

Primary teachers break fasting movement suspended till June

Non-government primary teachers, who started fast-unto-death strike in demand of nationalising their services, Thursday, suspended their movement till June 8 following assurance from the Prime Minister to meet their demand, reports BD News.

Prime Minister's political secretary Harris Chowdhury visited the fasting teachers Thursday at 1.14 pm and broke the fasting. He invited them into a discussion at the Prime Minister's office.

A 23-member delegation of Bangladesh Non-government Primary Teachers Association

(BNPTA) led by its president Mohammad Shamsul Alam attended the discussion.

After the meeting Shamsul Alam told journalists that the Prime Minister through her political secretary assured them of a final announcement of nationalising their services within next seven days.

He also said leaders of BNPTA would be given an appointment to meet the PM on next Sunday.

He said if the announcement of nationalising their services is not given before placing the budget on June 8, they would launch strong

movement from June 9.

BNPTA started the fast-or-death programme from Wednesday after observing a 48-h hunger strike at the city's Muktagon demanding nationalisation of their services.

On the second day of their 'fast-unto-death' programme, the non-government primary teachers were hospitalised as their health condition deteriorated sharply.

On the second day, 16 teachers were seen fasting, all being treated with saline. Three others were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

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Primary teachers

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in critical condition as they fell sick due to fasting, attacked by diarrhoea and cold-fever after being drenched in the rains.

About 2,000 primary teachers brought out a procession Thursday morning in the capital to press home their demand.

Rashida Akhter, a teacher from Chhatak upazila of Sunamganj district who was fasting said: "The Prime Minister committed to meeting our demand of nationalisation of the services of the non-government primary teachers previously and it was also an election pledge of BNP. Now we want an immediate implementation of PM's promise."

Md Abdur Rahim from Gournadi upazila of Barisal district said that an additional Tk 185 crore would be needed annually, if the government nationalises all the registered non-government primary schools in the country.

Veteran journalist Nirmal Sen, educationist Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury, SKOP leader Abdul-lah Sarkar, among others, visited the fasting teachers to express their solidarity with the teachers.