

5-point demand to be considered

## Non-govt pry teachers call off hunger strike

The teachers of non-government registered primary schools called off their hunger strike at 8-25 pm at Osmani Jatiya Uddyan in Dhaka on Wednesday night after accepting re-verage and other foodstuffs from Ameer Hussain Amu, Chief Advisor of Bangladesh Prathamik Shikkahak Oikkyia Parishad and Presidium Member of Bangladesh Awami League, reports BSS.

Before offering beverage to the hunger striking teachers at the Osmani Uddyan, Mr Amu in a brief address said, "the Awami League government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is sincerely trying hard for resolving all problems of the teachers and educational institutions in the country".

State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Mofazzel Hussain Chowdhury Maya, Bir Bikram, Nurul Islam Nahid MP, Whip Mujibul Huq Convenor of Bangladesh Primary Shikkahak Oikkyia Parishad Prof. Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Joint Convenor of Oikkyia Parishad

Mrs Sufia Khatun, Secretary General of the Non-government Registered Primary School Teachers Association Akkas Ali Sheikh also addressed at the function marking the end of the hunger strike.

The State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Mofazzel Hussain Chowdhury Maya said education is the backbone of the nation and we are sincerely trying to improve the standard of education in the country.

He said as a former teacher I have deep respect for the teaching community and I know that the government is really sincere in meeting all lawful demands of the primary school teachers who are the pioneers of basic education in the country.

UNB report adds: The government is actively considering the 5-point demand of the non-government primary teachers and sincerely working to fulfil those in phases, an official announcement said on Wednesday.

It said the government hopes the

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## Pry teachers

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teachers will withdraw their hunger strike.

The teachers' memorandum has been accepted on behalf of the Prime Minister, and it is now being reviewed, according to the announcement by the Prime Minister's office.

"Due to the keen interest of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the government is actively considering gradual implementation of the 5-point demand of non-government primary teachers", it said.

The government grant for the non-government primary teachers has been upgraded in line with the new pay scale for government primary teachers.

Three categories of non-government teachers will now get Tk 812.50, Tk 1007.50 and Tk 1153.75 per month instead of Tk 525, Tk 651 and Tk 745 paid earlier. They will receive arrears from July 1997.

The government has granted additional Tk 31.47 crore to pay the upgraded grants in the current fiscal year.

Moreover, the Prime Minister has directed to raise the teachers' salary and allowances in phases in every budget.

Other steps taken by the government include introduction of service books for non-government primary teachers, C-in-Ed training for them under two projects aided by World Bank and NORAD, and raising the age limit to 50 years for C-in-Ed training.

Besides, formation of a welfare trust for non-government primary teachers is also under active consideration of the government.