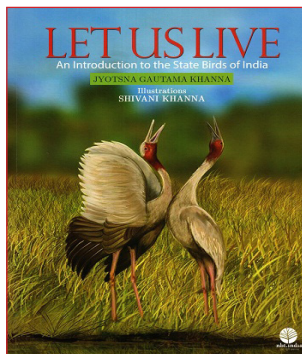


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### PICK OF THE MONTH



**Let Us Live: An Introduction to the State Birds of India**

Jyotsna Gautama Khanna  
ISBN 978-93-6719-130-9  
Rs 625.00

## NBT's Book Festival in Goa

Marking the beginning of a new literary chapter, the first-ever Goa Book Festival was inaugurated on 4th February, 2026 at the D. B. Bandothkar Ground, Panaji by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Goa, Dr Pramod Sawant, in the august presence of numerous dignitaries



including Prof Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman, National Book Trust, India and Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT, India. The festival was organised by the National Book Trust, India in collaboration with the Lokmanya Cultural Foundation.

In his address, Dr Sawant urged Goans to support the book fest with the same enthusiasm as food and music festivals. He expressed hopes for making this gathering an annual event. Prof Marathe spoke about the transformative power of reading, noting that building a Viksit Bharat begins with creating informed and thoughtful readers. Dr Kiran Thakur, Chief Patron of the Goa Book Festival and Chairman, Lokmanya

Cultural Foundation was also present at the inaugural ceremony and said the Goa Book Festival would give the state a distinct literary identity and help it emerge as a hub of intellectual dialogue with participation from over two-hundred publishers. Shri Yuvraj Malik remarked that the festival fills a long-felt gap in Goa's cultural landscape and urged visitors to take home at least one book that could bring inspiration into their lives.

The festival drew book lovers from all corners of Goa and was made brighter by a visit from Shri Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi, Governor of Goa. It came alive with stories from space and lessons for life brought to 1,200 students in attendance by Group

Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, first Indian astronaut to have visited the International Space Station. From launch-day fear and zero-gravity moments to listening to Vande Mataram before liftoff, he spoke candidly about discipline, resilience and dreaming big, reassuring students that India does look ‘saare jahaan se accha’ (‘best of the world’) from space. Concluding the session, Group Captain Shukla urged students to work towards India’s future in space, reminding them that dreams, when combined with discipline and courage, can truly defy gravity.

A Publishers’ Meet was also organised at the Goa Book Festival 2026 with 35-40 publishers across India participating in the event. The meeting was centred around ISBN facilitation, publisher support, visibility of publications, and professional development initiatives, strengthening collaboration within the publishing landscape.

During his session at Goa Book Festival spiritual leader and author, Acharya Prashant, spoke about the deep dissatisfaction people experience in their professional and personal lives, pointing out that most individuals do not actually seek true satisfaction but operate with assumptions or conditioned ideas of what satisfaction should look like. He explained that while dissatisfaction is uncomfortable and satisfaction demands self-honesty, people often prefer easy sources of validation, which offers a temporary sense of fulfilment tied to specific external outcomes.

In keeping with the NBT’s fundamental purpose of encouraging reading as habit amongst the young people of this country, throughout the five days of the book festival



at Goa, it was ensured the children visiting the fair were suitably engaged. The first day at the Children’s Corner saw an incredible crowd of 2,500 students. They were taken along on a journey into a world where stories, art and imagination bloomed and thrived. The day began with storyteller Swati Goyal, whose delightful puppet-led tale of a little hippo had children laughing, singing and joyfully immersed in storytelling. Creativity continued with ‘Cartooning the Mario Way’ by artist Neha Sudhakar, as students paid tribute to legendary Goan artist Mario Miranda through lively sketches of beaches, neighbourhoods and animals. Renowned cartoonist Charuhas Pandit then guided young artists through the basics of cartoon expressions, turning simple lines into big emotions. The day ended on a delightful note with ‘Poster Making Fun with Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya’ put together by Team ReP, where students explored the national digital library and collaboratively designed innovative e-library posters, with those judged best winning NBT books and

ReP goodies.

