

NEWAGE

Univ teachers get positive assurance from PM on their demands

Staff Correspondent

PUBLIC university teachers said Monday that they received a positive assurance from prime minister Sheikh Hasina that their demands would be 'taken into consideration'.

The teachers said that they received the assurance when they met the prime minister at Gana Bhaban.

Officials said that the prime minister requested the teachers to 'call off their nonstop work abstention'.

Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers Associations president Farid Uddin

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Ahmed told reporters that the federation would take a decision about its work abstention at its meeting today.

The university teachers began their indefinite strike on January 11, demanding removal of disparities from the new pay structure.

'The prime minister assured us that our demands will be taken into consideration,' said Farid after the meeting.

The teachers were at the Gana Bhaban as the prime minister's invited guests at the 'pitha utshab' she hosted.

On the sidelines of the pitha utshab Hasina met the leaders of the teachers' federation in a bid to end their strike causing closure of 37 public universities.

Farid said that after a patient hearing of their demands, the prime minister spoke in positive terms to redress them.

The meeting was 'fruitful,' PM's press secretary Ihsanul Karim told reporters.

He said the scope for elevating the university teachers to grade 1 from grade 3 would be created.

The press secretary also said that the teachers' de-

mands would be 'duly considered'.

The meeting was also attended by PM's principal secretary M Abul Kalam Azad and senior secretary of the Finance Division Mahbub Ahmed.

Indefinite strike by 15,000 teachers paralyzed the public universities across the country.

On Sunday, the teachers' federation sent a proposal to education secretary Sohrab Hossain to place 25 per cent of the professors in grade 1 and provide pay, perks and status of senior secretaries to five per cent of the senior

professors.

Sohrab Hossain said the government was trying to resolve the crises facing the public universities by upholding the teachers' dignity.

The public university teachers have been vocal against the 8th National Pay Scale since May 2015.

Their demands include restoration of the selective grades and the timescale that was abolished by the new pay structure.

The teachers are pressing for the removal of the pay and perks disparity between the teachers and the bureaucrats.