

10/10/62
 134

Universal primary education in four years: PM

By A Staff Reporter

Prime Minister Shah Azizur Rahman told the Jatiya Sangsad on Wednesday that the country would have universal primary education within next four years when at least one primary school would be set up in each village.

Addressing the Sangsad on Primary Education Bill, 1981, the Leader of the House said that there were 36,600 Government primary schools and 5000 registered non-government primary schools in the country. These registered schools would be gradually taken over by the Government, he said.

The Prime Minister appealed to all to keep primary education above politics and not to use the primary teachers politically.

The Prime Minister said that 68 per cent of the total allocation on education sector would be spent for the primary education. The Government would fulfil its constitutional obligations, he said.

He said that in order to check the dropouts from the primary schools, the Government had taken certain steps which included supply of books free of

cost and supply of uniform to female students.

Dwelling on the criticism of the Bill by the Opposition, the Leader of the House said that the Opposition members had made general criticisms against the Government without mentioning the merits and demerits of the Bill. He accused the Opposition of trying to create and demerits of the Bills. He said that the Opposition parties tried to mislead the primary school

Contd. on page 4 Col. 5

Contd. from Page 1

teachers and attempted to use them politically. He said that the Government believed in dialogue and not confrontation and expressed the satisfaction that the primary teachers issue had been solved through negotiations.

Refuting the Opposition criticism, the Prime Minister said that the present Government was elected one and it only could be removed through elections. "We shall hold power so long we enjoy the confidence of the people," he said.

He said that it was not true that the Government had, at any time, any plan to transfer primary schools to the Gram

Sarkars. He said that the President had the power to promulgate ordinances if circumstances demanded so. Ordinances were issued by the President in respect of primary education since the situation demanded an early solution of the problem, he said.

The Prime Minister said that the Bill had made necessary provisions to include elected representatives in the local committees. One member from Gram Sarkar, one representative from among the teachers and the chairman of the development council were elected representatives.

He said that the local Sangsad member would be authorised to nominate one person interested in education in the local committee. The Sangsad member would nominate one such person from one thana on behalf of the government, he said. The Prime Minister said that the teachers demanded that the local SDO should be the chairman of the committee.

MOHIUDDIN AHMED

Earlier Mr. Mohiuddin Ahmed Deputy Leader of the Opposition criticised the overall education policy of the Government and said that the present system of education aimed at creating a crippled social system. There was no sense of direction in the education policy he said.

Mr. Mohiuddin Ahmed said that the local committee would have preponderance of the bureaucracy. Such committee consisting of officers and local tout would not be able to run the schools satisfactorily.

He said that the primary teachers suffered most in the hands of the school inspectors. Under the Bill they had once again been placed under the school inspectors. He urged the Government to include some elected members in the committee to ensure some check and balance.

He said that the Government had no credit in the passage of the bill. It was the forceful movement of the teachers and the support of the Opposition which had compelled the Government to surrender to the demands of the teachers.

A large number of Opposition members participated in the discussion on the bill which continued for the second day on Wednesday. Those who took part in the discussion on Wednesday included Mr. Suranject Sengupta of Jatiya Ekota Party, Mr. Mohammad Mohsin of AL (H), Mr. A. S. M. Solaiman of Cono Front, Mr. Mohammad Golam Mostafa of JSD, Mr. Shah Jahan Siraj of JSD, Mr. Satish Chandra Roy of AL (H), Mr. Mozammel Haq of IDL, Mr. A. B. M. Siddique AL (M), Mr. Abdul Matin of JSD, Mr. Sajauddin Yusuf of AL (H), Kazi Abdur Rashid of AL (H) and Principal Nazrul Islam of AL (H).