

Ekushey Book Fair to be held physically in Feb-March

DU Correspondent

THE Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2021 will be held physically maintaining COVID-19 health guidelines.

State minister for cultural affairs KM Khalid announced this at a press conference held at the Poet Shamsur Rahman seminar room of Bangla Academy on Sunday.

“The launch date of the fair has not yet been fixed. Bangla Academy and the ministry of cultural affairs will propose three possible dates to the prime minister for a final decision on the date,” said Khalid.

The three proposed launch dates are February 20, March 7 and March 17, the state minister added.

Earlier, a view exchange meeting was held at the academy where the state minister, Bangla Academy director general Habibullah Siraji and publishers were present.

“We discussed ways to launch the book fair as early as possible. As the COVID-19 situation is somewhat under control and people are looking forward to getting the vaccine, we decided to hold the fair physically,” Khalid added.

The press conference was

attended by state minister for cultural affairs KM Khalid, Bangla Academy director general Habibullah Siraji and cultural affairs secretary M Badrul Arefin.

Farid Ahmed, the owner of Samay Prakashan and also the president of Academic and Creative Publishers’ Association of Bangladesh, said, “We held a meeting with the ministry and Bangla Academy. They proposed three dates to the prime minister and everything depends on the prime minister’s decision. We hope a launch date will be set so that the fair ends within March.”

Bangla Academy earlier proposed a virtual book fair considering the COVID-19 situation.

On December 13, publishers insisted that the Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2021 should be held at its usual venue maintaining the health directives. They also proposed that the fair should begin before February 21.

The book fair began on the Bangla Academy premises informally in 1972, and it became institutionalised in 1978. The fair was named Amar Ekushey Granthamela and a guideline for it was formulated in 1984.