

## Pry edn standard improving at slow pace: Speakers

The pace of improvement of the standard of primary education remains slow despite tremendous progress in developing the infrastructure of academic institutions, Executive Director of Advancing Public Interest Trust (APIT) Sabbir Bin Shams said on Saturday, reports BSS.

He told a press conference that the government took in 2003 the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP)-2 for the decentralisation and simplification and improvement of quality of primary education.

Partially aided by donors implementation of the programme would end in 2009, he said.

Advancing Public Interest Trust (APIT) with 14 other organizations organized the conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Executive Director of Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST) Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, President of

National Disabled Forum. Khandker Zahurul Alam, Coordinator of Sabalambi Unnayan Samity. Iban Dey Shyamal, Executive Director of Other Vision Communication. Tareq Ahmed also spoke.

APIT, in association with Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) Bangladesh, conducted a survey to review the development of primary education in the last five years, the speakers said.

Development of infrastructure, said Shyamal, was the biggest achievement of the PEDP-2.

Under the programme, two class rooms were built in each of 7,392 schools, a toilet in 7,168 schools each, an arsenic free tub-well was sunk in each of 7168 schools, 219 resource centre buildings were built in as many upazilas, in 283 upazilas education extension office buildings, construction of 40 education office buildings in 40 districts besides completing repair and extension work in eight primary education training institutes.

The speakers recommended suggestions for the completion of implementation of PEDP-2 which would include creation of a favor-

able atmosphere to integrate disabled children in the mainstream education, changing attitude of teachers and students toward disabled students and arranging training for teachers.

They suggested for increasing disabled students intake in the primary education to 50 percent from existing four percent.

They stressed the need for changing the pay structure of assistant upazila education officers under primary education department as well as for arranging training of academic supervisors.

They demanded removal of disparity in salary between teachers of government primary schools and registered non-government primary schools.

Considering the importance of education for a developing country they demanded six percent allocation of the national revenue for primary education and said although the World Bank has recommended 4 percent allocation.

They said that 2.8 percent allocation of national revenue have been recommended for primary education by 2009.