

Book policy soon: PM Help increase reading habits

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said in Dhaka on Saturday that a national book policy would be announced soon for the promotion of education including library service to the people and the development of libraries and librarianship in the country, reports BSS.

Begum Zia emphasised the need for building up nationwide library movement to help the people increase their reading-habit and encourage them in the use of libraries. She urged the affluent sections to contribute to the process.

The Prime Minister was inaugurating a three-day national seminar on "Preparing the libraries, and librarians of Bangladesh for the 21st century" at the auditorium of the

Institution of Engineers.

Begum Zia said her government wanted to make the best use of the libraries in the current efforts for poverty alleviation, expansion of mass-literacy and the socio-economic development of the people.

"We want the setting up of libraries in villages and localities...we want the holding of roving book exhibition and book fair," she said.

Organised by Library Association of Bangladesh (LAB) the inaugural function was also addressed by Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, State Minister for Education Principal Yunus Khan, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum, President of LAB

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Reading habits

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AKM Abdur Nur, General Secretary Shamsul Islam Khan and Councillor Zakiuddin Ahmed.

The Prime Minister said two projects were currently being implemented for the overall development of libraries—one is the book development programme and the other is Taka six crore programme for assisting the private libraries at district and thana levels.

Efforts are on to develop and expand the activities of the National Book Centre and the government-run libraries at the district level, she added.

Begum Zia said her government wanted to break stagnancy in the library activities and the libraries were to play its due role in the country's development efforts.

The Prime Minister said the government was trying to resolve the problems of the libraries and the librarians.

The formulation of a national library and information policy is under consideration while the short-term and long-term plans are being taken to develop the country's libraries, Begum Zia said.

She also said the government was contemplating the formation of a library commission and added the Ministry of Education had taken steps to promote the librarians and ensure other facilities.

The Prime Minister lauded the role of the Library Association of Bangladesh in the pro-

motion of libraries in the country and assured all necessary help from the government in this regard.

The progress of the nation is related with the libraries, Begum Zia noted adding the spread of education was not possible without the libraries.

She said the National Science Library, which was later unified with another organisation, would be re-established with its own status.

The Prime Minister urged the librarians to come forward in materialising the dreams of the 21st century—that is the establishment of a happy and prosperous Bangladesh.