

Text of statement of educationists

Following is the text of the joint statement of the five educationists.

1. Direct and indirect link between Chhatra League and Awami League needs to be severed for keeping the students and youths away from the destructive politics and to maintain congenial atmosphere in the educational institutions. At the same time order be issued to the authorities of all educational institutions and local administration to strictly check all criminal and unruly activities of all students and non-students on the campuses. Assurance of cooperation from all levels of the government be given in this regard. This decision is a must for restoring the glorious heritage of student politics.

2. We believe that there is widespread unanimity and acceptability on the main aims of the recently published draft education policy. Though there may be some difference of opinion on some points it should not hinder the general unanimity regarding most of the main aims for the development of education in the country. Steps need to be taken to implement most of the important aims and policies on which there is general unanimity through discussion and approval in the Jatiya Sangsad.

3. The important aims about which there is no major difference of views include: Ensuing quality and unified education for all children at all primary and secondary educational institutions on the basis of a core curriculum. Ensuing required minimum efficiency and knowledge in language including Bangla and English, Science, Mathematics, History, Social Science and Information

Technology for all students of all types of schools; and applying scientific method in evaluating efficiency.

4. Fixing minimum scope for education irrespective of housing, financial condition, caste, physical and mental special needs and educational institutions; and adequate financing and proper use of the fund for achieving these aims.

5. Meaningful decentralisation of the primary and secondary education administration, giving wide responsibility and authority to every educational institution along with making them accountable; and giving emphasis on the leadership of all educational institutions from primary level, increase their efficiency, salary and status.

6. Complete solution and elaborate work strategy for their implementation cannot be expected from a national education policy. Ways of solution to the complex problems could be found in the light of experience and in the process of implementation and stepping forward in phases. A permanent regulated Education Commission accountable to the Jatiya Sangsad needs to be formed to provide guidelines and review progress in this regard.

7. A National Education Act needs to be formulated to function as the legal framework for the education system and to chalk out the role of the state, government and citizens and the guideline for education management and financing to materialise the constitutional pledge regarding education. A permanent Education Commission can provide leadership in this regard.

8. Supply of adequate resource for reform and development of education is required and its proper use is indispensable. Decision has to be taken on priority basis regarding financing of education. Let the government expense on education be doubled from present 2 percent of the GDP in the tenure of sixth 5-year plan (2011-15) and it be increased to 6 percent of the GDP during the

Perspective Plan (2011-21). This cost for education has been recommended in the international programme of "Education for All."

9. As a way to adequate financing of education, cess tax be introduced. In India from 2004-05 for all basic education 2 percent has been added on present tax and from 2007-08 another 1 percent, for secondary and higher secondary education. India is collecting about \$3 billion per year recently for education. The money is deposited in the permanent fund named "Elementary Education Cell" and it does not lapse at the end of the fiscal year. The money from the fund is used for development of primary and secondary education and cost of lunch at school for all students.

10. Policy of spending government allocation on the basis of the number of students upazila-wise for maintaining constitutional pledge and to achieve equity is required. Coordinated decentralisation plan is required to be prepared and process started for expansion of universal basic education at every upazila from pre-school to class eight to implement the policy.

11. We propose three specific measures under the 6th five-year plan to expand quality and equity-based basic education.

12. Lunch be introduced in primary schools by involving the guardians and local government to increase daily teaching time.

13. Teacher preparation course be introduced as part of the degree course in colleges to increase efficiency of the teachers at primary and secondary levels and to attract meritorious youths to teaching profession. The participants in this course will get diploma in education along with bachelor's degrees in groups like humanities and science.

14. To attract meritorious youths proper scholarship should be given to the students of these courses and attractive salary be fixed so

that they continue in teaching profession for at least five years after completion of the course. A National Teaching Corps may be formed including these degree-holders. One to two lakh teachers of this Corps would be able to initiate qualitative change in education at primary and secondary schools of the country. To make the initiative successful one or two colleges in every upazila have to be selected and this course has to be introduced in these colleges. The infrastructure and quality of the colleges have also to be improved in this regard.

15. To create scope for life long education planned programme for elimination of illiteracy and adult education has to be taken. For this purpose involving the local government, local society and non-government organisations (NGOs) a country-wide network of village based permanent mass education centres and libraries have to be established. In these centres out-of-school adolescents and youths have to be brought under literacy and basic skill development. Different rural information technology centres and proposed community radio may be involved with this education centres.

16. Rising above short-term attitude and narrow political calculation bold and ideology-based decision and aims have to be taken. We believe that despite multifarious hindrance and limitations well-intentioned attempts to implement these initiatives would receive huge support from the people.

(Translation is ours)

WAR CRIMES

'Trial to be completed within govt's tenure'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Planning Minister AK Khandker yesterday said that he hopes the trial of war criminals would be completed within the tenure of this government.

The government is firmly committed to bring the war criminals to book, he said at a roundtable at the National Press Club in the city. Peshajibi Samannay Parishad organised the roundtable on 'Trial of War Criminals: National Duty'.

Speaking as the chief guest, the minister said the government has all necessary support from the international community to conduct the trial of war criminals.

AK Khandker, who was the deputy commander-in-chief during the liberation war,

said, "We have got support from the United Nations, human rights organisations and European missions in Dhaka. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia also said that they will not interfere in the trial since it is our internal matter."

He also said the war criminals and their supporters are trying to foil the trial by making an issue out of power, water and gas crisis.

He urged all to provide evidence and crimes to the investigation agency to help probe the war crimes.

Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzak was present as the special guest.

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMs Arefin Siddique, Prof Muntasir Mamun, co-convenor of Peshajibi Samannay Parishad Prof SM Nazrul Islam and journalist Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury also spoke.

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HR Department
INTRACO GROUP
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12 community radio centres approved

UNB, Dhaka

The government has given permission to set up 12 community radio centres as part of its policy of dispersal of information about the rural life and living.

Eleven of the centres will be set up in the private sector. The lone centre, Community Rural Radio, in the public sector will be set up at Amtali in Bogra district. It will be run by the Agriculture Directorate, says an official handout.

The objective of the community radio centres to disseminate information of developments, agriculture, education, health, welfare of children and women, recreation, market price, calamities and steps for reducing impacts.

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