

IT-based education at primary schools

Govt okays project covering 26,000 schools

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken an initiative to extend information technology based education to about 26,000 education institutions at primary level all over the country.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) yesterday approved the revision of the Third Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP-3) with this aim.

The five-year-long project involving Tk 18,154 crore has allocated Tk 925 crore for purchasing computers and accessories.

Of the total project cost, the government will provide Tk 13,962 crore while the rest of Tk 4,192 crore will come as project assistance. The project aid has increased by 24 percent while the government's own fund is slashed by around 26 percent.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal said the government has nationalised 26,193 primary schools. Laptops, sound system and multimedia projectors will be provided to these educational institutions under this program for developing teaching and learning environment.

One of the major causes behind amending the project is to introduce Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for improving teaching environment, Kamal added.

The project cost has been reduced by Tk 4,042 crore since two components -- stipend programme and food for education programme-- have been left out from the PEDP-3. Originally the project size was Tk 22,196 crore.

Allocations for the two components were Tk 3,351 crore for stipend programme and Tk 1,957 crore for food for education programme. Two

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separate projects have already been undertaken for these two programmes, resulting in the decrease of the project cost.

Under the project, 81,532 people will be appointed, of whom 80,605 are teachers. In the original project, approval for manpower was 48,084, he added.

The teachers, who will be appointed in the project, will be automatically absorbed in the revenue budget later.

The ECNEC yesterday also approved four another projects. Those are: establishment of two sports schools with modern training facilities in Rajshahi and Chittagong with Tk 79 crore, establishment of Bholia Textile Institute at a cost of Tk 65 crore, BSCIC Industrial Estate in Chuadanga at a cost of Tk 33 crore and special development of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur involving Tk 74 crore.

Under Begum Rokeya University development project, a 1000-seat female hostel will be constructed alongside establishment of Dr Wazed Miah Science Research Institute.