

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

Implementation at a snail's pace

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THE implementation of the National Education Policy 2010 is going on at a snails pace and many key elements of the policy were yet to be addressed.

Educationalists and some members on the committee

that formulated the policy have resented the slow place of the implementation process and held the lack of coordination responsible for this.

The education minister, Nurul Islam Nahid, said that a full implementation of the policy would take time. 'We

do not have any magic wand to implement it [National Education Policy 2010] overnight.'

Thirty-one months after the cabinet had approved the policy and 24 months after the parliament had adopted it, the government was yet to make a law for education,

work out a separate pay scale for teachers, set up a permanent national education commission, a non-government teachers' selection commission and an accreditation council for universities and implement other key features of the policy.

Continued on page 4, Col. 5

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Continued from page 1

Although the policy has emphasised the of vocational education and the eradication of illiteracy, the government has not taken any effective measures to this during the period, some member on the committee for the implementation of the education policy said.

They also said that there was a serious lack of coordination among sub-committees to work out strategies to implement the education policy.

The cabinet on May 31, 2010 approved the education policy and the parliament adopted it on December 7, 2010.

The government on June 28, 2010 set up the National Education Policy Implementation Committee and on January 26, 2011 set up 24 subcommittees to work out strategies for the policy implementation.

The subcommittees on the formulation of an education law has only prepared a draft and the subcommittee on the permanent education commission and on the appointment and benefits of teachers have met only twice since its inception, a policy implementation committee member told New Age.

The member said that 22 subcommittees had been asked to submit their reports and recommendations in two months while the subcommittees on the law and the permanent education commission were given three months for the job. 'But many of them submitted reports and recommendations six to 12 months after they had been set up.

There is no coordina-

tion between the ministry and committee members,' said national committee member Siddiqur Rahman. 'Right person is not in the right place,' he said.

The lack of coordination between the education and the primary and mass education ministry has become evident from making the decision on the extension of free primary education from Class V to Class VIII.

The subcommittee, chaired by the primary and mass education secretary AKM Abdul Awal Mazumder, set up to place a report on and to recommend on how free primary education could be extended up to Class VIII by March 2011, after its first meeting decided that extension would be in from from 2012. But the time for the extension has now been moved to 2018.

Implementation committee members also blamed funds constraints for the delay in the implementation of the education policy.

The draft of the education policy said that Tk 68,000 crore more would be needed by the 2017-18 financial year to implement the policy and the observation was dropped from the education policy that was passed. The government in the past three years has not made any additional budgetary allocation for the implementation of the policy.

Siddiqur Rahman and Quazi Faruque Ahmed, another member on the national implementation committee, said that the additional amount of money was a must for the implementation of the policy.

They both said that many elements of the policy such as the appointment of teachers in primary and secondary schools, Class V and Class VIII completion examinations and timely free distribution of textbooks, had, however, been implemented.

Faruque Ahmed said that the government was yet to take effective measures about the separate pay scale for teachers, the permanent national education commission, the non-government teachers' selection commission, the accreditation council for universities, the eradication of illiteracy, the expansion of vocational education and other key features of the policy.

The education secretary, Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury, said that the process to make an education law was under way. 'The implementation of the policy is a difficult process. But we have progressed much as we find its reflection in students making better results in the exams, increase in enrolment and an increase in the number of female students.'

The education minister, at a workshop on the implementation of the education policy in November, said that many criticised the government saying that the government had already been in office for three to four years but the education policy had not been implemented. 'I would like to say that this is not a policy that could be implemented immediately.'

'We have started the implementation process and there are some issue we have all ready implement-

ed. Work on some others are in progress. There are some long-term goals in the policy the implementation of which would take time,' he said.

'No education policies in the past had been implemented this far,' the minister said. 'We will soon review all issues.'