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Rights of education for disabled stressed

CHITTAGONG, Nov. 6:—President of Society for Care and Education of Mentally Retarded, Bangladesh (SCEMRB) D.P. Barja on Friday strongly pleaded for the rights of education for the disabled including mentally retarded in the strategy for universal education for all citizens by the year 2000, reports BSS.

Speaking as chief guest at a seminar here held under the auspices of SCEMRB, Chittagong branch D.P. Barja also the Managing Director and Chief Editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) said the basic rights of disabled comprising about ten per cent of the country's population need to be recognised in the overall strategy of development planning. He said about three per cent on the country's population according to WHO estimate constitute the size of mentally retarded population in any country.

The day-long seminar presided over by Mohammad Muslem President of SCEMRB Chittagong branch was addressed among others by Col Dr Mohammad Labibuddin Khan, Director of Chittagong Medical College Hospital as special guest. Safi-qur Rahman Chairman of SCEMRB, Chittagong divisional catchment area programme, Mr Muslemuddin Ahmed Chowdhury, Headmaster of Nasirabad Government Boys High School and Joyketu Barua, Vice-President of SCEMRB Chittagong branch.

Mr. Barua in his speech said programmes for education, training and rehabilitation of the mentally retarded should be extended to the rural areas. He said a national net-

work committee on community based rehabilitation has been constituted recently with the initiative of SCEMRB for the rehabilitation of the disabled persons with the involvement of all organisation working for the disabled.

Giving a background of activities of the SCEMRB in the national and international fields Mr Barua said Bangladesh is poised to hold the Asian conference for mentally retarded in 1997. He emphasised the need for rehabilitation of the mentally retarded and enactment of law in the Parliament for protecting the rights of the mentally retarded and ensuring protection of their property rights in future.

The day-long seminar on catchment area programme for community awareness about mentally retardation split into three sessions highlighted the problems and programmes for the mentally retarded in educational integration in normal schools medical services and rehabilitation.

Dr. Sayed Mahfuzul Haq, head of the Department of Psychiatry, Chittagong Medical College and Dr Ekhlasur Rahman, child specialist Chittagong Medical College, Ataul Hakim, former President of Chittagong Press Club, S C Roy Chowdhury, General Secretary SCEMRB branch, Jahangir Alam senior guide teacher of SCEMRB Chittagong, Abdul Munaf, Thana Education Officer Kotwali, Advocate Samir Kar, General Secretary, SCEMRB, Feni branch and Shafi Majumdar of Comilla branch were among others who participated in the different session of the day-long seminar.