

Separate div for primary education suggested

By A Staff Reporter

The National Education Advisory Council (NEAC) on the second day of its 15th meeting on Thursday decided to recommend to the Government the creation of a separate Primary Education Division under the Ministry of Education in view of the importance of primary education.

It also suggested that steps for initiating fundamental socio-economic reforms like land reforms and supplying capital for setting up cottage industries in the rural areas be taken to minimize the rate of illiteracy and to facilitate the expansion of education facilities.

Accepted for recommendation to the Government 30 clauses

pertaining to primary and secondary education in the country after considering the relevant chapters of the final draft of the interim national education policy.

Mr M.A. Baten, Minister of State for Education, and Haji Mohammed Dares, member of the 41-member NEAC, were in the chair for brief periods in the beginning, while Prof M.I. Chowdhury, Convener of the Draft Interim National Education Policy Editing Sub-Committee, presided over the major part of the session.

The Council during its consideration of the clauses relating to secondary education (chapter 11 of the report) decided to transfer two of the clauses to the "administration" sec-

tion from the section relating to policy measures.

The NEAC decided to recommend creation of a separate division under the Ministry of Education for looking after the primary education affairs.

Considering the importance of primary education in the national life and the large number of drop-outs from primary schools, the NEAC recommended immediate and simultaneous steps for socio-economic changes, including land reforms and supply of capital for setting up cottage industries in the rural areas.

NATUN PATHAN

The Council recommended establishment of 30,000 new primary schools or "Naton Pathan".

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shala" in the villages under the supervision of the Union Education Committee (UEC). The UECs would be responsible for the supervision of the primary education in their respective unions, who would, in turn be under the direct control of district education authorities proposed to be set up.

The NEAC recommended that the primary education period should be spread over five years. It suggested that the UECs would be responsible for supplying free of cost, text books, and other educational aids to the wards of landless and marginal peasants, as well as those of other poor guardians.

The Council also called for enacting a new law for framing the primary teachers' service rules.

The National Education Advisory Committee also recommended formation of mobile teachers training units for the training of primary teachers.

SECONDARY

The NEAC decided to recommend a three-tier secondary education system, namely, (a) Lower secondary — three years, (b) Secondary — two years and (c) High secondary — two years. At the end of each level of education, there would be held one terminal examination, which will be conducted by the district education authorities.

Students of the colleges and universities would be required to spend a specified period in participating in rural development programmes as a part of their educational curriculum, and during this their services could be availed of for teach-

ing the students of rural primary school.

The Council also recommended provisions for imparting at least one vocational skill to each of the secondary and higher secondary level students.

It found the residential model schools to be not only expensive but also unsuitable for the present social conditions, and recommended turning such residential model schools into secondary schools. It suggested that the Cadet Colleges be transferred to the Defence sector. The NEAC felt that only those students should be admitted to the cadet colleges, who would be absorbed in various defence jobs in future.

The council recommended that the proposed district education authorities ought to decide the number of non-government schools from among the existing ones to operate in each area — depending on such factors as geographical location, topographical features and population. The Government would immediately take up the responsibility of such specified number of non-government schools — by way of meeting the deficit on account of pay of teachers and their training — to bring them at par with comparable government schools. If any of the existing non-government schools is harmed by this decision, such a school will be turned into some other type of educational institution (vocational for example) and members of the teaching staff will be assured new jobs commensurate with their qualification.