

Non-MPO teachers continue sit-in

Staff Correspondent

NON-MPO teachers on Saturday continued their sit-in programme for the 13th day in demand of inclusion of their educational institutions in the monthly pay order system.

They will hold a solidarity rally at the National Press Club today to press home their demand.

About 200 teachers from outlying districts under the banner of Non-MPO Educational Institutions Teachers and Employees Federation are passing their days and nights on the sidewalk of the National Press Club in Dhaka. They had also observed six days of hunger strikes till November 4.

The federation general secretary, Taposh Kumar Kundu, said that they would continue their programme until their demands, including MPO in-

clusion, were met.

About one lakh teachers, who are not enrolled into the MPO, get no salary, house rent and medical allowance from the government. A teacher generally gets Tk 5,000 to Tk 7,000 from their school authority a month while some schools do not at all pay their teachers for months, the agitating teachers said. With such a low pay, they can barely make their ends meet.

Low pay and benefits force these teachers to try to find out other means to earn extra money so that their expenses are met, said their leaders.

On October 26, they had begun their sit-in agitation at the Central Shaheed Minar and after holding sit-in for four days, they embarked on their fast-unto-death strike on October 30 in front of National Press Club.

They called off their fast-unto-death agitation on Wednesday but continued their sit-in programme at the same place.

There are more than 8,000 educational institutions, including schools, colleges, madrassahs and technical institutions which are waiting for the MPO privileges, statistics show.

Teachers and employees under the monthly pay order system enjoy 100 per cent basic salary from the national exchequer. An instructor is also entitled to a house rent allowance of Tk 500 and medical allowance of Tk 300, a month.

Nearly five lakh teachers and employees engaged in about 28,000 non-government post-primary educational institutions have been realising 100 per cent basic salary from the exchequer, in the form of monthly pay order, since July 2006.