

Literacy Drive

Education is the life-line of a country's development. This has been a proven fact ever since the dawn of human civilization. Accordingly our national development strategy also aims at freeing the land from the curse of illiteracy. And it is noteworthy that the literacy campaign initiated by the late President Ziaur Rahman is gaining momentum throughout the country everyday. Efforts hitherto made in this direction have reportedly started producing good results. In the Rangpur district, for example, out of 42 lakh illiterate people, about one lakh 64 thousand—one lakh 15 thousand men and 40 thousand women—have by now been given elementary education. Steps are being taken to bring all into the light of education in this and other districts. Eradication of illiteracy will indeed instill self-respect in the people—the self-respect that is certain to help them keep pace with advancement of the time. But mere learning of three R's would not serve the interest. All-round progress and prosperity of the nation depends on how well our human resources are converted into a productive force. Education has therefore to be made practical, so that the youth can gain such knowledge and skill in their respective fields that would enable them to start a career without wasting time and energy after they complete their studies. In addition, such knowledge and skill will streng-

then their confidence so vital for them to make a mark of their own in their fields.

Here it may also be mentioned that if our youths in most cases after completion of their studies have to struggle hard to find a career satisfying their desire, the cases of the children belonging to the poor and low-income groups are still worse. A great many of these children are compelled to give up schooling at an early age to take a vocation to supplement their family income. As such they live in utter hardship throughout life. This hard reality calls for introducing vocational education and training at all stages of academic institutions. Even those for whom literacy campaign has been launched should be given such education and training after they receive elementary education.

Quite aware of the situation, the government is making efforts to make education practical. What is however needed is to widen scope of vocational education and training to encompass maximum number of people. And this education and training must make its recipients aware of their potential qualities and responsibilities towards themselves and society as well as help them develop their capabilities. Their efficiency will thus be promoted and their potentials utilized for greater interest of the nation.