

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Ensuring quality still a challenge

Finds Unesco study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Quality education has remained elusive though Bangladesh succeeded in attaining high enrolment at the primary level over the last 15 years, according to Unesco.

A significant proportion of the students, who have completed primary education, does not have basic literacy and numeracy competencies, says a report titled Education for All 2015 National Review- Bangladesh.

They scored only 18.7 out of 27 when their ability to read, understand, explain a Bangla paragraph, carry out a five-digit addition etc was tested.

The competencies were set by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board, said Talat Mahmud, director-education of Save the Children, Bangladesh over the phone.

He presented a summary of "Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2015, Education for All 2000-2015 Achievements and Challenges" at a programme organised jointly by Unesco, Dhaka, Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco (BNCU) and the education ministry yesterday at BNCU's office at Palashi-Nilkhet in the capital.

At the programme were also made a presentation on Bangladesh's education

and another on the declaration of a Unesco meeting in May.

The report on Bangladesh cites an assessment by the primary education department in 2011, according to which only 25 percent of students master Class- 5 Bangla competencies and 33 percent mathematics after completing Grade 5, whereas the yearly pass rates of the Primary School Certificate exams are more or less 90 percent.

Bangladesh has shown poor performance in other factors like pupil-teacher ratio, which is one trained teacher against 70 students, and student-teacher contact hours, which is 578 hours per year against an international average of thousand hours.

An assessment was also given in the report over the country's progress in addressing five other issues -- early childhood care and education, universal primary education, skills and lower secondary education, adult literacy and education and gender parity and equality in education.

The other presentation highlighted the education goals set for 2030 at a meeting of ministers from 160 countries around the world. The event was organised in Incheon, South Korea by Unesco for the World

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Ensuring quality still

FROM PAGE 16

Education Forum.

To achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal for education, the meeting decided to work on four areas -- inclusion and equity, gender equality, quality and lifelong learning opportunities.

The countries including Bangladesh there agreed to increase education expenditures setting benchmarks of allocation at minimum 4-6% of the Gross Domestic Product or at least 15-20% of total public expenditure.

The chief guest of yesterday's programme, Education Minister Nurul

Islam Nahid said ensuring quality education was still a big challenge for the government.

"As we are going ahead, big challenges are emerging. We will keep solving the problems."

The minister later addressed a press briefing on an ongoing annual survey under Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information & Statistics, in which detailed information about 37, 986 educational institutions except primary and pre-primary schools are being collected.

The data would include name, address and category of the educa-

tional institutions, infrastructural facilities they are receiving or being deprived of and information of students, guardians and teachers.

"A good decision depends on information," said Secretary of the Ministry of Education Nazrul Islam Khan.

The institutions will update their information online. "There will be a portal. Every educational institution will have website. If any direction is given the institutions will give quick reply," Nazrul said, expressing the hope that the system would come into effect within two to three years.