



A large number of book lovers thronged the Bangla Academy premises yesterday, the last day of the month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2010.

PHOTO: STAR

Curtain falls on month-long Ekushey book fair

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The curtain fell on the month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair yesterday with record 3,354 newly published books and a total sale of around Tk 20 crore, which is two crore up from the previous year.

Thousands of book lovers thronged the Bangla Academy premises yesterday all day long to buy books or to just see what were new at the fair.

Poetry collections topped the list of the new books launched at the fair this year, followed by novels and storybooks.

Bangla Academy itself sold books worth Tk 65 lakh at the fair till February 27, which was Tk 61 lakh last year.

The new titles at the fair include 807 books of poems, 581 novels, 378 storybooks, 255 essays, 129 children's books, 132 rhyme collections, 134 biographies, 110 books on liberation war, 87 on research, 54 on history and satirical verses and jokes collections, 52 on science fiction, 18 on religion and 294 books on other categories.

The concluding ceremony of the fair was held at the same venue with Bangla Academy Chairman National Prof Kabir Chowdhury in the chair. Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad was present as the chief guest.

The minister formally announced the conclusion of the fair and thanked everybody, including the publishers and book lovers.

He said the secular tradition of Bangladesh was

illustrated in this year's fair and the non-communal image of the country would be upheld through the Amar Ekushey book fair in future.

Bangla Academy awarded three book stalls 'Sardar Jainuddin Smriti Puraskar' for their eye-catching and artistic decorations. The stalls are Toi Tumber, Kotha Prokash and Mowla Brothers.

It also awarded 'Polan Sarkar Puraskar' to Nazrul Islam and Dr Fatema Amin for buying highest number of books.

On the last day, 94 new titles were unveiled at the historic fair.

A total of 370 publishing houses, government institutions, NGOs, mass media organisations, social and cultural organisations participated in the fair.

Tough action to be taken for negligence of duty

Tuku warns law enforcers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

State Minister for Home Shamsul Haque Tuku on Saturday warned the law enforcement agencies of tough actions for any negligence of their duties to ensure security of people.

The anti-liberation forces are carrying out terrorist activities in a premeditated way across the country, he said, adding that any negligence of respective duties to control the criminals would not be tolerated.

"If any negligence is found, tough action will be taken."

Tuku said this at a view exchange meeting with senior officials of the law enforcement agencies and the district administration at Rajshahi Circuit House.

Criminals are being arrested one after another, he said and asked the law enforcers to take actions against the big shots of Jamaat-Shibir if any of them were found involved in criminal activities.

The minister came to Rajshahi by a private helicopter to attend a religious function at Bagmara on the occasion of Eid-e-Miladunnabi.

He called on Rajshahi University vice chancellor and progressive teachers at his residence, addressed Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders and held meetings with the police, Rab and administrative officials.

He asked the RU teachers and BCL workers to stay united to fight against the anti-liberation forces upholding the country's interests over personal gains.

"Only the state machineries are not sufficient to deal with the evil Jamaat-Shibir axis, we need organisational and cultural strength. So all must remain united with a patriotic zeal."

Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, Barendra Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) Chairman Nurul Islam Thandhu, RU VC Prof Abdus Sobhan, Pro-VC Muhammad Nurullah, RU Progressive Teachers Association Convener Prof Shahnewaz Ali, Rajshahi SP SM Rokun Uddin, RMP Commissioner Nawsher Ali and Rab-5 Director Moinuddin Mahmud Chowdhury were present at the programmes.

RU BCL President Awal Kabir Joy and General Secretary Majedul Islam Apu were present at the campus programmes.

Allocating 8pc of GDP can ensure IT edn

Nahid tells memorial meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid stressed the need for allocation of eight percent of the total GDP for education sector to ensure information technology-based education as well as its infrastructural development.

"In a developing country like Bangladesh, we need an allocation of eight percent of total GDP for bringing qualitative change in the education sector. But we have only two percent, which is very poor against the present demand."

