

PRY TEACHER APPOINTMENT: SC stays HC order for fresh results

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Recommended primary school teachers show victory sign at Shahbagh in Dhaka on Monday after the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court stays the High Court verdict that has scrapped the November 20, 2024 their appointment. | Sony Ramani

Recommended teachers suspend protests

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on Monday stayed a High Court verdict that had scrapped the November 20, 2024 appointment of 6,531 recommended assistant teachers in government primary schools in Dhaka and Chattogram.

A three-judge Appellate Division bench led by Justice Md Ashfaul Islam stayed the High Court's February 6 order that had also directed the Directorate of Primary Education to publish fresh results for appointing the teachers following the Supreme Court's July 21, 2024 quota restructuring verdict.

The Appellate Division stayed the High Court order after allowing the DPE to appeal against the High Court's ruling.

The appointments were based on the 2019 recruitment rules, which allocated 60 percent quota for women, 20 per cent for wards of government employees and 20 per cent for male candidates.

The Appellate Division's stay order came on Monday amid continued street protests by the recommended assistant teachers, who argued that their results were published following the public administration ministry's advice.

They claimed that the 2019 recruitment rules were applied as the hiring process had begun before the Supreme Court's July 21, 2024 quota restructuring verdict, which restructured the quota system in government jobs to 5 per cent for freedom fighters' children, 1 per cent each for national minorities, persons with disabilities, and third-gender individuals.

Attorney general Md Asaduzzaman, representing the DPE, contended that the recruitment process remained stalled due to the High Court order, preventing the government from filling 6,531 vacant positions for assistant teachers.

Asaduzzaman also stated that the directorate would appoint an additional 154 writ petitioners who were previously dropped in the viva, alongside the 6,531 recommended candidates, as vacancies for the positions remained unfilled.

DPE's lawyer Muntasir Uddin Ahmed told New Age that there was no bar for appointments of the recommended teachers following the stay order.

The Appellate Division noted that it would hear the case in detail during the appeal proceedings.

The High Court's February 6 ruling followed a writ petition filed in November 2024 by 30 job seekers challenging the legality of the recruitment process.

Meanwhile, senior lawyers Miftahuddin Chaudhury, Belayet Hossain, and Kamruzzaman Bhuiyan, representing disqualified job seekers, argued against the appointments.

They maintained that the recruitment process violated the revised quota structure set by the Supreme Court, rendering the appointments legally flawed.

Hours after the Appellate Division order, the recommended assistant teachers in the evening suspended their 26-day-long protest at Shahbagh in the capital.

'We are considering the Supreme Court order as our victory. We have taken a decision to suspend our protest and return to our homes,' said a protester Mohib Bullah.

On February 10, February 13, and February 16, police used batons, water cannons, sound grenades and fired tear gas shells to disperse the protesters from Shahbagh and near the Bangladesh Secretariat in the capital, leaving some of them injured.

The recommended teachers had been staging demonstrations since February 6, the day when the High Court had scrapped their appointments.