

Teachers urged to help remove illiteracy

By A Staff Correspondent

President Lt. Gen. H. M. Ershad on Saturday called upon the primary teachers to help remove illiteracy and make endeavour to increase the percentage of literacy in the country. He told them to spread the light of education in each and every home in the rural areas where people are backward and illiterate.

Addressing the third grand national conference of the Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association (BPTA) at railway field opposite the Bangladesh Secretariat President Ershad told them to make their efforts in educating the people.

Terming the primary teachers as one of the mighty forces in nation-building, President Lt. Gen. H. M. Ershad said that his Government was trying to give them due honour in the society. He said that from now onward the prestige of teachers would not be undermined. He regretted that in past teachers were not treated honourably and injustice was done to them. Declaring them as full-fledged Government employees he said that the primary teachers would henceforth enjoy all facilities of a Government employee. He assured the primary teachers that an ordinance to this effect would be promulgated by the Government as soon as possible. He said that all the demands of the primary teachers would be accepted.

Referring to the tall talks of some opposition leaders, the Chief Martial Law Administrator said that during their regime the primary teachers were on the street and staged demonstration against their regime.

President Ershad said that his Government had taken measures to improve the lot of the poor and the common people.

Referring to the token strike of the non-gazetted Government employees, he said that the Government was considering to increase the dearness allowance for them till another pay commission was set up. He said that he was ready to step down if the demands could be fulfilled by the demonstrators.

President Ershad said that it was a matter of shame to the nation that the nation-builders (primary teachers) have to come out on the street for fulfilment of their demands. He said those who put the primary teachers behind the bar had done real injustice to them.

President Ershad said that his Government was trying to find ways and means to make the lives of the primary teachers a happy one. The doors of Bangabhaban would remain always open for them, he added.

He advised the opposition leaders to desist from making sweeping remarks against the

new administrative system. The allegation of corruption against all the officials in the upazilas would be unkind.

The President announced a trust for the primary teachers of the country and announced a donation of Taka 20 lakh for the trust. He urged the primary teachers to contribute something to the trust.

President Lt. Gen. H. M. Ershad condoled the death of five primary teachers who died on way to attend the conference. He announced a donation of Tk. 50,000 (fifty thousand) for each of the deceased family. The President also announced a donation of Taka 12 lakh to the Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association to meet the expenditure of the grand national conference.

Earlier, Prof. Abul Kalam Azad, President of the Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association put forward the demands of the primary teachers to the President.

Prof. Abul Kalam Azad and Kazi Abul Kashem Fazlul Huq were elected President and General Secretary of the Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association for a period of another five years.