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Textbook Festival celebrated

Staff Correspondent

THE government today celebrated Textbook Festival throughout Bangladesh saying it gave away free school books to students on the first day of the new academic year, spanning January and December.

The nationwide festival was celebrated for the third consecutive year by the ministries of education as well as primary and mass education for providing 270 million textbooks to 37 million students of primary and secondary schools and madrasahs free of charge.

In 2010, the government began distribution of free textbooks to students of

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Textbook Festival celebrated

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secondary schools.

In 1981, the Government began distribution of free textbooks to students of primary schools.

In the capital, education minister Nurul Islam Nahid, home minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir and primary and mass education minister Afsarul Ameen gave away free books to select groups of students at separate functions.

Textbooks written following a new curriculum were given to the students for the first time this year, said officials.

Government officials said the textbooks for free distribution had already reached all the schools and madrasahs across the country.

Reports sent by New Age correspondents, however, gave a different picture.

They reported that the government's education offices in Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna, Bhola, Jhalokathi, Pirojpur Jhenaidah, Comilla, Khagrachari and Thakurgaon and others part of the country did not receive the required number of textbooks for the secondary schools as yet.

Nahid gave away the books to the students of Residential Model College at its playground.

Addressing the students, Nahid said that the government was distributing free textbooks to the students to solve the textbook crisis.

He said, free books helped

cut down the rate of dropout and a gradual increase in student enrolment.

He called upon the students to concentrate on studies to have the best possible education for taking the country to its desired goal.

The students were seen happy receiving the textbooks.

Local Government state minister Jahangir Kabir Nanak, parliamentary standing committee chairman Rashed Khan Menon, MP, education secretary Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury, among others, attended the function.

Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir gave away the books to the students of Monipur High School and College at Mirpur in the city.

Afsarul Ameen and primary and mass education state minister Motahar Hossain gave the books to students of Kalachandpur Government Primary School at Gulshan.

On the eve of the festival, on Monday, prime minister Sheikh Hasina gave away free books to a select group of pre-primary, primary and secondary school students at a function at Ganabhaban, her official residence, kicking off the nationwide celebration.

Providing a different picture on the ground, New Age Barisal correspondent reported about 50 per cent of the textbooks for the secondary schools were yet to

reach the schools in six districts— Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna, Bhola, Jhalokathi and Pirojpur.

Secondary and Higher Education deputy director in Barisal division Mustafizur Rahman said, out of 6,885,534 copies of the textbooks needed in six districts in Barisal division 3,565,167 or 51.77 per cent of the copies were distributed until December 31.

Primary education officials in the division said many primary school of Agailjhara upazila in Barisal district were yet to get all the textbooks the students needed.

New Age Jhenaidah correspondent reported quoting district education officer Maksudul Alam that about 50 per cent of the required textbooks for secondary levels were yet to reach the district.

Secondary school students in the district need 1,563,000 textbooks.

New Age Thakurgaon correspondent reported quoting district education officer Fazle Alam that about 31 per cent of the required textbooks for secondary schools were yet to reach the district.

The district needs 1,570,000 textbooks for secondary school students.

New Age Khagrachari correspondent reported quoting acting district education officer Srila Talukder that about 25 per cent of the required textbooks for sec-

ondary schools were yet to reach the district.

The district needs 578,000 text book for secondary level students.

New Age Comilla correspondent reported quoting district education officer Abdur Rashid that about 17 per cent of the required textbooks were yet to reach the secondary schools in the district.

The district has a demand of 5,570,000 textbooks for secondary schools.

When asked, National Curriculum and Textbook Board chairman Mostafa Kamaluddin told New Age that all the textbooks reached schools at every nook and corner of the country.

He said there could be some 'insignificant mistakes, otherwise, by and large we delivered the books at every nook and corner of the country.'

'Some of the books might be on the way,' he added.

Out of 270 million books, around 108 million would be distributed among primary school students, 17 million among ibtedayi madrasahs, 115 million among secondary school students, 20.6 million among Dhakhul madrasah students and 1.3 million among vocational school students.

Students can also download all the textbooks meant for the primary and secondary schools and the madrasahs from the NCTB site:

www.nctb.gov.bd said officials.