



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Visitors swarm the Bangla Academy premises as the month-long Amar Ekushey Boi Mela concluded yesterday.

Boi Mela ends with record number of new books

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The 29-day Amar Ekushey Boi Mela ended yesterday with a record turnover and appearance of new books this year.

The turnover was over Tk 26 crore in 28 days, said Shahida Khatun, director (establishment, planning and training division) of Bangla Academy, who read out the closing report yesterday. Last year's sales amounted to Tk 25 crore.

Meanwhile, the number of new book arrivals was 3,669, 656 more than that of the previous year. Topping the list were poetry books numbering 817 followed by novels, totalling to 563. Yesterday's fair saw the arrival of 109 new books.

A total 425 publishing houses and socio-cultural, non-government and media organisations took part in the fair.

Expressing satisfaction over the sales, the publishers urged the authority to strictly implement the fair's policies to

restrict the access of pirated books and stop allotting stalls to "so-called" socio-cultural organisations.

Osman Gani, owner of Agamee Prakashani, said the huge turnouts since the fair's inauguration helped reach this year's record sales.

However, some publishers claimed that the monetary value did not portray the true picture of the number of book sold as book prices were comparatively high this year.

In yesterday's closing ceremony, presided over by Bangla Academy Chairman Prof Anisuzzamn, its Director General Dr Shamsuzzaman Khan thanked everyone for making the fair a success.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Advocate Promode Mankin said Amar Ekushey Boi Mela was not merely a book fair but has become a "book festival", becoming bigger and more organised with each passing year.

The academy awarded Ittadi Grantha Prokash, Moula Brothers and Bidya Prokash with "Munier Chowdhury Smriti Puraskar" for bringing out the "highest numbers of quality books".

"Ananya Jibanananda", authored by Clinton B Silly, translated by Faruk Mainuddin and published by Prothoma Prokashon, was awarded "Chittaranjan Shaha Smriti Puraskar" for being the "book of the best quality".

"Bangla Academy Probashi Lekhak Puraskar" was presented to expatriate writer Kader Mahmud while Sumonto Aslam, senior sub-editor of Samakal, received the "Shaheed Sirajuddin Hossain Smriti Puraskar" for his creative report on the fair.

The fair yesterday, being the 29th February of a leap year and the closing day, witnessed a massive turnout, with everyone wanting to get their hands on the books of their choice.