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Rules defied in pre-primary school teacher postings

Distance gives some a hard choice in Chapainawabganj

RABIUL HASAN, Chapainawabganj

Motiur Rahman and Israt Jahan have been recently appointed pre-primary school teachers. But the secure government jobs have brought them more worries than joy, because both face an almost insurmountable barrier--distance.

After doing an MA at Rajshahi University, Motiur had wondered what kind of job would suit him best since he was slightly club-footed.

Last month when he received the appointment letter, he was utterly cheerful, and soon his heart sank when he saw he was posted to Chataidubi Government Primary School in Islampur union under Chapainawabganj sadar upazila, about 15km from his village, Kichnidaha, of Sundarpur union.

Motiur said, "I have some prob-

lem in the legs since birth... As I did not get a favourable posting in my own union as per the rules, I will leave the job when I get another."

Not only Motiur, many newly recruited teachers, out of the total 134 in the district, have been posted in disadvantageous locations, violating the rules of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE). Victims alleged that there was money and influence involved.

Israt Jahan has to cross about a 5km field on foot on the way to her workplace, Ghantara Government Primary School in Monakasha union under Shibganj, about 15km from her village where there are two primary schools within half a kilometre.

"It is very difficult for me to cross the long sugarcane and corn field alone every day," said Israt. "If anything bad happens, the

district education office must take the responsibility," she added.

The rules of the Directorate of Primary Education, issued on January 5, say, "The selected candidates in the posts, created for pre-primary education, have to be posted in schools, which are advantageous for them and close to their permanent residence. In this case, female candidates will get preference. If any appointment order is issued defying this directive, legal action will be taken against the official concerned."

The Daily Star talked to at least five new teachers, posted in faraway schools. They said the district primary education office favoured some people in exchange for money.

The district primary education officer, Dilruba Begum, denied

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the allegations of taking bribes, and said it was a mistake if someone was not posted to the nearby school.

Asked what the remedy is, Dilruba said, "There is no way to revise the postings now."

When asked why she did not inform of "the mistake" to the Directorate of Primary Education in Dhaka as per the rules, she said the teachers could be transferred after two years.

Section 5 of the DPE directive says, "If any fault or inconsistency is found during issuance of appointment letters, directions should be sought immediately contacting with the Directorate of Primary Education after postponing issuance of the appointment letters of the candidates concerned of the related upazilas/thanas."

A family member of Israt Jahan informed her matter to DPEO Dilruba through its official email as well as over the phone during the posting but the education officer did not take any step in this regard. The Daily Star got the copies of the official order and the email sent at 3:49pm on January 22.

Dilruba said, "We didn't favour anyone. We appointed them after seeing their permanent addresses."

The Daily Star asked for the list of 134 new recruits to see how many were posted to far-flung schools, but the official declined to give it.