

The Bangladesh Times, Dhaka Tuesday, March 24, 1987

Development In Education: 82-87

By An Analyst

THE country has chosen democracy for development which means the greatest good for the greatest number of people. By its most accepted definition democracy means rule by consent which implies equal rights and privileges for all citizens. As opposed to centralisation of authority, democracy also means decentralisation or sharing of power amongst individual citizens. These right and privileges also entail certain responsibilities. Proper exercise of those rights and responsibilities requires an individual to be aware of them. Education is the only agent which can create that awareness. In order for democracy to stabilise spread of education to form a strong socio-economic infrastructure is essential. Since President Ershad assumed power in 1982 sincere efforts with far-reaching effect have been made to build this infrastructure. As a first step towards this, measures have been taken for universal and compulsory primary education.

In all planning, utmost care has been taken not only to develop human resources in a balance and harmonious way, but also to make education meaningful and more responsive to social needs, so that no lop-sided development in any sector of education took place.

High priority to primary education has been reflected in providing it with over 46 per cent of the total education allocation. Out of an estimated Second Plan development expenditure of Tk. 487.66 crore on education, the expenditure on primary education was around Tk. 225.59 crore. Besides a sum of Tk. 105 crore was also allocated during the financial year 1985-86. The revenue expenditure on primary education increased from Tk. 97.97 crore in 1980-81 to Tk. 221.22 crore in 1985-86.

Although dropout rate is still high, the enrolment in country's 44,020 primary schools has increased to 95 lakh from 84.5 lakh in 1983. The present target is to provide one school for every 2,000 people or for an area of two square kilometers.

To check dropout parent-teacher association has been formed in each school in which community learning centre has been established. There are 200 such centres. There are the outcome of an innovative scheme to make each primary school pivot of all community activities. Parent, teachers and community workers are the members of these centres. Under the guidance of the centre the school is being used not only for the education of children but also as a learning centre for entire community.

A major step has been taken to raise the emoluments of primary teachers. In 1980-81 a trained teacher used to get an initial emoluments of Tk. 445.00 per month against Tk. 715.00 at present. A trust fund for the welfare of teachers has been created and government has provided Tk. 20 lakh for the purpose.

Major physical progress in field of primary education during the period 1982-83 to 1985-86 has been recorded as follows:

- a. Repair and renovation of Schools -10,708 (Schools)
- b. Construction of classrooms 15,511 (Classrooms)
- c. Distribution of text books to primary children...-342 lakh sets
- d. Distribution of uniforms up to 1982-83 -35 lakh sets
- e. Sinking of tubewells -7718

Enrolment at the secondary level increased from 21.43 lakh in 1980 to 25.75 lakh in 1985. During the period number of schools increased from 8644 in 1980 to 9440 in 1985.

An amount of Tk. 6.51 crore including project aid of Tk. 30.36 crore was provided in Annual Development Plan for the years 1982-83 to 1985-86.

One of the priority projects at secondary level is the introduction of integrated science course in non-government schools. 3800 non-government schools came under the project. Construction of laboratories in 920 schools has been undertaken. Orientation of training in the use of new science text books have been given to

7,000 teachers.

Considering inadequate facilities in schools in rural areas number of streams in diversified courses of studies has been reduced to two, humanities and science, instead of six namely, humanities, science, commerce, home economics, agriculture and industrial arts taught in certain urban schools prior to 1983. The change has been intended to provide equal opportunities to children from both urban and rural areas.

One of the most important measures has been the recent increase in salary support and allowances to teachers of non-government secondary schools, the expenditure on this account being raised from Tk. 30 crore in 1980-81 to Tk. 92.42 crore in 1985-86.

Since 1982-83, country's 109 government colleges have been taken up for development. With a view to reducing the pressure on the existing universities and making the facilities of higher education available to the non-metropolitan areas in keeping

... development of four ... colleges has been under implementation since 1983-84.

During 1984-85 a further project for development of eight more university colleges were launched. Furthermore, six non-government colleges were nationalised during 1981-83 and following the President's commitment 27 more have been nationalised.

The enrolment and number of teachers in 276 intermediate and 366 degree colleges are 463,778 and 14,539, respectively.

The financial grants to non-government colleges towards salary support and allowance increased from Tk. 7.09 crore in 1980-81 to Tk. 15.24 crore in 1985-86. The grant in-aid to non-government colleges during the same period increased from Tk. 1.20 crore to Tk. 1.51 crore.

To bridge the gap between education imparted in the schools and colleges on the one hand, and Madrashas on the other, and to enable the Madrasha students to proceed to higher studies in science and technology, a project for the development of science facilities in 200 Madrashas has been under implementation since Second Five-Year Plan.

Country's 3,429 Madrashas have enrolment of 638,926 stu-

... 31,948 teachers. financial benefits to the non-government Madrashas have been raised to the level of non-government secondary schools and colleges. The allocations to non-government Madrashas towards salary support and allowances increased from Tk. 10 crore in 1980-81 to Tk. 41.68 crore in 1985-86.

Significant development took place in the last five years in the field of technical education in the country. Technical education project for the improvement of the quality of education and training at the four Engineering colleges and seventeen Polytechnic Institutes is the largest project ever undertaken at an estimated cost of Tk. 132.97 crore.

