

Textbook fiasco

Deplorable systemic flaw

HARDLY had we finished complimenting the authorities for a job well-done in distributing timely new textbooks to the students when the gross errors in the content of some of them came as a rude shock. Does it need a committee to find out where the errors occurred? The burden of responsibility lies with the editorial board and editorial board alone, no matter how many scores of people were involved in bringing out the books.

The matter, we feel, is an entirely governance issue, the poor state of which culminated in the mess that has been created. The focus was entirely on meeting the deadline for distribution forsaking the most important issue of accuracy and content.

Merely saying that the mistakes would be rectified only accords levity to a serious issue that was handled with laxity in the first place. Remember, more than 360 million books have been distributed involving more than 40 million students.

There are, we feel, two distinct categories of errors: one, the typo or the physical errors while the other is the intellectual or the content. We wonder how the mistakes could escape the eyes of the bevy of erudite persons who made up the editorial board. We wonder too about the system of incorporating changes in the content, because some of the alterations are whimsical to put it mildly. And who, we wonder, gave the final go ahead for printing as is the normal procedure involving such huge volume of printing work. It is also appropriate to ask what role the ministry of education played in ensuring error-free textbooks.

We have once again displayed our callous attitude of waking up to a mistake only after it has been committed. Can we ever purge it from our character?