

## President, PM's messages International Literacy Day today

By A Staff Reporter

The International Literacy Day will be observed today (Wednesday) in the country elsewhere in the world in a befitting manner.

The government has undertaken elaborate programmes at the national and local-level to mark the day with due importance and celebrity.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas on Tuesday on the eve of the day in a message called upon all to make concerted efforts to eradicate illiteracy from the country as soon as possible and to devote our all mite to establish a developed, prosperous and educated nation.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Tuesday in a similar message urged all irrespective of party and professional affiliations to pledge to work together to spread the light of literacy in the country.

The government-sponsored programmes on the day include a colourful procession to be brought out from the National Museum at 7.30 am and will end at the National Press Club.

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Deputy Leader in the Parliament Prof. A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury will lead the literacy procession while Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda and Dhaka City Mayor Mirza Abbas MP will be among others who will take part in the procession.

Meanwhile a discussion meeting on technique for implementing education for all will be held on the day at 10.30 am at the Osmany Memorial auditorium in city.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to attend the discussion meeting as chief guest. Members of the cabinet and diplomatic corp will attend the function.

Ministers, State Ministers, Deputy Minister, Whip and Members of the Parliament entrusted with responsibilities of their respective districts will attend similar functions to be held at each district and thana-level.

Meanwhile various socio-cultural organisations have chalked out their individual programmes on the day to mark the occasion.

The National Association of UNESCO Clubs in Bangladesh (NAUCB) in cooperation with the Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO and UNIC will hold a discussion meeting today (Wednesday) at 4 pm at the UNIC auditorium at Dhanmondi in city.

Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader in Parliament will grace the occasion as chief guest while Prof. Emajuddin Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University; Prof. Muhammad Shahjahan, Vice Chancellor of BUET and MS Sophie de Caen, Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP will be present as special guests.

Mr Gias Kamal Chowdhury, President of NAUCB will preside.

People's Theatre Association will stage a drama titled Janater Patshala today (Wednesday) at 4 pm at Tejgaon slum area in observance of the day.

Meanwhile the Underprivileged Children's Education Programme (UCEP) will organise a students procession on the day at 9 am starting from Dhalpur and will parade through different city streets before it returns to UCEP unit at Dhalpur.

UNB adds: President Abdur Rahman Biswas has termed illiteracy as the main hurdle to national development and said that without its eradication the country's socio-economic development could not be ensured.

"Without eradicating poverty, the people's socio-economic uplift, the raising of their standard of living and their emancipation from poverty would be impossible", the President said.

In a message on the occasion

of the International Literacy Day, Biswas said observance of the day is significant for the nation because it is linked with our national efforts to wipe out illiteracy.

The President pointed out that the government gave top priority to the education sector to fulfil the dream of building up a happy and prosperous nation.

He said primary education has been made compulsory and mass literacy programme strengthened. He hoped that all these measures would go a long way in ridding the country of the curse of illiteracy.

President Biswas called upon all, particularly the educated and conscious citizens, to contribute their bit in freeing the country from the curse of illiteracy. He also called upon the people to cooperate with the government's people-oriented programmes in this regard.

"Let us all join hands and put in our best in eradicating illiteracy to build up a developed, prosperous and educated Bangladesh", the President in his message said.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Tuesday called for concerted efforts of all irrespective of their position, profession and party affiliation to ensure the spread of education in the country.

"A national issue like education calls for united efforts the burden of illiteracy will increase hindering the develop-

ment of the country if we fail in our duty," she said in a message on the eve of the International Literacy Day today (Wednesday).

"We should take more initiatives to make all the people of the country literate and involve majority of the people in the education programme through strong motivational campaign. Education should be turned into a social movement," she said.

The Prime Minister said her government had undertaken some epoch-making programmes to enter the 21st century as a self-reliant and dignified nation by transforming the country's increasing population into human resources.

She said primary education has been made compulsory and the semi-non-formal education programme is being implemented to strengthen the mass literacy programme. Efforts have also been made to allow the poor children have access to education through "Food for Education Programme."

A Mass Education Department has been created to ensure proper coordination and implementation of this programmes, she added.

Begum Zia said the observance of the International Literacy Day is aimed at increasing awareness about education and stressed that illiteracy should be removed to pave the way for development.