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Black marketing of textbooks alleged

Staff Correspondent

The city book markets are now flooded with text books for primary classes. The books are designed and initiated by the government authorised persons of firms for free distribution under the Universal Primary Education Programme.

Many anxious guardians were found buying these books from city's Nilkhel Market at a higher price. The words "For free distribution under the Universal Primary Education are clearly printed on the back covers of these brand new white paper books.

According to reliable sources in book business a section of dishonest and unscrupulous teachers, employees and officials of the Text Book Board and Thana Education Offices as well as the people related to the printing and publishing process usually sell these books in the black market. The people in book business sell the books at an interest rate of more than 45 per cent on the quoted price.

When contacted the authorities of Dhaka Text Book Board denied the

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Text books

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allegation and said no officials and employees were involved in book black marketing. "We are not actual authority to check black marketing of books. Our major task is to sent book to concerned authorities for free distribution in time," said an official of Dhaka Text Book Board.

The book for free distribution were found for sale on Wednesday at Nilkhel Book market at the cost of Taka 40, 45, 150, 200 and 220 for classes I, II, III, IV and V respectively. There are three text books for class I and II each and six books for each of the other three classes.

A guardian whose two kids are reading in class IV and V in a city Kindergarten school said he had to buy two sets of books at a cost of Taka 200 and 220 due to inadequate supply of primary school books. He said his two kids did not get books because their school is not entitled to get government distributed free books.

Meanwhile the initiatives of the board authorities to distribute old and used books along with new ones has created another problem. According to government decision the students returned their old and used books to school authorities on completion of their annual examinations. These old and used books mixed with some new ones are being distributed among the students. But many of the important pages of these books have been found missing due to the careless use by children.

A guardian alleged that although his three kids got books from their school he had to buy extra three sets of books from markets because three books were very old and some important pages of those books were torn.

Teachers also complained that they had to face a lot of queries about untoward incidents by the students and guardians who refused to take old, used and torn books.