

Trouble in Monipur High School

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Students of Monipur High School and their guardians are deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict between the present and past governing bodies of the school.

The current authorities have been blamed for corruption and malpractice by a section of guardians who are in favour of the reinstatement of former principal of the school Sheikh Sabdar Ali.

The problems started during the beginning of this year when the current principal Belayet Hossain Shikder allegedly influenced the management committee of the school into retiring Sabdar Ali forcibly after he had been in charge for three decades.

"It was because of his strict principles and motivational qualities that the school could make a name," said a resident of Monipur area.

Under Ali, the 36-year-old school had been ranked fourth in the country and had also been awarded a number of times for having the best education system.

But on January 1, the management committee reportedly forced Ali into retirement.

"I still had one and a half years before my compulsory retirement age and they did not even give me a reason for my early retirement," said Ali who is fighting the matter in court.

Some students and guardians said Ali had been discharged on political grounds. After Ali had been sent into retirement, Shikder took over as acting principal. But sources said the quality of education and the flow of admission seekers dropped after the change.

During the first week of February, Ali returned to the school after the court ruled in his favour against the retirement decision of the management committee.

"But the committee and Shikder did not want him back," said a guardian of the school.

Things turned ugly when a group of enraged guardians took sides and damaged school property during a clash between the supporters of the committee and those in favour of Ali.

"Shikder was insulted and thrown out of the school by the students and their guardians," said a student of the school.

Ali was in charge for the next one and a half months but he was not allowed to intervene in administrative activities. The management committee later appealed to the court again and this time they received the verdict in their favour and Ali was out of office again.

Ali complained that Shikder, with support from the committee members, had swindled a huge amount of funds belonging to the school in various ways.

He said that the current administration was even awarding promotion to failing students in exchange of 'donations'.

Ali also alleged that Shikder and the committee members were getting large sums of money from publishers by canceling out discounts that the guardians used to receive for purchase of books.

Students said the curriculums have changed and they have been given books designed for lower levels.

"The kind of exercises and lessons that we had learnt in Class Five are about to be taught again through the new books," said a student of Class Eight.

Students were also handed a lengthy syllabus just a week prior to their examinations.

"Most of the topics mentioned in the syllabus have not yet been taught in the classes," said a student of Class Seven.

Students and guardians feared poor results in the upcoming exams. Especially, students from higher classes, who are scheduled to appear in scholarship exams in mid-April are very worried.

The Monipur High School Parents Forum organised a human chain in Mirpur recently to protest the situation. Over 500 students and guardians participated in the programme from 11am to 5pm. A press conference was also organised later by the Forum against the forced retirement of Ali, the changed curriculum and the mismanagement caused by the current administration.

"We do not want to see the reputation of a great school ruined by such elements who are in charge of the institution," said Golam Nabi, member secretary of Monipur High School Parents Forum.

"The press conference and the human chain programmes were all instigated by Sabdar Ali," said a staff belonging to the current administration.

Shikder declined to talk to Star-City when approached. He has meanwhile, filed a number of cases against Ali.

"I have received bail in two cases and still fighting another three," said Ali.

Shikder has also lodged complaints against four persons -- Golam Nabi, Shahidul Alam, Shilpi and Ahmed Mollah under articles 143, 386 and 506 with Pallabi Police Station, claiming they had collected tolls from some guardians.

"This is unnecessary harassment and it is being done to stop the protests by the Forum," said Nabi.

Police have been deployed at the school as the current administration feared more protest.



NOT A WELCOME SIGHT... Police have been deployed at the Monipur High School because of an ongoing dispute over the retirement of a principal.



No means no!

As violation of traffic rules gets worse by the day, traffic police often find themselves helpless. Sometimes all they can do is to use force to discipline the ever unruly rickshaw-pullers.

Tale of an orphan

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

Innocence was written all over her face with her big dark eyes telling a sad tale. When she lost her mother at the age of four, she was sent to an orphanage in Mohammadpur by her father. Now an eight-year-old, Shahida wishes if she could stay outside it.

"I wish I could stay with my father who occasionally comes to see me," the little girl mumbled. She hardly could finish her words when her fellows mimicked her sarcastically saying her step-mother would have broken her bones.

Shahida stays along with 112 orphans in the orphanage, which is part of a mosque and madrasa. Some 90 other boys and girls studying in the madrasa also stay on the same premises.

The orphanage officials said they could not afford to keep more than 112 orphans, as they never receive any government fund. "We run the orphanage with the fund we receive from a

former minister of Kuwait," said an official.

Asked what makes Shahida feel to stay outside the orphanage, she gave a blank look only. Tears were rolling down her cheeks. She kept mum when asked if she feels bad to stay in an orphanage when his father is about to leave.

The orphanage authorities serve the orphans meals three times a day. "We take rice, pulse and mashed potato in breakfast and meat or fish in lunch and dinner," Nur Banu, a seven-year-old orphan sitting beside Shahida said.

The orphans are lucky to get free food, accommodation and education there, some of them voluntarily said. "At least the orphans here do not need to pay for education," said a student of madrasa whose parents pay for her education there.

However, she heaved a sigh of frustration saying some parents think their daughter would be better educated if they stay in hostel. "In reality, the environ-

ment is not suitable for concentrating in study as not everyone is interested in it," she said.

