

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

# Students to get free textbooks on time

*Says primary and mass education minister*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary school students across the country will receive textbooks in due time as all primary textbooks have already reached upazila level for free distribution, said Primary and Mass Education Minister Afsarul Ameen yesterday.

"Some 10.78 crore copies of textbooks, written on the basis of the new curriculum, were printed for an estimated 2.31 crore students from class I to class V. We have sent the textbooks to all upazilas for free distribution," he said at a press briefing at his ministry's conference room at the secretariat.

He said the textbooks would be handed over to the students on January 1.

The minister said standard papers and four colours were being used in textbooks to make those more attractive. It costs Tk 326.68 crore for printing the books. The total cost including service charges of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) is Tk 340 crore, he added.

Ameen said they have reduced the num-

ber of pages of the new text books by 544 to 3,226 pages from the existing 3,770 pages to reduce the carrying burden of students.

He said of the total textbooks, 1.62 crore copies of books were printed for class I, 1.52 crore copies for class II, 2.86 crore copies for class III, 2.63 crore copies for class IV, and 2.14 crore copies for class V.

Besides, the ministry reserved more than 50 lakh copies as buffer stock in 64 districts.

He urged media to inform his ministry if the textbooks are seen being sold anywhere. "We'll take actions as per law against those involved in illegal business of selling the textbooks."

MM Neazuddin, secretary (in-charge) of the ministry, said the textbooks were printed in the new curriculum and if any error is found they will amend those.

Motahar Hossain, state minister for primary and mass education, Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, director general of Directorate of Primary Education, and Prof Mostofa Kamal Uddin, chairman of NCTB, were also present.