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| **Chapter- 1**  **Ministry of Primary and Mass Education** |

1. **Introduction:**

Today’s child holds the key of a country’s tomorrow and it is through education that a child’s latent talent can be brought to light by which he can brighten the nation’s future. Education builds life and provide livelihood. One of the core constitutional responsibilities of the state is to ensure basic education for all which paves the way for a child’s personal, social and cultural development. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is working hard for the implementation of universal and compulsory primary education. The Ministry carries out its obligation through different subordinate agencies formed under an effective organizational structure within a legal framework and guided by some policies and strategies.

**2.0 Activities undertaken for the development of children in the light of National Policies and Strategies:**

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education implement various policies, strategies and activities relating to primary education. The Ministry takes following activities against the set policies and strategies.

| **Policy/Strategy and its brief description** | **Activities** |
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| **National Education Policy (NEP) 2010**   * The vision of the Government in terms of education is clearly articulated in the National Education Policy of 2010 (NEP). The Government is fully committed to ensure education for all which is clearly spelt out in primary education policy. The major objectives of the NEP in relation to primary education are as follows: * To pursue human dignity through quality education provided in the context of local culture, customs and rituals; * To make a uniform curricula for the basic subjects in all types of primary schools ; * To extend primary schooling up to eight years from five years; * To ensure inclusive education and address the needs of the children with disabilities; * To make opportunities for children of other ethnic groups so that they may pursue education in their mother language. | * All primary educational institutions are gradually being nationalized to implement compulsory primary education for all. * Initiatives have been taken for increasing primary schooling period from 5 years to 8 years in order to improve quality of primary education. * Primary schooling has already been upgraded to class 8 in 609 schools have been. * Curriculum, textbooks and infrastructure are being developed and modernized for to cope with the new system. * Steps are taken to introduce identical curriculum for basic subjects in primary schools |
| **SDG and 7th Five Year Plan**  The 7th Five Year Plan stipulates resources for the MoPME to implement the action plans set forth for improving primary education. The following goals have been identified in the SDG and 7th FYP to develop primary education:   * Improve Teaching and Learning process by providing better teaching materials in schools; * Ensure participation and thereby reduce disparity; * Ensure decentralization and enhance effectiveness; * Establish effective Planning and Management; * The 7th FYP has also set a goal to completely eliminate illiteracy in line with the commitment made in the NEP | * Establishment of new schools, extension/ reconstruction/repair/renovation of existing infrastructures; * Introduction of school feeding program at the school; * Introduction of pre-primary education in all primary schools; * Construction of wash blocks and arrangement of drinking water in all schools; * Recruitment of necessary number of teachers and other manpower and provide training for them; * Arrange skill development for programme for the teachers ; * Offer stipend/education allowance to students; * Introduce pre-primary education in every primary school. |

**3.0 Achievement of the last three years in terms of child budget implementations:**

There have been significant developments in the education sector in the last few years, such as: creating opportunities for all, reducing dropout rate, and increasing rate of completion of primary education. Besides, the target of gender equality in the primary education cycle has been achieved. To increase admission rate and to retain students “School feeding activities in the poverty stricken areas” project is continuing. At present, about 33.90 lakh students of all primary schools in 104 upazilas are being distributed with 75 grams of cookies in each school day. The allocation of the project was Tk 518 crore in the fiscal year 2018-19, which was increased to Tk. 671.20 crore in FY 2019-20. Under this project, 17903 students of all primary schools of Bamna Upazila under Barguna district and two union of Islampur upazila under Jamalpur district got cooked food experimentally. Pre-primary education has been started in all primary schools. School meal will be introduced 16 upzillas in alternate school day from July, 2019. The government has been giving stipends from July 2015 of Tk. 3067.38 core from its own fund to all primary schools of the country to make sure that children’s education is not hampered due to poverty. The number of beneficiaries of such stipends has increased from 79 lakh to 1.37 crore. All primary schools of the country have started election of student council through direct vote. Under the Reaching out of School Children (ROSC) project, 310987 students have got opportunity to go to 11,162 Ananda Schools in 125 Upazilas who were dropped out. A total of 28500 poor and under privileged children have got the opportunity of being educated in 64 Districts Headquarters, 205 Schools of 86 Upazila and 9 technical training centers. For this purpose the government spent 36 core tk.

