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# Students unlikely to get textbooks even by Feb

## Case against NCTB chairman, 10 other officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of primary and secondary levels are unlikely to get board textbooks even in February, with the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) failing to distribute the books till yesterday, according to printers concerned.

Over the years, the non-availability of textbooks at the beginning of the new academic year has become a common phenomenon. Last year, students did not get textbooks even three months into the academic year.

"Only 42 per cent of textbooks of the primary level have been distributed, but whether the remaining 58 per cent would be distributed is uncertain," Mohammad Altaf Hossain, founder of a primary

school at Munia in Pirojpur, complained in a case filed yesterday with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

Altaf Hossain, who came to the capital to collect textbooks for his school, filed the case against 11 high officials of the NCTB, including its chairman, after failing to get books.

The officials have been accused of embezzlement of funds and use of low-quality paper, which delayed printing and distribution of the primary level textbooks, sources said.

In the petition, Hossain said some NCTB officials by preparing forged contract documents in the name of different presses sold printing paper in the market.

Instead of using the prescribed 61-gram paper, they used the low-

quality 55-gram paper.

The NCTB officials embezzled about Tk 29 crore, by using low-quality paper for printing.

The complainant said the primary level books did not reach the schools even 20 days into the new academic year, despite a directive from the education ministry.

The ministry directed the NCTB to send books to different districts by December 31 last year.

Donors, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, which have funded the printing of textbooks, have set a standard for quality.

After hearing, Magistrate Mohammad Emdadul Huq directed the director general of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption to investigate the

SEE PAGE 21-COL-6

## Textbooks

FROM PAGE 1

complaint, seeking necessary permission from the government.

The accused are Dr. Shafiur Rahman, chairman of NCTB, Prof. Kabir Uddin Ahmed Majumdar, member (textbook), Prof. Hassan Ali, member (finance), Prof. SM Haider, member (curriculum), Prof. AFM Alamgir Khan, member (primary education), Prof. Nazimuddin, secretary of NCTB, Nurul Islam, librarian, Mohammad Hossain, controller of distribution, Mohammad Amanullah, senior store keeper, Abdur Rashid Miah, deputy production manager and Abdul Haque Chowdhury, controller of paper.

NCTB officials could not be reached, despite repetitive efforts last night.