

Mass edn bodies at thana level soon

A high-level special meeting on "mass-education" held at the cabinet room in Dacca on Monday morning with Prime Minister Shah Azizur Rahman in the chair reviewed the progress of implementation of the programme and designed future course of action.

Planning Minister, Dr Fashiuddin Mahtab, Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister, Mr. Abdul Halim Choudhury, and Health, Population Control and Family Planning Minister Prof. M.A. Matin attended the meeting.

Besides, representatives of the Ministries of Education, Information and Broadcasting, Planning, Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Home Affairs and other related agencies attended and participated in the deliberations.

The meeting over, Shah Aziz told BSS that among other things the meeting considered the formation of thana coordination committee consisting of all thana level officials, local leaders, and MPs concerned to gear up the activities of mass education within the stipulated time.

He said that one thana level official would be tagged with each union for the overall supervision of the development of the programme.

Shah Aziz said that preparation of a comprehensive sche-

me on mass literacy for the Second Five-Year Plan, development of post-literacy reading materials and qualitative aspects of the on-going crash programme were among other issues that had come up for discussion.

He said that 1,19,909 mass education squads, formed after President Ziaur Rahman launched the programme on February 21, had been fully engaged in imparting functional literacy to the enthusiastic unlettered people in 279 thanas. Out of the total, 79,928 are

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male squads and 39,977 female squads, he added.

He said 3,13,413 teachers including 53,612 females were participating in the programme. The number of learners enrolled so far was 47,31,985 including 17,82,121 females, the Prime Minister said.

Shah Aziz said that a number of 68 lakh copies of primers and reading materials had so far been distributed to all the subdivisions and that the initial training programme for trainers at various levels had also been completed.

Remarking on the overall programme, Shah Aziz said that it had a good start and that initial enthusiasm on the part of all concerned had been high. Logistic support has been timely and somewhat adequate he added.

He said that a special programme had been developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Home Affairs under which 20,000 members of the Village Defence Party (VDP) would be engaged in imparting one lakh VDP members. One lakh primers will be given to them he added.

Besides a good number of voluntary organisations including jute mills were also showing interest in the programme. They are being supplied with primers and necessary reading materials, he added.

The Prime Minister who is also in charge of the Ministry of Education said that the programme had been worked out with the four Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education for students' participation in mass literacy as part of school curriculum. Fifty marks will be allotted in the SSC examination of 1980-81 and onward for this work, he said.

Programmes on mass education were being organised more or less on regular basis on radio and television. Information was also being released to national newspapers from time to time, Shah Aziz said.