

Mass Literacy Through Television

And if we look into the history of mass-literacy movement, we find that the most successful literacy campaigns had been conducted world-wide through Television. Russia took the lead after the overthrow of Czarist regime in 1917 and got the optimum result in two years time by totally driving out illiteracy from the Soviet Union. More recently a big mass literacy upsurge is going on in Indonesia, Thailand, Burma, Ghana and Mexico and all by extensive use of the powerful electronic media of mass communication—Television.

In our country, however, still BTV has not started a regular programme for one or two hours on a daily basis for imparting lessons on reading, writing and simple arithmetic. The educational TV programmes upto now have tended to be too technical and sophisticated so as to go over the head of the ordinary Viewers. It would therefore be advisable to make the teaching through TV as near as possible to the ordinary primary school level. It will not supplant but supplement the existing network of primary schools which can continue with the traditional methods of teaching.

The raison d'être for the above proposal is that our formal education should be supplemented by a non-formal programme, which will offer a meaningful and pleasant way of teaching and enable the participants to acquire knowledge of 3Rs easily. To emphasise the obvious in a world whose enlightenment and progress depends entirely on education, a country like Bangladesh whose literacy rate ranks so low, a sustained mass literacy campaign on its Television network is indispensable we should not forget that India started its Television for the first time in 1959 in Delhi with two hours of education TV programme, where as we laid more emphasis on entertainment, when we initiated TV Programmes in 1964.