

## PILOT PROJECT TO SUPERVISE PRY SCHOOLS Teachers' protest programmes begin tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary school teachers on Thursday announced a month-long countrywide programme to protest the government decision to allow Brac, a leading NGO, to supervise all primary schools in 20 upazilas under a pilot project.

In a joint press conference, leaders of four organisations -- Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association (BPTA), Bangladesh Private Primary Teachers Association (BPPTA), Bangladesh Graduate Primary Teachers Association (BGPTA) and Bangladesh Community Primary Teachers Association (BCPTA) -- also rejected the Brac proposal to sit with its officials to discuss the issue.

"We are employees of the government, not of any NGOs. So, we cannot sit with Brac or any NGO to solve our problem. We will only sit with the government," said BM Asad Ullah, general secretary of BPTA, at the press conference at its Topkhana office in the city.

At a press conference on June 11, Brac Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed said his organisation would hold a meeting with the teachers to clear the misconception and confusion over the pilot project.

On May 23, the government approved the pilot project under which Brac would work to improve overall education and classroom environment in the 20 upazilas by training teachers and making school management committees more effective.

At Thursday's press conference, the teachers alleged that such a

step is aimed at commercialising and privatising the primary education in the country.

The month-long protest programmes include view-exchange meetings with school management committees and guardians from June 15 to 25 at all primary schools, meetings with intellectuals, civil society members, media persons, politicians and other professionals from June 28 to July 3, teachers' rally at district level on July 10 and a grand rally in the capital on July 17.

BGPTA General Secretary M Badrul Alam Mukul; BPTA President Wahiduzzaman Mian, BGRTA President M Abdul Kaleq, BCPTA President Hafizur Rahman Khan, BPPTA Secretary General Megandra Mohan Saha and BCPTA Secretary General Mahbubul Alam were present at the press conference.

On June 11, Brac Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed also clarified that Brac has no intention of privatising or commercialising primary schools in the country.