

Education commission report lacks direction

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Academics and professionals at a seminar yesterday termed the National Education Commission's report inadequate, which they said has failed to put forward any specific solution or way out of the manifold crises the country's education sector is saddled with.

Some of the speakers also alleged the commission headed by former Dhaka University (DU) vice-chancellor Maniruzzaman Mia in the report just parroted the views and wishes of the ruling alliance leader.

Shiksha Andolon Mancha, a joint platform of some left-leaning student organisations aimed at improving the standard of education, organised the event at DU Business Studies Auditorium.

In the first of the seminar's three sessions, Bangladesh Economic

Association (Bea) President Prof Qazi Kholiquzzaman said the commission's report is too mundane and does not address core issues of the country's education sector.

It "is a product of vague thinking and appears to me more like a collection of unrelated essays than a commission's report," remarked the Bea chief.

He also aired his grievance against the government for ignoring and not implementing the Education Policy formulated back in 2000. "We are completely in the dark about the fate of that policy."

Barrister Shafiq Ahmed lambasted the Maniruzzaman commission's report for going against the spirit of the constitution and not being prepared in line with the constitutional guidelines. "It ignores jurisprudence, while emphasises madrasa education," he noted, and alleged, "Through

this report the government tried to please Jamaat-e-Islami, a partner of the ruling coalition."

At the third session, Prof Zafar Iqbal of Department of Computer Science of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust) excoriated the education commission for its utter lack of focus on discriminations that exist in the country's education system.

Echoing Kholiquzzaman's view, he said, "The report is nothing but a collection of papers that would serve no interest of the nation."

On computer education, the Sust professor said, "Rather than training students in computer operation at secondary school level, we should put more stress on mathematics, which is the language of computer. Computer education should follow a sound mathematical learning; that way it will be more effective, besides making a better

resource management."

Zafar also pointed out that quality textbook, skilled teaching faculty and laboratory facilities are the three prerequisites for a first-rate computer education.

Noted writer Selina Hossain said, "The commission's report fails to reflect aspirations of the people and stakeholders, as the commission didn't consult those engaged in education before preparing its report."

Writer Bashir-al-Helal, DU Prof Mesbah Kamal, Prof Anu Muhammed of Jahangirnagar University, Prof Ajoy Roy, Prof Shahidul Islam of Rajshahi University and Prof Abidur Rahman of Bangladesh Agriculture University also took part in the discussions.