

Projapoti Daycare – Rifat and Monira

Rifat and Monira are 4 and 5 year old siblings going to MATI Projapoti Daycare. Their family conditions should serve as an example why even a considerably moderate fee, can still be an incredible burden for some families.

As the family is traumatized by several incidents, we do not take a photo of them to respect their privacy and dignity. We also request, that should this case-study be replicated anywhere, the names should be changed to protect their identity.

Rifat and Monira are the two youngest among five children. The family lives in the slum-settlement “Akua”. Their father is a rickshaw-driver, who rents a Rickshaw on daily basis. Due to health issues he can only work 10 days a month, as he is extremely weak. When he is able to work he can earn between 100 Tk and 200 Tk. Mother Hazera works on an hourly basis in a household nearby, where she earns 1500 Tk monthly. The rent of their small tin-shed hut is 2000 Tk per month.

Besides Rifat and Monira, the family has three other daughters. Runa, aged 7, goes to class 2. Minara is 10 years old and already has a full day of chores: after sunrise she goes to the Madrassa to study the Koran, from 9 – 11 she goes to work as a househelp, from 12 - 4 pm she goes to school, where she attends class 5. For her work she gets 1000 Tk monthly which help to feed her family. The oldest sister, Kakoli, is 14 years old. She had to quit school after class 5 due to the financial situation of her family. She is also working as a househelp and earns 1500 TK per month. The mother tells us that all employers are decent people who pay the salaries on time and sometimes give a little extra, like a set of clothes.

Thus the 7 family members have 6000 Tk per month for survival, minus 2000 Tk for their hut.

When we ask about the nutrition situation, how many meals they normally have, the mother starts crying and tells us, how the evening before the rice was finished and she took the last Takas they had to buy flour to make ruti. When making the ruti she realized the flour was rotten, so they had no meal in the evening. That morning she had gone to her employer to tell him she could not come to work that day as Rifat was ill, and to ask him for 50 TK out of her pay. With this money she planned to go to the market again, buy more flour, mix it with

the rotten one, and try to make ruti again. “When Allah is merciful, we eat”, is how the mother assesses the situation.

The way we see it, this family is not able to pay a monthly fee for their two children, yet the mother is depending on sending them to the Daycare so that she and the eldest sister can earn an income. Every Taka they earn should be used to provide meals for the family.