

Education reform a must: PM

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KUSHTIA, Dec. 15: Prime Minister Shah Azizur Rahman has said that the education system would be thoroughly reformed laying emphasis on primary education and vocational training, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister was inaugurating the fifth annual conference of the Kushtia branch of the Institute of Diploma Engineers (IDE) on Friday night here.

He said that under the proposed policy primary education would be declared as a fundamental right along with those of food, clothing, shelter and medicare. Primary education will be made universal, compulsory and free and the process of doing this will be completed by 1985. The number of primary schools will be raised to 65,000 from the present 45,000 so that each village in the country has a primary school under the programme.

The Prime Minister also said that stress would be given on vocational training in the primary schools so that on completion of five years' schooling the students could be prepared for vocational training for subsequent gainful employment. He said that the Commonwealth Organisation had expressed its readiness to help implement the programme.

Shah Aziz said that the doors of secondary and higher secondary education would remain liberally open but the doors of higher education would be made totally selective and allowed to only the talented students.

Presided over by Mr. Tazammul Husain, President of IDE, Bangladesh the conference was also addressed by Mr. Shafuddin Sarker, its Organising Secretary.

The Prime Minister said that the education policy would be reformed to make it suit the

requirements of modern age.

He said that the doors of higher education to the diploma engineers would also remain open but on a selective basis along with the talented students. He said that the vital role being played by the diploma engineers in various fields of development activities continue.

He urged the people to reduce total dependence on Government for all development activities including the spread of education. He called for more private initiative from the wealthier section of the people in the spread of education as was being done in most of the countries like India and the United States.

The Prime Minister said that religious education would, of course, be given due importance in the education system but he added the main spirit of education would be to produce productive citizens by emphasising more stress on scientific and technological

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education. He also said that no other religion gave more importance to scientific education than Islam.

He said that the proposed Islamic University would also give emphasis on scientific and technological education and added Islamic studies and national history and heritage would also be taught there so that citizens of the country could be fully aware of their identity. He said that the Universities were meant for specialised knowledge in different branches of education and not only for religious education.

Shah Aziz said that the Government was going to set up an agricultural institute in Kushtia and upgrade the polytechnical institute to a technical institute. He said that a textile mill would also be set up at Kumar Bhai.

He also said that the Dacca-Kushtia road communication would be improved.

He said that the power problems in the northern districts would be solved for which the Government had decided to set up the Roop Pur Power Plan.

and improve the Pheramara Power Station.

Mr. Tazammul Husain demanded introduction of one channel education system in the field of technical education so that the diploma engineers could avail due facility for higher training and education. He also suggested splitting of the technical works on the basis of field and desk works.

He also demanded initial appointment of diploma engineers just one scale behind of degree engineers.

He spoke for setting up of universities for imparting knowledge in different fields with all possible faculties instead of setting up of specialised universities and demanded introduction of construction rules