School and College has a different side to the story. She says, "Students themselves are too coaching-based, if they pay attention in class they should be able to manage. There is a massive 'coaching culture'". They are so focussed on coaching that they lose their attention in class." While her argument does have its merits, parents can still point to the over crowded classrooms. They claim that paying attention in class is easier said than done. Hossain says, "We have roughly 70 students per class, the reason for this is that it is not financially viable to have less students per class. The class rooms we have are large and must be filled, or else we will suffer losses." She adds, "In other Bangla Medium schools they have between 130 and 140 students per class, yet parents complain here."

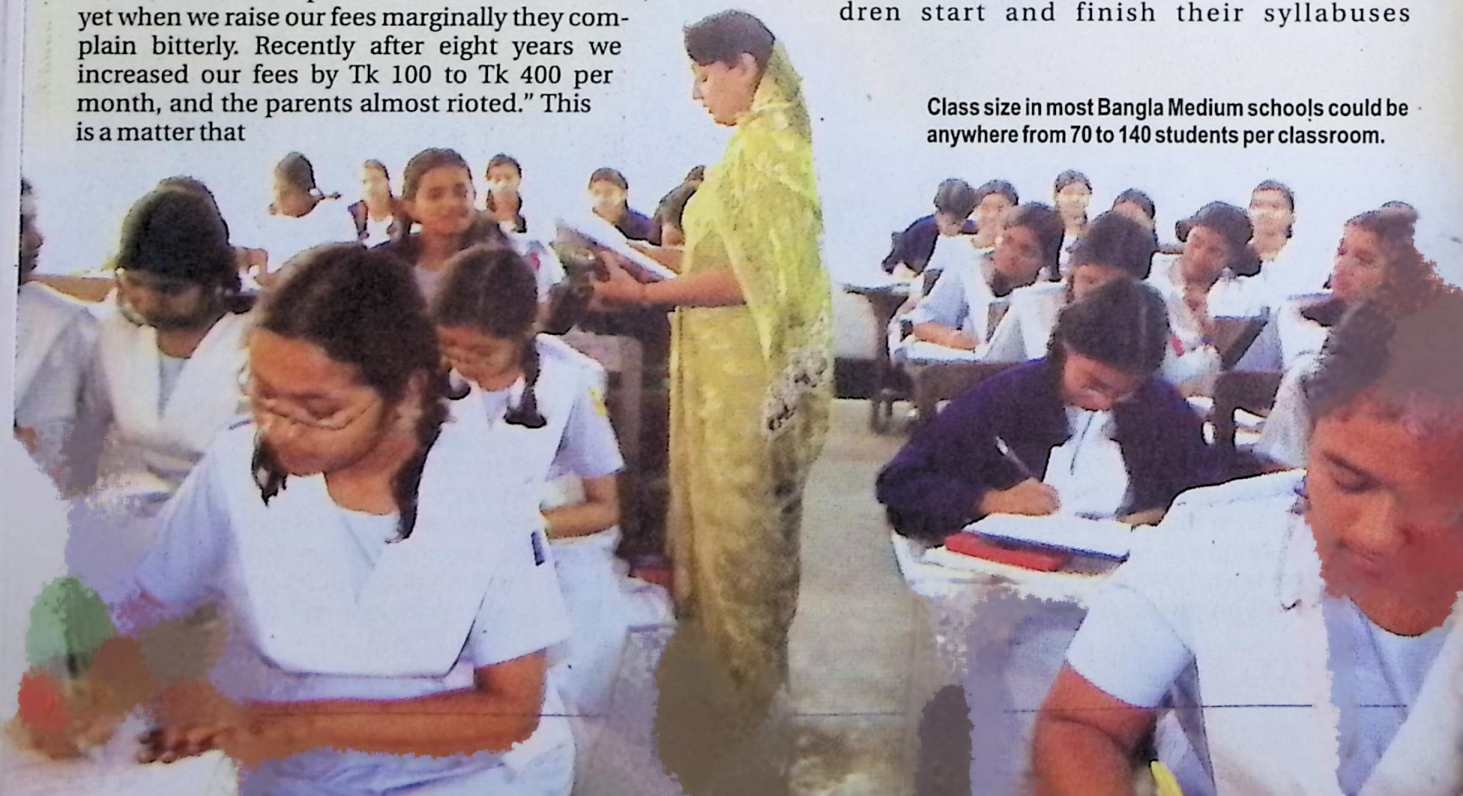
"We have roughly 70 students per class, the reason for this is that it is not financially viable to have less students per class. The class rooms we have are large and must be filled, or else we will suffer losses."



Rowena Hossain, Principal, Viqarunnisa Noon School and College.

She says the parents desire for smaller classes is not based on the reality of the situation. Hossain recounted a story where recently she told the parents of a girl that the class was full and there was nowhere that they could fit their child into the classroom. To that the parents said, "Then let her sit outside the door, she will manage from there". The parents complain about class sizes, yet there is a certain level of double standards. She emphatically says, "It is not possible to reduce the class size now". She takes parents' complaints very seriously but adds, "They are willing to spend Tk 10,000 a month for private tutors outside school, yet when we raise our fees marginally they complain bitterly. Recently after eight years we increased our fees by Tk 100 to Tk 400 per month, and the parents almost rioted." This is a matter that needs to be looked into. For many parents it is a quick fix to blame the schools, yet when standards need to be maintained or even improved, nominal increases in school fees are met with fierce resistance. Yet these same parents happily shell out thousands to private tutors.

In fact, Rowena Hossain turns the tables on the parents. She says, "Schools have fixed times and syllabuses. The problem starts when the parents demand for the syllabus even before classes start. They do so because then with the syllabuses they can enrol their children into private coaching centres. This way their children start and finish their syllabuses



Class size in most Bangla Medium schools could be anywhere from 70 to 140 students per classroom.