

Letters to the editor

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Stranded teachers

It is gratifying to note that the Government of Bangladesh and the Government of Pakistan have taken up the repatriation programme once again. The outstanding problems between the two countries shall now, it is hoped, find speedy solution to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The Urdu-Speaking Teachers awaiting repatriation for so many years are particularly

thankful to the leaders of both the countries for their sympathetic concern for those in distress. It is an admitted fact that assimilation of these teachers in the educational set up of Bangladesh is not possible in view of the fact that Urdu — and English too — ceased to be the mediums of instruction here after 1971. They are neither in a position to have recourse to some other profession owing to the nature of their education, nor are they able to attain the level of efficiency required in Bangladesh at this stage of life. The solution to their prob-

lems, therefore, lies in repatriation alone.

The Government of Pakistan agreed to include the Urdu-speaking Teachers in the Hardship Category when repatriation was going on in 1974. Their names were registered with the ICRC and everything was being set right. But in the meantime repatriation came to an abrupt halt on June 30, 1974 and the teachers were left behind.

Assurances, however, were given from all quarters that the case of the Urdu-speaking teacher would find the

most sympathetic consideration as and when repatriation would start again.

Now that work on repatriation has already started the Urdu-speaking teachers appeal to the Government of Pakistan, the Government of Bangladesh and all concerned to see that this time the teachers are cleared and repatriated, as early as possible.

This would indeed be a service to the cause of education and a great help to the poor Urdu-speaking teachers.

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