

Take strong steps against unfair means: PM

'Education budget increased, but no desired result'

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon teachers to give their best to elevate standard of education and eradicate illiteracy for economic development, report agencies.

"We have identified education as the main tool for alleviation of poverty and for economic emancipation," she said at the eighth National Conference of Bangladesh Shikhhak Samity (teachers' association) at Mirpur Indoor Stadium.

Nearly 5,000 teachers of non-government schools, colleges and madrassahs are attending the two-day conference.

The prime minister urged the teachers to give special attention to elevation of education standard. She said adopting unfair means in examinations is also a major problem.

A student who got certificate by adopting unfair means in a examination cannot compete anywhere for jobs. Ultimately they cannot get anything from education, she said asking the teachers to take a strong stand against this social vice.

Responding to the demands of the teachers, the prime minister said despite limited resources, her government would fulfil their legitimate demands in phases.

The prime minister said her government had been increasing budget allocation in the education sector every year. "But we are not getting the desired result from this sector," she added.

She called upon the teachers to render their service sincerely to raise the standard of education.

The government has included teachers and employees of non-government schools, colleges and madrassahs in the national pay scale before any movement. For this, Tk 227 crore was allocated in 1997-98, the premier said.

Now the teachers are getting 80 per cent of their salary from the government fund. She assured of consideration to provide 100 per cent salary from the government fund to the teachers who will show special performance and skill in their professions.

Hasina said the Non-government Educational Institute Teacher-Employees Welfare Trust was formed in 1990 but it was closed after six months during BNP's rule in 1991.

The present government re-
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constructed the Trust in May 1997 by mobilising a fund of Tk 50 crore. The education ministry has been asked to activate the Trust speedily.

The prime minister said the government has taken a number of important steps for the rapid spread of education.

The government has a plan to remove illiteracy from the society by the year 2005 and teachers are the main architects to make the tough programme a success, Hasina added.

The prime minister said the government is implementing projects to accommodate an increased number of admission of children in schools; stop child labour and reduce dropout rate.

She said a programme has been taken for spreading education for women and to increase the number of female teachers in the educational institutions.

"Under this programme, 7,000 more women teachers are being appointed from 1997 to 2002," she said.