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# Agricultural education

— Diwan Rashidul Hassan

lists promulgated permanent settlement act in 1973. Before that, since the inception of organized agriculture, there were autonomous villages in which the people obligatorily followed caste system based on profession. There was no incentive for innovation, mainly because (i) the autonomous villages never felt the need for improvement in production technology, (ii) the obligatory professional caste system in agricultural profession was never by choice, (iii) the social system was a sterile hybrid of primitive communism and feudalism.

The Permanent Settlement Act 1793 brought forward some revolutionary changes: i) private ownership of land ii) production of raw materials for British industries iii) new revenue system iv) foundation of agricultural research, teaching and extension organizations. The Department of Agriculture was first established under the Department of Land Records in 1880. Independent Department of Agriculture was established in 1906. First Agricultural Research Laboratory was commissioned in 1908. In 1929 All India Imperial Council of Agricultural Research was established. First institute for agricultural education in India was Bengal Agricultural Institute, established at Tejgaon in 1938. For its support the University of Dhaka created the faculty of agriculture in 1940 and started offering B. Ag. degree to the general science graduates after 2 years study at the institute. From 1945 the degree (B.Ag) course was offered to students for 3 years after 12 class of schooling (I.Sc.). The system was followed till the establishment of Agricultural University at Mymensingh in 1961. The

unfortunate, most of the agricultural research in the country. It sponsors BARI, BAU, BJRI, SRTI, BRR, LRI and other organisations engaged in agricultural research. Unfortunately, most of the

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cultural technologies so far developed through research in Bangladesh are not, in most cases, best suited and well adapted to local conditions and farmers' constraints. Very often development planners blame the farmers for their low response to modern technology. But there might be some genuine causes and valid reasons for the farmers to reject the technologies. Extension research can play an important role in determining the factors responsible for farmers' low response to modern technologies as well as their preference for adhering to old traditions and customs. Improving the quality of agricultural graduates is a universal concern. Although enough empirical data are lacking, our graduates lack the needed skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively in their profession. According to communication experts, producing quality graduates is a complex process operating in different phases

of the study programmes. At least four crucial factors can be identified in the process. These are adequacy and relevancy of the course curricula, accessibility of the schools to teaching resources and academic environment of the Institutes. Traditional system inherited from the colonial rulers has failed to attain the desired goals in all levels of our educational system. We must therefore, seek for a new system. Given adequate teaching resources and having established ideal environment in the educational institutes, the semester system may prove much more effective than the present system. Academicians recommend that the semester system be introduced initially on a limited basis. Then it should be expanded gradually according to need.