

Staff shortage hampers academic activities



The unused building of Somonnito Drishti Protibondhi Shikkha Karjokram in Pabna's Atghoria upazila. Photo: Star

Though a two-storey building was built for it at a cost of over Tk 1 crore, the school for visually impaired students in Pabna's Atghoria upazila is yet to start its operation after nearly six years due to shortage of manpower.

Established by the Ministry of Social Welfare on 15 decimals of land in 2017, Somonnito Drishti Protibondhi Shikkha Karjokram, the only such institution in the upazila, has been limping for lack of adequate manpower and other necessary equipment for long.



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However, alongside the prolonged teacher shortage, posts of other staff, including that of house parent, resource teacher, cook, guard and MLSS are lying vacant since completion of the building six years back.

But surprisingly no step has been taken to solve the problems in all there years, though shortage of skilled teachers is hampering studies beyond description.

Meanwhile, due to utter neglect and lack of academic and other extra-curricular activities, the newly constructed building is now in a crumbling state.

The colour of the building has already started fading away while its front portion is being used as a waste dumping spot for long.

Moreover, due to lack of proper maintenance the school building has gradually become unfit for living.

According to the data obtained from the social services department, there are a total of 6,275 visually impaired people in Pabna.

Of them, around 20 to 25 percent are students, but most of them doesn't have the access to proper education system.

Atghoria Upazila Social Services Officer Ismat Jerin said though the school building was built six years ago, they were unable to start its operation due to shortage of necessary manpower.

During a recent visit to the school for visually impaired students, this correspondent found though the institution officially has only five students, none of them were found present.

One of the local residents Abul Kalam said, " I have never seen any student at the institution in the last five or six years."

Renowned educationist, Professor Shibojit Nag said visually impaired students require special teaching methods like the braille system.

But many schools don't even have teachers who know the braille system, depriving the blind students from proper education, he added.