

National Education Policy 2009: Transform society in line with Islamic teachings

* Draft recommends revitalisation of existing education system, says providing Islamic education duty of society and state

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ISLAMABAD: The National Education Policy (NEP) 2009 prepared by the federal government seeks transformation of society along the lines of Islamic teachings and revitalise existing education system to cater to social, political and spiritual needs of individuals and society.

The NEP has nine chapters and describes overarching challenges, articulates the ways of filling the commitment-implementation gap, puts forward the provisions of Islamic education and transformation of the society on Islamic and human values, outlines reforms and policy actions to be taken at the sub-sector level, and broadly suggests a framework for implementation of the policy.

According to the policy's draft, teaching Islamiyat to Muslim students is meant to provide them with opportunities to learn understand and apply the fundamental principles of Islam in their lives. This, it says, will reform and develop society on the principles of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. The policy declares Islamic education as duty of the society and the state. It says ideology of Islam forms the genesis of the State of Islamic Republic of Pakistan and its fundamental principles were defined in the Objectives Resolution, 1949, which part of the Constitution.

Titled as Islamic Education, the NEP's Chapter Four gives out the vision for teaching Islamic Studies. It says as provided in the Constitution, all steps will be taken to enable Muslims of Pakistan, individually and collectively, to order their lives in accordance with the fundamental principles and basic concepts of Islam, and to provide facilities whereby they may be enabled to understand the meaning of life according to the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

According to the NEP, Islamiyat will be taught as a compulsory subject from Grade-I to Grade-XII, extending up to graduation level in all general and professional institutions, and advanced Islamic Studies will be offered as an elective subject at grades IX-X and XI-XII.

The policy divides the Islamiyat curriculum into five main parts – Al-Quran Al Kareem; Imaniyaat and Ibaadat; Seerat-e-Tayyiba; Ethics and Good Behaviour, and Prominent Personalities of Islam. The first part includes the reading of the Holy Quran (Nazira), the memorising selected small Suras of the Holy Quran (Hifz), the memorisation and translation of selected small Suras and the Quranic supplications, and selected Hadith.

According to it, the Islamic teachings will be made part of teacher training curricula and

the curricula of other training institutions. It says Arabic teachers, preferably having the qualification as Qaris, will be appointed to such institutions. The policy promises to ensure that textual and other learning materials don't contain anything repugnant to Islamic injunctions and controversial material against any sect or religious or ethnic minorities.

The policy recommends teaching Ethics and Moral Education instead of Islamiyat to non-Muslim children, and appointment of subject specific teachers for the purpose.

The policy says Deeni Madaris (religious seminaries) will be mainstreamed by introducing contemporary studies alongside the curricula of Deeni Madaris to enhance prospects of their students to pursue higher studies. It recommends the establishment of Madrassa Education Authority by the Interior Ministry.

Aims and objectives of Policy

1. To revitalise the existing education system with a view to cater to social, political and spiritual needs of individuals and society
2. To play a fundamental role in the preservation of the ideals, which lead to the creation of Pakistan and strengthen the concept of the basic ideology within the Islamic ethos enshrined in the 1973 Constitution
3. To create a sense of unity and nationhood, and promote the desire to create welfare state for the people of Pakistan
4. To promote national cohesion by respecting each others' faith, religion, and cultural and ethnic diversity
5. To promote social and cultural harmony through the conscious use of the educational process
6. To provide and ensure equal educational opportunities to all the citizens of Pakistan and to provide minorities with adequate facilities for their cultural and religious development, enabling them to participate effectively in the overall national effort
7. To develop a self-reliant individual, capable of analytical and original thinking, a responsible member of society and a global citizen
8. To aim at nurturing the total personality of the individual, dynamic, creative and capable of facing the truth as it emerges from the objective study of reality
9. To raise individuals committed to democratic and moral values, aware of fundamental human rights, open to new ideas, having a sense of personal responsibility and participation in the productive activities in the society for the common good
10. To revive confidence in public sector education system by raising the quality of education provided in government owned institutions through setting standards for

educational inputs, processes and outputs and institutionalising the process of monitoring and evaluation from the lowest to the highest levels

11. To improve service delivery through political commitment and strengthening education governance and management
12. To develop a whole of sector view through development of a policy and planning process that captures the linkages across various sub sectors of the education system
13. To enable Pakistan to fulfill its commitments to achieve Dakar Framework of Action EFA Goals and Millennium Development Goals relating to education
14. To widen access to education for all and to improve the quality of education, particularly in its dimension of being relevant to the needs of the economy
15. To equalise access to education through provision of special facilities for girls and boys alike, under-privileged and marginalised groups and handicapped children and adults
16. To eradicate illiteracy within the shortest possible time through universalising of quality elementary education coupled with institutionalised adult literacy programmes
17. To enable an individual to earn honestly his/her livelihood through skills, which contribute to the national economy and enables them to make informed choices in life
18. To lay emphasis on diversification from general to tertiary education so as to transform the education system from supply-oriented to demand-oriented and preparing the students for the world of work
19. To encourage research in higher education institutions that will contribute to accelerated economic growth of the country
20. To organise a national process for educational development that will reduce disparities across provinces and areas and support coordination and sharing of experiences.