

Madrasa teachers follow school colleagues' lead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DEMAND FOR NATIONALISATION

Teachers of ebtedai madrasas, the primary level educational institutions under madrasa board, continued their sit-in for the seventh consecutive day in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club, demanding nationalisation of all the registered madrasas.

They submitted a memorandum to newly appointed State Minister for Education Kazi Keramat Ali to press home their demand to nationalise the madrasas like the registered primary schools. Under the banner of "Bangladesh Swatantra Ebtedai Madrasa Shikhhak Samity", several hundred teachers began their agitation on January 1 and vowed to continue their programme if their demand is not met.

According to the leaders of the association, currently around 10,000 madrasas are being run in the country where around 50,000 teachers teach students from class 1 to V under the madrasa education system.

Qazi Mokhlesur Rahman, president of the association, said they will take a decision to go for a tougher movement like fast unto death today after discussing the matter at the executive committee of the association. They would submit a memorandum to the prime minister today, he said.

According to the memorandum, teachers of the ebtedai madrasas and the registered primary schools started getting Tk 500 as allowances through a government circular in 1994.

Later in 2013, the government elevated the amount to Tk 1,000 of 6,776 teachers of 1,519 madrasas, it said, adding that the government in 2016-17 fiscal year increased the salaries of headmasters to Tk 2,500 and assistant headmasters to Tk 2,300 from Tk 1,000. "The salaries and allowances of the primary teachers rose in phases. But the teachers of the ebtedai madrasas are still overlooked," it said.

Mokhlesur said they have long been teaching students like all other teachers, but facing discrimination.

"Many teachers are failing to provide for their families as they got nothing from the government," he said. None from the government contacted them yet, he said, adding they would continue their agitation until their demand is met.

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