

A Case for Text Book

Marketing of text books for classes VI to IX has just began. The good news is that the students can now hope to get the books well within the month and that too at a price 18 per cent less than the previous years. But that is still a hope and depends largely on the efficiency of the binding section. Till Saturday only one per cent of the five crore books were ready for sale, as much as 60 per cent were awaiting to be bound. Any dislocation at any point starting from the binding section to the retailers' end might cause unforeseen delay in reaching the books to the students.

We hope that will not happen, specially after the court case moved by the book publishers' and traders' samity. Every year however we have been noticing some lapses on the part of some quarters associated with publishing and marketing of books, resulting in inordinate delay for the books to reach the end users. This time the challenge was even greater because many books were required to add new materials besides going through cover changes. That led to a dispute between the text book board and the samity. So if the books can be delivered to the traders for retail sale in time after all such rows and additions, this will be considered a major achievement by any standard.

After all, there is no point subjecting the students to unnecessary troubles and harassment. That exactly had been happening over the past years. Students could not procure some of the text books even after half of the year was over. This time we wish the colossal loss in terms of lessons in classes--or the lack of it due to unavailability of text books--could be averted. What we need is sincere co-operation between and among all the related quarters to tide over the minor problems.

Obviously, the publishers' and traders' samity has a point. Books without warranting any addition could be marketed in their earlier covers. Covers are less important, what matters is content. Then of course, the samity too has no right to be reluctant to go for the changes in cover if that ensured durability of the books or otherwise improved the quality of the same. In that case, some provision for compensation could be considered without letting the students to suffer. Now we will ask everyone concerned to speed up his or her share of the task so that the marketing of text books and their availability for the students are ensured in time. The scope for manipulation with marketing of text books must be eliminated once for all.