

Floods force closure of 1,130 schools in 8 dists

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SEVERE flooding forced the closure of at least 1130 primary and secondary schools in six northern and two north eastern districts until Tuesday.

Education officers said that it was possible that more schools had to go on unscheduled holidays due to widespread flooding.

The unscheduled closures were hampering studies of thousands of students, they said.

At least 820 primary schools and 310 secondary schools were closed due to flooding in the northern districts of Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Sirajganj, Jamalpur, Bogra and the north eastern districts of Sunamganj and Sylhet, said district education and primary education officials.

Unable to attend classes candidates of Primary Education Completion Examinations and Junior School Certificate Examinations be-

came the worst sufferers as the exams are less than two months away.

Attendance fell sharply in many schools and colleges with some of them, having gone under flood waters, holding classes elsewhere.

The floods disrupted studies of many students who had to take shelter on embankments or flood free areas without being able to take their books with them, said teachers and education officials.

Neither the officials in

education directorate in the capital nor those in the divisional level offices could say how many schools were affected by the floods.

Director General of Secondary and Higher Education Fahima Khatun said quoting reports she had received that 300 secondary school and colleges in Jamalpur were affected by the ongoing floods.

She said that she requested all the district education

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officers to send reports about schools damaged by floods.

'We will address the losses suffered by the students on the basis of the reports' she said.

No classes could be held for the last two days in 259 primary schools and 100 secondary schools in Jamalpur, 150 primary schools and 77 secondary schools in Gaibandha, 176 primary schools and 54 secondary schools in Kurigram, 97 primary schools and 10 sec-

ondary schools in Bogra, 52 primary schools and 43 secondary schools in Sirajganj, 40 primary schools of and 10 secondary schools in Sunamganj, 30 primary school of Sylhet and 16 primary school in Lalmonirhat, said officials.

Class rooms of many schools have been submerged and reaching many schools became difficult as the areas around them were completely submerged, they said.

Turning to the question of

thin attendance in schools in Sirajganj, district primary education officer Laila Khanom said, 'Children can't be forced to take the risk of drowning.'

Many parents from the flooded areas said that their children could not bring their books when they had to move to safer places for shelter.

'My son who will appear in the Primary Education Completion Examinations in November is unable to study since we had taken shelter on the embankment' said Abdullah of Islampur in Ja-

malpur district.

Districts education officers said that efforts were on to keep the schools open ahead of the Primary and the Junior Secondary exams.

District education officers said with many schools needing heavy repairs the students would continue to suffer disruption in class room studies after the floods had receded.

The possibility of water-borne diseases breaking out posed another challenge, they said.