

AREA-BASED ADMISSION

Pvt schools too to keep 40pc quota

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The education ministry yesterday decided to reserve 40 percent quota for local admission seekers at private schools across the country, as part of a plan to introduce area-based admission.

The decision comes a day after ministry officials announced that the government was mulling over to provide local students with the same benefit for admission into public secondary schools.

Education Secretary Nazrul Islam Khan said the decision, taken at a meeting at the ministry, would be executed in the upcoming academic year so that local students get priority.

"Initially, there might be some problems but the entire admission process will improve significantly once the system starts functioning in full-swing," he told The Daily Star.

Heads of some renowned private schools in the capital attended the meeting, on incorporating the quota system into the admission policy, with officials of the ministry and Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education.

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The education secretary said the school authorities would prepare their own catchment areas and conduct a survey to determine the number of school-going children in their respective areas.

There might be some "overlapping" in the surveys and if that happened, the upazila education officers would settle the issues after scrutiny, he said.

The district education officers will also be involved in the process, he added.

Sources at the ministry said primary schools prepare their catchment areas during the end of every year.

A ministry official, wishing not to be named, said they have set tentative dates for all these processes. The schools are scheduled to complete the surveys by November 7 while the upazila education officers are to settle the disputes and submit the surveys by November 10, he said.

"A meeting will be held in the first week of November to finalise the admission policy," he added.

In yesterday's meeting, the official said, the heads of the schools agreed to introduce the quota system for local students.

Some principals proposed to increase the session fees for students, said meeting sources.

Currently, there is a 5 percent quota for freedom fighters' children and their children, 2 percent for the disabled children, 2 percent quota for the education ministry officials living in Dhaka and 1 percent for children living in Lillah (free accommodation and food) boarding.

Admission to class-I in these schools is made through lottery while students take a written test to get admitted into classes II to VIII, according to the existing system.

There are around 650 private schools in Dhaka.