

BUDGET

Nothing new for education

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although an allocation increase of 8 percent has been proposed for the education sector in the national budget, Finance Minister AMA Muhith did not unveil any new plan, only except repeating the old promises.

In his budget speech, the minister mostly focused on continuing his government's ongoing efforts like implementing education policy, distributing free textbooks and stipends, and giving training to teachers to enhance quality of education.

"Our government is attaching highest priority to education as the most important strategic tool for eradication of poverty and development," said Muhith as he set aside Tk 21,408 crore for education sector in fiscal year 2012-13, up by 8 percent from the outgoing year's Tk 19,806 crore.

An allocation of Tk 9,825 crore has been set for the primary and mass education ministry and another Tk 11,583 crore for education ministry.

Educationists, however, are not satisfied with the allocations.

"The budget for education rose in terms of allocation but slid in terms of percentage," Rasheda K Choudhury, a former caretaker government adviser on primary and mass education, told the Daily Star in an instant reaction.

"Although the budget touches the issue of national education policy we have not seen any allocation for implementation of the policy," she said, adding nothing has been said about allocation for nationalisation of jobs of non-government primary school teachers.