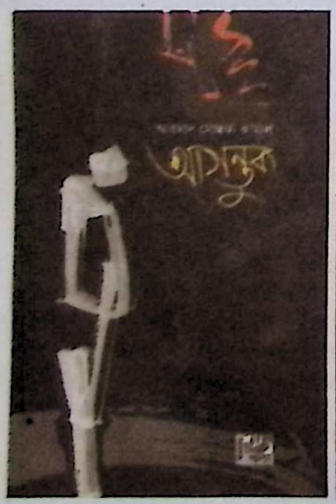
Newcomers Who Made Waves

ELITA KARIM

The beginning of every Ekushey Boi Mela is practically a war zone, where hundreds of publishers try to fight their way into the fair. The big names in the scene do not face the music; however, it is the new upcoming publishing houses find it a little difficult to fit in. Sometimes, it takes at least a couple of years before a publishing house is known and trusted amongst the readers. Some even do not manage to grab a spot even after waiting for two years in a row. This year, however, some of these publishing houses have actually managed to get book lovers to rush to their stalls with the variety of books they offered. Even though it is difficult to point the best one out, their sheer dedication and hard work is out there for all to appreciate them.

Pathsutro Prokashona Limited ,a wing of Jocsutro, an advertisement firm established four years ago, entered the boi mela premises for the first time this year and ended up launching around 47-50 books. "Last year we had plenty of launches as well," says Reza Ghatok, owner of the publishing house. "But we could not meet some of the rules and policies set by the Bangla Academy and this could not participate in the book fair." This year, says Reza, sales have been better than he had expected. "A good amount of marketing has been done which is why the books have been selling quite well," he assumes.



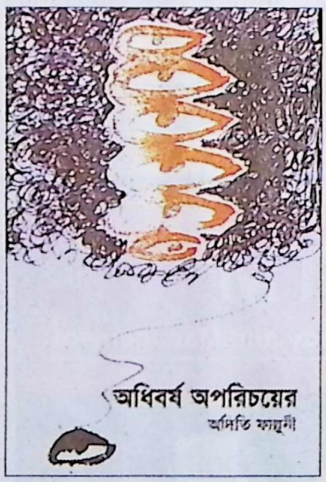
Cover: Shahinur Rahman

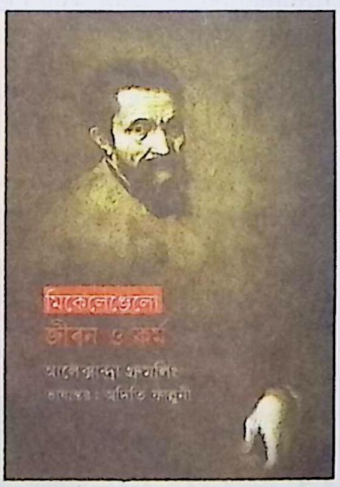


Cover: Mukul Biswas

Some of the most popular books which were sold were the series of detective books for young boys and girls written by Mustafa Mamun, namely "Lottery'r Number", "Cricketer Araale", Mustafa Kamal's Aguntuk, Abid Shahrier's Mukhorotay Nishongo and many more.

Specialising mostly in translations, Banglayan happens to be very popular amongst young readers. Launching at least twenty books this year, Austik Aarzu, the owner of the publishing house says: "Even though we had started to publish books back in 2005, we could not meet the policies set by the Bangla Academy to participate in the Boi Mela," he says. Some of the books that have been launched at the *mela* this year are Adity Falguni's Adhiborsho Aporichoyer, a translation of Alexander Groomling's Michael Angelo (Michael Angelo: Jibon o Kormo) by the same author and many more. It was not very easy to win a stall this year, informs Aarzu. Even though Banglayan had met with all the requirements to finally enter the *mela*, certain barriers to set up a stall came up right at the beginning of the mela, "thanks to some of the internal politics between a few publishers in Bangla Bazaar," says Aarzu.





Covers: Shibu Kumar Shil

Yet another publishing house that has sprung up in recent times is Zonayed Saki's Samhati Publications. Described as an organisation coming up with innovative