

Edn ministry mulls creating senior professor post

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EDUCATION minister Nurul Islam Nahid on Monday held two unscheduled meetings with prime minister and finance minister in a bid to reach a satisfactory solution to the crisis over a separate pay scale for university teachers and review of the new pay scale.

Top officials of the education ministry have said they are in discussion with finance ministry about creation of a post of senior professor equivalent to the senior secretary level as a solution to the ongoing problem.

At an additional secretary level meeting, they proposed creating the post at public universities keeping senior professors and senior secre

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aries on the same pay scale.

There are about 3,400 professors at the 38 public universities and 25 per cent of them are eligible to get selection grade on the basis of seniority.

All these teachers who are eligible for selection grade will be senior professor, said an additional secretary of education ministry.

Education ministry additional secretary (university) Helal Uddin on Monday said that creation of senior professor post was under discussion.

On Monday, after the regular cabinet meeting, the education minister held an unscheduled meeting with prime minister Sheikh Hasina at cabinet division and later finance minister AMA Muhith held a one-to-one meeting with Nahid at education ministry.

Cabinet sources said Nahid briefed the prime minister on the ongoing movement of public university teachers agitating for a separate pay scale and review of the new pay scale.

After the cabinet meeting, Muhith went to the education ministry in the afternoon but none of the ministers agreed to talk to reporters about what they had discussed.

A close aide to the education minister, however, said both prime minister and finance minister had discussed about an alternative solution to the problem.

Teachers of public universities have been on the street since May 14 pressing their four-point demands — a separate pay scale and review of the new pay scale, keeping senior professors and senior secretaries on the same pay scale, an identical payment and benefits for

teachers as enjoyed by the same grade government officials, and proper placement of the teachers in the warrant of precedence.

While observing a full-day work abstention, the teachers on September 17 threatened to boycott the upcoming admission tests if their demands were not met. The teachers observed similar programmes on September 8 and 13.

Public university teachers in a meeting with the education minister on Saturday demanded specific move towards resolving the crisis centring their pay scale before Eid ul-Azha.

They also demanded formation of a commission in this regard to recommend a separate pay scale for them.

Nahid assured them of addressing the crisis through talks with people concerned.