

Officials Reluctant to Perform

Dawn

Wednesday, Oct 4, 2006

KARACHI, Oct 3: The dilapidated condition of the government-run schools shows that the education department officials are reluctant to perform their duties.

Majority of the problems can be solved even if they ensure their frequent visits to different schools. Some of the reasons that led to declining number of students are: shortage of classrooms, teachers, insufficient infrastructure and transfers of the teachers to far away stations. It was learnt that the officials concerned were not following the government policy of transfers and postings, as many of the teachers were heard to have been on the same station for the last 20 years. School heads too have lost interest in increasing the enrolment and raising the education standard.

SITE schools face staff, funds shortage

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KARACHI, Oct 3: Shortage of funds, staff and infrastructure has forced primary school teachers of SITE Town to stop granting further admissions.

Getting admission in private schools is very difficult for the children with poor family background and if they are denied to enter government-run schools they will be left illiterate.

Teachers say that it is their compulsion to keep the number of students limited. They say that officials concerned are well aware of the problems arising from the shortage of staff and rooms, but nothing concrete has been done in this regard.

During visits to different schools of the town, it was observed that teachers were reluctant to give admissions in KG class. In a few schools, there are separate classrooms for KG students while in majority of the primary schools KG and class-I students sit together.

It was observed that students of different classes when seated together could hardly understand what they were being taught.

There are many schools where the number of classrooms is either one or two. Similarly, many schools have one or two teachers each, compromising the standard of education, but the authorities concerned seemed least concerned to solve the problems. The details of facilities in some of the schools, which were recently visited by this correspondent, are the following:

Government Girls' Primary School, situated in Pathan Colony near Metroville, which has four teachers for 160 students in five classes needs at least three more teachers. The school located in a six-room building has been without sweeper, peon, and Sindhi language teacher since its inception. Electricity is drawn through an illegal hook. No new admission in KG class has been given so far mainly owing to the shortage of teachers.

The school headmistress while talking to Dawn admitted that people were frequently visiting the school for admissions of their kids. However, she said, new classes could not be started unless the number of teachers was increased. She said that the authorities concerned had already been informed about the situation.

Govt Boys' Primary School, located in Pathan Colony, has five teachers for 290 students. The headmaster said that three more teachers were required to meet the shortage.

Power supply to the school has been disconnected following which it is being drawn through illegally hooked connection. Neither water was available nor there was any toilet facility for hundreds of students and staff.

Govt Girls' Primary School, situated in Pathan Colony No 2, has six teachers except the Sindhi language teacher for 351 students of five classes. It was informed that the classes were overcrowded and at least two teachers were required to increase the number of class sections. Water is not available there, and the furniture also needs repairs. Almost all the classes are overcrowded and a bench meant for two or three students is being used by four to five students. There are 111 students in KG class and 103 in Class-I. Teachers say that there is no room to accommodate more students.

Govt Boys Primary Model School, located in UC-4, has six teachers with the exception of Sindhi language teacher. The headmistress urged the officials concerned to post at least four more teachers.

At present, the school has only three rooms while its upper portion has been in the use of district officer education for the last seven years. The staff informed this scribe that the officials concerned had acquired the rooms for DO (Education) offices on temporary basis, but it was not shifted from here as promised.

They said that the primary school was in dire need of the rooms, adding that the number of students could not be increased due to shortage of class rooms and staff. There are no ceiling fans in classrooms.

According to the teaching staff, the education department has failed to ensure proper distribution of free textbooks to all students. They said that the school needed 20 sets of textbooks for Class-III, 29 for ClassIV, and 37 sets for Class-V.

Govt Girls Primary School, ST32, is situated on the first storey of another school (ST-31), where 401 students are taught by six teachers. Classes are overcrowded, which can be judged from the fact that there are 90 students in KG and Class-I each.

The posts of Sindhi language teacher, watchman, sweeper and female servant are vacant. A sweeper, basically employed in another school, told Dawn that he was hired to sweep only one school, but he had been asked to serve both of them, which he said was unjust.

Besides, water is not available and the furniture needs repairs, which has been dumped in the corridors. The cemented sheets of three rooms needed replacement. A total of 125 new admissions were given in the Govt Girls Primary School ST No 32. Owing to shortage of rooms, no further admissions could be given. Teachers of both the schools propose that the vacant rooms of the nearby secondary school should be given to the primary schools so that the overcrowded classes could be divided into sections.

Govt Girls Primary School, ST17, is situated in Asifabad old Golimar, where four teachers are available for 202 students. The new admissions reported till Sept 25 was 34. Though the school has good number of classrooms, it has only one toilet for all students and teachers. Sindhi language teacher and a peon are yet to be appointed. It is situated on the first floor of another school.

