

2012

Report on the visit to Narayanpur and Duani Char of Malda District of West Bengal on 6th & 7th November, 2012



Submitted by

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11/12/2012

Itinerary

6th November, 2012:

Visit to Narayanpur Char (North)

SSK
Unused building of DRD Cell
Site of Primary School and
Open air Primary School (Narayanpur Char Prathamik Vidyalaya)

Narayanpur Char (South)

Primary School housed in a building under construction

Visit to Duani Char

Site of Primary School
Existing Location of Primary School in the corridor of a Police Camp

7th November

Visit to Gaur

Ramkeli Rup Sanatan Prathamik Vidyalaya

Team Members

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Background of the Visit

A direction was given to the State Administration on 20th October, 2011 in a Public Hearing on the complaints on Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 by the NCPCR to take immediate steps for initiating action in setting up primary schools for out of school children living in the areas of Gangetic Chars by December 2011. In view of that in the 23rd day of November, 2011 a Primary School was inaugurated by the DPO-SSM Malda and ADM (G) at Narayanpur Char (N). On the same day a Primary School in Duani Char of the same Manikchak Block of Malda district was inaugurated. Teachers were appointed in this purpose and it was decided that land will be identified for setting up of these schools in two chars. To reach the inaccessible Duani char a boat with boatman were hired to help teachers to cross the river Ganga in the morning and after the school. It was also directed to the district administration by the team of NCPCR led by Mr. V.K. Tikoo to provide healthcare services through outreach posts during the interim period. He also directed to the local BDOs to ensure distribution of mid-day meals within the next 7 days and arrange to train local person from the villagers as ANMs, in the main land and to be sent back to these chars to work for the villages. The present visit was to follow up the progress of setting up of the schools in Narayanpur and Duani Char, children's enrolment, facilities provided to them and teaching in schools.

Narayanpur Char

Location:

Narayanpur Char is located at the Western side of the Malda District towards Rajmahal Plateau and at the border of Jharkhand. This is a new landmass developed by the River Ganga and the river is surrounded the landmass. As per local people the area of the char is about 40 sq. Km. A part of the char is under Jharkhand, but majority is under West Bengal, which is again divided into Narayanpur North and Narayanpur South. Previously, the Narayanpur was an undivided part of Malda or main land. But encroachment of the course of River Ganga and its subsequent erosion destroyed the land of previous Narayanpur and has develop a new char (new landmass) in between the river. Here people migrated from the mainland, settled here and name of the char as Narayanpur.

Population:

By the statement of a habitant of the char the population of the char is about 5000 including children of over 1500. This includes all below 18 year (No census yet been done in this char). The area is inhabited by people of Bin Community, who are engaged with fishing occupation mainly in the River Ganga and partly on agriculture. They all are known as Chowdhury.

Present Status of School:

South Narayanpur Char:

SSK: It was noted that in the South Narayanpur Char, there is a SSK running since 2000. At present 214 students are in the centre, age group of 5 to 9 years. Mid-day meal is provided to children of this centre.



SSK at Narayanpur Char (South)

Narayanpur Char Prathamik Vidyalaya (South): DPSC, Malda has sanctioned a new Primary School at the South Narayantala Char, very close to the existing SSK. The School has started in the month of February, 2012 for out of school children. At present the school is running under the shade of a Tree with 112 children of age group of 5-9. They did not receive school dresses and books from SSM, Malda yet, and no Mid-day meal facility is available till date for children. These children everyday take mid-day meal from the SSK. A teacher has appointed in this school but he comes from the mainland and as a result he is very infrequent in the school. A Local educated boy is assisting in teaching of children. As the school is running under the

shade of a tree, during rain and rainy season the school remains closed for whole day. It was also observed that same children attending both SSK and Primary School. We did not find any reason to set up Primary School adjacent to SSK.



Teacher & students of the Prathamik Vidyalaya

Building of DRD Cell: A building is existed, adjacent to the SSK in the Narayanpur Char South in good condition, which is found vacant since last two years. The building of DRD cell and could be an ideal option for opening upper primary school, which is an urgent need of this char, as there are a large number of children in this zone, who are found out of school. In absence of upper primary school, children are going out of the char to engage in different occupations and becoming child labour. Only few go out for study. SSM has recorded 55 children in the south Narayanpu, who are out of school. Local people reported that there is an Upper Primary school in this char, but it is under the

Jharkhand Government. Since the school is Hindi medium, Head teacher has refused to take admission of these children who studied in Bengali medium under the West Bengal Primary Board.



Vacant Building of DRD Cell

Case Study 1

Sunita Choudhury, 11 years old girl, born in this char is studying in class IV since August'12 in the newly started Prathamik Vidyalaya at Narayanpur Char (South). Before that she studied in the SSK. But till date her reading and writing skill is not developed as per her age. She speaks in a dialect, which is a combination of Bengali and Jharkhandi and do not understand properly what is written in her book in Bengali. She is happy to attend the school. She likes to continue her study but after class IV, no Upper Primary school is there. Else she has to work in field with her family till her marriage or parents might send her to distance place for work.



