

EVENT

Back to the books

With less than ten days of February left, the month of festivities, both colourful and solemn, can find its perfect ending at the Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela.

The Boi Mela, the congregation of book lovers through the decades in an undeniable landmark in Dhaka's urban scenario.

This year in 2018, some 3,000 freshly published books are expected to grace the stalls and pavilions of the fair. A total of 455 publishers are expected to have participated this year. The Boi Mela straddles the section of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue that connects the Dhaka University TSC to Doyel Chattar. The stalls have been spread over two venues- the Bangla Academy premises and the Suhrawardy Udyan right across it.

The stalls in the Bangla Academy premises are mainly the government publication houses. From survey data to information of taxes to books on law, serious buyers can find nothing is amiss. Also, new and self-published writers too have been given their own stalls at this site to promote their work. An attraction of this side is the Bino Books stall with their books that incorporate augmented reality. E-books are promoted widely this year as publishers have set up e-readers and are providing information on how to acquire those.

The true energy and enthusiasm of the book fair lies across the Bangla Academy though. People are walking through the security check points with barely bated enthusiasm. The colourful stalls are no

longer put up together in a haphazard manner. If anyone is looking for a specific stall, the handy large map at the entrance gives all the locations. It is an enjoyable sight to see potential buyers looking through the many publishers to get the best collection of Feluda or a better translation of Dan Brown.

Kakoli Prokashoni, Anya Prokash, Panjeree, Patha Samabesh stalls are hard to miss with their signature designing this year. The surging crowd at Sheba Prokashoni announces the stall even before the stall comes to view! And all around, people are looking through the many stalls to catch their next best read. New books are constantly announced through the mikes to the crowd as well as the presence of authors who are unveiling their books. Every day is ultimately a new find at the Boi Mela!

Both venues have resting benches as well as well facilitated eating arrangements. Payment for books has also taken a turn towards easy mobile payment. bKash payment options are visible in almost every alternate store. Considering the dry dust of this time, both premises are constantly getting a spray of water to ease down the dirt. Weekend crowds cannot fully obstruct the walkways as they are well spaced and

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stalls are easily accessible to see the books. For those who fully want to avoid the crowd, the golden hour is the opening on the weekdays, specifically the time between 3:30 to 4:30pm.

The Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela has the singular opportunity to be placed in a month that celebrates the true milestones of our culture and history. Mela in Bangla after all means congregation, and the Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela lives up to it by not only connecting people but time as well. Coming down in 2018, it can be said with confidence that Chittaranjan Saha, who started the fair as homage to the 1952 Language Movement martyrs with 32 books from his publication house- Muktohdara Prokashoni, would have been proud!

By Iris Farina

As the Boi Mela is ending, here are the opening and closing hours once again in case you haven't had the time to visit it.
For February 21 only, 8:00am to 8:30pm.
On Fridays and Saturdays, 11:00am to 9:00pm, with two hours, from 11:00am to 1:00pm, as "Shishu Prahar" or Children's Hour.
Other days, Sunday to Thursday, 3:00pm to 9:00pm.

CHECK IT OUT

Rang's Ekush collection

For this sombre month of February, Rang Bangladesh's latest collection features black and white as well as ash and off-white as the prime colours for their clothes. Both men and women's lines include clothes in traditional wear as well as western wear. Block print, screen print, machine and hand embroidery take centre stage in this collection with the Bangla alphabet as the main designing focus.



This collection is available at all Rang Bangladesh outlets as well as their website.


For more information, please call 01777 744344 or visit www.rang-bd.com, www.facebook.com/rangbangladesh

Ekushey with Foring

Fashion house Foring is celebrating this February 21 with a different view. Their new collection includes saris, panjabis, kamiz sets, t-shirts etc. in black, white, and grey. The collection has hand and machine embroidery, block designs as well as appliques and many other decorative items.

For more information, please visit www.facebook.com/Foring-Ltd-418926821602453 or www.foringbd.com



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