

Primary school dropout in CHT 59 per cent

Staff Correspondent

IN THE three hill tracts districts, the average drop out rate from primary schools stands at 59 per cent, says a new study report made public in the city on Wednesday.

The rate of dropout from junior secondary level stands at 24 per cent and from the secondary level at 19 per cent, the study report of Manusher Jonno Foundation states.

Launching the report, MJF said it wanted to share the findings with the nation.

MJF described the overall education situation and quality in the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban as 'deplorable' marked by access to education lower than the rest of the country.

Among contributing factors it identified distance of schools, communication problem, language barrier, unfavourable school environment, poverty, inadequacy of teachers, the irregularities in taking classes and lack of awareness.

MJF said that the study was based on interviews of students, teachers, managing committees of 126 primary and secondary schools, education officials and community leaders in the three hill districts.

It said that it conducted the survey from November 2011 to January 2012.

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Motahar Hossain launched the report as the chief guest and Dhaka University professor emeritus M Anisuzzman spoke as the special guest.

DU professor Shourav Sikder, Jahangirnagar University professor Ainun Nahar, UNDP education adviser for Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility AHM Mohiuddin Ahmed, Save the Children education advisor Habibur Rahman took part in the discussion.

Chief Researcher of the study Mong Shanoo Chowdhury presented the report.

According to the report 64 per cent of the teachers in the three districts use and speak Bangla while taking classes, 27 per cent of them use both Bangla and the languages of the ethnic groups, and nine per cent uses the languages of the ethnic

The report quoted 70 per cent of the teachers as stating that the text books do not reflect indigenous people's way of life.

It also quoted 75 per cent of the government officials and 63 per cent of the teachers as attributing geographical or communication barrier as a major problem hindering education in CHT.

Forty one per cent of CHT people held their financial insolvency as one of the major factors contributing to the high drop out rates.

According to the study the net primary school enrolment in the three hill districts stands at 95 per cent.

Shourav Sikder, AHM Mohiuddin Ahmed and other discussants described the primary school enrolment rate as 'not realistic'.

All the discussants except state minister Motahar emphasized on full implementation CHT Accord of 1997, for changing education scenario in the three hill districts.

Motahar said that the government was not getting enough people to appoint as teachers in the hill districts even after offering 30 per cent more pay.

He said government was trying its best to improve the education situation in the hill districts.