

## SCHOOL ADMISSION Move for MP quota challenged

Staff Correspondent

A WRIT petition was filed on Monday challenging a government move to introduce 2 per cent quota for lawmakers in enrolling students at non-government educational institutions at the primary, secondary and higher secondary levels.

The High Court bench of Justice Mohammad Bazlur Rahman and Justice Md. Ruhul Quddus kept the hearing pending and advised the counsel for the petitioners to come before it whenever the government makes a final

decision through notification on the issue.

The court asked the counsel, 'Unless the government decides to issue a circular on the issue, how can you presume that the decision will be taken?'

Once the government makes a final decision, the cause for action will begin, said the court.

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust and Ain o Salish Kendra filed the writ petition based on the newspaper reports that the education ministry was going

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to introduce a policy allowing parliament members to enrol 2 per cent students at the non-government schools.

Referring to newspapers reports, the petitioners' counsel ZI Khan Panna told the court that a meeting had been held with the education minister at the secretariat on Sunday and after the meeting the secretary said they would issue a notification on the proposed quota system on Monday.

ZI Khan also referred

to the reports that said the ministry was going to introduce the 2 per cent quota for lawmakers in line with the recommendations from the parliamentary standing committee on education ministry despite massive protests from the teachers, guardians and admission seekers.

He argued that admission quota for lawmakers should be stopped as it violates article 27 of the constitution which stipulates that all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal pro-

tection of law.

ZI Khan also submitted that the quota system would promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of citizens and that is recognised as a punishable offence as per the Penal Code.

He pleaded that in the quota system merit of the students could not be verified.

He appealed to the court to issue a rule on the government to explain why its process to introduce quota for enrolment of students at non-government schools should

not be declared illegal.

The education secretary and director general of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education have been made respondents in the petition.

Deputy attorney general Goutam Kumar Roy told reporters that the court adjourned the hearing observing that the matter was 'premature' and advised the petitioners' counsel to move the petition whenever the government will take a final decision on the proposed issue.