

# Production Oriented Education - II

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**Higher education:** Do we need higher education? Of course we need higher education and research for development of the country. But for a moment, just for a moment, think what will happen if all the universities in the country are closed down. Some may say there will be very little impact, some other even may go further to say that there will be no impact on our education at all if the universities are closed down. We need primary education more than the university education. Again another group may argue saying that our universities are 'political grounds' of the politicians. The vast majority in the campus; students, teachers and administrative staff are sincere and pursue their education seriously. It is the minority groups of 'outsiders' used by the politicians who spoil our university education system. This does not mean higher education in the country is a waste. Of course we need higher education and research for our socio-economic development. But universities should be left in the private sector with provision for scholarships for poor meritorious students.

**Religious Education:** Although "human development" is the slogan of the day, negligence of education

sector as a whole and bias towards "religious" education continue to persist. In Bangladesh growth rate of madrasa is far greater than that of secular schools (Anu Muhammad).

**Medical Education and Health:** Government has withdrawn automatic absorption in jobs of the doctors after their completing MBBS. I think it is a national loss. Although we need plenty of doctors in the country, many go away abroad. It costs quite an amount to produce a doctor, which is a burden on our taxpayers. In the health sector, for 120 million people we have about 25,000 physicians in the country after 25 years of 'development.' Some of them are not in the country and majority practice in the large cities. The largest concentration of the specialists and physicians is in Dhaka. Poor people of the country cannot reach them. Unless policy and system are changed, and effective measures taken, the situation will not improve and the general public, particularly the rural people will continue to suffer. Private practice of doctors in government service should be controlled and monitored properly.

**Information Technology and Education:** The importance of information technology is great in the

field of education, research and development (R&D). Advanced technological developments are taking place very fast in this respect. It has started reaching Bangladesh as well, though slowly. Computerized 'Internet' and E-mail services are by far the most important for education and research, as well as in commerce and industry. Our telecommunication system is not that efficient as yet in this respect, but ultimately I think the system will be upgraded.

**Education\* and Politics:** Our education system, particularly university education is not free from politics. Politics is not separate from education. Ultimately, it has to be separated, otherwise the prospects of our education will always remain bleak. But how it can be done? It is a very very big and complicated question to deal with. It depends on the political system of the country. Will our political parties and politicians like/want to do it? Without their determination and sincere good will it cannot be achieved. Our President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmad commented in this issue suggesting suspension of student politics. But can 'our democracy' achieve it? I think it should start from somewhere without

further delay. The President has spoken about it. The good result of it is that the people have started talking about it as well, though the result is yet to be seen. President said good words, but good words are not enough unless they can be translated into reality.

The President had revealed certain facts while speaking at a centenary function of a school at Jamalpur district on the 3rd April 1997 (Pingna High School field), blaming students and teachers while sparing the parents and guardians for the malpractice of copying and doing other things including violent activities in examination halls. Teachers are said to be annoyed by the President's remarks, but I don't think they have any valid ground to be so. I think it would have been proper to bring the parents and guardians into the picture as well.

If the matter of banning politics at university campuses and all educational institutions can be taken up in the parliament and a law enacted and included in our constitution, then it would be the first sign of good will and intention of our politicians and political parties. But can it be done in a society where education and politics are two sides of the same coin?