

DU remained closed for 4.5 yrs during 80-87: Ershad

# Campus sanctity for quality education must

By A Staff Reporter

President H.M. Ershad on Friday urged all concerned, particularly teachers, to make a strong pledge to restore sanctity on the educational campus and ensure an atmosphere congenial to quality education.

The President was speaking as chief guest at the triennial national representative conference of Bangladesh Teachers Association (BTA) at the Shilpakala auditorium.

"We want a production-oriented education which is suited to the need of time. At the same time we want to go back to the good old days when teachers earned both respect and fear from the students", the President said.

Turning to the situation in universities, President Ershad said, "When we were students of colleges we used to dream about Dhaka University. It was a great privilege to be a student of Dhaka University at that time. But if I were a college student these days, I would not dare go to Dhaka University

where violence and session jam are daily events".

He said that Dhaka University had remained closed for four and a half years between 1980 and 1987. Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) for 472 days during the period between 1980-81 and 1983-86 and Rajshahi University classes were suspended for 242 days last year.

President Ershad said that the nation had to suffer a loss of Taka 133.62 crore due to session jam in universities.

The President said that the Government spent Taka 1,138 per month for a university student and the amount came through the sacrifice of 5.67 crore poor people of the country.

## ONE-WAY TRAFFIC

On the Dhaka University Ordinance of 1973, the President said that under the ordinance, things had turned out to be a "one-way traffic". "The Government will provide fund to universities, but it will not be allowed to see whether the money is being

spent properly". He said that the University Grants Commission (UGC) which was empowered to look into the accounts of universities under the ordinance also did not get details of the accounts of universities.

Universities, President Ershad said, "are considered to be the powerhouse of a nation" where talents would assemble from all over the country. But what is happening in the university, teachers are appointed through vote, not on the basis of their qualification and ability, the President said.

"People avoid university area. Even women whom we respect as our mothers and sisters are insulted there. We just cannot send our children there to get an education that teaches them to insult women", the President said.

The President called upon the teachers to help restore a congenial atmosphere and ensure quality education in educational institutions.

The conference of BTA was

## Campus sanctity

Con from page 1

also addressed by Deputy Prime Minister and Political Adviser to the President Kazi Zafar Ahmad, Education Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud and president and secretary of BTA. Deputy Prime Minister Dr M.A. Matin, Ministers, high government officials were present at the function.

President Ershad regretted that students often put barricades on roads and railway lines

demanding nationalisation of colleges or right to copying in examinations. And in the process, thousands of passengers of trains and other vehicles suffered due to the blockade, he said.

Turning to the poor literacy rate of the country, President Ershad said it was a matter of shame for the nation that its literacy rate was as low as 30 per cent. He said that though Bangladesh had established itself at various international field, its rural population were still illiterate. He stressed on the improvement of primary education and said that improvement of primary education would help raise literacy rate.

The President said that the government did not want to impose recommendations of the Education Commission constituted last year. He said that there would be discussions, seminars and symposia on the Education Commission report before its implementation. Referring to the efforts taken by his government for improving the condition of the teachers, the President said that Islam as a religion had put education and teachers to high esteem. He said that he had tried his best within limited resources of the country to improve the socio-economic status of the teachers.

President Ershad declared a grant of Taka one crore to the benevolent fund of the teachers.

Referring to the current year's flood, the President said that this year people were not afraid since they had been feeling confident remembering the successful handling of devastating flood last year. He said this year the government had made forward planning in terms of finance & food stock.

BSS adds: speaking on the occasion, Deputy Prime Minister and Political Adviser to the President, Kazi Zafar Ahmed called upon the teachers to maintain their unity under the leadership of President Ershad for realising their demands as well as achieving recognition in the society.

Kazi Zafar recalled that President Ershad had created a unique history in the country by decorating the post of the Chairman of Bangladesh Federation of Teachers Association and said it was because of President Ershad, the teachers of the country had started learning to stand with their heads up to the economic condition of the teachers had also improved considerably during the rule of President Ershad, he added.

In his speech Education Minister, Anisul Islam Mahmud called upon the teachers to perform their noble responsibilities teaching the students with a missionary zeal.

The Education Minister recalled the contribution of the present government under the dynamic leadership of President Ershad for the improvement of the education as well as the teaching community and said that time had come to evaluate the qualitative standard of education in the country.

জন্ম 17 JUL 1988

পৃষ্ঠা... ১... কলাম...

Listing a number of measures to improve the education system in the country suited to the need of the age, Mr. Anis said the government was considering the establishment of two affiliating universities in the country.

About the 1973 university ordinance, the education minister pleaded that time had come to evaluate whether the ordinance, which was promulgated with the objective of better functioning of the universities had been achieved that objective or not.