations in 2012 and since then no initiative was taken to appoint regular headmasters in the district, sources said.

As per government rules, 65% headmasters are appointed through promotion

of senior teachers and the rest 35% are directly appointed, said teachers and officials.

But due to various complexities in promotion system and lack of initiative for direct appointment, the headmaster posts of

264 schools have remained vacant for one to five years.

Students Rimon, Priyanka and Adib of Beradanga Government Primary School in Sadar upazila said their classes are not held regularly due to shortage of teachers.

Abdur Rashid, president of district unit of government primary school teachers' association, said they had raised the issue in the headmasters' monthly meetings in presence of high officials on several occasions but to no result yet.

Admitting the problem, District Primary Education Officer Dilip Kumar Bonik said his office had brought the matter to the notice of higher authorities and they are waiting for a government decision.