

# Govt weighs online classes in city schools

Decides to introduce music lessons at pry, secondary levels

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The government is discussing a proposal to introduce a mix of online and in-person classes for schools, especially in metropolitan areas, as part of efforts to tackle the ongoing global energy crisis.

Besides the international crisis over the US-Israel war on Iran, traffic congestion during the opening and closing hours of the schools in Dhaka is another factor that made the government think about the option.



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The ministry would place the proposal before the cabinet for a decision after the end of the discussion, Education Minister ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon told reporters at the Secretariat after a meeting with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday .

“We are discussing promoting online education,” Ehsanul said, adding that the discussions covered both Bangla-medium and English-medium institutions.

He stressed that the government was not considering a fully online system.

A survey had already been conducted and around 55 percent of users wanted some form of online education, according to the minister.

He also linked the proposal to lost class hours because of the long Eid-ul-Fitr holidays and various movements across the country.

To make up for those losses, the government was also planning to run schools six days a week instead of five for the time being, Ehsanul said.

According to the minister, the prime minister has already given directions on the matter, and the ministry is working accordingly.

Tarique also discussed with Ehsanul ways to reduce traffic congestion in the capital when children go to or leave school, and directed the ministry to explore practical alternatives, the Prime Minister's Additional Press Secretary Atikur Rahman Ruman said.

Atikur said that in some cases a large number of private cars gather in front of schools during opening and closing hours, worsening congestion on nearby streets.

He cited an example in the capital where around 100 cars reportedly crowd in front of a school with just around 150 students, creating severe traffic jams and causing difficulties for students trying to reach the institution.

After the minister's briefing, the education ministry held a meeting with teachers from various schools and colleges in Dhaka, alongside officials from the education boards and the ministry.

At the meeting, the proposal to hold classes six days a week on a temporary basis was discussed. The meeting also discussed whether classes could be conducted online for three days a week, with in-person lessons on the remaining three days.

Under the plan, online classes may be scheduled on alternate days, meaning if a school holds online classes on Saturday, in-person lessons will be given on Sunday.

Sources said teachers would remain present at their institutions while conducting online lessons. Practical classes would continue in person.

They added that the proposal is still at the ministry level. A final decision will be made only after consultation with the prime minister and discussion at the cabinet.

Meanwhile, Cultural Affairs Minister Nitai Roy Chowdhury said yesterday that the government has decided to introduce music education alongside regular academic studies from the primary to secondary levels.

He explained that the initiative would be carried out by the cultural affairs ministry through a cluster-based model, under which music instructors would travel across upazilas to teach at multiple institutions.

Speaking to reporters after attending a programme organised by the US Embassy at Dhaka University, the minister added that the government had already resolved to expand cultural activities in schools across every district and upazila.

Nitai further noted that music competitions, similar to those arranged by the youth and sports ministry, were already being held in educational institutions to encourage cultural engagement among students.