

Textbook festival

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intent to destroy the country's education system and the new generations.

"Everyone knows we distribute textbooks on the first day of the calendar year. Still they are enforcing the hartal, but we will hold the festival anyway," he said and urged the Jamaat-e-Islami to call off the strike.

The government has printed around 32.63 crore copies of textbooks to distribute among students of primary and secondary schools, ebtedai and dakhil madrasas and technical institutions.

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board officials said they had dispatched almost all textbooks to the upazila headquarters.

However, insiders said there were some upazilas in a few districts like Patuakhali, Shariatpur and Tangail where

schools had not received all textbooks.

The delay was caused by some tendering complexities, said a source.

Primary and mass education ministry officials, however, insisted that there would be no problem.

Against the backdrop of a failed track record, the government started distributing free textbooks in 2010. Before that, the government used to provide free textbooks only for primary students, while secondary students had to buy their books.

An artificial crisis used to be created by a syndicate of printers and government officials, forcing secondary-level students to buy books well into the first quarter of the academic session. Free distribution of textbooks has contributed to increasing the number of students over the past five years.