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# New mass-education programme soon

By A Staff Reporter

The present government will soon launch a new mass education programme to reduce the country's illiteracy rate which is about 70 per cent now.

This was announced by Education Secretary A. N. M. Yusuf at a discussion meeting organised jointly by mass education programme of the Education Ministry and Bangladesh National UNESCO Commission at the National Museum auditorium in connection with the observance of World Literacy Day on Sunday.

The discussion meeting was also addressed by former Chairman of Bangladesh Public Service Commission S. M. Al Hussaini, former DPI Mohammad Ferdaus Khan, Joint Secretary (Development) Nuruddin Mahmud

Kamal, Executive Director of Mass-Education Programme and Abdus Selim, Secretary, Bangladesh National UNESCO Commission.

The Education Secretary said that the mass-literacy programme taken up by the government of the late President Ziaur Rahman was dropped in 1982 when a new government came to power. However, the government adopted fresh programme although in skeleton form in 1987 and it was still in force.

He said that a political commitment is necessary to execute such programme and the previous is necessary to execute such programme and the previous government lacked such commitment.

He stressed the need for incorporating comprehensive programme on mass-literacy in the

Fourth Five Year Plan.

The Education Secretary said that the present government had already given green signal to go ahead with an extensive programme and details of such a programme were being worked out, he said. Mr. Al Hussaini said that education sector should be given topmost priority and there should be no encroachment on the allocation of the sector. However, he said, a sustained movement was necessary to make the programme a success.

Mr. Ferdaus Khan said that if the present literacy rate continues the country will take 750 years to remove illiteracy. He suggested creation of a mass-education institute to coordinate the programme.