

Compulsory primary education plan

Concerted efforts needed

DHAKA, July 29 (BSS) : President Hussain Muhammad Ershad tonight called for putting in concerted efforts by all concerned to make the compulsory primary education programme a success to meet the constitutional obligation for the first time in this regard.

Making his concluding remarks at a presentation meeting on the compulsory primary education programme, the President said it was not the responsibility of the Education Ministry alone but everyone should perform the given responsibility for the implementation of the programme.

Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed, who is in charge of the Education Ministry, made the presentation at the meeting held at Bangabhaban.

Vice-President Moudud Ahmed, ministers and secretaries were present.

President Ershad said it was a gigantic task to make the compulsory primary education pro-

gramme a success. He, however, expressed his optimism that it would be implemented through a united social movement.

He said the programme was a great one and the people should be motivated and inspired to participate in it.

Earlier, making the presentation, Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed explained in details the programme chalked out by the Education Ministry in motivating the people modalities of implementation of compulsory Primary Education from January 1, 1991.

He said at the directive of
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President Ershad the programme would be launched throughout the country at a time making it a social movement.

The Prime Minister said for the implementation of the programme, a 40-member National Education Advisory Council had already been formed with President Ershad as the chief adviser.

He said a 150-member monitoring committee headed by the Education Minister and comprising adviser on primary education, officials and experts, would be formed.

Each of the member of the committee, he added, would be given the charge of three upazilas.

The Prime Minister said co-ordination and implementation committees would be set up at the ward, upazila and district levels to carry forward the compulsory primary education programme.

Kazi Zafar Ahmed said the co-ordination committee at the district level would be headed by a minister while the implementation committee by the Deputy Commissioner.

Similarly, at the upazila level, the co-ordination committee would be headed by a Member of Parliament and the implementation committee by the upazila Chairman.

He said a central implementation cell would be formed under the leadership of the Education Secretary.

The Prime Minister said six to ten-year children would be brought under the programme as a result of which 40 lakh children would come to the primary schools in addition to the existing one crore fourteen lakh.

He said existing schools and madrasa would be utilised to accommodate the new students and second shift would be introduced there for the purpose of compul-

sory primary education.

The Prime Minister said proposal was there to pay an honorarium to the teachers of the existing schools so that they could teach in the new shifts.

Kazi Zafar Ahmed said a low-cost housing scheme would be undertaken to set up one primary school at a cost of Taka two lakh. He said 2000 to 2500 new primary schools would be set up under the programme while another 2000 schools were expected to be built through the World Bank and other agencies assistance.

The Prime Minister said motivational programmes had already been launched and President Ershad would be visiting eight places in four regions of the country for holding motivational meetings.

Kazi Zafar Ahmed said he had a programme to visit 64 districts for the purpose and added that already he had gone to five districts for the compulsory primary education programme.

He said the ministers in charge of districts would be responsible for follow up action while the Upazila Chairmen at the upazila level.

The Prime Minister said President Ershad's government had given top priority to the primary education and an amount of Taka 1162.37 crore had been sanctioned in this regard in the country's Fourth Five-Year Plan. The allocation in the Second and Third Five-Year Plan, he added, was Taka 331.67 crore and Taka 538 crore respectively.