

Dhaka book fair attracts readers everyday

Everyday the ninth Dhaka Book Fair at the National Parade Ground here is attracting hundreds of book lovers from different parts of the country, reports BSS.

Kaleidoscopic book shops from home and abroad are showcasing their intellectual products in 151 Kiosks.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurated the fair on the first day of this year and declared

2003 as 'Library Year'. She also inaugurated the first Dhaka Book Fair on January 1, 1995.

Almost everyday new books are landing in the stalls. Foreign books are on display in the kiosks established by visiting publishers.

Kiosks of Iran Cultural Centre, Japan Foundation, Publishers and Book Sellers Guild of Calcutta, MIDAS and World Health Organization (WHO) are showcasing books from abroad.

National Book Centre (NBC) officials said last year was a benchmark year for the book-lovers across Bangladesh. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia branded the year 2002 as the 'book year'.

A visitor to the fair Atiar Rahman Labu said the organizers have maintained international standard in organizing such a big fair. But he said communication facilities to and from the National Parade Ground is too inadequate and little bit

expensive. He urged the authorities to assist visitors by providing less expensive medium of communication (urban commuters).

Noted publisher Tofazzel Hossain said Dhaka Book Fair has special significance. He said Frankfurt Book Fair, Moscow Book Fair, London Book Fair, Tokyo Book Fair, Cairo Book Fair and New Delhi Book Fair bear significance. Dhaka Book Fair, he said, has already occupied space in the international book map.

Director of National Book Centre Poet Mahmud Shafiq said Bangladeshi publishers are pronouncing their identity in a sophisticated way through Dhaka Book Fair. He said many publishers lack necessary aesthetic qualities as publishing is yet to emerge as an independent industry in the country.

He said in the west books have contributed towards creation of a deep thinking, rational and subtle societal texture. The workers in the western countries are avid readers.