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Pry teachers begin hunger strike till death

DU Correspondent

GOVERNMENT primary assistant teachers began a hunger strike until death at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka on Saturday for reducing the difference in wages between trained head teachers and trained assistant teachers.

Thousands of assistant teachers from across the country gathered at the Shaheed Minar about 10:00am and sat on the hunger strike to press the demand.

Primary Assistant Teachers Greater Alliance, a combine of Bangladesh Primary Teachers Society, Bangladesh Primary School Teachers Association, Bangladesh Government Primary School Assistant Teachers Association and Primary School Assistant Teachers Forum organised the programme.

Addressing the programme, teacher leaders demanded that their jobs must be upgraded to 11th grade with basic a salary of Tk 12,500 from the existing 14th grade with a basic salary of Tk 9,500.

They said that the pay scale discriminated against 3.5 lakh primary assistant teachers.

Bangladesh Primary Assistant Teachers Foundation president Shahinur Akhter said that the government could easily meet the demand removing the discrimination upgrading the jobs of assistant teacher to 11th grade as the head teachers were getting salary as per the 10th grade.

'We will continue our strike until death if the authority pays no heed to our demand,' she added.

Bangladesh Primary Teachers Society president Shahinur Al Amin urged the prime minister to intervene into the matter to resolve the crisis.

'We were forced to go for hunger strike as previously we formed human chain, submitted memorandum and held meeting with ministers on several occasions but assistant teachers' fortune remain unchanged,' added Shahinur.

One of the demonstrating teachers coming from Madaripur said that they would not return home until their demand was met as it was not related with their salary but social status also.

On December 9, the teachers threatened to go on fast-unto-death from December 23 if their status were not upgraded from 14th grade to 11th grade in the eighth national pay scale by December 22.

In 2015, government increased the salary of assistant teacher from Tk 5,200 to Tk 10,200 as per the 14th grade at 8th national pay scale.

Bangladesh Prathamik Sahakari Shikkhak Mohajote goes for fast unto death, demanding higher gradation in their service, in front of Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka on Saturday. — New Age photo