

## New year's day with new books *Education minister promises primary and secondary students*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary and secondary students will get new textbooks on New Year's day, as around 80 percent of over 36 crore copies of textbooks have already reached their schools, said Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday.

"The remaining textbooks will reach the education institutions on time," he told reporters after visiting three printing presses at Matuail in the capital.

The minister said the number of free textbooks to be distributed this year rose by more than 2.84 crore copies. The government would distribute 36.22 crore copies among students from class-I to class-X.

"We have been distributing textbooks free of cost since 2010 and the number is increasing every year," Nahid said.

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Besides, the government for the first time would distribute pre-primary level textbooks in five ethnic languages to facilitate education of children, he added. Printing of textbooks in Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Orao and Garo languages have already been completed.

Sources in the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) said textbooks for around 24,000 ethnic students have been printed.

"We will also distribute some Braille books for the visually impaired students," the minister added.

Expressing satisfaction over the quality of the books, the minister said the government appointed inspectors to monitor the quality of printing and the paper was examined before printing.

Nahid further said there was a time when books were printed in small printing presses, but now textbook printing has grown into a major industry.

Education Secretary Md Sohorab Hossain, Additional Secretary Chowdhury Mufad Ahmed, NCTB Chairman Prof Narayan Chandra Saha, and NTCB Member (Text) Mia Imamul Haque Siddique were present during the visit.