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Book Fair

Education makes no sense unless it is based on knowledge in its widest possible perspective. 'Books still have the last word' is a lovely slogan. Book-fairs are organised now and then in all the civilised countries. The 'World Book-Fair' is now running in the Indian Capital, New Delhi and our national book-fair in the Bangla Academy, in Dhaka.

As a matter of fact, people only buy those books which they are forced to buy e.g.—the text books. Some buy books with an acquisitive instinct. To them every book is a collector's item just to place on their decorative shining book-shelves. There are others whose interest lies inside the covers. The electronic revolution has however seduced the readers to viewing of audio-visual media—the Television—the Films—the VCR's, now-a-days, than to reading of books outside the-texts. To them the book fair is nothing more than a social occasion to looking for familiar and unfamiliar attractive faces adding to the pageantry and colour of the fair. Perhaps they are not wrong because the very word 'fair' itself conveys a suggestion of socialising. This is not to say that the book-fair now on in the Bangla Academy has no importance of its own.

The first ever Book Fair was held in Calcutta in 1776 and there is no evidence in history of aping a foreign practice. The wonderful idea of organising such a fair was spawned by a handful of publishers and book-sellers of College Street, Calcutta, and there has been no break in its continuity since.

In our country, it is observed that our educated youths with college degrees are found to be very deficient in general knowledge in relation to both home and international affairs. Therefore, besides holding book fairs, we should organise lectures in honour of some eminent authors and the celebrities. Books should also be sold at a subsidized rate to seduce middle income group people to purchase books. For we should not forget that our future generation will have to live in a highly competitive world. And books still have the last word.