

International Literacy Day today

# Help change life of at least one child: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday urged the educated people to perform their constitutional duty by teaching alphabet to at least one child, reports BSS.

The students, particularly those who have ended final examinations, can do the job to establish an illiteracy-free Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister was addressing the inaugural ceremony of International Literacy Day 2009 at Osmany Memorial Auditorium in the city.

Primary and Mass Communication Minister M Afzarul Amin presided over the function organised by his ministry. State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Motahar Hossain and the ministry's secreparary-in-charge Badrul Alam Talukder addressed the function as special guests.

The theme of the day this year is 'Literacy and Empowerment.'

The Prime Minister said education has no alternative to make life human, enlightened and meaningful.

The government is working relentlessly to build a modern state and society by educating the people, she added.

'Literacy is the stair of education and the educated people are the key force of development, the Prime Minister said and added education can strengthen social positions of the people.

Creation of awareness about literacy, implementation of government's programmes and determination of future programmes are essential, she observed.

Sheikh Hasina said the human civilization has progressed a lot as a result of the flourishing of merit and tech-

nology, but the light of civilization did not spread equally everywhere.

"This is a big challenge for our development and prosperity," she said and called upon all to come forward to take the nation forward by facing the challenge.

The Prime Minister referred to the quotation of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman 'We need golden men to build golden Bangla' and said education is the only weapon to produce that 'golden men'

Realizing this truth, Bangabandhu had nationalised all primary schools and the jobs of all primary teachers in the war-ravaged post-liberation Bangladesh, she recalled.

"We believe the country could become illiteracy-free by this time, if the Father of the Nation was not assassinated," she said and reiterated her government's pledge to complete the incomplete tasks.

Sheikh Hasina said as per the 1991 census, the rate of (See Back page Col. 6)

## Help change

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adult education in the country was 35 percent which rose to 64 percent in 1996 when the Awami League was in power.

"We set the target of making the country illiteracy-free by 2006, but it is unfortunate that the rate of literacy declined to 53 percent in last seven years," she added. The Prime Minister pledged to free the country from the curse of illiteracy by 2014 and said her government wants to ensure cent percent enrollment of children in schools. She stressed collective efforts by all to this end.

Referring to the formation of a committee to formulate a time-befitting education policy in the country, Sheikh Hasina said the committee has submitted its report.

The report would be posted on the internet to take opinions of the people on the draft policy until September 30, she said added the policy will be finalised after analyzing those opinions.

She expressed the hope that it would be possible to modernise country's education system by implementing the recommendations made by the National Education Policy Formulation Committee.

The Prime Minister said the desired success could not be achieved in the education sector, like all other areas, because the democratic process was hampered in the country frequently.