Shahida was asked if physical or mental torture causes her trouble, she moved her head in negative without uttering a word. But suddenly she spoke her heart out when this correspondent was about to leave.

"Apa, can you please tell them (authority) to open the rooftop for us. They will do it if you insist," she urged this correspondent. All her friends surrounding her began to request the same. They said they are only allowed to go out with a guardian and of course, wearing a veil.

The rooftop of the orphanage is the only place where they can play or have some recreation. "We are always confined here," said one of them pointing at the locked collapsible gate at the entrance of girls' section.

When asked, the officials claimed sometimes they open the roof, but girls fight each other and get hurt while playing there.

useful telephone numbers

COURIER SERVICES

International
Air Borne Express- 9561371, 9561372, 9550724
Air Couriers Intl (BD) Ltd.- 8815970
Aramex International Courier- 9558003, 9559582, 9565075
Airspeed Express- 9563494
Asian Courier Services Ltd.- 8313543
Baishakhi Courier Service- 9558606
Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Bangladesh Courier Service- 9563989
Bengal Express- 9560642, 9552666
Bangladesh Intl Courier- 953636
Continental Service Ltd.- 9552948, 9558425
DHL Worldwide Express- 9881703-7, 9886305-9, 9882057
Enem Express- 9330699
Fedex Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.- 9565114
Modhuban Courier Service-

9550884
Overseas Courier Service- 9352431, 8321169
Pacific Courier- 9568446
Reliance Express Service- 9558515, 7110249
Sky International service- 9660442
Skynet world Wide Express- 9558062, 9560258, 7114787, 7113184
TNT Express- 9566662, 9558239, 8618155
Union Courier Service- 9341722
United Parcel Service Air alliance Ltd.- 8826429, 8810223
National
Asian courier Service Ltd- 8313543
BAE- 9884851
Central Courier Service- 9881118
Confidence Courier Service Ltd. 9567036
Chisty Courier- 7110177-9,
Cosmopol Services- 9552793, 9557975
Dhaka Courier Services- 7236222

Dolphin Courier- 9558802
Dreamland Courier Service- 9550326, 9566975
Pioneer Courier Services- 9561727, 9569759
Probashi Courier Services- 9346359
Rainbow Express Parcel Services Ltd.- 8322773, 8315703
Reliance Express Services- 9558515, 7110249
Sundarban Courier Services- 9551984, 9556189, 9551656
Sunrise Courier Services- 9568751
World Runner Express Ltd. 9112068, Fax - 880-2-9112068

TIPS

Do you know according to Dhaka City Corporation, you must deposit your waste at the collection site between 4pm and 10pm

LIBRARY & INFO

Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers
Central Public Library- 8626001-4,
Shishu Academy- 9564128
Shilpakala Academy- 8614673
Bangla Academy- 8619550
Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 955640
The American Centre (IRC)- 8813440-4, 9886395
The Nazrul Institute- 9114602
Ford Foundation- 8116133
Alliance Francaise- 8611557
British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7
Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604
Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6
Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8850141, 8850142
The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314
Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412

OUTING

Museum and Zoo
National Museum- 8619396-9
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday 3 pm - 8 pm, Thursday closed
Muktijuddha Jadughar- 9559091
Open: 10:30 am 6:30 pm, Sunday Closed
Bangabandhu Smiti Jadughar- 8110046
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Wednesday closed
Ahsan Manzil
Open: 10 am 5 pm, Friday: 3 pm - 7 pm, Thursday Closed
Shishu Jadughar- 9666466
Open: 10 am - 6 pm, Sunday Closed

CITY BUS ROUTE

Bus No.	Route	Starts from
1	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 10, 11, 12	Golap Shah Mazar
2	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Banglamotor-Farmgate-Mirpur 1, 2	Phoolbaria bus station
3	Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mahakhali-Airport-Azampur	Phoolbaria bus station
4	Shyampur-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Airport-Tongi	Shyampur
5	Sayedabad-Kamalapur-Motijheel-Airport-Joydebpur-Gazipur	Sayedabad
6A	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Gulshan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6B	Kamalapur-Motijheel-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 1, 2	Kamalapur
6C	Motijheel Shapla chattar- Malibagh- Farmgate- Gulshan 2	Motijheel Shaplachatter
7	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Maghbazar-Nabisco-Gulshan 2	Sadarghat
8	Chittagong-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asad Gate-Kalyanpur-Gabtol	Chittagong Road
9	Demra Rani mahal-Motijheel-Kalbagan-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 10, 11, 12	Demra Ranimalah
10	Sadarghat-Gulistan-Kakrail-Malibagh-Rampura-Biswa Road-Tongi Bridge	Sadarghat
11	Sayedabad-Motijheel-Fakirapool-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Tongi Bridge	Sayedabad
11/A	Sayedabad-Khilgoan-Malibagh-Rampura-Airport-Tongi Bridge	Syedabad
12	Shanir Akhra-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Asadgate-Mohammadpur	Shanir Akhra
13	Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Jhigatola-Shangkar-Mohammedpur	Motijheel
14	Signboard -Motijheel-Shahbagh-New Market-Shyamoli-Mirpur 1, 12	Signboard (Chittagong Road)
15	Chittagong Road-Motijheel-Shahbagh-Farmgate-Mirpur 12	Chittagong Road
24	Gulistan-Maghbazar-Mohakhali-Airport-Uttara-Bipile	Gulistan