



Primary Education Needs Metamorphoses

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Metamorphoses are constantly going on in the western developed world. Education there is also rephased pursuant to the changes in order that their children can keep themselves abreast of the latest technology for bringing about metamorphic changes. But are our children at all going to be metamorphosed?

The government's initiative to introduce compulsory primary education through implementation of the Mass Education Programme (MEP) may be a far cry in the backdrop of the malady already eating into the vitals of the primary education and the existing primary schools which are considered to be the very backbone of the nation.

In the advanced world, education is going to be orchestrated by making provisions for computer and information technology for the ultimate objective of transforming the nation's population into vital national force catering the needs for upgrading the growth rate, nay, the net national product or per capita income. Net national income is the

index of economic development but that must be accompanied by the disposal of economic benefits that reached the common men and involved in improvement of their lot. In this distributive system primary education can play the pioneering role indeed.

Similar programmes in Mass and Adult literacy strides proved ineffectual in the past for want of sincerity in political commitment and lack of accountability and transparency on the part of concerned officials and teachers. The moment we are thinking of metamorphosis, the existing malaises are already planting the grassroots education in the back-seat and thus putting education to jeopardy. Can we then hope for services mix catering to the needs for the ultimate economic growth and the welfare of the people?

Unless and until the formal schooling at the grass roots level is re-structured into the conscientious section of society with teachers working as torch-bearers of literacy and inspectorate enlarged from the

labyrinth of clandestine activities, no governmental plan will see the light of success and fruition. Realistic approach is yet to be articulated to accomplish this vital task.

Education in real-life situation in which the teachers should accept teaching as social responsibility and moral obligation need to prevail. The usual practice of taking education and teaching as mere vocation or profession should be done away with. Primary education is the very foundation of education system.

The crux of the problem is that the control of these schools lies with corrupt and incompetent inspectorate at the thana level. Supervision, in the truest sense of the term, is absent as dedicated teachers are few. Their attentions lie not in the onerous performance of the social needs for the proliferation of education but in satisfying the vested interests. This widens the gap between the educational facilities in rural and urban Bangladesh.

The drop-outs are immeasur-

able only because the teaching in schools could not be made interesting, cordial and attractive. The ideals of the top-grade schools in Dhaka hardly reach the nooks and corners in the rural communities for lack of motivation and commitment in services of the concerned ones on one hand and the absence of introduction of the latest computer and IT gadgets on the other.

A great many primary schools lack the basic physical facilities like sheds, walls, class-rooms, tube wells, latrines, playgrounds, benches, black-boards, teaching aids, maps, charts, etc. and shortage of teachers not to speak of providing them with computer and IT gadgets. There is a gross and growing disparity in the dispersal of facilities, — a great many primary schools are not yet nationalised and are deprived of government aid. The marked increase in the schools has not resulted in the commensurate increase in enrolment there.

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