

PRESS RELEASE

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Involvement of parliamentarians should be made integral part of policy formulation on education

Islamabad. Government is fully committed to bring about reforms in all aspects of education system in the country for which the involvement of parliamentarians is indispensable. It was stated by Federal Minister of Education Lt. General Javed Ashraf Qazi as a chief guest in a seminar held on today at National Assembly jointly organized by Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights (PCHR) and Education Sector Reform Assistance (ESRA) Islamabad. The seminar was attended by parliamentarians, diplomats from USAID, civil society organizations and people from media. Federal Minister for Education Lt. General (Rtd) Javed Ashraf Qazi briefly gave overview of governmental steps being taken to reform education sector in respect of curriculum, examination system, and teacher training etc. He said that we have implemented the policy to start examination from 15th August in all the provinces, and launched composite exam system in matriculation. He maintained that to end rotting and cramming, the government has tried to make the examination papers objective giving thirty percent concentration to subjective portion. He added that to reform curriculum in Islamiat, we have employed Islamic scholars from all schools of thought and Jahamia Al-Azhar to compose unanimous syllabus on Islamiat and to exclude discriminatory material from it. Moreover, government is also planning to establish one vocational and technical education institution in each district of the country.

Ms. Tehmina Dasti Chairperson National Assembly Standing Committee on education highlighted the steps taken to reform education sector. She said that we have reserved six billion rupees for Ministry of Education and sixteen billion to promote higher education in Pakistan. Chairman PCHR Mr. Riaz Fatyana MNA described the importance of role of parliamentarians in formulating education policy and said that having close links with the constituency and people, they are in better position to understand the needs of their constituencies. He remarked that to increase the literacy rate, it imperative that at least five percent of GDP is to be allocated for education.

Chief Coordinator PCHR Mr. Shafique chaudhry briefed the participants about objectives of dialogues and centrality of involving parliamentarian in policy formulation. Deputy Chief of Party ESRA Dr. Salman Hummayyun highlighted the problems the education system is faced with due to lack of political will and non-involvement of parliamentarians. He said that the problems have occurred in education management system, teacher training, curriculum, and accountability etc.

The seminar was also attended by Mr. Murtaza Satti MNA, Ms. Gule Ferkhunda MNA, Ms. Riffat Javed Kahlon MNA, Syed Javed Ali Shah MNA, Sardar Shahjehan Yousaf MNA, Ms. Nafisa Raj MNA, Mr. Haroon Peracha MNA, Mr. Murtaza Satti MNA, and Farid Ahmed Paracha MNA. These honorable members of parliament recommended that education policy should be formulated with due concentration of the needs of rural areas of the country as at least 70 to 80 percent of population lives in rural areas.

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