

REVIEW OF NEW PAY SCALE

Public univ teachers threaten to go on full strike from Jan 11

DU Correspondent

PUBLIC university teachers on Saturday threatened to bring to halt all academic activity at public universities if their demand for retaining the selection grade and time scale in the new pay scale is not met.

Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association leaders at a press conference also said that they would wear black badges to work today and will hold a three-hour work abstention on January 7. They also gave the government time till January 10 to meet their demands.

Federation secretary general Maksud Kamal after a general meeting held at Dhaka University announced the programmes.

The federation president Fariduddin Ahmad said finance minister AMA Muhith had assured them of retaining the selection grade and time scale for university teachers in the 8th national pay scale and that all facilities ensured in the seventh pay scale would be retained in the new one, but he did not keep to his words.

Farid demanded a review of the pay structure, retention of selection grade and time scale, and salaries for a certain

percentage of the university professors that is equal to that of senior secretaries, within a short time.

He urged the Finance Minister to refrain from any kind of 'untoward' comments targeting university teachers, to remove all incongruence in the latest pay scale and reintroduce it.

'We are not demonstrating for salaries but for our dignity that we lost in the new pay scale,' he added.

Farid Uddin also alleged some vested quarters among bureaucrats were trying to create trouble in the education sector by humiliating teachers.

The public university teachers have been protesting at the 8th National Pay Scale since May 14, advocating a four-point charter of demands that includes the formation of a commission to initiate an independent pay scale for public university teachers.

The other demands of the public university teachers are salary and allowance parity between senior professors and senior secretaries, and between professors and secretaries; upgrading the status of teachers in the warrant of precedence; and the provision of cars and other allowances for teachers, similar to provi-

sions given to bureaucrats.

There are 1,80 lakh students and 15,000 teachers at 37 public universities across the country.

At least three meetings in September and October between education minister Nurul Islam Nahid and public university teachers did not lead to any breakthrough in the conflict.

Teachers observed full-day work abstention on September 8, 13 and 17, respectively, besides taking part in processions and human chain on several occasions, and submitted memorandums to the education and finance ministers.