

104

## Education For All

Sir,

The Government has given the highest priority to Primary Education to rid the country of the curse of illiteracy.

As a result, the number of primary schools has increased substantially. Special measure like "Food for Education" has been introduced to reduce the "Drop-out rate" and to increase enrollment in the primary schools. Further, Primary Education has been made free and a certain amount of wheat is allocated per child who attends the school regularly. It has given incentives to parents to send their children to school and reduced the drop-out rate. All these activities are admirable no doubt, but the question is whether these measures are leading to the goal of achieving the target of education for all by year 2000. A child after completing the Primary schooling is expected to meet the following criteria:

- \* He/she should be able to read and write independently
- \* Will be able to comprehend what has been read
- \* Will be able to use the numeric for functional purposes.

If these specific criteria are not fulfilled then the mere increase in enrollment and the decreased drop-out rate will have little or no impact at all.

In the light of past experience, it is clear that now-a-days, good quality education is not imparted in the classroom. The important task of educating a child in the classroom has been shifted to numerous coaching centres.

Few children can succeed or pass the examination without private coaching. This is equally applicable to the state run primary schools. Low income parents are unable to provide private coaching to their children. So it is logical to assume that lack of good quality education in the class room in turn will lead to poor literacy among the children who attend these schools. Beside, the low income group is often unable to assess the quality of education their children receive at school. What matters most to them is whether their children would be promoted to the next higher class or not. To fulfil their hope and aspirations, sometimes they do arrange private coaching for their children, conducted by class teacher. These are the children who do often get promoted to the higher grades but unfortunately with very little knowledge. Sometimes, there is even no change in the educational and functional knowledge in them. Ultimately, this leads to a situation where despite the drainage of money and efforts by the guardians, the students are left at the stage from where they began. This has lead to a situation where a child after five years of primary schooling is neither equipped with functional knowledge nor he acquires, proper education.

To save the country from such disappointment and wastage of valuable resources, the following measures are suggested.

- \* To introduce an accountable education system

- \* A uniform and homogenous educational syllabus and curriculum among all the educational institutions as well as in the educational institutions run by the NGO's throughout the country.

- \* To ensure that all schools complete their syllabus and curriculum within the given period of time.

- \* The education imparted in the classroom should help widen the horizon of knowledge of the students.

- \* To introduce a uniform public examination system country-wide every three years and after five years of schooling.

- \* The students who qualify in the public examination after three years will be allowed to continue in the fourth grade.

- \* After completion of the fifth grade and qualifying in the public examination a certificate of recognition should be issued.

- \* If certain schools fail to meet the minimum expected standard of success, proper actions like—withdrawal of grants—Freeze on salary increment of teachers could be imposed.

On the other hand the schools with the commendable success should be awarded financially.

The authority through the system of award and punishment could control the quality of education. If the desired standard of education is not achieved after so much effort and spending so much resources the objective of having a literate nation with skilled manpower in future will become nothing but another futile exercise in the field of development.

Husne Ara Khan  
Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka.