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### Rural Library

Knowledge is power and knowledge can be acquired through the process of reading. And only a well-equipped library can make this possible.

In our country there is wide-spread illiteracy. Even those who want to have the blessings of education do not have a proper environment or facilities for reading books, magazine and newspapers. For example, we have received reports from Narail about the condition of their library which is disquieting. A very old library established during Pakistan time, thirty years ago, with only 250 books it is in shambles. Although now there are about 10,000 books on its shelves there is an acute shortage of books on elementary science and technological development, besides those on Islamic subjects. There is also shortage of furniture, inadequacy of space in the reading room, safe drinking water and toilet facilities for men and women. The same problems possibly are being faced by almost all the rural libraries of the country.

Libraries undoubtedly are a vehicle of knowledge and information and for a growing population in our country the setting up of new libraries in all upazilas are a logical need and should receive the priority they deserve. Literary, intellectual and cultural pursuits keep the minds of man busy and away from frivolities and anti-social habits. "An empty mind is a devil's workshop" so goes the saying.

Since library is so important in the life of the nation it is time now to conduct a survey of the existing libraries, their present state of affairs, their need for efficient management. All endeavours should be made to promote reading habits among the rural people — the educated and half-educated men and women as well as those who can just read. National and international agencies may be requested to donate books generously.