More such storytelling and creativity showcases filled the Children’s Corner with curious young minds during the run of the Goa Book Festival. Of note was the ‘Let’s Learn Goa’s Kaavi Art’ by artist Sagar Naik Mule, where participants explored Goa’s slowly reviving mural tradition through live demonstrations and hands-on creation.

Similar vibrancy also prevailed at the Cultural Stage of Goa Book Festival 2026 where elegance and devotion flowed into the audience through ‘Ganesh Vandana’, a mesmerizing Kathak dance performance by Laheja, the School of Performing Arts. With graceful movements, rhythmic precision, the performance set a sublime tone of celebrating India’s rich classical heritage through dance. Equally attention-grabbing was the power-packed musical night by 24K India who delivered an electrifying performance, setting the crowd grooving with their high-energy beats and unmatched style.

## A Celebration of Books, Art and Culture at Andaman & Nicobar

National Book Trust, India with the support of the Department of Art and Culture, Andaman and Nicobar Administration organised the Andaman and Nicobar Book Fair 2026. The book festival was formally inaugurated on 14th February, 2026, by Dr. Chandra Bhushan Kumar, IAS, Chief Secretary, Andaman and Nicobar Administration at ITF Ground, Sri Vijaya Puram, marking the beginning of a vibrant celebration of literature and knowledge. The inaugural ceremony was graced by distinguished dignitaries including Prof Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman, National Book Trust, India; Ms Poorva Garg, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, South Andaman District; Ms Jyoti Kumari, IAS, Secretary, Art and Culture and Ms Priyanka Kumari, Director, Art and Culture. The dignitaries interacted with the numerous publishers participating in the fair and appreciated the wide range of books on display. The fair featured 40+ stalls, 35+ publishers and offered a rich and diverse literary experience for readers of all ages.

The book fair brought to the people



of Andaman and Nicobar deeply insightful literary sessions such as ‘The Quiet Romance of Service: A Veteran’s Journey of Bravery

and Belonging’ where Colonel S. C. Tyagi shared reflections from his remarkable life through an engaging conversation with Gaurav Choudhury. The audience received heartfelt insights into dedication, courage, and the deeper meaning of service to the nation. Colonel Tyagi spoke about some of the powerful experiences from his distinguished service, including his time with the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka and his role during the Kargil War. The session beautifully blended personal experiences with thrilling narratives, leaving attendees moved, inspired, and deeply appreciative of the sacrifices and spirit of our veterans.

Another such well-attended and noteworthy event at the Andaman Nicobar Book Fair 2026 saw acclaimed author Kulpreet



Yadav discussing his recently published work *The Battle of Narnaul: Rao Tula Ram's Secret Plot to Overthrow the British, 1857–1863* and its central historical figure Rao Tula Ram. He shed light on the lesser-known chapters of India's resistance history, bringing alive the courage and legacy of Rao Tula Ram through vivid storytelling and research-based insights. He also shared his personal experiences as an actor, offering the audience a glimpse into how performance and literature intersect to enrich narrative expression.

The book fair was also a very welcoming space for young readers with the Children's Corner organising drawing, poster-making and bookmark designing competitions to draw the attention of children to the world of fiction and keep them involved with it. The youngsters could also attend various types of innovative storytelling sessions, for instance, musical storytelling by Alma and Gaurav, where children were enthralled by a delightful story about the Sun refusing to come out. Using expressive face masks, playful props, catchy jingles, and live guitar music, the storytellers turned the session into an interactive and joyful experience for all. Determined to encourage children's creativity the Children's Corner also held the vibrant Doodle Art Wall where throughout the day little artists joyfully drew and coloured, turning it into a canvas of collective creativity.



On the third day of the book fair esteemed members of the judiciary graced the book fair. Shri Dipendra Nath Mitra, Judge, Family Court; Shri Neyaz Alam, Additional District & Sessions Judge, Port Blair; and Shri Jayanta Mukherjee, Judicial Magistrate First Class-cum-Civil Judge (Junior Division), 2nd Court, Port Blair, visited the fair, explored various stalls, browsed titles at the NBT-India's stall, and purchased books—encouraging the culture of reading in the islands.