**4.0 Share of child budget in Ministry’s overall budget**

| *(Figures in Billion Taka)* | | | |
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| **Description** | **Budget**  **2021-21** | **Budget**  **2019-20** | **Actual 2018-19** |
| MoPME Budget |  | 240.41 |  |
| *Operating* |  | 147.71 |  |
| *Development* |  | 92.70 |  |
| Child-Focused Budget in MoPME |  | 239.70 |  |
| *Operating* |  | 147.27 |  |
| *Development* |  | 92.43 |  |
| **Total Government Budget** |  | **5,232** |  |
| *GDP* |  | 28,859 |  |
| *Total Government Budget as % of GDP* |  | 18.13 |  |
| *MoPME Budget as % of GDP* |  | 0.83 |  |
| *MoPME Budget as % of Total Budget* |  | 4.59 |  |
| *Child-Focused MoPME Budget as % of GDP* |  | 0.83 |  |
| *Child-Focused MoPME Budget as % of Total Government Budget* |  | 4.58 |  |
| ***Child-Focused Budget as % of Ministry Budget*** |  | **99.70** |  |
| Source: Finance Division |  |  |  |

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is the leading child focused ministry of the Government with 99.51 percent of its total expenditure directed towards children's wellbeing. The Ministry, under its Operating budget, implements various activities, almost all of which are fully child focused. Apart from its core mandate of managing primary education across the country, it also implements some other activities which are directly linked with Children's Right to Development. Overall child sensitive budget of MoPME has moderately increased to 99.31 percent in FY 2018-19 from 99.31 in FY 2017-18

**5.0 Good Practice**

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| **Eradicating the fear of mathematics through Math Olympiad**  Problem solving skill is vitally necessary for survival in face of the challenges of 21st century. It requires long preparation, collective national effort and a favorable environment to make it a habit.  To achieve this skill in primary education level, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education has initiated a Feasibility Study Project for implementing Olympiad techniques in teaching method. A total of 240 teachers culled from 17 Upazilas of 17 Zillas will be trained to implement these techniques in the classrooms of standard 3 and 4. The first phase teachers’ training has already has been completed and the second phase in now going on. The main objective of mathematical Olympiad technique is to make students learn through creativity. In this method learners can relate topics covered in classes with the real world, and can gain problem solving skills. Through lively classroom and participatory teaching, students can be introduced and get used to peer learning; they can also solidify their learning through effective, available and attractive content materials.  At the beginning of the project, teachers covered under this project and all other related personnel were apprised of the outline of the project through an inauguration and orientation ceremony. A teacher content manual was prepared by content workshops conducted by mathematical Olympiad academic members and councilors in different places like Comilla, Mymensingh and Dhaka. The content manual contains the detailed guideline for the teachers as to how to conduct classes. A total of 240 teachers attended the five day long first phase training held in Dhaka. In this camp, they were given the idea of how they could make classroom teaching more lively and participatory. Also, they were introduced to numerous activities, ideas and materials in order to conceptualize the basics of number system, place value and geometry which they will transfer to their students. The teachers will go back to their respective schools after training. A regular supervision will be conducted and their advice, observations, opinions and recommendations will be gathered. Along with that an online and social platform has been created for the teachers to receive regular updates.  Under the project around 1000 students from 80 schools participated in the nationwide Dutch Bangla Prothom Alo mathematical Olympiad. In the first phase of this program, 65 Olympiads were arranged in 64 districts of the country, 155 students from 80 schools participated in the regional phase of the Olympiad after getting selected from the preliminary selection. Six of these students got selected for the national round of the Olympiad.  Presence of students in the school has increased notably after the project was started.  A substantial increase in classroom presence has happened after the project started. In almost every school, presence is higher, where students were far more irregular previously. Students come to their respective classes with lot of interest and often urge the teachers to start the class, if the classes were delayed for some reasons.  There were a number of students who used to be impatient and caused disturbance in classes. Often it became impossible for the teacher to control them. Now these students have calmed down and more focused in learning. They also help others in team and group works and activities. Now classroom control has become far easier.  Earlier, students were apathetic to classes and inattentive; this situation has changed completely after the introduction of Olympiad techniques. Now students attend classes with eagerness, participate in classroom activities more actively. Mathematics used to be a fearful topic to them; now they have overcome the fear by playfully enjoying the classes, participating in group activities.  Apart from that, a portion of the students failed attaining even marginal competency. Before getting promoted to another grade most of them did not attain the necessary competency of the previous grade. As they were already lagging behind, they did not have any clear knowledge of the basic topics like place value, consecutive numbers, geometric figures and shapes, addition with keeping in hand etc. After classroom activities conducted by the teachers upon their return from the training, there have been clear signs of improvement in the marginal competency attainment of the students. Almost all can solve problems of addition, subtraction, numbers, place value and geometry. They now know the concepts behind these and know how to apply these to the real situation.  Apart from these, enhancement of teachers’ skills can be attributed to this program. Almost all of the teachers have realized their mistakes in teaching approach and admitted that they have rectified those from their trainings. Along with that they have gathered new knowledge about different topics, learnt to think differently, to see things from a new perspective. Even they took initiative by themselves to add new things to their teaching methods. Teachers have opined that the trainings in this project have brought a big change in their mindset and impacted their thought process. They are encouraging their students to solve problems of real life rather than solving exercises.  Till date, progress of the project can be summarized in the light of the following perspectives:  - Students are learning to solve problems of real life scenario through participating in mathematical Olympiads. Those students who practiced creative thinking beforehand, started applying those.  - A large number of students, who were irregular in classes, have become regular. School has become a place to learn playfully with joy. They have become attentive in classes.  - Weaker students have attained better marginal competency. It is these weaker students, who have become far more attentive and are attaining marginal competency more quickly.  - Students from every school now are interested to find out the underlying concepts, practical application, and the reasons of such application etc.  - Students now act more spontaneously while performing individual and team activities and are being introduced to Peer Learning and Team work.  - The classes where students were relatively restless and lacking concentration are now easier to control for teachers.  - The materials used in classroom were totally dependent on teachers. These materials were not so easily available either and hence learning were hampered. However, in the Math Olympiad Project, students prepare all the materials under teachers’ instruction. Also, the materials are of no cost or low cost, which reduces overall pressure from the teachers.  The project has come half way through. As we stand now, observing the teachers participation, students evaluation and other factors we can hope that the projects result will be very positive and our students will be able to achieve all competencies. If the outcomes of the Feasibility study project is found satisfactory, and if we can we can make proper adjustments and corrections, we can surely scale up the project all over the country in each primary school. So for the time being, we can say it without any hesitation, “Math Olympiad Method in Primary Education is eradicating the fear of the Students.” |