North Narayanpur Char

Prathamik Vidyalaya:

The school is established in the month of November, 2012. The building is under construction. At present two rooms with roof have been constructed, though floor is not ready, plastering, setting up of doors and windows, toilets etc. are all yet to develop. There is at present 150 children enrolled in class I to IV. The major problem reported by the local people is, the only teacher, deputed in this school by the Govt. hardly comes more than 5-6 days in a month. The school remains closed many days in a month. A lady, Class X passed and a Person, Class XII passed at present are managing the school on behalf of the Teacher. Mid-day meal facility is available in this school as reported by the students. Students have already received dresses and books from Sarva Shiksha Mission, Malda.

Note: There is a demand from local people to appoint teacher from the Char, as Para Teacher, as many of them have desired qualification. Their observation is that, children know the dialect which is a mix of Bengali and Jharkhandi. Only local teachers can teach in the mother tongues of children.



Prathamik Vidyalaya at Narayanpur Char (North)

A lady is managing the class

Case Study 2

Vikas Chowdhury, a 9 years old boy, born in this Char is now studying in class IV of the newly started Prathamik Vidyalaya in Narayanpur Char (South) since August'12. Prior to this school he studied in the SSK and till go to SSK to take his Mid-day meal, as because at present mid-day meal facility is not present in this school. Though the SSK is here since 2000 and children go there, but reading and writing skill is not properly developed among them. Vikas can write but cannot read thoroughly and his understanding on language is not developed adequately. This is because of their dialect, which is different to the medium of study. These children do not understand Bengali well, thus could not understand the language of books. Local teachers are assisting them in their understanding and thus a tendency of taking private tuition is present in this village. A local educated man is taking private tuition of children including Vikas at afternoons in the vacant building of the DRD Cell. The boy wants to continue his study but in absence of upper primary school in this Char under the West Bengal Board, he is under doubt whether he could continue his study or not.



Location:

Duani Char is located at the Western side of the Malda District towards Rajmahal Plateau and at the border of Jharkhand. This is a new landmass developed by the River Ganga and the river is surrounded the landmass. The Char is completely under the West Bengal Jurisdiction.

Population:

About 2500 people are residing in this char; out of them about 1100 are children below 18 years. Like Narayanpur, people of Duani Char are also engaged in fishing and are of Bin Community. Apart from fishing they are also engaged in agriculture.

Present Status:

After the visit of the team of NCPCR, and subsequent announcement of the establishment of school, initiative has been taken from the Sarva Shiksha Mission, Malda to run the school. In this purpose a teacher has been appointed and a boat with a boatman worth Rs 2000/- per month has been arranged. The school though at present is running at the veranda of a Police camp has enrolled 150 children of 6-9 years of age group. Mid-day meal facility is also present for children. For the purpose of the construction of the school a land has been identified, where NRGM has provided assistance to raise the land to make it suitable for construction as the area has a problem of water logging during rain. As continuous erosion is very much active along the river side of this char it has been suggested by the Sarva Shiksha Mission, Malda to develop the school building in semi-permanent nature with portable materials, those can be fixed wherever necessary. In spite of the all initiatives from the Government's end, it has been seen that the only teacher deputed for this school is very much infrequent, school hardly run 5-6 days in a month. Remembering about the Mid-day meal a local person reported that children here received the Mid-day meal 6 days in the month of June and 8 days in July. After that no children get Mid-day meal. The school is found closed since August, as teacher is not going to this school.

Before the establishment of this Prathamik Vidyalaya, children were deprived of any facility of education, as there is no SSK or ICDS for children, which has a need in this char. Sarva Shiksha Mission, Malda is trying to establish ICDS centre at least in 10 locations of different chars.



Duani Char Prathamik Vidyalaya at Police Camp

Gaur

Location:

Gaur is the ancient city located 15 km south-east to the Malda District towards the Bangladesh border. It is the ancient and historical site of Bengal. It is the part of mainland and connected by metal roads with Malda city and rest of India and Bangladesh. This is highly populated land where people are engaged in number of occupations including agriculture and cottage industry, sericulture etc. It is one of the important tourist spots of Bengal and here a large number of people across India and abroad come every year.

School Visited: On 7th November, 2012

Team Members:

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Ramkeli Rup Sanatan Prathamik Vidyalaya

The school is established in 1961 and one of the old and important schools of this area. The school building is found completely RTE compliance and in good condition. Present enrollment is over 180, but at present only one teacher is teaching in this school. This is hampering the day to day teaching of all children, thus children are depriving their right to education in spite of all amenities and infrastructure. The school is only eight kilometre away from Malda Town and communicated nicely by road by regular bus services. In spite of that the school is depriving of required number of teachers.

DPO, SSM, Malda as a visiting member has thoroughly noted the matter and stated that he will discuss the matter with ADM(G) for rationalisation of teachers as per enrolment as early as possible.



Ramkeli Rup Sanatan Prathamik Vidyalaya

Suggestions & Recommendations:

1. More teacher is immediately required in all chars to maintain pupil teacher ratio
2. Rationalisation of the number of teachers as per enrolment could be one alternative
3. Immediately requires Upper Primary School in every Char for ensuring right to education till completing elementary education and elimination of child labour.
4. ICDS centres in every char is immediately required for children
5. Concerned School Inspectors should visit schools in every char at regular interval as teachers in two chars are found very much irregular.
6. Mid-day meal facility should be there in every school and should run everyday
7. Though the provision of Para-teacher is not present now but considering the situation of poor communication and dialect problem, government should re-think on this matter and appoint Para-teacher from local educated people.
8. Strong monitoring should be developed for ensuring right to education of children