

Poor salary puts bright students off teaching profession: Experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most meritorious students are keeping away from a career in teaching mainly because of poor salaries, resulting in a decline in the quality of education from primary to university level, experts said yesterday.

It would not be possible to ensure quality education without the pool of talent coming into the teaching profession, they said.

The experts expressed their views at an open discussion and a seminar organised separately in the city to mark the World Teachers' Day.

They also urged the government to increase the salary and other benefits for teachers in order to attract meritorious students to the teaching profession.

"Students with outstanding academic results do not opt for a career in teaching and most meritorious students who started teaching as a career considering it a noble profession do not continue in the profession for long because of poor salary," said Dr Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to the caretaker government, at the open discussion at the Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Academy, jointly organised Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco (BNCU), education ministry and Unesco Dhaka office.

He also said that teachers who perform well should be rewarded while those whose performance is poor should be given punishment.

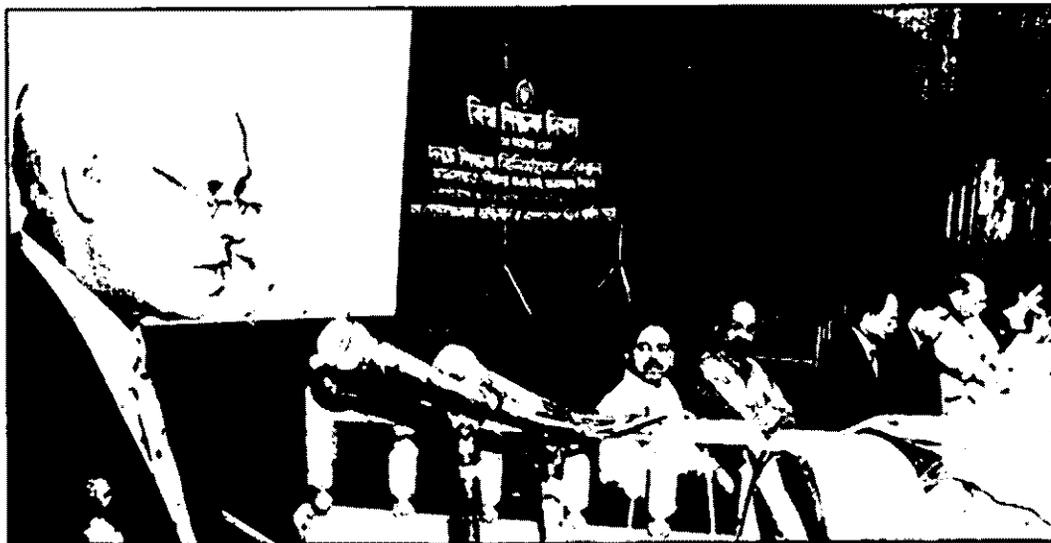


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Unesco Dhaka Office Director Malama Meleisea speaks at a seminar titled 'Planning for an effective teaching force: Quality teachers for quality education' at LGED Bhaban in the yesterday.

"To improve the quality of education, teachers have to devise effective ways to enhance the students' understanding of any subjects. Only meritorious and talented people can do that well," said Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed.

Additional Secretary Abdul Awal Majumder, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education Director General Prof Nazim Uddin, Unesco Dhaka Office Director Malama Meleisea and Joint Secretary Nazrul Islam Khan also spoke.

The Campaign for Popular

Education (CAMPE) organised the seminar titled 'Planning for an effective teaching force: Quality teachers for quality education' at LGED Bhaban in Agargaon where the speakers called for an increase in the facilities for teachers.

Primary and Mass Education Secretary Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said the government has taken several measures, including recruitment of a huge number of teachers and setting up of 51 teacher training institutes, to enhance the quality of teachers.

"I agree that salary and other

facilities of the teachers should be increased, but we do not have sufficient funds," he said.

Former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed, Prof Nazmul Haque and Rasheda K Choudhury, director of CAMPE, also spoke.

National Front of Teachers and Employees (NFTE) and Bangladesh Shikshak-Karmachari Oikya Parishad -- two platforms of non-government teachers and employees -- also organised discussions at their offices in the city to mark the day.