



# NEWAGE

## PM says teachers' rally linked to opposition wrong

Staff Correspondent

THE prime minister, Sheikh Hasina, on Wednesday said that the recent rally of teachers for job nationalisation was linked to opposition political camps and termed the movement a wrong step as it was her government that has done whatever positive for teachers.

'There are some rules and criteria for school enlistment for the monthly payment order. We have already

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## PM term teacher's rally

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nationalised more than 26,000 primary schools, she said in the parliament during the prime minister's question hour.

'If all secondary schools and madrassahs are enlisted for the monthly pay order, the government will need to spend Tk 40,000 crore. And such a step will stop all other works. There will be no development and no road or bridge construction. Everything will need to be spent on paying salaries,' she added.

Hasina, referring to the recent agitation of non-government schoolteachers, said that they were pressuring the government the wrong way.

'It is not right to take to the streets maintaining a liaison with the opposition in the name of movement. Sec-

ondary final exams are about to begin but the teachers are abstaining classrooms,' the prime minister told the parliament in reply to a supplementary question of Jatiya Party MP Hafizuddin Ahmed.

She said that it was not proper that a school would be enlisted for the monthly pay order immediately after its establishment. 'There are some rules and regulations. We need to go by them.'

Hasina said that an increase in teacher salary and the enlistment of more schools for the monthly pay order depend on the income of the country. 'Let our national income increase. We will then certainly consider their demands.'

Hasina said that her party did whatever positive things had been done for teachers. 'We know about

teacher's requirement. It is our government which ensured the payment of 100 per cent basic salary of non-government teachers from the state exchequer. There is no need to pressure us as we are aware of the importance of teachers and we also know how much and when payment should be increased.'

Several hundred non-government teachers went on a series of demonstrations in Dhaka demanding job nationalisation and enlistment of their schools for the monthly pay order in January 7-27.

Some ibtedayi madrassah teachers are still on demonstrations in front of the National Press Club pushing for the demand.

The prime minister, in reply to a question of M Shafiqul Alam, hoped that

construction of the 6.15 kilometre Padma multipurpose bridge would begin during the tenure of the government.

In reply to Pinu Khan, a lawmaker of the Awami League, she said that the cabinet had approved Sonadia deep seaport project and the construction work would begin after funds were mobilised.

Hasina also said that government had plans to construct a third seaport at Rabnabad of Patuakhali and the process for the appointment of consultants for a feasibility report was under way.

In reply to Nur Afroz Ali of the Awami League, Hasina said that exporting manpower to Malaysia had begun and already 14.35 lakh people had registered online for jobs in Malaysia.