



Floating Schools in Bangladesh

Article: Floating Schools in Bangladesh: Learning on water

In many parts of the world, going to school means walking, biking, or taking a bus. But in parts of Bangladesh, where heavy rains and floods are common, children attend school in a very different way, by boat.

During the rainy season, much of the countryside becomes covered in water. Roads disappear under the floods, and buildings become unreachable. For many families, this means children cannot go to school for months. But instead of giving up on education, some communities came up with a creative solution: floating schools.

Floating schools are boats that have been turned into classrooms. These boats travel to villages and pick up children who can't reach regular schools. Inside, they have blackboards, books, fans powered by solar panels, and even internet access in some cases. The students sit on benches, learn from trained teachers, and continue their lessons, even while surrounded by water.

This idea was developed by a Bangladeshi non-profit group called Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha. Since 2002, they have created dozens of floating schools, libraries, and health clinics to help rural communities that are often cut off by flooding.

The floating schools don't just teach reading and math, they also help children learn about climate change, health, and local farming techniques. In a country facing rising sea levels and regular natural disasters, these lessons are just as important as school subjects.

Floating schools show how innovation and education can work together. Even in the most difficult conditions, learning doesn't have to stop; it just needs to float.



Vocabulary Practice:

Word / Phrase	Definition
Flood	A large amount of water covering land that's usually dry.
Reachable	Able to be reached or accessed.
Non-profit	An organization that works to help others, not to make money.
Solar panel	A device that collects energy from the sun to make electricity.
Climate change	Long-term changes in weather and temperature patterns.
Innovation	A new idea or method that solves a problem.
Countryside	Areas outside of cities; rural places.
Rising sea levels	When oceans grow higher and cover more land, often due to climate change.
Health clinic	A place where people receive basic medical care.
Rural	Relating to the countryside, not the city.

Comprehension Questions

1. Why are floating schools necessary in parts of Bangladesh?
2. What features do floating schools have inside them?
3. Who started the idea of floating schools in Bangladesh?
4. What other topics do students learn in floating schools besides reading and math?
5. How do floating schools help solve the problem of flooded roads?

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think about the idea of floating schools?
2. Have you ever studied or learned in an unusual location? What was it like?
3. How do you think climate change is affecting education in other countries?
4. Would you enjoy learning on a boat? Why or why not?
5. What are some creative ways to make education more accessible in your country?
6. Do you think schools in cities could learn anything from floating schools?
7. How can governments support students during natural disasters?
8. What's more important: a fancy school building or access to good teachers and books?
9. How do you feel when you see stories about people solving problems in new ways?
10. If you could design your own school, what would it look like?