

# Believe it not, but this is a tale of pry education

## Classes are merged in Nilphamari due to teacher crisis, unauthorised absence

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Believe it or not, primary school students of two classes huddle in a room and a teacher takes classes.

At South Kanial Khata Government Primary School in Nilphamari Sadar upazila, students of class IV and class V sit in a room and Assistant Teacher Rajab Ali takes classes one after another. He gives lessons on different subjects to students of two classes. This is due to acute shortage of teachers.

Rajab Ali is also the headmaster-in-charge of the school. This correspondent could hardly understand what he taught and what lessons the students got.

After a class he came out and said there is another teacher in the school, who also does the same.

He ducked a question on lessons and said they are compelled to merge classes due to acute shortage of teachers.

He took over as headmaster-in-charge after the headmaster retired a few months back.

He said the problem was brought to the notice of the District

Primary Education Office long ago, but to no effect.

On Wednesday, this correspondent also visited the Chapra Saramjani Government Primary School in the Sadar upazila where the same practice is followed.

The school runs two shifts—classes I, II and III in the first shift and class IV and V in the second shift.

There are only two teachers now, including the headmaster.

The headmaster said students of classes II and III sit together in a room because of shortage of teachers.

There were two more female teachers in this school. One of them was transferred last year and the other is absent for more than two years.

This correspondent was taken aback when the headmaster said he ran the school alone for more than a year after the female teacher was transferred. He got a teacher in March this year on deputation.

The situation is almost the same in most of the government primary schools of the district, the two

headmasters said.

This correspondent also visited some other government primary schools in the district on Thursday and Saturday. Primary education is virtually in doldrums in Nilphamari district because of teacher crisis, unauthorised absence of teachers and appointment of less qualified persons as teachers, it was gathered.

Sources in the District Primary Education Department said there are 472 government primary schools in six upazilas of the district with 392 posts of headmaster and 2,863 of other teachers.

Of these, 83 posts of headmaster and 555 of assistant teacher are vacant for long.

At many schools, assistant teachers without requisite qualification are headmasters-in-charge.

This is affecting discipline and academic atmosphere.

In the Sadar Upazila, eight out of 96 posts of headmaster and 104 out of 304 posts of assistant teacher are vacant.

In Domar upazila, 16 posts of headmaster against 67 and 73

posts of assistant teacher against 204 are vacant.

In Dimla, there are 65 posts of headmaster and 207 of assistant teacher. The vacant posts are 16 and 72 respectively.

The situation in Jaldhaka upazila is worse with 22 vacant posts of headmaster and 85 of assistant teachers out of 79 and 270 respectively.

The number of vacant posts of headmaster and assistant teacher is 16 and 77 respectively in Kishoreganj upazila.

In Saidpur, five posts of headmaster out of nine 9 and 61 of assistant teacher out of 227 are vacant.

The sources however said over 100 teachers are on a 10-month training at the district headquarters now.

Admitting the crisis of teachers, District Primary Education Officer Abdus Sattar Sarkar said recruitment of teachers is not in his hand.

But he said the vacant posts will be filled up shortly as tests for recruitment of headmasters and assistant teachers have been completed.

## SSC examinee kills herself fearing bad result

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Taslima Nasrin Lima, 16, committed suicide by hanging herself from a ceiling fan with a scarf Saturday night, thinking that she will fail in SSC examination because of bad performance in English subject.

But results announced at 3-30 PM Fatema Girls' High School of Khulna city showed that she passed the examination and got 'B' in Commerce Group.

She was the daughter of Mohammad Nasiruddin, Deputy Director (Inspection) of Rajshahi branch of Bangladesh Bank.

Her mother was not in the house at east Baniakhamar of the city when she committed suicide.

On information, SI Maruf of Khulna thana recovered body from the house. A General Diary has been filed.

## Extortionists kill boy as father refuses to pay toll

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

A schoolboy was slaughtered on Saturday by extortionists at Berashula village in Sadar upazila, Jhenidah following his father's refusal to pay toll.

According to family sources, the extremists demanded Tk 30,000 as illegal toll from Abdul Quddus, a farmer at the village last month.

They were pressuring Quddus to pay the money. When Quddus refused to bow down to their pressure, they threatened him on Thursday night of dire consequence.

According to police, the culprits stormed into the house of Quddus at about 11:00pm on Saturday and picked up his school going son Abdus Sabur, 11, confining all the family members at gunpoint. They took the boy to a nearby jute field and slaughtered him there.

Local people found the boy's body yesterday morning.

Police rushed to the spot and sent the body to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

When contacted, Jhenidah Sadar police told this correspondent they have identified the killers and trying to nab them.

