

Flood disrupts education system in eight districts

The recent flood has resulted so many losses and damages in human lives and livelihood but the loss of education sector is uncountable. Severe flooding forced the closure of at least 1130 primary and secondary schools in six northern and two north eastern districts until Tuesday (Sep 8, 2015). In some cases, the authorities were taking classes on comparatively higher places, but that is hardly helping their cause as most of the students are failing to make it there due to floodwater.

Education officers said that it was possible that more schools had to go on unscheduled holidays due to widespread flooding. The unscheduled closures were hampering studies of thousands of students. At least 820 primary schools and 310 secondary schools were closed due to flooding in the northern districts of Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Sirajganj, Jamalpur, Bogra and the north eastern districts of Sunamganj and Sylhet, said district education and primary education officials.



A Flood affected school (Photo credit: bdnews24.com)

Unable to attend classes candidates of Primary Education Completion Examinations and Junior School Certificate Examinations became the worst sufferers as the exams are less than two months away. Attendance fell sharply in many schools and colleges with some of them, having gone under flood waters, holding classes elsewhere. The floods disrupted studies of many students who had to take shelter on embankments or flood free areas without being able to take their books with them.

Neither the officials in education directorate in the capital nor those in the divisional level offices could say how many schools were affected by the floods. Director General of Secondary and Higher Education Fahima Khatun said she had received that 300 secondary school and colleges in Jamalpur were affected by the ongoing floods. She said that she requested all the district education officers to send reports about schools damaged by floods. No classes could be held for the last two days in 259 primary schools and 100 secondary schools in Jamalpur, 150 primary schools and 77 secondary schools in Gaibandha, 176 primary schools and 54 secondary schools in Kurigram, 97 primary schools and 10 secondary schools in Bogra, 52 primary schools and 43 secondary schools in Sirajganj, 40 primary schools of and 10 secondary schools in Sunamganj, 30 primary school of Sylhet and 16 primary school in Lalmonirhat, said officials.

Class rooms of many schools have been submerged and reaching many schools became difficult as the areas were completely submerged. Turning to the question of thin attendance in schools in Sirajganj, district primary education officer Laila Khanom said, 'Children can't be forced to take the risk of drowning.' Many parents from the flooded areas said that their children could not bring their books when they had to move to safer places for shelter. Districts education officers said that efforts were on to keep the schools open ahead of the Primary and the Junior Secondary exams. District education officers said many schools need heavy repairs otherwise the students would continue to suffer disruption in class room studies after the floods had receded. The possibility of water-borne diseases breaking out posed another challenge in this context.

Children basic need at this stage

At this point of time perhaps the children need basic education materials not for all listed and stored 57 items. They may only need 11/12 items. If not, only three basic items (Plastic sheet to keep them dry from the rain and a shade from the sun, Mats to sit, water pot to drink and toilet pot) should be provided.

Now it's time for taking quick action for the best interest of the children.