



Development in the education sector

Education not only enlightens the individual life, but lays the foundation of a skilled manpower and paves the way for national economic development. Education is one of the weapons of ensuring success in all sphere of national life. Development of the nation, its economic progress, social development and prosperity in individual life can be ensured only through the spread of the light of education. Acute poverty, huge number of illiterate adults, weak management, huge population inadequate resources are the main obstacles of education's progress.

Importance was given in the second five-year plan to improve the quality of education so that our education system conforms to the need of the nation and the society as well. But expected success and progress could not be marked in this field due to constrained resources, and other social problems in spite of the sincerity of the government. With the growth of population, the number of students in our educational institutions is also increasing. Since the number of educational institutions would not be increased according to the ratio of students desired expansion of education was not possible. Though there was expansion of education, the quality and standard in some fields did not rise.

Special emphasis was given to improve the quality of education and expand the facilities of education under the current plan period (1985-90). During this period Taka 1170 crore will be spent in education sector which is 4.85 per cent of the total allocation. The areas identified to the education under the plan are given below.

- To ensure enrollment of 70 percent of the school going children, prevent the rate of drop outs so that majority of the students complete their five-year primary education. To ensure universal primary education by the year 2000.
- To narrow the gap of the educational facilities between the rural and urban areas.
- To arrange in-service training of the teachers of primary, secondary and vocational.
- To give more emphasis on science, technical and vocational education.
- To reduce the numbers of illiterate adults.
- To maintain equal ratio of students (girls and boys) at different levels of education including college and universities.
- To narrow the existing gap regarding facilities in education between male and

female. Strategy to be taken for the implementation of the objectives are:

- 1) creation of infra-structural facilities to keep 70 percent students in schools and to prevent wastage in primary education by increasing rate of presence.
 - 2) creation of facilities of science education in the school where these are lacking.
 - 3) Steps for removing the present discrepancy between urban and rural areas, male and female by giving preference on scholarships.
 - 4) cluster training programme for primary teachers at upazila level will be undertaken besides their in-service training.
- In-service training for the secondary teachers in regional basis will be taken in phases.
4. Efforts will be made to increase the number of seats in the educational institutions for the female.
 5. Massive mass literacy programme will be taken up to reduce the number of illiterate adults.
 6. Necessary infra-structural and academic facilities will be provided to improve the quality of education at all levels.

Not only allocation was considerably increased in the education sector during last few years, specially from 1982-83, but also efforts were made to build up the education as a weapon for economic social progress by integrating it with the needs and demands of the nation. Due importance was given to provide uniform facilities and make the education effective. Special attention was also given to make the education meaningful. For the last seven years, the total annual spending on education sector was increased to four folds. The spending in 1980-81 in this sector was Taka 285.91 crore and in 1988-89 this has stood at Taka 1156.86 crore. The progress made at different levels of education are given below.

Primary education: Maximum importance has been given on primary education during the Third Five-Year Plan by spending 46 per cent of the total allocation of education sector. Seven thousand primary schools are now functioning in the private sector in addition to the government primary schools in the education sector. During the current plan period 1000 primary schools in private sector will be nationalised. The programme is nearing completion. It is hoped that 70 percent of the school going children will be in schools by 1990. The rate

of admission has increased to 68 percent in 1988. Under the development project there will be construction of school buildings, repair and renovation, distribution of books free of cost, supply of furniture, frequent training of teachers and ensuring water supply have been undertaken. Training programme of those related to school management has also been taken up. The wastage in the primary education sector could be arrested a little following considerable improvement in keeping the students in schools with the increase of infrastructural facilities. We have conviction that the enrollment of students in primary schools will further improve if supervision in this respect is strengthened. It may be mentioned here that 50 percent of the post of primary teachers has been kept reserved for the females and the rate of female teachers has reach double as compared to 1981. The percentage of female teachers in primary schools is now 17. The rate of the enrollment of girl students has also increased gradually. Before 1985, the rate of girl students was 40 percent and it has now increased to 44 percent. The normal atmosphere in the primary education sector was disrupted a little following the consecutive floods and cyclone for the last two years. So the government has laid emphasis on post-flood rehabilitation of primary education.

