

## AMAR EKUSHEY BOOK FAIR

# Fair shortened, ends tomorrow

*Over 100 titles on Sheikh Mujib published so far*

Tanzil Rahman

THE month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair will end tomorrow two days before the scheduled closure amid low turnout of visitors and deteriorating COVID-19 situation.

This year, over 100 books on the country's founding president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were launched among 2,529 new titles at the fair that began on March 18 at Suhrawardy Udyan and on the Bangla Academy premises.

State minister for cultural affairs KM Khalid said in a press release on Saturday that the fair would end on April 12.

The decision came after the government has said that it would go for a strict lockdown likely from April 14.

Academic and Creative Publishers' Association of Bangladesh president Farid Ahmed said, 'We, the publishers, have been going through a tough time since March 2020. We hoped that the fair would reduce our loss, but all publishers suffered huge loss in the fair.'

'We feared that if the situation continues, many publishers will have to shut down their business. We welcomed the authorities' move for closing the fair on April 12 as the government is planning imposing lockdown from April 14. We will get a day for our closing before the lockdown,' Farid added.

The fair did not get momentum due to rise in COVID-19 infections, rescheduling of fair hours and hot weather and the time in the year as the country's biggest book fair is generally held in February.

A total of 108 new books were launched on Saturday and the total number of new arrivals reached 2,529 so far on the twentyfourth day of the fair.

The list includes 339 story

NEW ARRIVALS			
TITLE	AUTHOR	TYPE	PUBLISHING HOUSE
Sangata Asangata Prasangata	Hanif Sanket	Essays	Priyo Bangla Prakashan
Trishnarta Bhalobasha	Nishat Tasnim	Collection of poems	Bhinnamatra Prakashani
Jaler Jamin	Haque Faruk Ahmed	Collection of short stories	Anyaprakash



Three girls visit Amar Ekushey Book Fair in Dhaka without wearing masks on Saturday.

— New Age photo

books, 394 novels, 148 essay collections, 853 collection of poems, 46 research works, 46 rhymes books, 41 juvenile literature books, 82 biographies, 16 collection of writings, 80 books on the liberation war, 12 on plays, 42 books on science, 32 travelogues, 59 on history, 16 on politics, 27 translations, 12 on medical science, 14 satire, 32 books on religion, 21 science fiction and 180 books on different categories.

However, over 100 books on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was launched in this year's fair in different categories, including collection of poems, essays, research, liberation war, memoir, history, biography and others.

Agamee Prakashani launched 122 books on Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman this year. Bangla Academy launched 14 books, Kathapraksh six, Somoy Prakashan seven, Anyaprakash seven along with other different publishers launched books on him.

Osman Gani, publisher of Agamee Prakashani, said, 'We launched 122 books on Bangabandhu this year as we are launching books on Bangabandhu and liberation war from the very beginning.'

'Many publishers launched books on him marking his birth centenary. I do not know how many of them ensured quality. After evaluating those books, we would reach a conclusion about their quality,' Osman Gani added.

Ekushey Padak winning writer Anwara Syed Haq said,

'Many young writers wrote books on Bangabandhu out of their emotion. If their writing quality falls, we should consider them as we are celebrating the country's golden jubilee and Bangabandhu's birth centenary together.'

Bangla Academy director general Habibullah Siraji said that Bangla Academy had plans to launch 100 books on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman marking his birth centenary but, they launched 26 books in 2020 and 14 this year due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

'Many writers have written books on Bangabandhu. I urged them to maintain quality instead of emotion feelings,' Habibullah Siraji said adding that such books should not distort the historical information.