

Allout efforts must for removing illiteracy: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday called for launching of united and integrated social movement to free the country from the curse of illiteracy within the shortest possible time, reports BSS.

"People of all classes and professions as well as all government agencies would be involved with this massive movement for eradication of illiteracy through proper utilisation of nation's limited resources, she said local government institutions would be involved and their accountability would be ensured in this regard, she added.

The Prime Minister was addressing as chief guest a discussion and prize distribution ceremony, organised by the Primary and Mass Education Division observance of the Interna-

tional Literacy Day.

Held at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium, the discussion on the role of non-formal education in eradication of illiteracy within the next 10 years was also participated by Education Minister A.S.H.K. Sadek as special guest. Eminent educationist Dr. Abdulah Al Muti Sarfuddin presented the key-note paper in the subject while Prof. Dr. Siddiqur Rahman and Dhaka University and former Secretary and Adviser Kazi Fazlur Rahman took part in the discussion.

Secretary of Primary and Mass Education Division Syed Amir-Ul Mulk gave an address of welcome while UNESCO Resident Representative in Dhaka Ansar Ali Khan read out the message of the UN-

ESCO Director General, issued on this occasion.

The Prime Minister said to make the literacy movement a success people of all walks of life, social and voluntary organisation, and public and private institutions have to work together. Local public representatives also have a significant role to play in this connection as they are the direct sharers of the weal and woe of the people, she added. The government would provide necessary incentives to make the movement fruitful. The Prime Minister also underlined the role of mass media and called for playing its dynamic role to motivate the people in removing illiteracy from society.

The Prime Minister said that the
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Allout efforts

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job of moving illiteracy from a poor country like Bangladesh was not possible without the active and meaningful participation of the people of all walks of life. She noted that in the meantime various institutions and agencies including a number of voluntary organisations have taken up programmes to remove illiteracy. The support and assistances from UNESCO and various other international organisations and donor agencies would be further increased in future on the thrust to make the country free from illiteracy, she added.

While soliciting the active support and cooperation of all people irrespective of opinion and identity to make positive contribution in this regard, the Prime Minister said, "let us all make a pledge to free the nation from the curse of illiteracy within the stipulated time."

The Prime Minister said that removing illiteracy in a massive scale was indispensable for opening the door of a new life through spreading light of education among the illiterate people. Education is essential for making people conscious of their responsibility, right and dignity as well as to intensify the pace of development, she added. Education has no other alternative to establish happy and prosperous Bangladesh, she said.

The Prime Minister said that considering the prime importance of education in the national development, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had laid highest priority to expansion of education. Bangabandhu incorporated education in the constitution as state responsibility and constitutional obligation. Within a short period of only three years and a half, Bangabandhu, despite having serious resource constraints in the war-torn country, had nationalised primary education and given, 1,44,660 teachers of 36,165 primary schools the status of government servants.

The Prime Minister referred to the constitution of Dr Kudrat-E-Khuda

Education Commission by Bangabandhu for formulating a modern, scientific and technical education system. The commission, among others, recommended adult education centre in each village, appointment to trained teachers, use of social establishments as education centres and employment of full-time officials and employees from the centres to thana level to introduce a new trend in education system of the country, she mentioned. The Prime Minister, however, regretted that after the tragic assassination of the Father of the Nation no government ever took any steps to materialise these realistic recommendations of the Dr. Khuda Commission.

The Education Minister said that all wise suggestions and recommendations of this discussion would be considered with the highest priority and steps would be taken to materialise them. The government is committed nationally and internationally to removing illiteracy from the country. He hoped that the new government would be able to present the nation a realistic, progressive and time-befitting education policy.

In his key-note paper Dr. Al Muti Sarfuddin suggested a strong social movement with the involvement of people of all walks of life including the government and non-government organisations to make successful the gigantic task of freeing the country from illiteracy within the stipulated time.

The Prime Minister also awarded medal to the Chairman of Alampur Union of Kushtia Zilla for his contribution to non-formal education. The others who received the awards from the Prime Minister were "Gono Shahajjo Sangsta," "Dhaka Ahsania Mission," "Lalmonirhat Sathik Sakkharata Samity" and "Friends in Village Development" of Khadimganj under Sylhet.