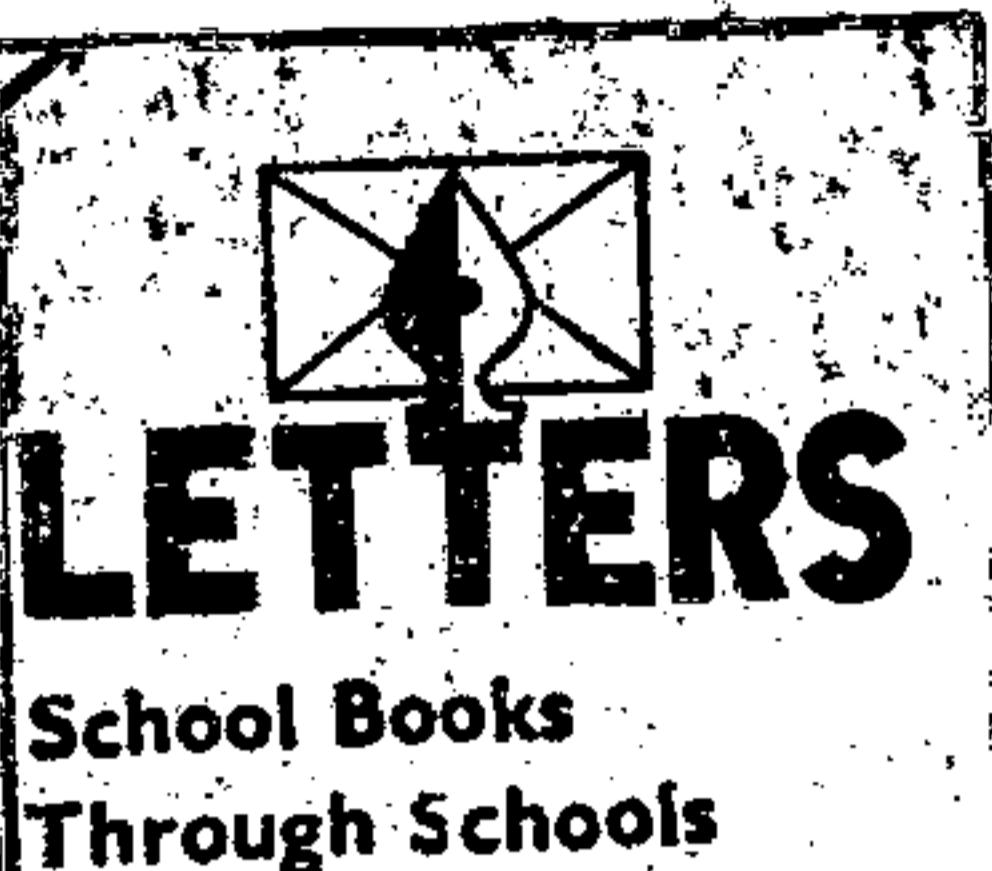


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School Books Through Schools

Sir.—As the proverb goes 'Knowledge in youth is wisdom in age' I would like to impress upon the authorities to remove the bottlenecks in the purchase of school books and thus enable our children to acquire knowledge. The present distribution arrangements of text books through post offices in Bangladesh is most praiseworthy, but in practice it is painful to observe that the instructions are not being strictly adhered to. For example it was stated in the press release that from now on all genuine school students could procure Board books from any Post Office where sufficient books are in stock. But now unfortunately the guardians face great difficulty in procuring school books first because there appears to be shortage of books in the Post Office and secondly because their children are unable to stand in the queue for long hours and bear the brunt of pressures from healthy and grownup people in the queue.

Another great problem for guardians is related to the timing of distribution of books which is reported to be from 9-00 a.m. to 2-00 p.m. The office hour of guardians is from 7-30 a.m. to 2-00 p.m. and in some cases from 9-00 a.m. to 4-00 p.m. or even more. It is difficult for the guardians to go out of office and stand in the queue for books during their office time.

Moreover those responsible for distribution of school books in the G.P.O. now instruct the recipient guardians to procure books from Post Offices of their own locality which again is inconsistent and contrary to press release. It seems quite relevant to mention here that when the Government lays great stress on education and has taken steps to remove the curse of illiteracy from the country we presume the authorities can bear some sort of subsidy on school books too, if necessary minimising other ends, in the greater interest of imparting education to our poor and needy children at cheaper costs at least at school levels.

I would like to suggest to the appropriate authorities to kindly see to the feasibility of switching the present arrangement of distribution of school books to the Headmasters of the respective schools at a subsidised rate to ease the situation. —Yours etc. A.A. SIDDIQI Stenographer, Ali Commercial College Section XI, Mirpur 16