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30,000 children provided Maktab education

A Correspondent

PATUAKHALI, Jan 15: About 2,000 rural children have been provided with Maktab education and more than 500 unemployed persons absorbed in various jobs in Patuakhali district through different income generating projects undertaken by Bangladesh Maktab Mission, a non-government organisation established in 1986 aiming at changing lot of rural people and imparting basic education to poor children.

The projects comprise Maktab in mosques, pisciculture, poultry farming, sewing and type training centres and family planning centres.

The mission has so far brought 16 districts including Patuakhali, Barisal, Pirojpur, Chandpur, Gaibandha, Comilla, Rajshahi, Kurigram, Dinajpur, Panchagarh, Sherpur, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar, Feni and Laksmipur under its jurisdiction, where about 1,500 Maktab have been opened in mosques of rural areas and 100 poultry farms, 10 sewing training centres, five type training centres

and five fish culture projects have been launched.

A total of 651 programme officers have been engaged in different districts to run the projects.

Fifteen hundred teachers have been employed to run the maktab. Poor children in rural area who are deprived of primary education are generally facilitated admission to these maktab without tuition fees. About 30,000 children have been provided this education so far all over the country. Maktab committees were formed at union levels who are entrusted with taking care of the maktab and collecting donations from the rich. The amount of donation is deposited with local banks to meet up the expenditure required for purchasing books, educational appliances and salary of teachers. Mathematics, Bengali, English and Arabic are taught in these maktab with special importance and emphasis keeping pace with the primary education curricula.

The Maktab Mission that obtained government registration in February this year has so far imparted training on sewing to more than 500 destitute women, most of them have got jobs in tailoring shops.

One hundred poultry farms were opened at initial cost of about Tk 1 lakh. About 300 unemployed youths have been engaged in these farms who are now earning sufficient money to run their families.

Besides, the mission has undertaken family planning motivation programmes at union levels, at least 500 males and females have been motivated by its field workers to undergo sterilization.

The mission has also introduced interest-free loan disbursement system in rural areas. About Tk 40,000 have been disbursed among destitute people and marginal farmers on long-term basis.

The funds required for running projects are raised locally by union committees. A total of 95 union committees have so far been formed in different districts. These committees are organised by union programme officers who are assigned to raise funds by taking donations from the local rich people. The funds are deposited with local banks. No money is converted to the central committee situated in Dhaka.

Moulana Abdus Sobhan, Chairman of Bangladesh Maktab Mission while on a tour here told this correspondent that his organisation had a plan to open maktab in all the mosques of the country providing maktab education to all poor children and income generating training to unemployed rural people in the days ahead.