

Ekushey Book Fair extended till Mar 10

By DU Correspondent

Bangla Academy authorities yesterday extended the duration of the Ekushey Book Fair for another ten days till March 10.

The month-long fair was scheduled to be concluded yesterday. The authorities' notice extending the fair came at about 4 pm.

The decision was announced after a meeting between Sports and Cultural Affairs Minister Obaidul Quader and Director General of the Academy Dr. Syed Anwar Hossain at the latter's office, sources at the Academy claimed while talking to The Daily Star.

When contacted the DG denied it and said the decision was taken to fulfil the "expectations of publishers, writers and readers".

When contacted, some members of the Boi Mela Parichalana Committee, publishers and writers however expressed mixed reaction over the decision.

Osman Gani, a member of the Committee and owner of Agamoni Prokasan said the Academy authorities did not consult the Committee in taking the decision. "The authorities did not even inform the Committee", he said.

Another publisher and member of the Committee said he was not aware of the decision.

Expressing his reaction to this correspondent, eminent writer Humayun Azad said the Ekushey Book Fair should be

concluded within the month of February. There was no demand and no reason for the extension.

When contacted the minister said, "It depends on the authorities whether they would extend the fair or not".

Earlier in 1996, the Academy extended the Ekushey Book Fair for a week following requests from publishers and writers.

Meanwhile, people in their thousands thronged the fair yesterday, knowing that it was the concluding day.

A total of 633 books were released at the fair till yesterday.