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Time frame imperative for publishing textbook

Recommends nat'l textbook expert body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National textbook expert committee at a meeting yesterday recommended that a time frame or calendar will have to be introduced to deal with textbook publishing activities round the year, especially measurement of textbooks' real demand, paper collection, floating tenders, printings, bindings and marketing for solving textbook crisis permanently.

All curricula, texts and syllabuses from class VI to X will have to be available online, especially on the website of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), so that anybody can collect or print the texts.

On March 9, the government formed a 15-member national textbook expert committee led by former general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association Prof Akhtaruzzaman due to emerging textbook crisis in the country.

The committee held the meeting at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Building at

Dhaka University to make a recommendation list on how to solve the crisis permanently and distribute the quality textbooks among the students before beginning the new academic year.

Academicians, teachers, publishers and officials of the education ministry and NCTB were present at the meeting where they put emphasis on decentralisation of the textbook printing, publishing and marketing activities, especially in six divisions of the country.

They also suggested that the government should provide free textbooks for all secondary students like the primary level.

Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury said textbook publishing activities will have to be done round the year so that its crisis is solved permanently.

"The talented manpower should be brought to the NCTB for strengthening its activities. The branch offices of NCTB, especially in six divisions, will have to be expanded as part of the decentralisation," he added.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof

Harun-ur Rashid said there is no need to print all textbooks every year, because curricula and contents of the texts except social science and history books remain unchanged for years.

The chief of the newly formed committee placed an 11-point suggestion at the meeting.

The suggestions include collection of paper through open tender, introduction of calendar round the year, strengthening monitoring system, expert committee comprising progressive-minded academicians for writing and changing syllabus and curriculum, stopping guides and notebooks and stern action against those NCTB officials and employees who were involved in creating artificial textbook crisis.

Prof Monzazuddin Patwari, Prof Sheikh Abdus Salam, Prof Anwar Hossain, Prof Quazi Farruque, Prof Kazi Afroz, Golam Kuddus, Prof Abu Ahmed Chowdhury and journalist Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury also spoke.