

## Metropolitan

## Dhaka Day by Day

## Dhaka Book Fair '96

By SMS Joya

The second fortnight long Dhaka Book Fair was held in the open space on Bijoy Sarani from January 1 to 15, 1996. The number of participants doubled this year with 124 participants, whereas it was only 63 last time. This explains the massive popularity of the event. Altogether, there were 128 stalls including pavilions and semi-pavilions. The new-comers included National Book Trust of India, Saudi Arabia, Embassy of Iran, Motilal Banarjee (P) Ltd, Allied Publishers Ltd and China International Book Trading Corporation.

Some of the publishers received good response from the buyers. A diverse variety of books satisfying almost all kinds of readers were available there. From nursery text books, to poetry, to fiction, to environmental, social, political, legal, science books to technological and religious research works could be found at the fair.

However, visitors to this fair somehow got distracted by the nearby trade fair and the expected high turn-out never really materialised. Holding a trade fair simultaneously and that too at a little distance had also a negative impact on the sale of books at the fair. Moreover, the publishers spent big money on setting up their pavilions.

So the publishers have learnt a lesson or two. Next time they will simply erect bamboo-posted stalls.

Apart from this minor planning debacle, the Jatiya Grantha Kendra set the ground rules for the success of the book fair. The local publishers were only allowed to participate if they had published at least five first-rated books in the past year and were not allowed to sell/display books of other publishers. However, the foreign publishers were allowed to sell through local agents only. A strict restriction was coded against selling/displaying of any books breaking the



— Star photo

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T&T assures  
subscribers

Officials of telephone exchanges in the city will be present at their respective offices during scheduled time everyday, excepting government holidays and Thursdays, for proper subscriber service, reports UNB.

The assurance came from the T&T Board Sunday following reports published in different newspapers regarding immense sufferings of telephone subscribers.

The Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board said the exchange officials would be duly available at their offices from 10 am to 12:30 pm in discharging their duties to the subscribers.

During the fair, discussion sessions as well as cultural programmes participated by prominent writers, artists and intellectuals were held.

The authority also arranged raffle for the visitors and awards for the publishers. Books worth Tk 1,000, Tk 500 and Tk 300 were given away through raffle everyday. The public could have a glance at the winning numbers displayed on the

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