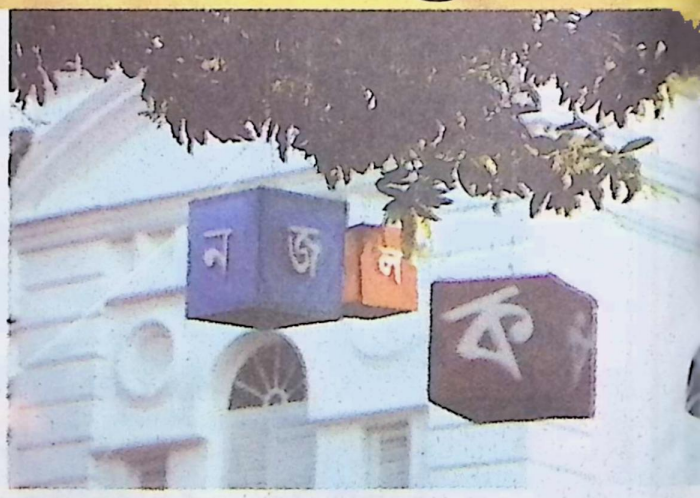


As the Season Begins

ELITA KARIM
PHOTO: AMIRUL RAJIV

The Ekushey Boi Mela has become an annual tradition that people from all walks of life try never to miss out on. This year, book lovers, once again, will be looking forward to the new releases, book launches and also the endless hours of *addas* amidst whiffs of fresh pages and new books. At the same time, this yearly book fair also becomes a source of worry in terms of proper organisation of stalls and security measures taken by the Bangla Academy authority. This year, the academy has taken certain steps to ensure that the policies set by the authority are followed accordingly.

Tension broke out in front of the Bangla Academy last week, when some of the publishers demanded to know why they were not being permitted to apply for stalls at the book fair. "We have certain criteria and a list of rules that everyone needs to follow," says Murshed Anwar, Deputy Director, Public Relations, Bangla Academy. "Those publishers who have published at least 15 books in the last one year, i.e., from March 2007 to January 2008, will be allowed to apply. Nevertheless, publishers who have published at least 60 or more books in the last few years have applied as well. Other than this, publishing houses will also have to present necessary documents such as Income Tax papers, a TIN and so on." Even



though the Bangla Academy authorities and the publishers have always been aware of the regulations, this year, steps have been taken to make sure that everyone involved in the fair strictly go by the code of conduct and the book of rules. This will also keep a check on the publishing houses that release pirated copies of books and automatically eliminate the houses that are unable to present the proper paperwork.

Along with the several facelifts made to ascertain a free-flow of book lovers into the fair, the Academy earlier