

No text books for Class IX students yet

By Mosafa Kamal

The students of Class IX will not get their text books soon, probably not until they have appeared at their first terminal examinations.

That is, the decade-old legacy has been repeated again.

Reason? The Text Book Board blames authors, publishers and presses and the power supply. The authors supplied manuscripts which are just revisions of the old ones barring the subject of economics as late as September 1984. The publishers first printed their own books including note books before they went for printing the board's books and then the ratiaring of power supply to industries affected the printing press, sources said.

A School Text Book Board source alleged that a tendency among some publishers to get their own books published before those of the Board had also contributed to the problem.

Meanwhile, although the distribution of primary school text books began in November last, the printing of all the text books for students of this level might take another 15 days. Many primary students would have to go without books till these were distributed.

The government is supplying free text books for students of classes I, II, III and IV, and at half the prices for students of Class V. According to an estimate of the Text Book Board, 35 lakh sets of books are required for Class I, 22 lakh sets for Class II, 15 lakh sets for Class III, 11 lakh sets for Class IV, and 5 lakh sets for Class V.

UNICEF donated 3000 metric tons of offset paper by way of local purchase from Karnaphuli Paper Mills for printing of the books into Class III but

Contd. On Page 8 Col. 1

Text books

Contd. from page 1
the Mills failed to supply the same as scheduled. From next year UNICEF would import offset paper, the source said.

The source, however, observed that due to supply of free text books the demand was much higher. Although the books were the same as last year no learner showed interest in the use of old books as was done earlier. He pointed out that 51 million books were being distributed for students from Class I to Class IV, although according to estimates, half of that number should have sufficed.

The source said, the printing capacity of the presses in

Dhaka city was limited, and the Board would have to examine if printing presses at divisional and district towns might also be used for publication of primary text books from next year.

About the books for Class IX, the source conceded that there was delay in supply of manuscripts to publishers. The old books of the class were being printed with minor corrections. Only the Economics book was newly written. Manuscripts of some of the books were given between August and September, 1984.

The Board source alleged that private publishers often showed the tendency to get note books written and printed after getting supply of manuscripts of text books. They printed text books against a fixed rate of royalty and did not like to invest their money for a longer duration, he added.

An official of the Bangladesh Book Publishers and Sellers' Association said that this allegation was not generally true, although he conceded that this tendency might be present among a few of their members.

He said that the Board authorities stated giving manuscripts for Class IX books from October, and some manuscripts were yet to be given fully. He pointed out that the manuscripts on Home Economics was still being given on a piece meal basis.

The Association official said, the Board authorities this year had imposed another burden on publishers by asking for printing of some of the books in double demy sizes, although presses of such size were a few in number. On being informed the Board allegedly told the publishers that it had no authority to change the instructions about size of books given by the National Curriculum Committee.

The Publishers' Association source said, the main difficulty, they were facing in ensuring timely printing of text books, was electricity rationing between 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. The Association had approached the education authorities, and the latter reportedly approached to the electric supply authorities but without result till Monday. The source claimed that their printing presses could be operated only at one-third of the capacities due to electricity rationing. About four lakh sets of books were required for students of Class IX. Each set comprised 22 to 23 books, the Board source said.