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Govt plans to set up schools at 2000 remote villages

Says education minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the government wants to set up schools at around 2000 remote villages which lack presence of education institutions.

"There is no school in some 2000 villages which are basically located in the outlying areas of the country and we want to give extra care to the areas so that children feel more interested to come to schools," he added.

The minister said this as the chief guest at a national sharing programme of a report at LGED auditorium in the city.

"If necessary, we would provide 100 percent facilities to those schools in order to attract children to attend schools," he added.

Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) in cooperation with Unesco Bangladesh organised the National Sharing of Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (GMR) 2009.

The minister said as per its 'electoral commitment' the government wants to ensure

enrolment of all children in school by 2011.

"We gradually want to reduce dropout rate and also want to impart standard and quality education," he said, adding that the government needs cooperation from all irrespective of party and opinion as it is a national responsibility.

Nahid also said that although 91 percent of children are enrolled in the primary school, 48 percent of them drop out before completing class five.

At the secondary level, 42 percent of students drop out before their SSC examinations, he said, adding that the main reason behind the drop-out is poverty among other social problems.

The minister further said that the main task of the government would be to find out the reasons and address the problems.

The minister said there is no alternative to include local community in the education institutions to reduce dropout rate as well as increase enrolment.

Stressing the importance of quality and life-related education, Nahid said, "We want to

put emphasis on such education which will help the students compete in the highly competitive world. We want to establish a vocational institute in every upazila."

Though teachers are the main element of imparting quality education, they are getting fewer facilities, he said.

The government has started working to provide better facilities for teachers, he said and called on the teachers to play their role in improving the quality of education.

Underscoring the need for learning mother tongue, the minister said it is important to include issues of morality and patriotism in the curricula apart from regular subjects.

Presenting major findings of the EFA GMR report, Habibur Rahman, member of Education Watch Working Group, said there has been strong progress towards many EFA goals, but still a long way to go.

Malama Mcleisea, director and representative of Unesco Bangladesh, Azizul Haq, acting director of CAMPE, Prof Quazi Afroz Jahan Ara, Dr Kazi Salehi Ahmed, and Md Muntasim Tanvir also spoke.