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## 35 p.c. of universal edn. plan achieved

By Atiqur Rahman

Only 35 per cent of the total target of the national programme of universal education could be achieved till December 1984. The Planning Commission hopes to achieve 40 per cent of the target by the end of the second Five-Year Plan. The Second Five-Year Plan terminates on June 30.

This was contained in a project paper prepared recently by the Government. Considering the very poor achievement of the programme during the Second Five-Year Plan period a proposal has been made to adopt a revised project of nearly Taka 660 crore in the Third Five Year Plan. The revised estimated cost includes over Taka 225 crore in foreign exchange which is to be financed by IDA, UNICEF, UNDP and SIDA.

One of the major causes of poor achievement of the programme was inadequate allotment of fund and the other major cause of poor performance was delay in creating the required infrastructure for implementation of the programme. The cost of the project according to revised estimate made in 1981 was Taka 293 crore 72 lakh. Allocation upto current fiscal year was only Taka 149 crore 45 lakh which is about 51 per cent of the estimated project outlay.

The project paper also indicates that due to delay by two years in implementation and

inadequate fund placement, completion of the programme during the Second Plan period was not possible.

It may be recalled here that there are 44,000 primary schools in the country. Two projects one under the IDA and the national universal primary education programme was taken up during the Second Five-Year Plan to give the primary education an universal shape. Although the programme was scheduled to be implemented from July 1980 it was delayed by about ten months. Originally the cost of the programme was estimated at Taka 369 crore 35 lakh which includes foreign exchange of Taka three crore 66 lakh. The programme cost was later revised at Taka 283 crore 72 lakh.

The objectives of the programme included raising the number of students specially the girls in primary schools, stopping drop outs, training to primary school teachers and developing the standard of primary education through strict supervision. The programme was to be implemented in developing primary education in 432 upazilas of the country.

The programme aimed at constructing 15,000 class rooms whereas construction work of class rooms numbering 6861 could be completed till December last. The programme also envisaged to repair 1340 primary schools. But repair of only many school. But repair of only by that time. The plan also aimed at distributing 273 lakh sets of furniture and 231 85 lakh sets of text books free of cost but only one. <sup>1/4</sup> sets of furni-

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