

তারিখ ২৪/১২/৭৯...  
পৃষ্ঠা... ৫... কলাম... ৪...

# Adult Education: A Stimulating Force

-S. Hussain

*Pl give it three*

Illiteracy remains the major stumbling block in the way of social and economic growth in many developing countries. Without reasonable levels of education it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Third World countries to carve out the paths of progress and implement the plans for development. According to the United Nations experts without effective and progressive educational systems, socio-economic targets will largely remain unattainable in Asian and African countries.

Most disturbing, however, is the fact that despite overall efforts the number of illiterates does not appear to be declining fast in the developing countries. In Asia and the Oceanic region, the rate of illiteracy was 75 per cent in 1955, it came down to 66 per cent in 1960 and stood at 58 per cent in 1970.

Referring to the dimensions of illiteracy, Mr. A.M. M'Bow,

Director-General of the UNESCO, said recently in Bonn that the number of illiterates in the world would be around 800 million in 1980 and 954 million by the beginning of the next century.

Mr. M'Bow called upon the member nations of the UNESCO and specially the developing countries to undertake necessary measures for wiping out illiteracy from the face of the world.

He called for an act of solidarity among member countries to combat illiteracy as by 1985 only two-thirds of the world's school age children would be in a position to receive education under the present conditions.

He suggested that teachers and students should teach three illiterates at least each to read and write. Universities and international educational institutions like the UNESCO should sponsor such projects.

Educational efforts aimed at combating illiteracy however would need the improvement of infrastructure and basic facilities available in the developing countries. The acute shortage of schools, colleges, teachers and teaching materials remains the major hurdle in the way of doing away with illiteracy in the Third World. The international organisations like the UNESCO and other bodies in developed countries should provide necessary resources in order to fill up the gap in this sector. Special emphasis should be placed on basic information, community development, adult literacy, youth education, training and further training of teachers and media.

Moreover, experts should be sent to developing countries to organise seminars and workshops for the training of adult education teachers and for implementing pilot experimental projects in cooperation with local authorities.

Werner Keweloh, Chief of the

German Association for Adult Education (D.V.V.) outlining the objectives of adult education, recently said: "Education measures in the Third World must have a 'development quality'. This implies that they must have a multiplying effect and, above all, reach the marginal population groups; if one wants to realize an improvement in the living conditions of the people."

Adult education should be pursued as a stimulating force to create practical knowledge and, above all, to accelerate the pace of socio-economic advance in the developing countries. As an UNESCO expert said education and economic strategies should be so evolved in developing countries that they are directed toward extending the benefits of education to the vast majority of masses with a view to converting the labour force into a viable human capital for productive use.