

PM firm on erasing curse of illiteracy

LALMONIRHAT, June 4: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today expressed her firm resolve to continue the government's endeavours to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh free from the curse of illiteracy, reports BSS.

Addressing a exceptional grand rally of more than two lakh people of Lalmonirhat district, who have recently been freed from the curse of illiteracy under the mass literacy programme, at Collectorate ground here she urged all irrespective of opinion and the affluent sections to strive to the best of their ability to help make all people of the country literate.

Organised by Lalmonirhat District Mass Literacy Society, the grand rally was attended by 2.68 lakh people of the district, between the age of 14 and 45 who have recently been given Three R's (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, regarded as the basic studies), and the people from all walks of life, members of various professional bodies and leaders of different politi-

cal parties.

The grand rally, created great enthusiasm among the people of the district. From today

Lalmonirhat has become a model of mass literacy for the rest of the country, the Prime Minister said.

All people of the country, she said, need to be educated in the shortest possible time to meet the challenge of the present time.

Removal of illiteracy from the country, Begum Zia said, was one of the major pledges of the BNP government and the government is committed to fulfil the pledges, she added.

That is why the BNP government, the Prime Minister said, had laid utmost importance on education sector providing the highest budgetary allocation to it.

The rate of literacy has increased by 10 per cent during the last four years, she told the rally.

Referring to the establishment of the Primary and Mass Literacy Division, introduction

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of compulsory primary education, spending of Taka one thousand four hundred crore for the construction and development of primary schools and introduction of two hundred satellite schools, the Prime Minister said her government had taken all-out steps to make education life-oriented.

Officials concerned informed, mass literacy programme is being carried out in Lalmonirhat district through 7,155 centres. Thirty men and 30 women work as teachers in day and night shifts in each centre.

All people of Lalmonirhat district, officials said, would be freed from the curse of illiteracy within the next three months.

The Prime Minister talked to the people at the grand rally and enquired about their welfare. She asked them to avail the government's credit and training facilities to make them engaged in different self-employment ventures and poverty alleviation projects.

The BNP government, the Prime Minister said, had introduced "food for education" programme in one thousand unions across the country to enable the poor and distressed children to get education.

An additional 14 lakh children are now going to schools regularly due to the introduction of Food for Education programmes, she said.

Another 1,250 unions, the Prime Minister said, would be brought under this unique programme next year. The enrollments in schools, she said, have greatly increased due to the steps taken for the expansion of primary education.