

Textbook Board clarification

Bangladesh National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) has sent a clarification to the news item "Textbook Board may incur Tk 20 cr Loss" published in The Daily Star on February 14.

"It is not based on facts that six lakh books are now deposited in the NCTB godown. It is also not true that price of six lakh books is Tk 20 crore. At present, a few books of the buffer stock are deposited in its godown," the clarification said.

Referring to the 'buffer stock' created in 1996, NCTB said creation of the stock was not illegal as it was done according to an Education Ministry instruction.

Our Reply: The Daily Star story mentioned three reasons why the NCTB faces a loss of Tk 20 crore. These are 1) Books remained unsold; 2) Government is deprived of huge revenue as pirated books flooded markets; and 3) The excessive production cost of books of the buffer stock. And the three reasons are supported by a comment from a leader of the Press Owners' Association that huge taka could be saved if the books were not printed at that time at a higher production cost as production cost has remarkably decreased in recent times. Also, formation of the probe body to investigate the creation of the buffer stock is enough to point to the alleged irregularities. Though our report mentioned the probe body but the clarification did not say anything about it.

The NCTB version contradicted the number of books in its buffer stock mentioned in our report but it did not give the exact number of books in its buffer stock.

Obituary