Government primary school for girls, situated in UC- 4 of SITE Town, has six teachers except the Sindhi language teacher for 214 girls studying in five classes. The number of new admissions so far given was reported 30. The school has no sweeper and watchman. A teacher said that students were asked to clean and sweep classrooms, which not only wasted their precious time but also made their uniform dirty. Another five-room building is situated in the same compound, which has not been in use reportedly for the last seven years. Teachers said that the area was in need of a secondary school and the five-room building was a suitable place for it, if authorities concerned gave approval to the proposal.

Govt Girls Primary School, ST36, is located in Frontier Colony No 1 (UC-7 of SITE Town). It has seven teachers with the exception of Sindhi language teacher for 250 girls studying in six classes. The school lacks water facility. Students have to sit on mats as the damaged furniture has not been repaired.

The school building is situated along the main Banaras stream and the monsoon floods have washed away the school's boundary wall. Without any protective wall, the stream water in case of floods would enter into classrooms. The school gets power supply through illegally hooked connection.

Govt Girls Primary School, Ghausia Mohalla is also located in UC-7, where the number of students is about 300. The school has been upgraded to middle level, but owing to lack of staff and classrooms middle level classes could not be started so far. There are seven teachers in all except the Sindhi language teacher. It has 12 classrooms, with some rooms on second floor directly exposed to sunlight in the absence of roof. Peon is not available. Electricity has been drawn illegally without proper connection.

The headmistress said that in the past the number of students was about 400, which decreased to 300 mainly due to the shortage of staff.

Govt Boys Primary Khyber Muslim School, Frontier Colony No 1, has seven teachers for 301 students. The posts of Sindh language teacher and watchman have been vacant since long.

The headmistress said that due to teachers' shortage the existing staff were taking extra classes. There were 125 students in Class-II, she said, adding that at least two more teachers were required to meet the shortage.

Govt Girls Primary School, Labour Square, has only four teachers for 153 students. The students of class 7th and 8th are also taking classes here, as there is no lower secondary school in the area. There is no peon at the school having five classrooms. The school needs at least three more teachers and proper furniture. The secondary level school is far away from the area and it is need of the hour to upgrade it. It is one of the very few government schools, which has a playground for students. The school gets power supply through illegally hooked connection.

Govt Girls Primary School, ST27, is situated in Hasrat Mohani Colony (UC-1 of SITE). It has seven teachers for 109 students. There is no Sindhi language teacher. The new admissions of students reported till Sept 15 was 25. The school has neither peon nor any watchman. The principal complained of water and sewerage problems.

In UC-3, Govt Boys Primary School, Haroonabad, has five teachers for 96 boys studying in five classes. The school gets power supply through illegally hooked connection. The posts of Sindhi language teacher and watchman have been lying vacant since long. The number of new admissions till Sept 19 was reported 26.

Govt Girls Primary School, ST14, located in the same union council, has five teachers for 72 girls studying in five classes. The school has no Sindhi language teacher, watchman and peon. The furniture was reported insufficient and the existing one needed repairs. The staff told this scribe that on different occasions thieves took away two water motors, 12 ceiling fans, iron grills and windows. The headmistress stressed the need of posting a full time watchman so that the interruption being created by the outsiders could be stopped.

The Sindhi-medium Govt Boys Primary School, Bunde Ali Mukhi, located in old Golimar (UC2) has four teachers for 91 students. Water and toilet facilities are next to nil. The posts of sweeper and watchman have been vacant since long.

Govt Boys Primary School (J/M) Aqsa is situated in Bawani Chali, UC-4 of the town. There are nine teachers for 240 boys studying in seven classrooms. The new admissions reported till Sept 25 was 100. The school has no toilet for the students. The posts of Sindhi language teacher and sweeper are lying vacant. The furniture needs to be repaired. It was learnt that the free textbooks have not been provided for the Class-IV and Class-V.

Govt Girls Primary School, ST-16, situated near Bismillah hotel in old Golimar, has 11 teachers for 300 students. The new admissions till Sept 26 were reported as 150. The school has no watchman, Sindhi language teacher and peon. The insufficient furniture needed repairs. The staff disclosed that 20 sets of free books for the Class-II were yet to be provided. The school also needs nine ceiling fans.

Govt Girls Primary School, ST1, situated in old Golimar, has 10 teachers for 372 students. It has no watchman. There are 10 classrooms. The staff disclosed that 12 sets of the free books for the Class-IV had not been provided so far.