MASS LITERACY

The mass literacy programme was launched in 1980 as a movement. But was suspended in 1982 due to some weak management problems. The mass literacy programme was again re-introduced in the country in September 1987 with the slogan 'Education for all'. The main objective of the present programme is to help raise the literacy rate to 60 percent by the year 2000 by increasing the infra-structural facilities of primary education. Work of this programme has been taken up in some of the selected upazila in the first phase. Upazila parishad will take prime responsibility for implementation of the programme. Active cooperation of all officials of development agencies at upazilas level has been sought for the successful implementation of the programme. The mass literacy programme will be work and life-oriented. The government is encouraging the non-government voluntary organisations with some financial assistance.

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which have played successful role in removing illiteracy.

SECONDARY AND COLLEGE EDUCATION

The problems which are plaguing the secondary and college education are. (a) low standard of teaching and inadequacy of qualified and efficient teachers, (b) Maximum number of failures in secondary and higher secondary examinations (c) Inadequate facilities, (d) Big gap of facilities between the urban and rural schools (e) Weak management both centrally and locally, etc.

In the wake of these problems, the government has laid stress on the development of secondary and college education under the current plan. According to the plan, programme has been drawn to develop the infrastructural academic facilities and given emphasis on science education

in the secondary schools and colleges. To reduce the pressure of admission in the universities, the government took special scheme to extend facilities of honours and post-graduate education in 11 degree colleges of the district headquarters in 1983-84. Besides programmes taken to set up science labs and supply science equipment to 77 non-government inter-mediate colleges. There are at present 10,246 secondary schools throughout the country, of which 252 are government high schools. The present government has nationalised 99 high and secondary schools. The number of colleges in the country is 758 of which 275 are non-government intermediate, college, 11 government intermediate, 298 non-government degree college and 174 government degree colleges. The present government nationalised 84 colleges. Payment of 70 percent of the basic salary of the non-government teachers as grants is a remarkable achievement of the present

government.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

There are three kinds of institutions for imparting technical education. The degree awarding institutions are engineering college, textile technology college, teacher technology college. Diploma awarding institutions are polytechnic institutes, institute of glass ceramics, graphic arts institute and certificate awarding institutions are vocational training institutes. The number of technical institutions in the country is 79. Considerable progress has been made in the technical education sector for the last few years. Construction of hostels for the female polytechnic students has been done with each of the country's 17 polytechnic institutes in addition to a women's polytechnic institute in Dhaka with residential facilities. These were done for the expansion of technical education among the women. A common finishing facilities centre has

been set up in the premises of teacher technology institute for the leather industry. The centre will help attain skill and necessary practical knowledge to the workers employed in tanneries around the institute. A project under the name of technical education project is in the process of implementation to further strengthen the technical education directorate and improvement of the technical teachers training college. The project will improve the quality of education in the 4 Bangladesh institutes of technology (formerly engineering college) and 17 polytechnic institutes. The project includes (a) teacher training, (b) improvement of curricula, (c) Training of the students in the mills and factories (d) repair and renovation of old buildings, (e) supply of machinery, (f) reforms of examination system. The project is expected to be completed by 1991. The number of vocational and trade institutes under the education division is 51, workshops of 30 institutes out of 51 are being supplied with modern equipment.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

There are seven universities in the country including an engineering university and an agriculture university. Two more universities one at Khulna and another at Sylhet will be set up during the current plan period. Work on Shahjalal technical university is rapidly progressing. The number of total university students is 40 thousand. Session jam has been identified as one of the problems in university education. Remarkable progress has been achieved in the development of university education during the current plan. Two halls of 1200 accommodation were set up for Dhaka University; purchase of seven buses, and establishment of 300 kv substation and deep tube well, one hall of Rajshahi university for 400 students another hall of 400 students for the females.

All the development plans, policies and projects under the education sector are aimed at flourishing the identity and establishing the prestige of an independent nation. The main objective of all plans is to integrate the people with the development activities. These are also aimed at earning a dignified life for the nation and the country in the world. In fact, the steps taken in the education sector is leading the nation to the deserved goal.