

# Musallis thwart primary school cultural programme

Staff Correspondent · Sylhet

A GROUP of congregants launched an attack on a cultural programme held at a primary school in Sylhet city on Sunday after the school had completed its annual book distribution festival.

Eyewitnesses said that a group of some 60 Musallis (congregants) coming out of the Collectorate mosque, swooped on the cultural programme venue and vandalised the stage and some furniture at Durga Kumar Pathshala, at Bandarbarazar, in the city.

The school children were frightened and ran

here and there for safety, screaming out loud, witnesses said.

The head mistress of Durga Kumar Pathshala, Segufta Kanij Akter, told the reporters that the cultural programme began after the book distribution ceremony was over.

The miscreants vandalised the stage and furniture though the programme was suspended for around half an hour during Azan, or call for prayer, of Zuhr, the head mistress alleged.

The school managing committee president, Manzur Ahmad Chowdhury, told New Age that the cultural programme resumed

after the end of Zuhr prayer when the attack was launched.

Shahnaj Begum, 30, a mother of a second grader told New Age that her daughter was traumatized because of the attack. 'She is not behaving normal,' Shahnaj said, adding she may take her kid to a psychologist if things do not improve.

'When I heard the noises, I rushed to the spot and found my daughter frightened and lying on the ground and crying,' she said.

She said her kid could not recognise her for a while and covered her face

with both hands when she wanted to pick her up.

When contacted, Sylhet Metropolitan Police additional deputy commissioner Zedan Al Musa told New Age that they visited the spot immediately but did not initiate any legal action.

'The Musallis said that they vandalised the stage as the loudspeakers of the cultural event disturbed the prayer,' the police officer said.

However, none was hurt, he said, adding that police are keeping a vigil on the Musallis and may take action if the school committee lodges a case.