

Consensus needed to change edn system

Staff Correspondent

Education Minister ASHK Sadeque said the country's education system needs a massive reformation but without a political consensus the Government has nothing to do in this regard. He said all quarters including the political parties and educationists should come up with their suggestions for the reformation of the education system in the greater interest of the nation.

He was addressing as chief guest a roundtable discussion on "National education policy—technical and higher education", organised by Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) at its office premises on Wednesday. Chairman of BUP Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmed chaired the discussion while educationist Abdullah Al-Muti Sharfuddin, Prof.

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Consensus

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Kazi Saleh Ahmed, Dr Zaheda Ahmed, Prof. Ainun Nishat, Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Prof Sharifa Khatun, M Mojibul Hoq, Jahanara Haq and Nilufar Banu, among others, took part in the discussion.

Most of the speakers favoured the mother tongue Bengali as the medium of instruction and suggested to take special measures for teaching English at a certain level. They were critical over the madrasah education and observed that madrasah education is totally contrary to the reality of the socio-cultural situation.

Education Minister ASHK Sadeque in his speech said English is being used widely for different purposes including business and for this reason English should be considered an important weapon. The medium of instruction must be Bengali but it would not be wise to neglect English.

He observed:

The Education Minister said although there is a criteria for providing financial support to educational institutions but it was very difficult to maintain due to various reasons. Commenting on private coaching, he said it is not a major problem if we can ensure proper, standard and quality teaching in class-room. Referring to education loan, the Minister said providing education loan to students is a good idea if they repay the money after their employment.

M Mojibul Hoq in his speech emphasised the need for taking steps to decentralise the education system with a view to bringing a qualitative change in the education sector.

Primary and secondary education should be placed under the authority of the Local Government with a provision of "hire and fire", he observed.

He said there are two education systems—madrasah and general—in the country. Madrasah is not a modern education and for this reason this system must be changed, he added.

Prof Saleh Ahmed said in the modern socio-economic perspective, the madrasah education has no use other than religious purpose. Religious subject can be read as an optional subject, not a compulsory one, he opined.