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পৃষ্ঠা ... 5 কলাম ... 3

66

16

Mass Education Programme—II

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THE history of moktab is the history of muslims in this country. This institution has many advantages suited for the purposes. Generally it sits in a mosque with some exceptions here and there. It sits very early in the morning just after Fazr prayer. So this timing is suitable for our working boys and girls who help their parent at home and in the field. It is a mixed class of boys and girls who take their lessons in the same class in groups.

MANAGEMENT: The management of this holy institution is run by the people of the samaj. People have the commitment for the religious education of their son/daughter/wards. This commitment comes from the realisation that a Muslim's son must be a Muslim.

CURRICULUM: The objective of moktab education is to give the children functional religious knowledge. So the curriculum constitutes of the following.

To memorise some suras from the Holy Qur'an, to memorise some Niats in Arabic to memorise some rules for prayers and other religious functions, to introduce the Arabic alphabets, to learn the art of reading Arabic with-

out meaning, to learn the reading of the Holy Quran without knowing the meaning.

This takes one to two years time. In order to build an educated generation among the Muslims literacy programme is to be integrated with the moktab-education and the curricular activities of both are to be integrated. This may give the best possible solution of the problem we are

suffering from. To achieve this: A comprehensive list of the mosque based moktabs is to be made; management system of these moktabs is to be developed and strengthened; a token honorarium is to be offered to the moktab teachers; a comprehensive and well planned primers based on literacy need and religious education is to be developed; local leadership and the administration are to be involved in the affairs of this institution.

Built with public donation, a mosque is a permanent institution located in the most convenient position in a village and the people under its areas are attached with it throughout their lives. Government is now extending free electricity and water facilities to the mosque in our country. So con-

sidering all these opportunities if we push forward the literacy movement through these moktabs, We may

achieve the best possible results. The added benefits from this system that may accrue from are:

i) Expenses for fuel or lantern are not needed at all.
ii) Accountability of the property given to the centres are easily tractable.

iii) Literacy may be catered just at the beginning of a child's life and there will be no more illiterate added to the illiteracy of our society.

iv) A portion of the wall of the mosque may be made into a black board with a minimum cost.

v) Children of academic age will enroll spontaneously with minimum motivation if the idea that a Muslim's son must be literate is brought home.

By functional literacy now-a-days we mean literacy that can improve a man's lot. In the centres an illiterate learns only Three Rs and this raises curiosity in him to read materials carrying information that can help improve his lot. For example, posters, pamphlets etc. are imprinted and distributed with information of technology for high yielding crops, family

planning etc. Now to receive this life centred information, there must be a station in the far reaching villages too. Just like the radio messages transmission and reception.

Heterogeneity in faith is inevitable. Innovations are to be devised for literacy programme of the minority communities also.

Here in Bangladesh, the minorities are the Hindus, the Budhists and the Christians. Excepting the Hindus who constitute about 10% of the population, the Budhists and the Christians are few in number and are concentrated in some definite areas. Even the Hindus also live in paras in all areas of Bangladesh. So taking these advantages into consideration, an effective programme may be chalked out for operation immediately.

CONCLUSION: Adult literacy is a challenging task. The success of this programme depends on people's participation, commitment and proper implementation strategy. It is apparent that in a Muslim's majority country like Bangladesh, people's commitment and participation can easily be ensured by launching the programme through moktab, an age old sacred institution of the Muslims.