

# Pry school headteachers must get salary as Class II officers: SC

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*Front view of Supreme Court in Dhaka. | Collected photo*

The Appellate Division on Thursday ruled that headteachers of all government primary schools must receive salaries as Class II officers under the Selection Grade X pay scale, effective from March 9, 2014.

A three-member bench led by Justice Md Ashfaqu Islam delivered the verdict while disposing of a petition filed by Ministry of Primary and Mass Education challenging a High Court verdict in 2022.

The High Court on February 25, 2019 directed the government to provide headteachers with salaries and benefits as Class II officers in line with a government gazette notification issued on March 9, 2014.

The ministry had challenged the High Court ruling issued on February 25, 2019 against the payment of the headteachers under the Selection Grade X pay scale.

Following the Appellate Division's verdict, nearly 30,000 headteachers of government primary schools will now receive the benefits of the ruling, their lawyer, Salahuddin Dolon, told New Age.

Monirul Islam, the headteacher of a government primary school at Shaikupa, told New Age that they would now receive salaries under the Tk 16,000 scale as Class II officers, compared with their previous Tk 12,500 scale as Class III employees.

The Appellate Division upheld the High Court's directive requiring government authorities to grant headteachers the Grade X scale and officially recognise them as Class II (gazetted) officers, effective from March 9, 2014.

Additionally, the High Court had instructed the government to adjust the 2015 pay order to ensure headteachers receive pension benefits under the selection grade and time scale upon completing 4, 8, and 12 years of service.

The High Court delivered the verdict after hearing a writ petition filed by the 45 headteachers from various government primary schools in 2018.

Salahuddin noted that the petitioners had joined at different times as Class II officers under Grade XI and Grade XII, but had not been granted the appropriate salary scale despite the March 9, 2014, notification upgrading their status from the Class III to the Class II.

The Appellate Division's Thursday's verdict said that the headteachers would not get time scale benefits.

A government memo issued on April 20, 2017, ensured that the Class III and IV employees received salaries under the Grade XI and Grade XII, respectively. However, despite the gazette notification, the headteachers were not granted the corresponding Grade X (trained) and Grade XIII (non-trained) pay scales, leaving them one grade lower than other similarly ranked officers.

Salahuddin pointed out that assistant teachers in the secondary high schools under the education ministry and senior staff nurses under the health and family welfare ministry have been receiving the Grade X pay scale since the 2009 Pay Scale revision, which was confirmed through a notification on May 15, 2012.

He argued that denying headteachers the same benefits was unjust and motivated by mala fide intent.

Opposing the petition, additional attorney general Aneek R Haque argued that it was not feasible to pay the headteachers under the Grade X scale.

He also stated that the time scale system no longer existed.

However, he acknowledged that a few headteachers would benefit from the time scale under specific circumstances.