

Educated people should spread health education

Deputy Leader of Parliament Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury on Friday underlined the importance of involving all enlightened people to spread health education programme throughout the country, reports BSS.

"Health education is a massive task and it should not be confined among the physicians only", he told a national discussion programme on health education movement. Prof Chowdhury said all educated people should shoulder the responsibility of creating greater awareness among the vast multitudes of illiterates the need for health care.

Organised by Bangladesh Health Education society (BHES), the function held at BIRDEM auditorium was also addressed, among others, by Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda, Dr Myo Thwe, Acting Chief of WHO in Bangladesh and Dr. K M. A Aziz, senior scientist at ICD-

DRB Prof. Khurshida Khanom, President of BHES, was in the chair.

Prof Chowdhury, a protagonist of health education and the chief patron of BHES said health was no more a personal belonging, rather a wealth of the nation. He said the mass media like Radio TV and newspapers could play a vital role in educating the masses the urgency of maintaining good health for themselves and also for the nation. In the backdrop of our resource constraints and low rate of literacy, the media particularly television and radio could be effectively used to make aware and keep people healthy.

Emphasising the greater need for prevention rather than curative action in health care, Prof. Chowdhury said in the light of prevailing socio-economic situation in Bangladesh, prevention of diseases is much more easy to attain. Besides being cheaper, prevention

leads to lesser mortality and fewer complications, he said adding that the old slogan-prevention is better than cure, is no more sufficient to explain the benefits of prevention.

referring to lack of proper strategy to meet our protein deficiency and food shortage, Prof Chowdhury said a changed food habit intake of potatoes as a substitute of some portion of cereal (rice or wheat) would go a long way in meeting food deficit. Beans, if grown abundantly could be a great source of harmless, but high quality and cheaper variety of protein

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for the people of Bangladesh, he added. He asked all those working in health education field to spread these ideas with greater speed and dimension throughout the nook and corner of the country.

Prof Chowdhury said since we have to deal with vast number of people, a target group should be fixed up, otherwise the exercises would be futile. He suggested inclusion of health education in school curricula and introduction of national awards for those who work in this field to give them necessary encouragement.

NAZMUL HUDA

Information Minister Nazmul Huda said it was the BNP government under the leadership of late President Ziaur Rahman which for the first time in its 19-point programme incorporated health education as one of the top priorities. He said BNP was the first government which gave due importance to health education in political programme.

The Information Minister said due to lack of proper education on health aspect, many people are roaming with diseases causing harms to others. Health education helps on individual not only to safeguard his own health, but also assist in the preservation of community's health, he pointed out.

Mr. Huda assured the organisers of extending all-out cooperation for the use of media in propagating health education. He said it is the political pledge of BNP to provide health care and create greater awareness among the masses on health issues.

WHO Representative Dr. Thwe said his organisation was fostering health education movement to spread public information and education aimed at motivating the people about the need for maintaining good health. He assured the BHES of all possible assistance.

Earlier, in her welcome speech Prof Khurshida Khanom gave a brief account of health education movement globally and the efforts being undertaken in Bangladesh. She said programme of health education would succeed only when peoples' awareness and encouragement were supported by political goodwill.