On 22nd February the fair presented it attendees with the opportunity to learn about the politics of filming through the session titled 'Island of Stories: Filmmaking, Feminine Grit, and

the Poetry of Everyday Life' featuring Dr. Meena Longjam in dialogue with Deep Saikia. Dr. Longjam reflected on how her academic research has profoundly shaped her storytelling process, grounding her films in lived realities, cultural memory, and nuanced social contexts. She spoke about the way research deepens narrative authenticity and helps document voices from the margins. The discussion also addressed gender disparity in filmmaking, where she highlighted the structural challenges women filmmakers face and emphasized the need for more inclusive and equitable spaces within the industry. Adding to the charm of this day was the Children's Corner with innumerable performances by young dancers such as Punjabi, Kashmiri, Nicobari, Bengali and Telugu folk dances, with the children beautifully dressed up in the respective traditional costumes.



## 26th Edition of Sambalpur Book Fair

The largest literary celebration in Sambalpur began on 24th January at the P.H.D Ground, Ainthapali, following a grand inauguration by Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Education. Shri Rabi Narayan Naik, Minister of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water in Government of Odisha, and Shri Suryabanshi Suraj, Hon'ble Minister of Higher Education, Sports and Youth Services, Odisha Government were also present.

Organized by the National Book Trust, India in collaboration with SETU and the District Administration, this nine-day festival was a vibrant tribute to the power of reading and Odisha's rich heritage. During his address, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan emphasised that while mobile phones provide quick information, they cannot match the depth of knowledge that books impart to the human mind. With over 250 stalls, featuring national and international publishers, people who could attend the fair free-of-cost were able to browse, explore and buy multitudinous books on popular fiction to academic reference works.

At the inaugural ceremony of the 26th Sambalpur Pustak Mela 2026, the NBT publication *The Saga of Kudopali: The Unsung Story of 1857* was highlighted. The well-respected authors Shri Dipak Panda, Shri Dharmendra Mishra, and Dr. B. Pramod Kumar Mishra were also felicitated. The occasion was further enriched with the release of several significant titles, including: *Anandmath* (Odia translation), *History of Sambalpur* by Shri Dipak Panda, *Veer Surendra Sai* (in Odia) by Shri Dipak Panda, *Maa Samleswari* (in Odia) by Shri Dipak Panda, *Submerged Temples of Sambalpur* (in English) by Shri Dipak Panda,



*Satyanarayan Bohidar Granthavali* (in Odia) by Shri Ganesham Nahak and *Ghanashyam Granthabali* edited by Shri Niranjana Tripathy.

The cultural scene at the book festival was joyful and celebratory throughout its nine-day run with the soul-stirring melodies of Rajasthan coming alive on 25th January as the legendary Manganiars mesmerised the audience with their powerful voices and timeless folk music. Music, culture, and literature blended beautifully at P.H.D. Ground, Ainthapali, creating unforgettable moments for everyone present. On Day 6 of the book fair the audience enjoyed a captivating performance by Saswat Tripathy & Group, as melodies and rhythms filled the air. It became a memorable evening when music, culture, and the spirit of literature blended together beautifully. An electrifying finale was delivered by Karnish Live on 1st February. It was a night of music and magic under the stars.

Beyond this the Children's Pavilion, managed by the National Centre for Children's Literature (NCCL), hosted interactive workshops in art, science and storytelling for students of all ages. The activities at the Children's Corner of the Sambalpur Book Fair began on a high-note with over 2500 students from more than 25 schools being brought into a world of creativity, curiosity, and fun-filled learning. The morning of Day 1 commenced with a drawing competition, where young artists vividly expressed themselves through themes such as



‘My City, My Pride,’ ‘150 Years of Vande Mataram,’ and ‘A Day at the Sambalpur Book Fair.’ With confident brushstrokes and a burst of colours, the children brought their ideas to life, creating serene yet powerful artworks that reflected pride in their city and the nation, leaving spectators inspired and impressed.

This was followed by an engaging and interactive orientation by Team ReP on the Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya. Through live storytelling session, students were introduced to the digital library platform, which hosts over 6,000 books in 22 languages. The excitement peaked with a surprise appearance by the platform’s mascot, followed by a

lively quiz. Winners were rewarded with books by NBT-India and charming keychain mementos, adding to the festive spirit. Throughout the day, the various activity corners remained abuzz with energy and enthusiasm. The Reading Corner, Madhubani and Gond Art spaces, Patta Chitra and Warli Art zones, along with the ReP, Colour Me, and Paper Craft corners, collectively transformed the Children’s



Corner into a vibrant hub of imagination, creativity, and joyful learning on the first day and thereafter.

