



rs expected in parts of the island

⚡ Niger soldiers declare coup on national TV

⚡ Corruption controversy sparl



Govt. spending on education in historical decline, is lower than regional peers: Report

6 months ago

Share on     

- **IPS calls for greater non-State sector participation in education**
- **Panel discussion held on 'Non-State Actors in Sri Lanka's Education Sector'**

Despite Sri Lanka's free education policy and the expansion of State activities in education, public spending on education has historically declined, and the Government expenditure on education is low compared to regional peers such as Nepal, India, and Malaysia, according to a recent international report.

Highlighting the findings of the report earlier this week, the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) Director of Research Dr. Nisha Arunatilake made several recommendations to address the challenges faced by Sri Lanka's non-State education sector, including encouraging non-State sector participation in education services and expanding on successful collaborative initiatives to improve services, efficiency and quality, but only under regulation and with attention given to ensuring equity.

She was speaking at a panel discussion on "Non-State Actors in Sri Lanka's Education Sector" organised by the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS) together with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) on the International Day of Education at the Dr. Saman Kelegama Auditorium at IPS. The event was held to disseminate the findings of a country case study of non-state actors of education in Sri Lanka, a paper commissioned for the "2021 Global Education Monitoring Report, South Asia - Non-state Actors in Education", which draws on the global comparative research by the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report at UNESCO. The IPS was one of the six regional partners that contributed to the report on the experiences in Sri Lanka.

The report found that non-State actors' engagement is growing in Sri Lanka, as evident from the rising participation in non-State pre-schools, schools and higher education institutions.

Strengthening collaboration between State and non-State actors was reiterated by the panellists who participated in the discussion. National Education Commission Chairman Prof. Harischandra Abeygunawardena acknowledged the significant role of non-state actors in the education sector and outlined the way forward for state and non-state partnership to bridge the gaps in the education sector. Gateway Group Chairman Dr. Harsha Alles, drew attention to the pros and cons of running non-State sector schools and higher education institutions in Sri Lanka. He emphasised the importance of separating barriers between State and private education and encouraging collaboration between the two sectors.

Dialog Axiata PLC Senior Manager – Social Innovations Asith de Silva noted that educators' and parents' suspicious attitude towards technology is harmful in introducing innovative technology to Sri Lanka's education sector. He discussed how his organisation navigated these challenges while implementing the Nenasu programme. Former Ministry of Education Additional Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Review Dr. Madura Wehella discussed the gaps in existing regulations, particularly the 1961 Education Act, which does not recognise non-State actors in the education sector. She elaborated on how State and non-State actors can collectively overcome regulatory constraints and strengthen the education sector holistically. For example, she suggested that the public and private sectors collaborate on innovation and teacher training.

UNESCO GEM Report Senior Project Officer (Research) Dr. Priyadarshani Joshi, contributed virtually to the event. She noted that the main motivation to focus on South Asia was the region's highest share of private institutions in total enrollment worldwide. The 2022 GEM report demonstrates inadequate public provision in South Asia and discusses the different contributions to education made by the region's diverse non-state providers. To strengthen South Asia's education sector, Dr Joshi suggested bringing all actors under one umbrella to work towards achieving educational goals by creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment, built on standards, information, incentives and accountability.

The panel discussion was followed by an interactive Q&A session with the audience. Apart from disseminating the findings of the “GEM 2022: South Asia” report, the event aimed to bring together policymakers, professionals, and non-state actors involved in Sri Lanka’s education sector to discuss their perspectives on the role of non-State actors in the education sector, the IPS noted in a press release yesterday (26).



An advertisement for Pizza Hut Melts. The top left features the Pizza Hut logo and the text "NEW! Melts Crunchy | Cheesy | Loaded #Not4Sharing". Below this is a "CLICK HERE" button. The main part of the ad shows five different Melts varieties in their packaging: Double Chicken Delight, Meat Feast, Spicy Chicken Combo, Sri Lankan Chicken, and Veggie Lovers. At the bottom, it says "INTRODUCTORY PRICE RS. 890".