

## The System of Higher Education Should Be Updated: Wardak

News Report

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Rana Think Tank held a summit in its monthly meeting on the higher education of Afghanistan. In the summit, an advisor to Ministry of Higher Education, Dr. Yahya Wardak, talked about the status of higher education in Afghanistan especially lecture notes, books and teaching materials.



Criticizing the old-fashioned system of lecture notes in Afghan universities, he said that the curriculum was outdated, so it could not enhance the academic levels of students and their education.

“Materials which were taught thirty to forty years ago,” he said, “are still presented to the students through lecture notes, and the students learn them with rote memorization. This way they write down the notes in exam papers and pass the university.”

Wardak also criticized the policy of Afghan government that tens of millions of dollars have been spent on so-called projects in Ministry of Higher Education but with no practical outcome. According to him, foreigners also consider the problems of higher education in Afghanistan as a project, that is, they spent sums in useless ways.

He added that the real challenges in the ministry were not recognized but that money was spent on useless workshops and expensive meals.

“Unless the system of education in Afghan universities is not changed from the old-fashioned system of lecture notes into the modern system of textbook and internet,” Wardak asserts, “the students will not become interested in education; therefore, they keep the lecture notes in mind just for limited number of days in order to get scores and pass the exams.”

He also said that Afghan government should had taken steps for enhancing the academic levels in the universities in the past years.

The mentioned advisor for Ministry of Higher Education says that in spite of many challenges, he has started the process of converting the old lecture notes and teaching materials of the lecturers into textbooks. His efforts have resulted in publishing around 223 textbooks.

Wardak says that all the published textbooks have been written by the lecturers of Afghan universities and have been confirmed by the related university as well as the academic board of Ministry of Higher Education. The textbooks have been published with the financial support of some donors and organizations. And they are, then, donated to lecturers, students, public and private universities, and some academic centers.

According to him, in order to have pioneered a positive work for the future, he has experienced many difficulties in this work.

“When the instructors’ lecture notes are printed and then given to the students,” Mr. Wardak emphasizes, “it will have two advantages: first that it increases the interest of students in education, and the next is that the lecturers are encouraged to write academic works, this way, both the students and lecturers will become diligent.”

He adds that although he has worked for publishing medical textbooks, he encourages others to work in their related fields. He suggests Ministry of Higher Education to develop a national program for publishing textbooks to print at least one textbook in each field, to hold encouraging programs for the lecturers, and to support each kind of project in this regard. Dr. Wardak also wants the lecturers to revise their books and enrich the contents of them.