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MPO is a bad system: Muhith

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Finance minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith. -New Age file photo

Finance minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith on Tuesday said that he kept aside money in the 2018-19 fiscal budget for the inclusion of educational institutions to the Monthly Payment Order, though he termed the system as 'bad'.

Replying to a query of Bangladesh Tarikat Federation lawmaker Syed Nazibul Bashar Maizvandary at the parliament, Muhith said that the MPO system was not a 'good initiative' for enhancing the quality of education.

'We have kept the money for MPO enlistment of educational institutions in the budget' he said.

'But I want to say one thing is MPO is a bad system. We took the system and now we are continuing the system' he said.

Criticising the system, the minister said that there was enough forgery in the system.

'Stipend and school feeding activities play special roles in the improvement of the quality of the education. Instead of taking any move to this regard, you raised voices for the MPO,' he said, criticising the lawmaker.

Muhith's statement came at a time when non-government teachers had been on the streets demanding their educational institutes to be provided MPO facilities.

Thousands of teachers took to the streets several times in recent years to press home their demand for MPO benefits for their institutions.

Aggrieved teachers resumed their protests on June 10 as finance minister Muhith, in his budget speech, remained silent about the inclusion of the institutions into the MPO system in line with a commitment made by prime minister Sheikh Hasina in January.

The last inclusion of 1,624 institutions into the MPO system took place in 2010.

Responding to a question of treasury bench lawmaker Mizanur Rahman, the minister said people's fear of hassles about paying tax had been removed through various measures.

'It was a perception among the people that they would face various hassles after giving the tax. But the perception has been changed,' he said.

Responding to a question on reducing the landing rent, the minister said the government did not fix the interest rate of bank loan.

But, we participate in the discussion of the Bangladesh Bank, he said.

'We have advised them for bringing the interest on bank loan to a single digit. The advice has largely been implemented,' he said.

Replying another question, the finance minister said the government set a target to realise Tk 2.25 lakh crore as revenue during the 2017-2018 fiscal.

'Some 1.79 lakh crore has been realised till now,' he said.

The minister said the government in the last nine years took 64 projects under the assistance of the World Bank.

'Of the projects, some 19 have been implemented while the rest are underway,' he said.



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