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## Online-offline classes on pilot basis in Dhaka from next week

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*The minister of education and primary and mass education ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon addresses a press briefing at the International Mother Language Institute in the capital on Thursday. | New Age photo*

The education ministry on Thursday decided to introduce a 'blended learning approach' with three days of online and three days of in-person classes at some selected educational institutions in the Dhaka metropolitan city on a pilot basis from next week.

At a press briefing held on the day, education and primary and mass education minister ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon said that from the next week classes at these institutions would be held six days instead of five days a week.



The online classes would be held on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays while in-person classes would be held on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays, he said, adding that no classes would be held on Fridays.

The main goal of the introduction of this 'blended approach', he continued, is to reduce traffic congestion in the city, save energy and encourage digital education.

The authorities of some of the schools, including Viqarunnisa Noon School and College and Dhaka Residential Model College, at the briefing agreed to start online classes from next week.

Teachers, students, and guardians are confused over the implementation of the new system as the ministry did not issue any clear instruction on the matter from which day the pilot programme would be implemented and at which educational institutions.

The briefing was held at the International Mother Language Institute in the capital where head teachers and principals of different educational institutions were present.

Earlier on Wednesday, the minister discussed with the head teachers and principals of different educational institutions on the matter at the same place.

After the briefing, Dhaka Residential Model College principal brigadier general Mohammed Zaber Hossain said to move forward in the present and the future, they must utilise online platforms.

Regarding his institution, he said that their students lived there following a cadet college pattern where generally mobile phone usage was restricted.

'We will discuss this matter soon with my teachers to determine what kind of action plan we can implement quickly,' he added.

Viqarunnisa Noon School and College principal Mazeda Begum said that since they have 25,000 students at their institution, student attendance was decreasing because those who came by car were unable to get fuel, and those using CNGs or rickshaws were facing increased fares.

Mentioning that after discussion with branch heads, she said that it would be more convenient for teachers to take classes from home as they did during the Covid pandemic time.

They also need some time to set up Wi-Fi in every room or office within the educational institution, she added.

Some guardians said that online classes would be a burden for them due to lack of device in the case of two or more children are studying from same family, load shedding and less attention to classes.

'Will the government stop coaching centres? If not, why will they only take online classes while students will have to attend coaching centres as usual?' questioned Ruksana Akhter, a guardian.

Some students also shared that they were confused whether their schools would implement this approach.

At Thursday's briefing, the minister told journalists that after discussions the institutions heads were agreed to conduct the pilot which would be conducted in some selected educational institutions in the capital at first that have the capacity to conduct online classes and which have a huge number of students.

'We are not forcing anyone. The big schools, good schools, we have taken these works to make them go for the blended education,' Ehasnul further said.

He also said that the teachers would take in-person classes from the educational institutions.

Replying to a question on extra incentive for the teachers as their work day increased by a day, he did not say anything.

The minister said that decision would be made at the ministry about free Wi-Fi facilities at the educational institutions while the institutions would get opportunity to buy electronic school buses with no taxes.

Gradually this pilot would be taken across the country if it succeeds while they will not make any decision which will affect learning, he added.

After a high-level meeting chaired by prime minister Tarique Rahman on March 31, the education minister said that they were considering adopting a 'blended approach' combining online and in-person classes, especially in metropolitan areas.

**Tags** [#education](#) [#blended learning approach](#) [#in-person classes](#)

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