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## Ensure spread of edn: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Tuesday called for concerted efforts of all irrespective of their position, profession and party affiliation to ensure the spread of education in the country, reports UNB.

"A national issue like education calls for united efforts... the burden of illiteracy will increase hindering the development of the country if we fail in our duty", she said in a message on the eve of the International Literacy Day today (Wednesday).

"We should take more initiatives to make all the people of the country literate and involve majority of the people in the education programme through strong motivational campaign. Education should be turned into a social movement", she said.

The Prime Minister said her government had undertaken some epoch-making programmes to enter

the 21st century as a self-reliant and dignified nation by transforming the country's increasing population into human resources.

She said primary education has been made compulsory and the semi-non-formal education programme is being implemented to strengthen the mass literacy programme. Efforts have also been made to allow the poor children have access to education through "Food for Education Programme".

A Mass Education Department has been created to ensure proper coordination and implementation of this programmes, she added.

Begum Zia said the observance of the International Literacy Day is aimed at increasing awareness about education and stressed that illiteracy should be removed to pave the way for development.