The minister said this at a meeting organised by Moni Singh-Farhad Memorial Trust in memory of astute politician Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and veteran journalist Bazlur Rahman at Shaheed Tajul Auditorium in the city on Saturday.

Nahid said the government is working to develop the skills of young people through providing them with quality and time-befitting education aimed at building a prosperous Bangladesh.

The youths will have to take



PHOTO: STAR

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid speaks at a meeting organised by Moni Singh-Farhad Memorial Trust in memory of astute politician Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and noted journalist Bazlur Rahman at Shaheed Tajul auditorium in the city on Saturday. On his left is Muktul Chowdhury and on his right are Fawzia Moslem and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu.

the country's leadership in future and it is their duty to serve the nation with their knowledge, merits as well as mettle. The government is committed to preparing them as pioneers in changing the fate of the nation.

The government has taken

a lot of initiatives to minimise the dropout rates at primary and secondary levels, as about half of the total learners drop out at this level.

"We are determined to bring fundamental change in the education sector. Institutional education is not

enough, rather the students should be taught with ethics-based education for revitalisation of their moral values."

Nahid also recalled the contribution of Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and Bazlur Rahman during the mass surge in 1960s.

Awami League leader Tofail Ahmed said there is no alternative but to restore the constitution of 1972 with a view to establishing a non-communal democracy.

Terming the anti-liberation forces a major barrier to establishing Bangladesh as a prosperous and non-communal democracy, he demanded the trial of war criminals within the shortest possible of time.

Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon, Communist Party of Bangladesh General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu also spoke.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, wife of veteran journalist Bazlur Rahman, was present at the meeting.

President undergoes medical check-up

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman is well and in good health, physicians said yesterday after completing his medical check-up at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore, according to a message from the president's press secretary.

In his message, AKM Nesar Uddin Bhuiyan said that a parliamentary delegation headed by Speaker Abdul Hamid visited President Zillur Rahman at the hospital and enquired about his health.

The delegation members included Whip Nur-e-Alam Chowdhury Liton, Atiur Rahman Atiq, Fazlul Karim Chowdhury, Zillur Rahim and Afzal Hossain.

Earlier on Saturday, State Minister for Environment and Forest Dr Hasan Mahmud visited the president at the hospital.

The president is expected to return home on Thursday night.

Concern over death threat to New Age editor

UNB, Dhaka

The Union of New Age Journalists yesterday expressed grave concern over the death threats to its Editor Nurul Kabir by anonymous callers for his brave journalistic works.

In a joint statement issued by ASM Shahidullah Khan, publisher of the daily New Age, and Shahiduzzaman, president of the Union of New Age Journalists, also urged the government to find out the criminals that gave threats to him and his family and bring the culprits to book.

Nurul Kabir has received death threats for his journalistic works twice in the past few days - first time on February 23 and then on February 26 - from unidentified goons, the statement said.

It said the anonymous callers asked the New Age editor to stop writing as well as speaking against terrorism and violence, etc. and demanded Tk 50 lakh from him.

The callers also warned that, in case of Kabir's failure to comply with their demand, they would kill him and do harm to his family.

COUNTERING TERRORISM US to train officials

BSS, Dhaka

The government of the United States of America (USA) is ready to impart training to Bangladesh security officials and provide all sorts of technological assistance in countering terrorism.

Rear Admiral Sean Pypen, coordinator for Countering Terrorism and Operations in the Asia Pacific Region of the US government, said this yesterday while discussing counterterrorism in Bangladesh with senior officials of the home ministry.

Md Kamal Uddin, joint secretary for political affairs of the home ministry, led the

Bangladesh side comprising senior officials of Bangladesh Coast Guard, Bangladesh Navy, Bangladesh Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab).

"We have pointed out the government initiatives for countering terrorism in Bangladesh to the delegation and the US delegation appreciated our steps," Kamal Uddin told BSS.

Sean Pypen gave assurances of all-out cooperation in imparting training and providing technological and logistic supports for Bangladeshi security officials in countering terrorism in the region in future, he said.

Schoolboy killed by classmates

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A schoolboy was killed by his classmates at Siddhirganj in the district on Friday.

