

Resources to be mobilised for expansion of edn: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Thursday said that her government would mobilise all resources and strength for the expansion of education with the ultimate objective to bring progress and prosperity for the nation, reports BSS.

She called upon all including public representatives, teachers, government officials, NGOs, voluntary organisation and all sections of society, irrespective of opinions, to launch a united thrust to free the nation from the curse of illiteracy.

"It has been proved beyond doubt that socio-economic condition of the people could be improved only through raising the standard of education and making it available for all", she said, while addressing as the chief guest the prize distribution ceremony in connection with the National Primary Education Week '96.

Held in the Osmani Memorial Auditorium, the function was also addressed by Education Minister ASHK Sadek and Secretary Primary and Mass Education Syed Amir-ul-Mulk.

The Prime Minister said economic growth, social welfare, environment development and expansion of democratic culture were deeply related with the spread of education. Considering these aspects her government has given outmost importance to education and the highest priority to education in the national budget.

The Prime Minister said that her government was firm to ensure admission and attendance of students, stability of educational institutions and decrease the rate of dropouts through developing educational infrastructures, education reform

teachers training and distribution of text books free of cost at the primary level.

"We would attain the goals if we could successfully launch a social movement on the basis of national consensus for the expansion of education", she said.

The Prime Minister said that despite having rich history and cultural heritage, we are lagging behind because of long misrule and exploitation. "We are lagging behind economically also because the vast majority of the population are illiterate". She said all development endeavours of the nation were being frustrated because of the curse of illiteracy. "Our thrust for attaining national growth and prosperity would be a far cry unless we could eradicate this curse from society", she said.

The Prime Minister said the South-East Asian countries, which were much more backward than Bangladesh during the seventies, have crossed us in education, economy and industrialisation. "Education is the basic contribution towards attaining their such success", she added.

Sheikh Hasina said the majority of the children were deprived of getting

education while 38 per cent of the school going children become dropouts because of various handicaps. The quality of our primary education is not also satisfactory, she said, adding that "we want to put an end to such situation". "We want to utilise our all wealth and strength for translating into reality our dream for a prosperous future", she added.

The Prime Minister said her government was determined to attain economic self-reliance and establish literate society through the eradication of illiteracy within the next ten years. She called for a united thrust by all to create education facilities for all children, men, women and aged people.

The Prime Minister recalled that the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had incorporated primary education in the country's Constitution as the fundamental right of people, realising the importance of education at early period of our independence.

In a war-ravaged country Bangabandhu nationalised, 36,165 primary schools, gave the status of government teachers to one lakh 55

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thousand 442 primary teachers and set up over 11 thousand new government primary schools.

Later, the Prime Minister distributed medals, cash awards and certificates among 116 persons including students, teachers, officials and persons playing pivotal role in the expansion of education.

Sibrat Adarsha Government Primary School of Gaibandha was adjudged the best primary school for the National Award while the National Gold Medal for best teacher went to Begum Piara Akhter, Headmistress of Bholanagar Government Primary School of Brahmanbaria.

The National Award for best official outside Primary and Mass Education Department was won by Kazi Farid Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner of Rajshahi while Md. Nurul Amin Chowdhury received the National Award as best officer of the department. Mr. Birendra Lal Chakravarti of Khagrachhari received the award as best educationist. Sheikh Mohammad Ruhul Amin of Magura PTI won the National Award as best instructor while the best cub teacher award was received by Mohammad Sariatullah of Uttar Mirwarishpur Primary School of Begumganj. Jessor Institute Primary School got the National Award as best cub organisation while the award for best managing committee went to Latachali Government Primary School of Kuakata under Patuakhali district.

NJM Ash Sakib of College Para Government Primary School got the national award for being the best reciter while Rashedul Hossain Snighdya Chashmayarahmat Government Primary School of Mymensingh got the award for patriotic song. Kohinoor Akhter Bithi of Senpara Parbata Government Primary School received the national award in the branch of extempore speech while Jebalun Noor of Khampara Government School of Chandpur received the award in solo acting. AKM Jamiul Islam of City Government Primary School of Manikganj, Marina Abul Ana of Mahmudia Primary School of Barisal and Sabir Morshed Shishir of Banaripara received national medals in drawing, dance and cub respectively.