

## Edn budget percentage drops

Staff Correspondent

THE finance minister, AMA Muhith, has proposed an allocation of Tk 21,408 crore for the education sector for the 2012-2013 financial year.

In the proposed budget, primary and mass education ministry will receive

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Tk 9,825 crore and the education ministry will receive Tk 11,583 crore.

The percentage of allocation for education and information technology sector was decreased and is 11 per cent (excluding subsidies, pension and interest) of the total budgetary allocation. For the 2011-2010 financial year, however, it was 11.8 per cent.

In his budget speech, Muhith said the government was determined to enhance the quality of primary education. He said that the government plans to implement the Education Policy in phases.

He stated that the government had already brought down the teacher-student

ratio to 1:47 from 1:50 and still wanted to bring it down further to 1:40.

'Our Government is attaching the highest the priority to education as it is the most important strategic tool for development and the eradication of poverty,' he said.

According to him, at present the male-female student ratio is 47:53, which is the second highest in South Asia.

Furthermore, as many as 43.38 lakh students from the secondary to graduation level have been awarded stipends.

He said a total of 23 crore books have already been distributed in 2012.

In order to enhance the quality of education, he said that the government had given

priority to teacher's training, in particular in the core subjects.

The minister said that a comprehensive sector wide programme (Third Primary Education Development Program, PEDP-3) at a cost of Tk 58,359 crore was taken in which a total of 47,680 teachers would be recruited under this programme.

He mentioned that the government planned to raise the number of female teachers in primary schools to 60 per cent from the current 58.4 percent.

He said that multimedia classrooms have already been set up in each model primary school and ICT labs have been installed in 3,172 sec-

ondary and higher secondary schools across the country.

Muhith said that construction work on 1,500 colleges has been initiated and as many as 306 model high schools were established in upazilas where previously there were no government high schools.

With regards to universities, Muhith said that the government wanted to establish a Digital University at Gazipur and Bangabandhu Science and Technology University in Gopalgonj.

He said that the government had taken steps to establish three new public universities, one at Rangamati, one in Barishal and the Rabindra University in Kushtia.