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## Lawmakers unite to promote literacy

By A Reporter

ISLAMABAD, Oct 14: Parliamentarians of different political hues in a consultative meeting here on Wednesday agreed to jointly work for promotion of literacy.

They also decided to plead with federal, provincial and district governments to increase their budget for education.

The agreement came at the parliamentarians' consultation on literacy which was organised by the National Commission on Human Development (NCHD) in collaboration with Unesco.

The major purpose of the consultation was to highlight the role of parliamentarians

for the promotion of literacy in Pakistan and create awareness of the challenges and issues regarding education for all (EFA) goals.

Statistics reveal that half of the adult population in Pakistan could not read and write mainly due to the failure of formal education system to meet learning needs of all the children in the country.

Out of those 60 per cent children who are enrolled, one third of them drop out before the completion of grade five and most of them ultimately join illiterates.

Although Literacy Act was enacted in 1987, its implementation is still pending as

the enforcement date could not be announced by the federal government.

The participants discussed in detail the problems of lack of consistent and strong policy, poor financing, absence of proper organisational structure and leadership gap for patronising literacy movement across the country.

While talking on the occasion, NCHD Chairperson Nafisa Shah said that literacy and non-formal basic education should be part of the agenda of Parliamentary Committee on Education to ensure adequate debate and provide priority to this neglected sub-sector of education.