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## MPs vow to help boost education sector

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ISLAMABAD - A large number of parliamentarians on Wednesday urged the government to review its contradictory policies. They severely criticised the government for its negligence towards the educational sector.

It is pertinent to mention here that on the call of PPP MNA Nafisa Shah, MPs from different political parties participated in a consultation workshop organised by National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), in collaboration with UNESCO and Ministry for Education, titled, 'Parliamentarians' consultation on literacy in Pakistan'.

The MPs from both sides, the treasury benches and opposition, unanimously recommended that appropriate resources should be allocated for education sector including Non Formal Education Programme to achieve the goals of 'Education For All' (EFA). They demanded of the government to enhance the educational budget up to 7 per cent.

They briefly discussed the challenges and issues being faced by formal and non-formal education sectors and

gave their recommendations in this regard.

Begum Shehnaz Wazir Ali, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Social Sector, appreciated Nafisa Shah's efforts for bringing together the policy makers and implementers through such events.

The participants of the consultative meeting including MNA Shahid Khaqan Abbasi of PML-N, MNA Begum Shehnaz Wazir Ali of PPP, Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistani Dr Farooq Sattar (MQM), State Minister for Education Ghulam Farid Kathia, MNA Tahira Aurangzeb and Khurram Dastgeer of PML-N, MNA Jamila Gillani, Khlida Mansoor, Nighat Mir and many others took part in the debate and gave their recommendations.

They pledged in the same meeting, "We the parliamentarians from various political parties pledge to work for promotion of literacy, mobilization of masses for literacy.

We would advocate federal, provincial and district governments to increase budget for literacy. We resolve work beyond party lines to provide education and literacy in Pakistan."

The MNA, Nafisa Shah,

Chairperson of NCHD, emphasised the need to legislate the allocation of at least 5 percent of the education budget for Non Formal Education Programme (NFEP) and literacy programmes in Pakistan.

She suggested that literacy and non-formal 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.

In her welcome remarks, Nafisa Shah said that the major purpose of this consultation meeting was to highlight the role of parliamentarians for the promotion of literacy in Pakistan and create awareness about the challenges and issues regarding EFA goals.

She briefed the participants on state of literacy in Pakistan. She also highlighted the present challenges being faced by the educational sector.

Zulfiqar Ahmad, Chief Operating Officer of NCHD, in his presentation highlighted the NCHD perspective on literacy while Terja Vertenan, UNESCO representative for Pakistan, gave international perspective over the same issue.