

1.20 lakh teachers begin strike today

Staff Correspondent

An indefinite period of strike by about 1,20,000 teachers of non-government high schools and colleges begins across the country today (Monday).

The strike programme was announced on April 12 at a rally by the central teachers' action liaison committee to press home the four-point demand.

The indefinite period strike is likely to affect the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations to be held from May 2 as the action committee decided to boycott the examination during the strike.

Also, a three-day programme of

wearing black badges by teachers of government high schools begins today (Monday) to press home their 10-point demand including awarding of first class gazetted officer's status to assistant teachers. Bangladesh Government Secondary Teachers' Association will hold a rally on April 20 to announce its next action programme that may include strike.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Government College Professors' Association and Bangladesh Government College Lecturers' Association threatened to go on strike after May 7 if their 12-point demand was not

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1.20 lakh teaches

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met by the government by that time.

Leaders of the Central Teachers' Action Liaison Committee, an alliance of six teachers association of non-government high school and colleges did not attend meetings on Sunday, one called by the Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar in the morning and another by State Minister for Education Principal Mohammad Yunus in the evening at their secretariat chambers.

Some leaders meet Sircar

But leaders of some other teacher's associations and employees associations of non-government schools and madrasahs including S.M. Ashraf Ali, Nazrul Islam, Rafiqul Islam Mantu and M. Hossain Hasan attended the meeting called by the Education Minister. They told the Education Minister that they were opposed to boycotting the SSC examinations and wanted to realise their demands through discussion, meeting sources said.

A leader of the Central Teachers' Action Liaison Committee Dr. M. Akhtaruzzaman told Bangladesh Observer that they did not take part in the meeting called by the Education Minister as he (Minister) invited them to the talk along with leaders of other associations. He added that they (committee leaders) decided not to join any talks without knowing reaction of the Prime Minister regarding four-point demand.

The four-point demand include 100 per cent financial benefit as given to government school and college teachers, implementation of recommendations of the high-powered committee set up by the Prime Minister, security of job to be ensured by law and equal teaching facilities extended to government schools and colleges.

However, Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar talking to Bangladesh Observer said on Sunday that talks were underway to resolve the crisis through discussions. The

increasing government contribution to their salary from 70 per cent to 100 per cent would take time as it involved huge amount of money.

The government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia would certainly gradually increase the salary-contribution.

He said that indefinite period strike would have no impact on the SSC examinations as most of the teachers belonging to the Central Teachers' Action Liaison Committee were the teachers of colleges.

Besides, the minister said, the government had arrangement for holding the SSC examinations under the four education boards scheduled from May 2. He hoped that leaders of the Central Teachers' Action Liaison Committee would solve their problems through discussion discarding the path of strike and boycott of examinations.

Meanwhile, the Central Teachers' Action Liaison Committee called upon all non-government high schools and college teachers and employees to observe the strike and not to be misled by any propaganda until realisation of the four-point demand.