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Textbooks reach most students

STAR REPORT

Most students of primary and secondary schools across the country started their first day of school in the academic year with the free government-distributed textbooks in their hands.

The educational institutions in the capital and elsewhere in the country distributed the new textbooks to the students yesterday.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid inaugurated the distribution at Azimpur Girls School and College in the city. However, on December 30 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina formally inaugurated the distribution of 19 crore textbooks among students of primary, secondary, ibtedai (primary level of madrasa), dakhil and technical classes.

Around 90 percent textbooks of general secondary schools and ibtedai madrasas have

been sent to educational institutions and most of these institutions distributed the books yesterday.

However, only around 70-75 percent textbooks of primary schools and dakhil madrasas were sent to educational institutions and most of them have distributed them to students.

Education officers of different district education offices say that even though all students did not get the new books on the very first day, the status of books distribution is now better than those of previous years.

Students, parents and teachers also praised the government's initiative to distribute books on time overcoming many obstacles. They said the initiative will bring a real change in the education system and will help the students obtain good results.

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students could begin the first day with new books.

Though free textbooks are given at primary level every year, this year for the first time the government is giving free textbooks to students of secondary school level. Some 1,868,950 copies of textbooks will be distributed among students in this academic year and a large portion of it has already been distributed.

The education minister while inaugurating the book distribution programme in the city told reporters that this initiative would reduce drop-out rate and bring qualitative changes in students' lives.

Nahid also said there could be some places where the books might have not reached yet but the books will get there shortly.

Dhaka District Education Officer (DEO) Ruhul Amin Khan told The Daily Star that almost all books for secondary school levels have been sent to the school but they are lagging behind in the distribution of dakhil textbooks as they received books for only six subjects out of 39.

"The situation is far better than any other year," he said hoping to distribute all the books within a week or two.

Mostofa Kamal, headmaster of Government Laboratory High School, told The Daily Star that they have distributed almost all books to their students.

Many educational institutions of the district, however, distributed new textbooks to their students before December was over.

Our staff correspondent in Chittagong reports: DEO Hosne Ara Begum said the distribution of new books at upazila level is going on in full swing as around 90 percent of the total requirement of 63 lakh books for secondary schools, including dakhil, have reached their destinations.

District Primary Education Officer (DPEO) of Chittagong Debesh Chandra Sarker said they have got around 60 percent of the textbooks out of their requirement of 35,01,721 for primary level, including ibtedai madrasas.

Most of the received books have already been distributed in schools at upazila level, claimed the officials of the two departments.

Textbooks

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Every year, a state of disorder prevailed over distribution of new textbooks. Students and their parents had to go through anxious times even for three to four months into the academic year just to get the books, which eventually hampered their studies, parents said.

Sayma, a student of Azimpur Girls School and College, said, "We have not seen this before... We got the books on our very first day at school. We could not start studying properly in the previous years since we never got the books on time. This year I am happy."

Habibur Rahman, parent of a school-goer at Azimpur Girls School and College, said, "No doubt this is a great success of the government. Students of the school got their books in March last year. Since the students are getting the books on the very first day of the academic calendar, they would be able to study longer this year and learn more."

The government last year decided to give free textbooks to

Our staff correspondent from Rajshahi reports: Rajshahi DEO Sadhan Chandra Biswas said they received 95 percent of textbooks against their requirement of 16.64 lakh books for the secondary schools.

Rajshahi DPEO Abdul Kader said they got 84 percent or 10,12,567 textbooks against their requirement of 11,92,781 textbooks as of Thursday last and they distributed 9,98,099 textbooks.

Our correspondent in Moulvibazar reports: Around 93 percent of secondary school textbooks and over 60 percent of primary school books have been sent to educational institutions in Moulvibazar, said DEO Abdul Mojid.

He said they received 10,40,335 copies of books against the requirement of 11,12,708 for secondary schools and hoped that the rest will be received within a short time.

The scenario is almost same in Khulna, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Barisal, Jessore, Munshiganj, Khagrachhari, Cox's Bazar and Madaripur.