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# NEWAGE

## 53pc teacher vacancies hit CHT edn hard

Sadiqur Rahman  02 July, 2026, 00:22



*Students attend a class at Rowangchari Government High School in Bandarban recently.  
| New Age photo*

A Class X science student, Borna Shree Tanchangya, travels nearly two kilometres from her hill-perched home every weekday to attend class at Rowangchari Government High School in Bandarban.

The girl's dream of securing a good score in the Secondary School Certificate examination is clouded as her school runs with 11 teachers against 27 approved posts, with no teachers for physics, mathematics and biology.



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The situation at Rowangchari Government High School reflects a wider crisis across the three districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts where 337 out of 640, nearly 53 per cent of approved teacher posts in 24 government high schools, remain vacant.

Teacher shortages in the CHT region, comprising Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban, is far more severe than the national average—nearly 20 per cent of the approved teaching posts in government secondary schools nationwide are vacant, according to official data.

Borna relies on private tuition after school to cover up the absence of classroom-based learning.

‘I am worried whether I’d pass the SSC depending only on private tutoring,’ Borna told New Age on June 22.

Among the 11 teachers currently posted in Rowangchari Government High School, two are on study leave since December 2025 to pursue their Bachelor of Education degree.

To manage the gap, the Bandarban Hill District Council, however, has appointed two teachers on an ad-hoc basis.

‘The school has 507 students—289 girls and 218 boys. Just imagine how difficult it is for a few teachers to manage so many students,’ said senior teacher Bouddhi Chandra Tanchangya, who has been serving as acting head teacher since March.

The CHT region is home to diverse ethnic minority communities, many of whom live in remote areas where educational opportunities are already limited.

In Bandarban, 136 of 223 approved positions of teacher in eight government high schools are vacant. In Khagrachhari, 109 of 242 posts in 10 government high schools remain unfilled, while in Rangamati, 92 of 175 posts in six government high schools are vacant, according to the three district education offices.

Eawai Prue Marma, assistant head teacher of Bandarban Government Girls’ High School, said teacher shortages were persistent across the three hill districts for years.

According to the district education office, Eawai Prue’s school has 52 approved teaching posts of which an overwhelming 34 posts are vacant with no teachers for mathematics, physics and biology.

A teacher since 1988, Eawai says, ‘We teachers had repeatedly informed the previous lawmakers about the crisis, but the situation remains the same.’

The situation deeply worries the parents.

Chawo Sing Prue, father of two sons and a daughter, said that his children studied at Rowangchari Government High School until Class VIII before he transferred them to a private school in Bandarban town.

‘Education in the town is costly, but I have to bear the expenses to ensure my children’s access to the teachers they need,’ he said.

For some students, the shortage has already altered their educational aspirations.

Chandra Tangchanya, mother of a seventh-grade student also of Rowangchari Government High School, said her daughter initially wanted to study science, but eventually went for the humanities because the school lacked science teachers.

National minority rights activist Ilira Dewan, who served as a member of the Local Government Reform Commission in 2025, says that teachers recruited from the plains are often posted to remote hill districts but rarely remain there for long.

‘After securing transfers through administrative channels, many return to the plains, while the posts remain vacant for extended periods,’ she said.

Seeking intervention, members of the Rowangchari upazila network committee, formed by non-governmental organisation Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh, visited the Bandarban deputy commissioner’s office on June 9.

The deputy commissioner, Md Saniul Ferdous, declined to accept their memorandum, saying that the district administration had little authority over

the issue.

Contacted on June 23, Saniul told New Age that the Hill District Council oversaw primary education in the district, while secondary and higher secondary education was controlled by the Ministry of Education.

‘The district administration has no role in teacher recruitment. We can only inform the higher authorities about shortages,’ he said.

Under the Chittagong Hill Tracts Treaty, widely known as the peace treaty of 1997, the three hill district councils were expected to oversee primary education in mother tongues and secondary education.

In practice, however, the councils currently exercise authority only over primary-level recruitment.

Bandarban Hill District Council chairman Professor Thanzama Lushai said that the council’s ability to address shortages in secondary schools was limited.

‘We can only inform the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education about teacher shortages. Apart from that, if project funds are available, we can appoint a few teachers temporarily,’ he told New Age.

According to Thanzama, 42 temporary teachers are currently working in different educational institutions in Bandarban under such arrangements.

Director general of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education Professor Khan Moinuddin Al Mahmud Sohel told New Age on June 25 that they hoped the teacher crisis in the CHT would be addressed soon.



Saying that the recruitment of secondary school teachers lay with the Bangladesh Public Service Commission, the DG said, 'We have requested the PSC to recruit 5,000 teachers'.

A meeting involving the education minister, PSC officials and DSHE representatives was recently held, he said, adding, 'We hope a solution to the teacher shortages in the hill districts will be found soon.'

Rights activist Ilira believes that full implementation of the CHT accord could empower hill district councils to respond more effectively to local education needs.

She also notes that low salaries and limited benefits often discourage teachers from remaining in remote hill areas for long.

'Teachers serving in difficult and remote terrains should receive decent incentives,' she says.

She has also suggested recruitment of more teachers from the national minority communities in the hills to address the issue.

'The government may arrange a special recruitment programme to engage educated unemployed ethnic minority youths in teaching,' said Ilira Dewan.

Tags

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