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A national workshop on planning and implementation of National Literacy Programme in Bangladesh was organised by the National Institution of Educational Media and Technology (NIE-MET) from 30 November to 5 December, 1984 in collaboration with UNESCO-ROEAP (Regional Office of Education for Asia-Pacific) in Bangkok. The aim of the workshop was to discuss and formulate outlines for the national literacy programme in the light of the action plan prepared by the Ministry of Education.

The workshop was attended by specialists from Ministry of Education, Directorate of Primary Education, Planning Commission, NIEAR, various NGO's, engaged in the field of mass literacy and adult education. Mr T. M. Sakya, Literacy Specialist, ROEAP represented UNESCO in the workshop. This was attended by 56 participants including experts. The workshop made the following recommendations:

- There should be provision for incentive for the learners and they should be given priority in getting credit facility and employment opportunity.
- Literacy programme should be firmly linked with the promotion of primary education as eradication of illiteracy is not possible without the UPE (Universal Primary Education).
- A motivation of campaign about the need for literacy programme should be started.
- Special efforts should be made to involve the NGOs in implementing the literacy programme.
- Minimum qualification of literacy instructors should be SSC and they should be given cash remuneration of Tk. 200 per month with the provision for incentive reward of Tk. 20 for each learner achieving literacy under his instruction.
- The existing infrastructural facilities of primary education in the country including teachers should be used to the maximum.

## A profile of

Here the reference of the "International Literacy Day" of UNESCO which falls on September 8 may be made.

This day symbolises the gigantic strides made by UNESCO the world over to eradicate illiteracy from the face of the earth.

Mr. M. Bow, Director-General UNESCO in his draft programme and budget for 1986-87, Volume-I gave special stress on the extension and improvement of education in rural areas. He said, "It is envisaged that technical assistance will be provided to member states by means of seminars and practical workshops, training courses, consultative services and the preparation of guides and methodological documents."

"The purpose of this assistance is to contribute to developing the various levels, types and forms of education for children, young people and adults in rural areas; improving the standard and relevance of education by means of a revision of educational content and methods; developing education by means of a revision of educational content and methods; developing education in the technologies needed for progress in rural areas and expanding national capacities for the training of educational personnel working in rural areas. Special attention will be devoted in this respect to education for women."

Here emphasis has been given by Mr. M'Bow on women's education. This is of very much importance to our society, where bulk of the women folk are still illiterate. It will not be irrelevant here to mention the recommendations put forward by Prof Kazi Abdul Latif, Member University Grants Commission (U.G.C.) after attending a study programme from May 26 to 22 June 1985 in USA.

He visited a number of universities and national level institutions and organisations there.

The purpose of his visit was to recommend measures on the basis of his experience for the formulation of educational policy for the universities and colleges in Bangladesh.

The UNESCO approved participation programme was entitled "Reorganisation of the courses and curricula at tertiary level of education in Bangladesh".

In his participation report Prof. Latif recommended, the following for ensuring improvement in the quality of education at tertiary level in Bangladesh.

- Emphasis should be given on improving quality of teaching at lower levels so as to ensure production of better quality students capable of assimilating the advanced teaching material at the tertiary level.
- In order to ensure quality and dedication of teachers, they should be well-trained, well-paid and made accountable for their specific roles, and at the same time there should be provision for reward in the form of promotion enhancement of salary for the really active and dedicated one.
- In the teaching and examination systems, introduction of "Yearly System" instead of half-yearly or "semester". System in all institutions should be ensured immediately. The courses should be so designed as to necessitate holding of examinations annually, instead of holding them at the end of 2 to 3 years. Once success is achieved, we may go for the semester system.

Another point to be stressed: Dr. M.N. Huq, Director General, National Institute of Educational Administration Extension and Research (NIEAER) visited, Nepal, India

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## Bangladesh literacy

istan from 30 May, 1985 in connection with UNESCO-sponsored study visit on promotion of girls' education in the Asia Pacific region.

In view of the priority accorded in the region to the task of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and the problems presented in this context by the low enrolment of girls in some of the countries, the APEID of UNESCO-ROEAP, undertook programmes to promote the sharing of experiences among countries with a view to strengthening national

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action for the promotion of girls' education.

Overall activities have been initiated with this objective in promoting the education of girls in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea to carry out national studies and other activities pertaining to universalisation of educational opportunity for girls and women. The heads of national steering committees formed a regional panel on girls' education which visited participating countries in May-June,

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1985 to exchange experience and promote the education of girls.

The objectives of their visit were following:

- to share and exchange their experience with policy makers, planners and community workers on possible strategies and methods for dealing effectively with the problems of low enrolment of girls in primary education and;
- to study and review the progress of studies on the situation of girls' education prepared by participating

countries.

Another contribution of UNESCO may be mentioned here.

Mr Abdul Aziz Chowdhury, Assistant Director, Primary Education attended the UNESCO-sponsored Inter-Regional Seminar on Primary Education held at Arusha, Tanzania, from 17-21 June, 1985. The inter-regional operational seminar was designed to review the state of primary education in rural areas, emphasising the contest of primary education in relation to local conditions, aspiration of young people and their families and the human, cultural and educational resources that are available. One of the concern of the seminar was how to facilitate the integration of pupils in the production process and enhance the contribution of education to development. Coming back to literacy profile again.

An international meeting of evaluation specialists in the field of literacy, post literacy and continuing education programme was organised by the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE) in Hamburg from 24-28 June, 1985. The main objectives of the meeting were (i) to review the findings of exploratory study on evaluation and monitoring of literacy, post-literacy and continuing education programme; (ii) to discuss ways and means of improving the current practices of evaluation and monitoring and (iii) to develop procedures of more intensive studies to be carried out in the areas of learner evaluation as well as impact evaluation. Mr. Zahir Ahmed, Project Director, Friends in Village Development, Bangladesh attended the meeting.

Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO organised a training for literacy supervisors and organisers

at the Institute of Literacy and Adult Education, Aban Mission, Dhaka from 15-22 May, 1985 with financial assistance from ISESCO, Rabat.

In all 30 participants drawn from 26 organisations, both governmental and non-governmental attend the training programme Dr. Ali Al-Kasimi, Director of Education, ISESCO, represented Director-General of ISESCO in the inaugural session of the training course.

Mr. Sami Mohammad Nasser, an expert of the Regional Centre for Adult Education (ISTEC), Egypt conducted the training programme.

The literacy profile of our country is not so promising. Yet we can do a lot if all the agencies of government, semi-government and voluntary organisations make a concerted and persistent efforts to remove the curse of illiteracy from Bangladesh. Phase by phase we will have to eradicate illiteracy, rejuvenate our college and university education.

Our aim should be to make the entire nation a coherent whole in the field of education. Modern science and technology must not be lost sight of. We have the greatest asset—the human resources. If we can mobilise them properly to remove illiteracy, make the education system dynamic and tune the society onward-looking we will be able to unlock our latent talents.

The history of China, Japan, and North Korea are some examples in this regard.

### NOTE

The first part of the article was published yesterday