## Khulna journalists protest NSI excess

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna divisional unit of Bangladesh Photojournalists' Association (BPJA) yesterday brought out a procession and held a rally here protesting attack on their colleagues in Dhaka by the National Security Intelligence (NSI) personnel on Thursday.

The speakers at the rally demanded an exemplary punishment to the attackers and withdrawal of cases against photojournalists.

The rally was presided over by the president of the divisional unit of BPJA, Md Zakir Hossain while it was addressed by Khulna Press Club president Abu Hasan, Khulna Union of Journalists (KUJ) president Makbul Hossain, press club general secretary Faruque Ahmed and Khulna BPJA general secretary Deabrato Roy.



PHOTO: STAR

Thousands of residents of Haragachh in Rangpur town brought out a procession yesterday demanding immediate resumption of power supply.

## Cry for power as 150 units closed in Haragachh

### Thousands stage protest, lay siege to DC's office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Several thousand people, most of them bidi factory workers, from Haragachh municipality, brought out a procession in Rangpur town and laid a siege to the Deputy Commissioner's office for hours yesterday demanding resumption of power supply to their area, snapped on July 3.

They also demanded power supply by Power Development Board (PDB) instead of Rural Electrification Board (REB). Earlier, they staged a sit-in and held a rally at Station Road, blocking traffic for about three hours from 12:30 pm.

They organised the programmes under the banner of Haragachh Bidyut Grahak Sangram Parishad (HBGSP).

Speakers at the rally alleged that

the Rangpur Palli Bidyut Samiti-2 illegally snapped the power supply, violating a court order.

Addressing the rally, former chairman of Haragachh Municipality Anwarul Islam Maya said tougher agitation will be launched if power supply is not restored immediately under the PDB.

Government shifted the Haragachh power supply authority to Haragachh from PDB to Rangpur Palli Biddut Samiti-2 in 2002. Since then the local people have been staging protest demonstrations under the HBGSP for power supply under PDB. In such a situation, neither the PDB nor the REB realised bills. So the bills accumulated. A case was filed earlier with a Rangpur court, which was disposed of. Later they lodged appeal with the High Court, which, on July 2, ordered a status quo.

Amin Uddin, Secretary of HBGSP claimed that REB unlawfully snapped power supply in Haragachh despite a High Court order to maintain status quo.

When contacted, General Manager of Rangpur Palli Bidyut Samiti-2 Enamul Hoque said the power supply has been snapped because of huge amounts of accumulated bills.

He, however, said, he is yet to get the High Court order.

On July 3, the Rangpur Palli Biddut Samiti-2 snapped power supply in Haragachh as outstanding bills rose to about Tk 6 crore.

Other speakers at the rally said about 150 small and medium industries including Bidi factories in the municipality are closed since July 3, making several thousand people jobless.

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## Phensidyl factory at NGO office !



PHOTO: STAR

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Barisal yesterday unearthed a phensidyl factory from an NGO office in Uzirpur upazila.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members yesterday unearthed a phensidyl factory where the drug was being made under cover of an NGO office in Uzirpur upazila.

The law enforcers recovered 600 litres of phensidyl, 200 phensidyl bottles, 2100 empty bottles, a huge quantity of powder, chemicals and other raw materials for phensidyl production from the factory near Sanuhar bus stand along the Barisal-Dhaka highway and arrested its owner Kamal Haldar alias Kamal Dakhtar, a local palli chikitshak (Rural Medical Practitioner).

RAB sources said Abu Haldar, Manik Fakir, Kashem and other associates of Kamal Dakhtar rented a two-room house and hung a sign-board of Rural Economic Development Organization (REDO), an NGO, about six months ago.

But they used to produce phensidyl there.

On a tip-off, some Rab members in the guise of drug peddler contacted Kamal Dakhtar to supply them 200 bottles of phensidyl. Kamal was scheduled to supply the drug at 3 pm yesterday.

Rab raided the house at about 10 am, made the haul and arrested Kamal but his associates fled away.

Rab sources in Barisal said they handed over Kamal to Uzirpur police. Police produced him to a court in Barisal, which sent him to jail.

When contacted over phone, sources said in Uzirpur Kamal Dakhtar opened a dispensary in one room of the house and the NGO office in the other room. But he used the other room to produce phensidyl.

The sources said the so-called NGOREDO was not registered with the government's NGO Bureau.

8x3

2X2

4X2

6x3



PHOTO: STAR

Journalists in Rangamati town yesterday protested attack on photojournalists by NSI men in Dhaka on Thursday.