

## All set to launch 'PM Literacy drive': Balighur Rehman

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Education, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education, Engineer Muhammad Balighur Rehman on Wednesday said the Prime Minister's literacy drive would be launched soon in the country with a special focus on primary and adult education.



Addressing at the launching ceremony of 'Education For All Global Monitoring Report' arranged by UNESCO at a local hotel, the minister said the present government has finalized the modalities to launch this drive and it would target enrolling and educating out of school children.

The minister said "our country is lagging behind in education sector and is not likely to achieve EFA goals however the present government is accelerating its efforts to promote literacy and achieve MDGs". He said the government has prepared a National Plan of Action for education under which five million children would be enrolled in the next three years.

The minister said the government would enhance spending on education from 2 percent upto 4 gradually.

He appreciated the efforts of UNESCO in preparing the 'EFA Global Monitoring Report' and said it would help the policy makers to devise their plans accordingly.

On the occasion, Minister of Education, Afghanistan Farooq Wardak said increased investment in education sector is pre-requisite and this report warns that "we have no time to wait and must place education at our top priority".

He said the people of Afghanistan have suffered the tyranny of violence but still they are hopeful and ready to struggle to make them strong nation.

Director Asia and Pacific regional Bureau for Education, UNESCO Asia, Gwang Jo Kim emphasized to motivate the teachers through giving them proper training and incentives so that they could stay in their professions.

He said UNESCO is committed to work hard for ending the regional learning crisis.

The EFA Global Monitoring Report revealed that a global learning crisis is costing governments \$129 billion a year.

Ten per cent of global spending on primary education is being lost on poor quality education that is failing to ensure that children learn.

This situation leaves one in four young people in poor countries unable to read a single sentence, affecting one third of young women in South and West Asia.

This year's report 'Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all' warns that without attracting and adequately training enough teachers the learning crisis will last for several generations and hit the disadvantaged hardest.

In South and West Asia, about 33 in 100 children of primary school age are learning the basics in reading.

On current trends, the Report projects that it will take until 2072 for all the poorest young women in developing countries to be literate, however, with the right policies in place, fast progress is possible. In Nepal, the literacy rate of the poorest young women tripled from 18% in 2001 to 54% in 2011.

To improve the quality of education, between 2011 and 2015, South and West Asia needs to recruit an additional 1 million additional teachers per year to reach a ratio of 32 pupils per teacher in lower secondary education, the report said.

The report calculates that the cost of 250 million children around the world not learning the basics translates into a loss of an estimated \$129 billion.

In total, 37 countries are losing at least half the amount they spend on primary education because children are not learning.

By contrast, the Report shows that ensuring an equal, education for all can generate huge economic rewards, increasing a country's gross domestic product per capita by 23 per cent over 40 years.

If Pakistan were to halve inequality in access to education to the level of Viet Nam, it would increase its economic growth by 1.7 percentage points, for example.

The Report also highlights the need to address gender-based violence in schools, a major barrier to quality and equality in education.

It underscores the importance of curriculum and assessment strategies to promote inclusion and improve learning.

Secretary Ministry of Education, Training and Standards in Higher Education, Ahmed Bakhsh Lehri, Director Pakistan Idara-e- Taleem-o-Agahi and Founder ASER Pakistan, Baela Reza Jamil, Co- Founder Pratham, India, Farida Lambey and teachers including Khaldea Iasmin from Bangladesh, Shafiqah Ahmed Wardak from Afghanistan, Fouzia Umbreen also spoke on the occasion.

**Source:** <http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/1-front-top-news/155500-all-set-to-launch-pm-literacy-drive-balighur-rehman.html>