

30 per cent children remain out of schools

By A Staff Reporter

Universal primary education for children, literacy, and technical and vocational training for adults should be the objective of mass education in Bangladesh.

Mr Ferdous Khan, retired Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Education said this at the seminar on "mass literacy programme and the teaching community" at Dacca College auditorium on Sunday.

In his paper on "mass education programme and economic development" Mr Ferdous Khan said that the content of mass education programme could not be same in all countries because of the differences in socio-economics.

He said that present more than 30 per cent of our children remained out of schools, many among those who were enrolled in schools again dropped out before completing primary education. About seven lakh educated people remained unemployed while 90 per cent of the population were deprived of facilities for technical and vocational training.

He said that the existence of a large number of educated unemployed only proved that these educated people could not acquire the skills needed for earning livelihood.

The objective of mass education therefore, is not only to make the adults in the age group of 15 to 45 years literates but also to train them in different trades.

Mr Ferdous Khan refuted the criticism that mass literacy drive would not give much return to the national economy. Comparing the illiterate people with blind, he said that they are helpless whenever the question of communication in writing letters or reading news papers come. They thus crawl to earn a livelihood by con-

30 p c children

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fining themselves within a very limited sphere of activity

Illiteracy was also an obstacle to economic development because without it even progressive development of agriculture was not possible he said.

In his paper on "mass education and social change" Prof Muhammad Abul Hasan said that it was only through education that social, political and economic development was possible.

Referring to a recent survey he said that the efficiency and productivity of a farmer increased by only 10 to 12 per cent if he underwent an apprenticeship of a year but his productivity increased by 30 per cent if he was freed from the curse of illiteracy.

He said that freedom from the curse of illiteracy enables men to have better understanding of their surroundings the society they lived in and this helped them to directly contribute to social and economic welfare.

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