

## National Book policy to promote quality

By A Staff Reporter

The National Book Policy was announced on Wednesday aiming at encouraging publication of quality books and enhance export of those to the international market.

The State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum announced the Book Policy at a press conference at the Ministry and said the main objectives of the policy was to encourage writing, publishing and use of all categories of books to meet the needs of people of all ages.

Earlier the 34-point National Book Policy was approved by the Cabinet on

February 28 last.

The State Minister for Cultural Affairs informed the newsmen that a national committee will be formed within a month to execute the policy.

Prof Jahanara Begum said the objectives of the book policy includes building up modern infrastructural facilities to improve standard of publications, encouraging the involvement of educated manpower in this industry, modernisation of the printing industry and give priority to import inputs specially for the production of books on science and technology, use of ISBN and classification number.

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creasing publication of books for children as well as text and reference books.

The policy also seeks to encourage publication of books for readers of all categories and also encourage potential creative writers.

Prof Jahanara Begum further informed that the policy will enhance book export and prohibit publication and import of obscene books and books against independence and sovereignty of the country.

Prof Jahanara said to expand the activities and competence of the national book centre, the organisation would be converted suitably into Book Development Council in the light of recommendations of UNESCO.

She said the policy will ensure coordination between the private and public sector to implement publishers, develop sales and distribution network, organise fairs and exhibitions, develop information and data

bank, enhancement of library legislation for proper development of libraries and appointment of technical hands in all professional posts.

She said the policy will also ensure fair wages to professionals involved in book production such as the translator, editor, designer, illustrator and give due recognition to their creativity and protect their rights.

She said it will also increase publication of books on the handicapped, illiteracy eradication programmes and mass literacy.

Replying to a question, Prof Jahanara Begum said book export has increased in the last few years. In 1990-91, the export earning from books was Taka 98 lakh which doubled last year.

She further informed the country imported books worth Taka 8.25 crore in 1990-91, of which import from India was more than Taka three crore against export earnings worth Taka 68,000 only.

About illegal sale of huge Indian books at the recently concluded Amar Ekushey Book Fair at Bangla Academy, the Director General of the Academy Prof Harunur Rashid said he was aware of such situation but could not order for withdrawal of those books from the Fair, apprehending retaliatory measures by Indian authorities in India about Bangladeshi writers' books.

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