

MPO teachers demand pay hike before Eid-ul-Azha

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The teachers of the secondary-level schools under the monthly pay order system on Saturday demanded nationalisation of their jobs and a rise in their festival and medical allowances and house rent before the coming Eid-ul-Azha.

They said that the government must immediately take steps to implement the announcement made in March by then education adviser Wahiduudin Mahmud to increase the festival, medical and recreation allowances and house rent of the MPO teachers from this Eid-ul-Azha.

They said that they raised their demand for the nationalisation of education because they wanted the existing discrimination between the government and non-government teachers to end.

They have also warned that they will launch a sit-in programme in front of the National Press Club in the capital from May 17 for an indefinite period if the government fails to meet their demands by that time.

Under the banner of the Unity Council of Teachers and Employees they held a grand rally in front of the National Press Club on the day, pressing for their 11-point demand, said a press release.

Their demands also include increasing salaries of head teachers and assistant teachers under the MPO system as per Grade 6th and Grade 7th respectively; introduction of the universal transfer system and pension system as the government teachers have; equating the age limit of teachers and employees with that of university teachers and employees by raising it to 65 years; formation of teachers' appointment commission as the Public Service Commission and appointing MPO teachers to different posts at the education administration; operating educational institutions in the manner the government ones are run by abolishing the governing body/managing committee system; formation of education reform commission; and bringing of all recognised educational institutions under the MPO system.

Earlier on March 5, then adviser for the education ministry Wahiduudin Mahmud announced an increase in the festival, medical and recreation allowances and house rent of the teachers from this Eid-ul-Azha and a fund was also created to pay them retirement benefits.

His announcement came after teachers under the MPO system staged a strike for 22 days. Following the announcement they on March 6 postponed their strike till coming Eid-ul-Azha.

The protesting teachers on Saturday said that they got only 25 per cent of their basic salary as festival allowance, Tk 1,000 as house rent, Tk 500 as medical allowance, while got no pension.

At the entry level, an assistant teacher under the MPO system gets Tk 12,500 gross salary.

On the other hand, at government schools, an entry-level teacher gets Tk 16,000 as basic salary, Tk 1,500 as medical allowance, 100 per cent of their basic salary as festival allowance, and 45 per cent of their basic pay as house rent, leaders of the protesting teachers said.

At the rally, Unity Council of Teachers and Employees chairman and Bangladesh Teachers' Association president Mohammad Kawser Ali Sheikh said that they would start a non-stop sit-in programme in front of the National Press Club from May 17 if the government failed to response.

On July 18, 2023 the then Awami League government announced 5 per cent of the basic salary as incentive for the teachers and employees under the MPO, effective from July 1, 2023 in face of a 22-day-long sit in staged in Dhaka city along with a 17-day-long strike across the country.