

CA for overcoming segmentation in education system

Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed on Sunday said the country would have to overcome segmentation and divisions in the education system at primary and secondary levels that create a divided society, reports UNB.

"The emergence of a widening difference in the quality of education between urban and rural schools is a serious problem. Over

last several decades the problem has become worst... we've to find out the solution to the problem as soon as possible," he told a conference on education affairs.

The Chief Adviser said: "We've to ensure that a set of core knowledge and competencies is acquired by all students along with choices for additional or complementary learning. This will require

a core curriculum, irrespective of the type of institutions and provider of services."

He was inaugurating the three-day Conference on 'Governance in Education: Accountability and Effectiveness' at the International Conference Centre.

The conference was organized by UNESCO and Bangladesh Na-
(See Page 11 Col. 2)

CA for overcoming

(From Page 1 Col. 4)

tional Council for UNESCO with cooperation of Ministry of Education and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education in association with Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University and Access to Information Programme of the Chief Adviser's Office.

The educational system in Bangladesh consists of some 150,000 institutions, 34 million students and over 900,000 teachers, it was informed at the function.

It was stated that primary and secondary level institutions naturally form the bulk of the system with about 20 million students in

primary education including madrasas and non-formal programmes and about 11 million students at the secondary level including madrasas.

Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury and Director UNESCO and its country representative Malama Meleisea also spoke at the inaugural session, chaired by Education Secretary and secretary general of Bangladesh National Council for UNESCO M Momtazul Islam.

Director, Institute of Educational Development, Dr Manzoor Ahmed and policy adviser of Access to Information Programme of Chief Adviser's Office Anir Chowdhury presented two keynote papers separately on the theme of the conference.

Academics and policymakers were present at the function.

Laying importance on the use of electronic media for educational purpose, the Chief Adviser said although computer and internet proliferation is still not widespread in the country, it must make good use of the electronic media for educational purpose. State-run Bangladesh Television (BTV) has the necessary infrastructure for setting up an educational channel.

The channel, he said, can be used optimally and effectively for high priority purposes like teachers training and support, literacy and continuing education, supplementing formal primary and secondary classroom instruction, open university courses, English language instruction, and technical and vocational education.

The Chief Adviser asked the ministries of Information, Education, and Primary and Mass Education to examine and move the matter expeditiously to set up such a facility.

Much progress has been made in the country in recent years in expanding opportunities and overcoming disparities in the education sector, he said.

He added that proactive policies of the government to expand access as well as innovative initiatives by the non-government organizations to serve those unable to take advantage of the formal system have led to the success.

Dr Fakhruddin said the children, disadvantaged by extreme poverty or having special needs, often do not get education they deserve. Unacceptable inequalities, therefore, persist alongside widening quality gaps.

He mentioned that National Commitment to "offer free and compulsory education to all boys and girls" as stated in Article 17 of the

Constitution as well as the goals set by MDG and Education for All would remain unrealized if the present rate of progress is maintained.

"We should devise an optimal arrangement now for all education-related service providers in a geographic unit such as an upazila, to function cohesively.

They should work together through a mechanism of local coordination to ensure that every child can participate in an institution, which meets the minimum agreed standards of instruction whoever the service provider may be," he said.

The Chief Adviser said the mental barriers between the government and non-government programme must be bridged in order to fully utilize existing social capital and achieve educational goals.