

BLOCKADE-HIT SCHOOLS

Nahid rules out promotion without exams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ruling out the possibility of giving automatic promotion to school pupils, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid has said students must appear at and pass the annual examinations in order to be promoted to the next grades.

"There will be no such promotion; the examinations will be held soon," he told reporters at a hurriedly called press conference at his secretariat office yesterday.

Nahid's comment came following some media reports that said the authorities of several schools were mulling over promoting their students to the next grades without taking exams, as they had to reschedule the final examinations for several times due to the ongoing political situation. The reports also said the guardians were making such demands on the issue as well.

Terming the reports as based on rumours, the minister said: "Giving promotion without exams will set a bad example."

The ongoing political turmoil has been taking a heavy toll on students, as it has messed up the academic calendar of all educational institutions, from primary schools to universities. Even after taking some exams on Friday, the school authorities find it difficult to reschedule other tests.

Around three crore students and their guardians are worried over the examinations, which are pending owing to the opposition's agitation programmes, the minister told the press.

Mentioning that many schools across the country had already completed the annual exams, Nahid, who is also minister for primary and mass education, said examinations of some subjects were going on in high schools in the capital and some big cities elsewhere.

The minister hoped that the schools would find a way out to complete the exams and announce the results.

He urged the opposition parties to refrain from calling any programmes for a week so that the embattled schools could finish the exams.

Despite the disruptions caused by blockades, Nahid said students would be provided with new textbooks as early as the next academic year.