



Literacy Day

Sir,—I fully endorse the views expressed in your editorial of the 8th instant under the above caption. International Literacy Day is of great importance to our country where 78% people are illiterate. The number of illiterate people is on the increase as there is a rapid increase in total population. According to the census report of 1974 the percentage of literacy stands at 22.2 and in 1979 we come to know that there has been only an increase of 1% over the last 28 years. The very statistics also shows that about 3 million out of our total population are illiterate. A spontaneous service rendered by them can help the nation undergo an overall change in the field of literacy. About 12356 teaching personnel have so far been trained to work for removal of illiteracy. But it is regretting to note that they only work for some hours a day.

Every year we observe the day but the progress in the percentage of literacy is very slow for some obvious reasons. The campaign is not followed by effective elaborate programmes for expansion of literacy all over the country. The measures taken both at official and unofficial levels make us hopeful. But we are soon hurried back to despair when we think that speeches, discussions and programmes as well are not really being translated into action through practical and concerted efforts.

Bangladesh means a land of rural areas where majority of the people fail to have the light of such a campaign. So in rural areas of the country there should be a comprehensive planned programme which may be launched by welfare organisations and voluntary associations existing in our societies, or some fresh committees may be set up at union level consisting of local teachers, students and elected

representatives political leaders as well as local influential persons interested in education. The youths to be trained under youth complex scheme should have certain guidelines in this regard to launch an effective campaign in their respective areas.

The rural unlettered people cannot understand the significance of the day as well as the curse of illiteracy. They should be motivated towards the necessity for ensuring our national prosperity and dignity in international forums. To infuse in them the spirit of literacy there should be launched a massive countrywide programme by the aforesaid organisations or committees. The members on the committees can raise funds from the local people through their contributions in order to arrange and run night schools, which are very few in number at present in our country, for imparting the knowledge of three R's to our adults.

Moreover the womenfolk constituting half of our total population are not getting proper and necessary facilities. We must make our womenfolk educated to ensure our progress. Female teachers or students may perform the duty of imparting knowledge to them. Teachers can motivate and encourage them to make necessary efforts in this regard to make our adult women literate.

We hail the interim education policy which includes programme for introduction of universal primary education. The government will not be alone able to save the nation from the curse of illiteracy. To make the literacy drive a success all the able and educated persons of the land should extend their hands of cooperation with dedication and sincerity.

However, nothing can be done overnight. We have to advance step by step. Let us all be serious about the problem and the practicable measures to be taken to eradicate illiteracy by launching a programme based on the point—each one teaches one—Yours etc. MD. AKHTAR HOSSAIN MONDAL, Asstt. Teacher, Rani Bilas Moni High School, Joydebpur.

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