



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurating immortal Ekushey Book Fair 2001 at the Bangla Academy premises on Friday.

Ekushey Book Fair begins **Mother language research centre to be set up soon: PM**

Staff Correspondent

As Ekushey Book Fair at Bangla Academy began on Friday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called upon the poets, litterateurs and cultural activists to contribute to building up of a self-reliant Bangladesh.

"After restoring democracy, we have ensured free intellectual and cultural exercise," she said adding, "We left behind the dark period to usher in a new era of advancement in language, literature and culture and national development in a democratic system."

The Prime Minister reiterated her pledge to build Bangladesh as a welfare state free from the curse of hunger, poverty and illiteracy

monies of the month-long Book Fair, she urged the people of all strata including students, teachers and political leaders to reinforce their effort in teaching and learning the mother tongue - Bangla - and protecting the dignity of it.

Presided over by Bangla Academy's Chairman Prof Anisuzzaman, the function was also addressed by State Minister for Youth and Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Kader, noted journalist Obaidul Haq, Academy Director General Prof Syed Anwar Hossain, Md Abdur Razzak, Mosidul Huq and Anisur Rahman.

Bangla Academy in association with Bangladesh Pustak Proka-

Book Fair

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Parishad organised the book fair, which is held every year to pay homage to the martyrs of Language Movement of 1952.

Describing the mother tongue as a language of heart, Sheikh Hasina said it is not possible to properly acquire knowledge without command in mother tongue. "There is no contradiction between knowledge in mother tongue and learning of foreign language," she maintained but lamented over the problems created due to over-emphasis on foreign language.

The Prime Minister asked the Bangla Academy to take initiative for translating books written in other languages and assured it of all cooperation from the government.

Referring to her last year's announcement for establishing mother language research centre, she said the government has already selected the site and a project will be launched soon to set up the centre.

Samples of about 4,000 existing original languages will be collected for research in the centre, she said and pointed out that people from around the world would be able to share the achievement of Bengalees while observing the International Mother Language Day on Feb. 21.

The Prime Minister also mentioned that Jatiya Sangsad in its last session repealed the 125-year-old act on control dramatic performance.

State Minister Obaidul Kader alleged that there was a conspiracy to kill the four-and-a-half-