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Error-ridden textbooks

Need to replace them urgently

P RINTING and distribution of textbooks for school students have almost regularly been botched up in recent years, which caused immense trouble to the students and great discomfiture to teachers, parents and guardians. The books were seldom delivered timely thus delaying the beginning of the new academic year.

But matters have reached a critical stage this year. The books supplied for the students of class nine and ten contain gross errors that could only baffle and frustrate the learners greatly. It seems the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) at the supervisory level and the publishers on the operational level didn't even bother to check whether the books were being properly printed and that these could be of any use to the students in the end. There are errors of every kind which would have been eliminated if the NCTB authorities had selected the publishers carefully and kept a tab on their work from time to time.

Printing and distribution of textbooks are not something that can be left to callous officials at the NCTB or the publishers who professionally leave much to be desired, and not even aware of the problems associated with books fraught with too many errors.

If the deteriorating standard of education is a matter of concern, it will be further multiplied if students are forced to read such books. The truth of the matter is that printing and distribution of school textbooks have become a profitable business with the issue of maintaining quality of textbooks being relegated to a point of trivialisation. The NCTB authorities, despite knowing what precisely their job is, seem to neglect the matter until it is too late and then swing into action to cover up for the lost time. The result risks being a sloppy job of a corrected version.

The education authorities should immediately withdraw the flawed books and stop the supply of the lots not yet delivered with a clear-cut statement issued by the NCTB as to the timetable for their redistribution. Under no circumstances should the students be burdened with such reading material.

The whole matter needs to be gone into with the responsible duly identified and brought to book.