

PM calls for new curriculum to suit need of time

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday asked for incorporating such subjects in the curriculum as suit the need of time by discarding those devoid of patriotism and morality to save the country and the nation from erosion of values, reports BSS.

Inaugurating a 5-day conference on universal primary education in Bangladesh the Prime Minister said that owing to the failure of formulation of a national education policy even after 25 years of independence, neither the quality nor the quantity of education was developed.

Held at the Hotel Sonargaon, the inaugural session was presided over by the chairman of the conference preparatory committee Kazi Fazlur Rahman while Education Minister A.S.H.K. Sadek attended as special guest. The session was also addressed by former central Education Secretary of India Anil Bordia, Asst. Director of UNICEF (programme) Dr. Manzur Ahmed and conference preparatory committee member and executive director of BRAC F.H. Abed.

Referring to the fast deterioration of the education standard, the Prime Minister said that during the last 21 years education has become "consumer goods" with aim and end to earn profit.

Educational institutions which were the seat of culture for knowledge and learning and workshop of making men today turned into the hub of terrorists, she said.

This transformation of education into commodities, she said, had injected negative influence on the mind and mentality of the teachers. As a result like all other commodities, education has also become scarce for the teeming poor, she said adding "in silence and solitude, we have become the victims of these terrible gobblets of the undeclared regimentation of education policy."

The Prime Minister said that education is not only a basic need but also a fundamental human right, which is incorporated in the article 26 of 1984 declaration universal education system was also laid down in the article 17 of the country's constitution, she said.

Turning back to the post-liberation period the Prime Minister said that the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had declared that education would be the main and first weapon of the nation-building thrust.

To attain the objective, she said, Bangabandhu during the short period of his administration had formulated Dr. Kudrat-e-Khuda

education policy, nationalised primary education, given primary teachers the status of government servants, set up eleven thousand new primary schools. Besides, Bangabandhu made primary education compulsory, women education upto class eight free, distribution of educational tools "free" of cost and introduced tiffin-system in the schools, she

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added.

But she regretted that the Father of the Nation was assassinated at a moment when he was out to implement a pro-people scientific and pragmatic education policy suggested by Dr Khuda Commission. During Awami League administration in 1974 the teacher-student ratio was 1:45 which now rose to 1:60. Besides the cost of education aids was also increased manifold while the standard deteriorated.

Referring to the approaching of the new century, the Prime Minister said "we will not be able to enter the coming century unless we could build ourselves as an educated nation". She sought cooperation of all irrespective of opinion and party affiliation to assist her government in its efforts to fulfil this hard task the nation has vested on it. "We need specific plan of action and national consensus to reach the target," she added.

Lauding the organisers to hold "this timely seminar on this priority issue" the Prime Minister said that her government would give utmost importance to the suggestions to be evolved from the five-day deliberations by the eminent thinkers and policy-makers from home and abroad.