

Primary students may not get text books before June

By A Staff Reporter

The printing and distribution of free text books for primary school students have slowed down. If the trend continues, many students will go without book for some more months, at least not before June, it is reliably learnt.

Out of total 30 million books to be distributed by the education authorities this year only 12 million could be transported to the districts by Monday. At present on an average two lakh books could be transported to the districts a day.

The distribution chain has two more stages: district education officers would transport books to respective upazila headquarters, from where the schools get the books for distribution among students.

Reliable sources told the Times that the education authorities were not in a position to trans-

port books to districts in larger quantities and faster pace because the printers could not maintain adequate supply to the Text Book Board.

On occasions shortage of BRTC trucks, the only transporter of free text books also contribute to the dislocation.

The sources said, out of 35 lakh sets of books for Class I, the authorities could reach only about 14 lakh copies of Bengali, and about 34 lakh copies of Mathematics books.

Of the 22 lakh sets (each of two books) needed for Class II, only 11 lakh copies of Bengali, and a little over 20 lakh copies of Mathematics were distributed by Monday.

The problem is more acute for students of Class III and IV. Of the total 15 lakh sets (of three books each) meant for Class III, a little over one-fifth has been distributed to the districts. Only about a half of the required 11 lakh sets of books for Class IV could be transported to the districts from Dhaka city.

Last year education authorities could distribute free text books for primary students by February. In that year free books were distributed for students of Classes I to III, and

Contd. On Page 8 Col. 8

Text books

Contd. From Page 1

for half the students of Class IV.

This year free books are being distributed for students from Classes I to IV and at half the prices for students of Class V. All primary students will get free text books from next year.

The Government undertook to start distribution of free text books for primary students from 1981 as a component of the programme to achieve universal primary education UPE by 1985. Other components of the UPE programme also did not progress as originally planned.

This year distribution of free text books including transportation charges would cost about Taka 14 crore, as against last year's about Taka 12 crore. Next year all primary students would get free text books, and the production and distribution of the same would cost around Taka 17 crore.