

MMA govt accused of massaging education figures

By Farzana Shah

PESHAWAR: The slogans of enhancing literacy rate in the province are mere rhetoric as major part of the budget allocated for the education is often used in June, the last month of financial year while the remaining lapses, which is of no use for the cause of education sector's uplift.

The MMA government in NWFP is claiming of 35 lakh fresh enrollments in schools since announcement of free textbooks distribution, however, there is severe scarcity of teachers to teach these students.

According to above statistics for these 35 lakh new students about 16,000 teachers should be appointed, however, the provincial government has approved the appointment of only 4,000 teachers which shows how much is being done for enhancement of the education in the province.

This was the crux of a seminar arranged by Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE) here at Peshawar Press Club on Friday in connection with the International Literacy Day.

The provincial coordinator of PCE Ibrash Pasha speaking on the occasion said that figures regarding improvement in literacy rate were often exaggerated; however, the facts on ground were different.

Expressing concern over effectiveness of provision of free textbooks and other steps, he said in most remote areas books were not being provided to the students in time which wasted their time.

He lamented that there were EDO posts in Timergara which were abolished by the provincial government which would affect the efforts being carried out for promotion of education in this remote area.

Former provincial minister for Education and Jails Syed Qamar Abbas speaking on the occasion said that successive governments, including his own made politically motivated appointments in the education department which had hindered the progress in educational field.

However, he said that it was time to take concrete steps in this regard, adding that the NGOs should cooperate with the government and the provincial committee for education should also take these NGOs along for forwarding useful suggestion.

He while expressing concern over dual system of education in the country said that the system imposed in colonial era was still in vogue which was the biggest hurdle in real promotion of education, adding it should be abolished and a uniformed education system followed in all schools.

Qamar Abbas also stressed the need for giving more incentives to teachers with good salary package so that they could carry out their responsibilities with mental ease.

Other speakers also highlighted the importance of education and asked the government and NGOs to take concrete steps for promotion of education.