

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY TODAY

Separate pay commission for teachers soon

Nahid tells discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the government is working to form a separate pay commission for teachers from primary to university levels to increase their salaries, facilities and social dignity.

"The process to form the commission has started," he said while addressing a discussion organised by National

Front of Teachers and Employees (NFTE) at the National Press Club in the city on the occasion of the World Teachers' Day 2009 today.

Speaking as the chief guest at the meeting titled "Build the future: Invest in teachers now," Nahid said the government would put its best efforts to increase salaries and dignity of teachers as they hold greater responsibility for building the nation with devo-

tion.

"Teachers are the torch bearers of the nation towards future and vital tools for the country to realise its dream of building a digital Bangladesh," he said, adding: "But it must be said that teachers are badly neglected in our country."

The minister said teachers should rightfully receive the respect of being the most prestigious and prominent people in both the national and social levels.

The new pay scale introduced earlier this year has increased the salaries of teachers to some extent and the new pay commission would certainly help further alleviate the problems, he added.

"We want higher education of global standards and it is a big challenge for us," Nahid said, adding that quality teachers are the key factor in this respect.

He further said that work on forming an education policy is almost in its final stages. Opinions and feedback from experts and stakeholders are being taken into consideration in formulating the policy.

"It is unfortunate that there have been six draft education policies over the years but none have been finalised due to changes in governments," he said, adding that the present government is looking forward to forming a policy

irrespective of politics and individual opinions.

Speaking as the special guest, Rashed Khan Menon MP, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on education, said the government is taking steps to enhance training and skill building programmes for teachers.

He said teachers are the artists to develop the youth and future of the nation and they rightfully deserve befitting facilities and social status in society.

Other speakers at the programme stressed the need to increase salaries, facilities, skills and dignity of teachers in the social and national levels.

"Quality of education has dropped, because quality teachers have dropped. Without quality teachers, dreams of changes will remain as dreams as teachers are the torch bearers of the nation," said Prof Kazi Shahidullah, vice chancellor of National University.

Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique also stressed the need to increase salaries and facilities of teachers as well as taking proper measures to increase their quality.

He, however, pointed out that teaching profession should be freed from any form of commercialisation.

NFTE Chief Coordinator Principal Kazi Faruk Ahmed chaired the event.