



EDUCATION EXPENSES Primary sees a 25pc rise, secondary 51

Guidebooks, pvt tuition prop up out-of-pocket costs

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

During the first half of last year, out-of-pocket expenses rose by 51 percent for secondary level education and 25 percent for primary level education, according to a study.

The average annual cost of education for a 9th grader was Tk 27,340 in 2022. In the first six months of last year, it was Tk 20,712, says the report by Education Watch, a civil society platform of researchers.

The numbers indicate a 51 percent rise in annual spending, said Mostafizur Rahaman, one of the researchers, while presenting the findings at a press conference in the capital's CIRDA auditorium yesterday.

The average annual spending for a family on a 5th grader was Tk 13,882 in 2022. In the first half of 2023, it was Tk 8,647, he said, adding that it indicated a 25 percent annual rise as per the research, he added.

The study was done on 2,077 students, 3,129 parents, and 2,019 teachers, school management committee members, and government officials from 26 upazilas across the country.

As classroom lectures prove to be inadequate, the students rely on costly private tuition, coaching centres and so-called guidebooks, said Manzoor Ahmed, founder of the Institute of Educational Development at BRAC University.

"In many cases, teachers force students to use guidebooks, notebooks and take private lessons," he told The Daily Star.

According to Unesco Global Education Monitoring Report 2022, families bear 71 percent of the total education expenses in Bangladesh.

Jahangir Alam, father of two primary school students in the capital's Mirpur, said, "We are compelled to hire private tutors because the quality of classroom teaching is questionable."

GUIDEBOOK USE RISES

In 2022, 79 percent of primary and 82.5 percent of secondary students used guidebooks bought from markets. In 2023, 92 percent of primary and 93 percent of secondary students used guidebooks.

In 2023, 70 percent primary and 76.5 percent secondary students had private tutors.

"The reliance on guidebooks is widespread as classroom learning is inadequate. Guidebooks are aggressively marketed, and incentives are offered to teachers who encourage students to purchase them," said Mostafizur, citing the findings.

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| EXPENSES FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| | IN 2022 | 1ST HALF OF 2023 |
| Urban | Tk 18,132 | Tk 11,059 |
| Rural | Tk 10,637 | Tk 6,586 |

| |
|---|
| 92% primary students used guidebooks |
| 93% secondary students used guidebooks |
| 70% primary and 76.5% secondary students took private tuition |



Students stage a sit-in in front of Buet's administrative building protesting Chhatra League's political activities on campus flouting a ban. They held demonstrations for the second straight day yesterday to press home their six-point demand, including expulsion of six students and resignation of the director of the directorate of student welfare.

PHOTO: STAR

POLITICS ON CAMPUS Buet students boycott tests, classes on 2nd day of protest

BCL calls for demo at Shaheed Minar today

DU CORRESPONDENT

Buet students yesterday boycotted their classes and exams and demonstrated against early Thursday's gathering of Chhatra League activists on the campus where political activities are not allowed.

They demanded expulsion of several students, including Imtiaz Hossain Rahim, a central committee member of the pro-Awami League student body, for what they said were their open political activities on the campus.

The protesters said they would continue demonstrating and boycotting the classes until their demands are met and the "campus is safe for students".

They said multiple rules were

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BUSINESS

Solar power for homes dimming

Solar power for homes in Bangladesh, which received widespread appreciation, has been losing its lustre as electricity supply through the national grid expands, virtually ending the growth of solar energy.

Over the last two years, the proportion of the population with solar home systems (SHSs) has been falling.

In 2021, some 2.25 percent of the population used SHSs. The number declined to 1.81 percent in 2023, according to a recent survey report of the BBS.

STORY ON B1

Bribery, corruption major investment barriers

Says US trade representative report on Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Biden administration identified bribery, corruption, customs, anti-competitive procurement system and violation of intellectual property rights as major trade and investment barriers in Bangladesh.

"Corruption is a pervasive and longstanding problem in Bangladesh, and anticorruption law is inadequately enforced," said the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in the 2024 National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers.

Bribery and extortion in commercial dealings are common features of business even though the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Prevention of Corruption Act, the Penal Code and the Money Laundering Prevention Act criminalise attempted corruption, extortion, active and passive bribery, bribery of foreign public officials, money laundering and use of public resources or non-public state information for private gain.

American companies have complained

about long delays in obtaining approval of licences and bids as Bangladeshi government officials seek bribes.

"There have been continuous proposals to curb the independence of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the main institutional anticorruption watchdog."

The Sarkari Chakori Ain Bill (Government Job Act), enacted in October 2018, requires the ACC to seek permission from the authorities concerned before arresting any government official and limits the ability of the ACC to investigate corruption allegations against government officials.

While the ACC has increasingly pursued cases against government officials (mainly lower-level officials and some higher-level officials), there remains a large backlog of cases.

There have also been efforts to water down anti-corruption safeguards of government procurement rules, said the report, which was released on March 29.

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MV ABDULLAH

Fresh water access limited for crew

Hijackers allowed them to speak to family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The 23-member crew of the hijacked Bangladeshi ship MV Abdullah are suffering from an acute water crisis as the pirates restricted its use due to depleting stock.

The crew, held hostage on board since March 12, are now getting water from the ship's reservoir for only a couple of hours a week.

They are allowed to take baths and store drinking water within this short window, families of several crew members told The Daily Star yesterday.

After about a week's break, the pirates allowed several crew members to

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