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# Call to change Mathematics curricula

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The Fifth National Mathematical Conference concluded on Monday at the Jahangirnagar University with a call for changes in the existing Mathematics curricula and evaluation method of the performance of students.

The three-day conference participated by about 250 mathematicians from home and abroad dwelt at length on "the problems of Mathematics teaching and applicable mathematics in Bangladesh" The conference included a number of expository lectures, group discussions and presentation of research papers.

Terming the present mathematics curricula as "century-old" Mr Anwar Ali, senior member of Directing Staff of the National Institute of Educational Administration Exiension and Research (NIEAER) said that it should undergo basic changes in content and sequence to fit an advanced age in science and technology.

Underscoring the need of teachers' training to get better teaching from them, he regretted the non-availability of the training facility in the form of in-service education. He pointed out that there was no such re-training in the primary level. In the secondary and higher secondary levels also the provision of such re-training was too insignificant in comparison to the colossal need for it.

He said, want of training facility would render every attempt at reshaping the curricula unsuccessful. He also regretted that the few experts in curricula development and revision we have could not carry out their work properly for the want of political and professional support from the society and for political and group pressures.

Prof S.M. Sharfuddin observed that the present teaching system and the curricula could not help sprout the talent and foster the problem-solving ability of the students. He advocated for changes in both the curricula and the method of evaluation of the performance of the students in this connection. He said, methematics examinations should include open-ended problems which should be valued according to the approach and adequacy of the solution. He underscored the need of proper design and the assessment of open-ended problems in this connection.

Prof. Sharfuddin viewed that the major aim of mathematics education in primary level should be to develop the ability to use numbers in situations that arise in daily life. The secondary school carricula also need to be reshaped to include situations from everyday life and other fields of study, he added.