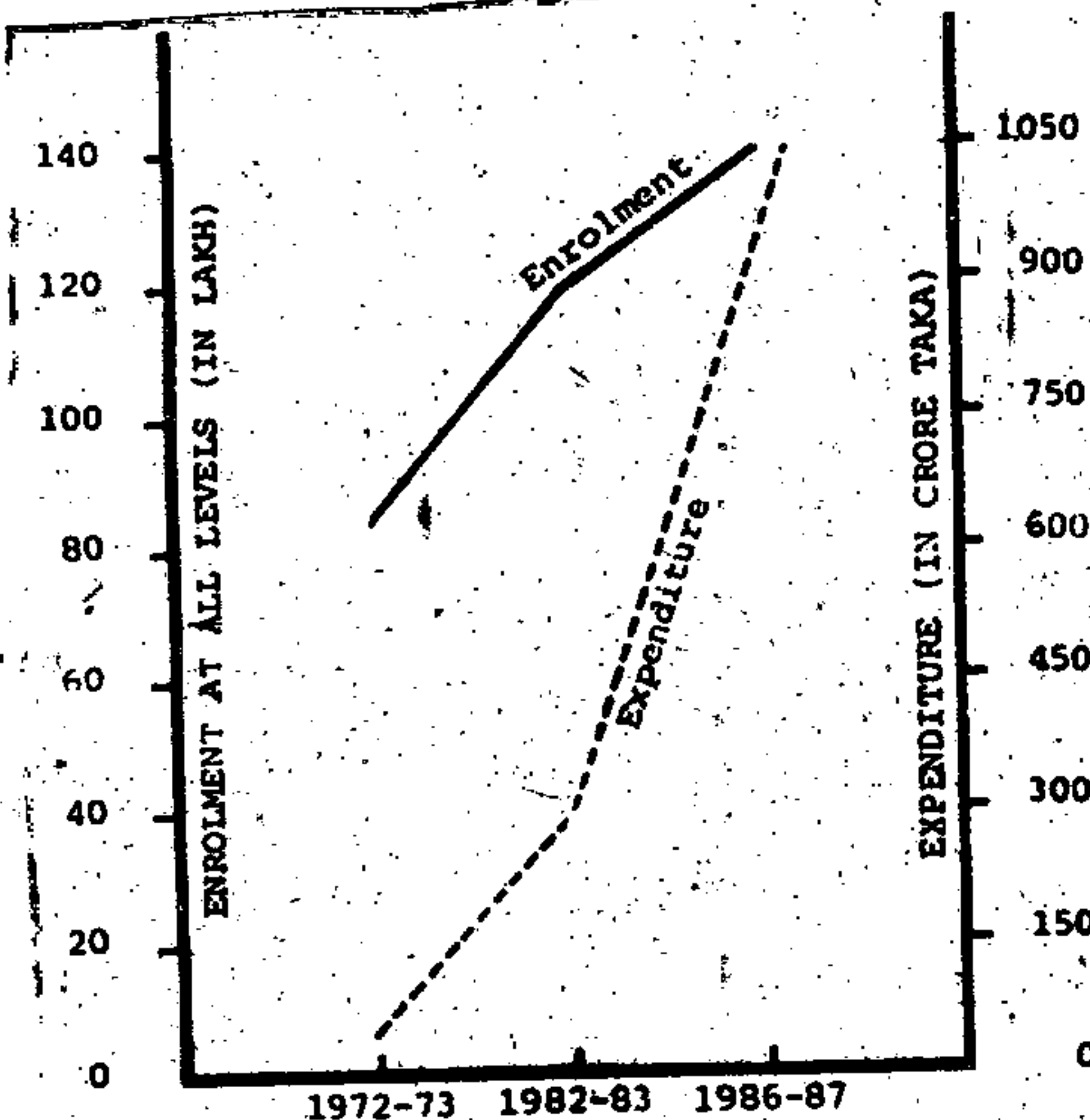
Establishment of a Mohila Polytechnic Institute in Dhaka adds new dimension to women's education in technical fields. In addition women's hostels are being built in each of the 17 polytechnics.

Dhaka Engineering college at Joydebpur is the only college where Engineering Diploma holders from Polytechnics are admitted to pursue degree course in Engineering. Under President Ershad's commitment intake capacity of the college is being raised from 120 to 240.

In the academic year 1985-86 with the commissioning of Islamic University number of universities in the country has increased to seven. In 1983 the total enrolment and the number of teachers in the universities were 39,586 and 2,626 respectively. Two more new universities, one at Sylhet, and another at Khudna, will be established during the Third Five-Year Plan. Development activities in the universities have been substantial. Particular attention has been given to construction of halls of residence for students, academic building including libraries and laboratories, procurement of science equipment, books and journals.

Education is a sector where gestation period being long quick results cannot be expected. Planning for education must have a prospective period during which sustained efforts and continuous evaluation have to be made and adequate resources are to be provided.

Education in the modern technological age is challenging. Government is committed to meet the challenge.



EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (1972-87) IN GRAPH