

# A teacher dedicated to the cause

Schools remain closed but Bidhan makes sure children don't fall behind



The relentless floods ravaging Sylhet have forced a harsh reality -- the closure of many educational institutions.

In Barlekha upazila of Moulvibazar district alone, over 252 villages have been submerged in the past 20 days.



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At least 500 families sought refuge in 30 designated locations, many of which are schools repurposed as shelters.

According to official data till July 4, as many as 889 primary schools have been closed across Sylhet division either due to flood waters breaching its premises or for being converted into shelters.

For students, guardians, and teachers, learning gaps caused by forced closures of educational institutions is nothing new. This is a recurring event every monsoon, although it keeps getting worse every year.

Besides, the scars left by prolonged school closures during the pandemic are still fresh in everyone's minds.

However, one teacher has decided to take matters into his own hands.

Bidhan Chandra Das, headteacher of Hakaluki High School, has been holding classes for 25 students from 32 families currently sheltered at the flood-stricken school.

The students come not only from Hakaluki High School but also from other schools and madrasas in the area.

But the little ones have one thing in common -- the shared need for education.

Bidhan has refused to let the flood drown their learning spirit.

He has dedicated himself to the students' well-being, remaining at the shelter throughout the day.

Bidhan's makeshift classroom offers a shred of normalcy when everything around these children are under water.

He offers Bengali, English, Mathematics, and Science lessons throughout the day, alongside holding cultural events.

Bidhan's efforts ensure these children, displaced by the floods, continue to receive the education they deserve.

Khaleda Begum, a homemaker from Murshibadkura village who took shelter at the school with her family, expressed her relief.

"I was worried that my children would lag behind in studies due to the flood-induced school closure. Thanks to Bidhan Das, they are not only able to continue their studies but also get necessary school supplies and a nurturing environment," she said.

Similar sentiments were echoed by Mohammad Ali, a seventh grader sheltered at the school.

"Our house got damaged in the flood, so we took shelter here. I did not expect to be able to study in the present situation, but here we are receiving enough support to make sure our studies are not disrupted."

Bidhan's commitment resonates deeply with his purpose as an educator.

"As a teacher, I have a commitment to do everything possible to make sure that education remains uninterrupted for the students, even during a natural disaster," he told this correspondent.