Police recovered the body of Arafat Hossain, a student of class ten at Siddhirganj Water Development Board (WDB) High School, from an abandoned mill near his residence on Saturday noon.

They have also arrested one Delwar Hossain in this connection.

Arafat's elder brother Sohag said Arafat used to help his father in running their business. He went out along with his two friends with his laptop on Friday afternoon and since then he had been missing.

Investigation officer (IO) of the case Sub-Inspector (SI) Awal said four of Arafat's classmates had slaughtered him.

The killers are addicts, he added.

Dispose of cases fast to ensure justice: Law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday called on the lower court judges not to halt the proceedings of cases on any illogical and unacceptable grounds so that the cases are disposed of within short time and the litigants can easily get justice.

The backlog of pending cases at the lower courts is growing higher day by day, as the hearings of those cases are

adjourned several times for small reasons and, therefore, the litigants have to suffer a lot to get justice.

The minister said this as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of a month-long training of 50 newly appointed judges of the lower courts at Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI).

JATI Director General Justice Hamidul Huq presided over the programme.

Shafique said the govern-

ment is planning to enact a law for disposing of cases through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system.

If the system is launched the cases will be disposed of outside the courts through compromises, he said, adding that the judges and lawyers can play their role as mediators there.

The government has already instructed the law commission to make necessary recommendations for enacting the law.

Step up Khaleda's security measures

FROM PAGE 1

The AL leaders said even after passing the written examinations, many pro-ruling party youths are not being selected for the jobs. This has created resentment among the youth, they said, pointing out to recent police constable recruitment.

In response, Hasina said rules and regulations should be followed in recruitment in the public service.

Meanwhile, home ministry officials say the government has recently provided additional security to Khaleda including eight to 10 house guards, 16 police and two vehicles for escort as demanded on behalf of the opposition leader.

"If they [BNP] demand more, we'll give them that. But providing SSF escort depends on the government," comments a home ministry official.

"According to law, the leader of the opposition is supposed to get security equal to what a minister avails. But

she has been given 10 times more," AL General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam told reporters after the meeting held at the AL chief's political office in Dhanmondi.

The meeting adopted a confidence proposal in memory of the 57 army officers who were killed during the BDR mutiny in February last year.

GO TOUGH ON EXTORTIONISTS, TENDER MANIPULATORS

Hasina also directed Home Minister Sahara Khatun to go tough on extortionists, tender manipulators and those who are deteriorating law and order without considering their political identity and affiliation.

The premier also asked the home minister to arrest them at once, if necessary.

ALCWC DECIDES TO FORM SUB-COMMITTEES AND COMPLETE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The meeting decided to fulfil the 41-member AL advisory council, which currently has

20 members, and form the party's sub-committees.

Hasina directed the party leaders to form the sub-committees comprising those who stood brave during crisis, especially during the caretaker rule, party insiders say.

DISTRICT TOURS THIS MONTH

The meeting also decided to start district tours by the central leaders to strengthen party's grassroots activities. The tours would start soon this month.

The AL chief directed the party to focus on the government's success and activities and make people aware of the opposition's anti-government propagandas during the tours.

The meeting held BNP-Jamaat alliance representative for the recent unrest in Chittagong Hill Tracts. The AL general secretary alleged the coalition has still been creating tension in the area in a planned way in a bid to foil the CHT Peace

Agreement.

Replying to a query, he said one candidate would be given on behalf of the AL-led grand alliance in the upcoming polls for Dhaka City Corporation, municipalities and union parishads across the country. The selection process would be coordinated by the central AL, he added.

Asked about Joy's primary membership, Syed Ashraf said the grassroots leaders of Rangpur made Joy member of the party. But it is up to Joy as to whether he would accept it.

At the meeting, party leaders expressed dissatisfaction over slow implementation pace of the government's different development projects. They said over 13 months has passed since the government assumed office, but development work is not being held that fast.

They also pointed out that no major visible development work is seen since there is slow pace in implementation, meeting sources say.

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