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66 hunger strikers admitted to hospital

Govt-teachers talks fail

Staff Correspondent

The talks between the government and the Central Liaison Committee of the striking teachers of non-government schools and colleges held on Thursday night failed as the government refused to accept the demand for increasing government contribution to the salary of non-government teachers.

The teachers resolved to continue their programme of hunger strike in front of the National Press Club till the implementation of their demands. Thousands of non-government teachers started their sit-in demonstration in front of the National Press Club on Saturday last.

They submitted a memorandum to the Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad and enforced an eight-hour hartal in the capital on Tuesday demanding realisation of their four-point demand. Hundreds of teachers started their hunger strike unto death from 12 noon on Wednesday.

The talks between the government and the Liaison Committee of the striking teachers started at 4.30 p.m. at the residence of Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and continued for about six-and-a-half-hour till 11 a.m.

The government side was represented by Minister Abdul Mannan

Bhuiyan, Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam and State Minister for Education Prof Yunus Khan. The 24-member team of the Liaison Committee of the striking teachers at the talks included M Amanullah, Dr M Akhtaruzzaman, Kazi Farook Ahmed and KN Rasheda.

It was learnt from official source that the Prime Minister Begum

Khaleda Zia hurriedly called meeting on Thursday noon to discuss the situation arising out of the movement of non-Government teachers with her some Cabinet members including Local Government Minister Barrister Salam Talukdar, Energy Minister Dr. Khondakar Mosharraf Hossain and Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Labour Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Telecommunication Minister Tariqul Islam and Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar. The Prime Minister instructed the Labour Minister, Education Minister and Telecommunication Minister to negotiate with the leaders of the Liaison Committee.

On Thursday night talks failed as the Government proposed to enhance its contribution to teachers salary by 10 per cent over the next two financial years while the Liaison Committee leaders insisted on the implementation of the 10 per cent increase from the 1994-95 fiscal year.

The Liaison Committee demanded raising of Government's contribution by 30 per cent more but the committee took a flexible stand asking for 10 per cent increase in the coming financial year.

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Govt-teachers

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cial year.

Emerging from the talks, Telecommunication Minister Tariqul Islam told newsmen that their initiative failed as the Liaison Committee leaders refused to accept their proposal. He said that the Government could not implement 10 per cent rise in one financial year due to budget constraints. He, however, did not rule out further talks with the Liaison Committee.

The Liaison Committee leaders blamed the Government's side for rigid stand that led to the failure of Thursday's talks. They criticised the Government for its repression and inhuman behaviour with teachers. They told the newsmen that their movement would continue till realisation of their minimum demands.

Meanwhile, 66 teachers who fell sick due to hunger strike were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and other city clinics on Thursday evening. Of them, the condition of 15 teachers are stated to be critical.