

# Taslima's book sold out a day after controversial release

Kolkata, February 03: A day after Bangladeshi author Taslima Nasreen's book Nirbasan (Exile) was released amid a major controversy at the 36 Kolkata International Book Fair, the book was sold out by Thursday evening.

"We had printed 1,000 copies of the book, but it is already sold out. We have ordered a reprint and it shall be available to readers by Saturday," said Shibani Mukherjee of the People's Book Society, publishers of the book.

The author, however, said she did not want her books to sell because of a controversy.

"My books have been on bestseller lists since the 1980s. I do not want my books to be sold because of a controversy regarding their launch or a ban. I do not want this and neither do I expect this," Ms. Nasreen told from New Delhi.

Emphasising her demand for freedom of expression, Ms. Nasreen said that she did not want the undermining of her "right to write" to become the reason for her books to be sold out.

"I want my books to be sold as any other writer's would, but my freedom of expression should be given due regard," she added.

The book was supposed to be formally released at a function at the auditorium of the book fair on Wednesday, but was cancelled at the last minute. Later, it was released at the stall of the publisher and within an hour 100 copies were sold. On receiving a call protesting the release of the book, the organisers of the fair, Publishers and Booksellers Guild, told the publishers that the auditorium would not be available for the function.

Police officials said they also received a complaint from the Milli Ittehad Parishad, a minority outfit, but a decision on whether or not the event should be held was left to the organisers.

During the day, there was significant police presence in the vicinity of the book stall, but there were no protests or disruptions at the book fair. As visitors ambled along the stall in the afternoon, one could hardly imagine that it had been the site of a major commotion with sloganeering friends and supporters of Ms. Nasreen trying to out-shout the Muslim clerics, who had come to register their protest on Wednesday evening.

Taking up a whole shelf inside the bookstore, Nirbasan, the seventh volume of an autobiographical series by Ms. Nasreen, was the central attraction of the stall.

The book is Ms. Nasreen's account of the events that led to her ouster from the city in 2007. Her controversial book Dwikhandito (Split in two) is the third book in the same series.

**Source URL:** <http://www.siasat.com/english/news/taslimas-book-sold-out-day-after-controversial-release>