

## Striking Teachers

**T**O say that education is in a shambles in this country would be as clichéd as saying that a nation cannot develop without education. The recent nationwide strikes by government and non-government school and college teachers speak volumes about a sector grossly neglected by successive governments. Several hundred community primary

teachers under the banner of 'Bangladesh Community Primary Teachers Association' have continued their fast-unto-death strike at the Central Shaeed Minar demanding nationalisation of their jobs. According to a Daily Star report, the president of the association referred to the fact that even as early as October 2000, during their movement, BNP stalwart (now LGRD Minister) Abdul Mannan Bhuiya had promised the teachers that all their demands would be met once the BNP came to power. But the teachers have bitterly come to realise that these were empty promises as even at the end of their tenure, the ruling party has shown very little compassion to the aggrieved teachers. Meanwhile schools and colleges across the country remain closed depriving students of their basic right to learn. Recently the closure of colleges has hampered the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations, as they had to be deferred because of the strike. The demands of the teachers include - the end of wage discrimination and introduction of school-based examination system.

Teachers in this country are often criticised for their lack of commitment towards their profession and in many cases the blame is valid. But unless their basic needs are met, which includes salaries that allow them to lead decent lives, there is no point in accusing them of not being dedicated enough.

## Hotter than Hades

**I**N a recent report by the National Academy of Sciences, the Earth has reached its most scalding in the last 400 years. A panel of top climate scientists stated to lawmakers that human activities are a major factor for the cause of these recent developments. The average global surface temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere rose around 1 degree during the 20th century. Evidence of the fact is in retreating glaciers. Other research by Kevin Trenberth and Dennis Shea of the Commerce Department's National Center for Atmospheric Research reveal that in 2005 Global Warming was the cause of approximately half of the hurricane-fueled warmth in the North Atlantic and natural cycles were a minor component. The Bush administration stated that the threat is not serious enough to sanction new pollution controls. According to the White House, these pollution controls are said to cost five million Americans their jobs. The recent heat is unusual for at least the last 400 years and substantially the last several millennia.

