

Education policy by yearend

National university dev of corruption: Nahid

The new National Education Policy now in the making will be finalized towards this yearend to introduce science- and technology-based modern education system in the country, the Education Minister said Sunday as he disclosed massive plans of the new government for an overhaul of the sector, reports UNB.

Nurul Islam Nahid said the Committee on Education Policy will submit a draft policy report within this month. The new policy is being framed taking into account the past education

policies, including Dr Qu-drat-e-Khuda Education Commission report, to make a modern education policy suiting the requirements of the present-day world.

Speaking at Meet-the-Reporters program at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) auditorium on Sunday afternoon, he said, "To date, several education policies have been formulated but none of them was executed."

During one-and-a-half-hour-long interactions on problems and prospects of the education sector, the Education Minister said main

challenges before him are to improve the quality of education at all levels, particularly at the university level, train teachers for imparting quality education and bring cent-percent children under the coverage of primary education by 2011.

Besides, his aim is to free the education ministry and its affiliated departments from corruption and irregularities widely reported as an open secret in many institutions and offices in the sector. "It may not be possible overnight, but we are striving.

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Education policy

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It's no use to be minister of a corrupt ministry," said Nahid, a former DUCSU leader.

In reply to a question he termed the National University a den of corruption where as many as 1800 people were employed in a single day considering them as party cadres in the past.

The Education Minister announced that judicial inquiry will be conducted into the National University and some private universities to see the financing and appointments in those institutions.

"We're trying to reorganize the National University," he told a correspondent.

On substandard education and irregularities in private universities, Nahid said presently 52 private universities are functioning with 1.60 lakh students. These universities have been established under the 1992 Private Universities Act, amended in 1998.

He admitted that some of these private universities are doing well, some are not. A law concerning the operation of the private universities and ensuring quality education is likely to be introduced in the next session of parliament.

In reply to a question, the Minister said his ministry sent letters to DCs to collect information about different types of madrasa in their areas. He made it clear that the government is not against madrasa education where religious education is imparted.

The government wants to modernize the curriculum of the madrasa education alongside the religious education.

Nahid said the government will introduce new education

syllabus by 2011 as the educational institutions are teaching based on age-old syllabi which are not effective to meet the needs of the present times.

The Education Minister expressed concern over alarming dropouts of around 48 percent at the primary and 49 percent before SSC examinations.

Also expressing concern at low enrolment at vocational and technical institutions, he said students who are unable to get higher education should be encouraged to get technical education for getting jobs.

To increase the enrolment at primary level, he said students in haor, CHT, charland and munga-hit areas will be given cent-percent stipend and meals at schools to check the dropout.

Nahid said some 1,500 schools will be set up covering 2000 villages where there is no school.

The Education Minister said under a World Bank pilot project standard of education at universities will be improved through the training of teachers, setting up libraries and enhancing research works.

He noted that as part of teacher training a teachers' exchange program with the British Council is underway.

The Minister said another important task before him is to print 21 crore textbooks within this year. He said new books will be distributed among all school students for free.

DRU president Shamim Ahmad chaired the press-interaction session while its general secretary Pathik Saha spoke about various activities of DRU.