**6.0 Ministry’s Challenges to ensure child welfare:**

* Lack of necessary manpower to implement child budget at the field level;
* Lack of proper training and awareness among policy makers and implementers about the programs taken up for the development of children;
* Lack of skill among field level officers for the implementation and formulation of child budget;
* Dearth of scope for children to get involved in budget preparation and action plan.
* Delay in procurement process and consequential slowing down of project implementation;
* Lack of initiatives for floating tenders in right time;
* Lack of coordination among the implementing agencies.

**7.0 Child centered development plans in FY 2019-20**

* To expand school feeding activities and to include private sector and personal efforts in this program, national school meal policy have been initiated. If the policy is formulated, involvement of local people and private participation in school feeding activities will be increased which will yield better result.
* To adopt a project entitled “Digital Primary Education” for improving quality of education through using of ICT. Under this project, interactive classroom will be built in 503 Model Primary schools, the total allocation for this project is Tk 25 crore in the fiscal year 2019-20.
* To initiate ‘Primary School Cub Scout’ (4th level) project after successful completion of ‘Primary School Cub Scout’ (3rd level) project with a project cost Tk.354.02 crores.
* To continue with Primary Education Development Project (PEDP-4) spanning from July 2018 to June 2023 with a total expenditure of Tk.38397.16 crores.
* To continue with “School Feeding Program in Primary School” for providing meals to every student at noon in every school in the country.

**8.0 Conclusion:**

Today’s children will lead the nation in future. The ministry of Primary and Mass Education is working relentlessly to ensure children’s fundamental right to education. The ministry is continuously taking steps to introduce better techniques of education, bring IT into play so that students can get the hang of modern education at an early age which will stand in good stead as they grow up and face the challenges strewn on the paths in future. Future action plan of this ministry will be taken according to the needs of the children where they will be directly involved in decision making process.