## Creative Expression, Drama, and Innovation

Students from the Department of Human Development and Childhood Studies, Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi led by Dr. Shashi Shukla and Ms. Smriti, Assistant Professors, took part in a vibrant and active workshop organised by NCCL, the children’s wing of NBT-India on February 25th.

The day began with an ‘Orientation on the Activities of NBT-India and NCCL.’ This was followed by the formal beginning of the workshop on ‘Theatre as Transformative Learning Practice’ by storyteller, theatre artist and trainer, Dr. Jaishree Sethi. She engaged the students in a dynamic and interactive session, discussing the significance of theatre not just as a form of entertainment but also as a tool for education and transformation. Students learned about the various nuances of the art form of theatre—from creative expression and storytelling to improvisation, mobilisation, advocacy, and activism—and how theatre as a learning practice can lead to greater transparency within self and society through reflection and action.

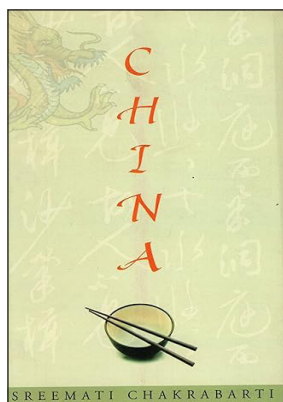
The lively workshop was followed by an ‘Orientation on Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya’ by the ReP team, where students were introduced to the national digital library through the official website and app. There, they can freely access more than 6,000 e-books in 23 languages.



Students were excited to discover this reading and learning app available just a click away. The session ended with students receiving bookmarks featuring the ReP mascot Vidya along with the ReP QR code, so they could easily download the app on their mobile phones.

With this, a morning shinning with joy, creativity, and pure delight came to an end as students carried home spark of inspiration, hearts alive with stories untold, ready to weave theatre’s magic into their own bright tomorrows.

## NBT Books About Afro-Asian Countries



### CHINA

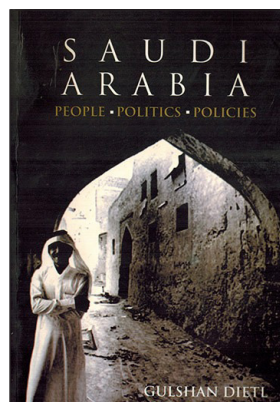
Sreemati Chakrabarti

2008 | 238 pp | ₹ 235 (PB)

An ancient civilization with tremendous diversity on the social, political and cultural planes, China has a mysterious glow about it which stems from its unique political system.

The present book makes an attempt to demystify many of the myths about this country while placing it in its proper historical perspective.

ISBN 978-81-237-4996-9 (PB)



### Saudi Arabia

Gulshan Dietl

2024 | 134 pp | ₹ 160

Saudi Arabia is a unique country in at least three specific ways. One, it possesses more than a quarter of the global oil reserves. Two, the holiest Islamic shrines are located in Makkah and Medina placing the country in the epicentre of the Muslim sacred space. Three, it is one of the last surviving ruling monarchies.

This short book is meant to serve as a basic introduction to this fascinating country.

ISBN 978-81-237-4834-5



### JAPAN

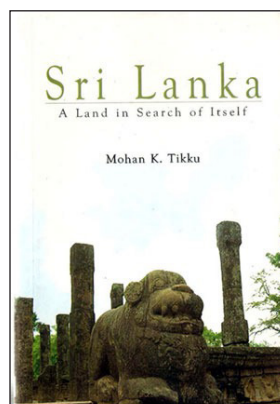
Yamaguchi Hiroichi

2024 | 198 pp | ₹ 200

The present book provides the general reader with basic information about different aspects of Japan with a special focus on the contemporary socio-cultural reality of this country.

The book has been written to provide its readers with a handy, informative, comprehensive and updated introduction to this economically and culturally significant nation.

ISBN 978-81-237-4826-4



### SRI LANKA: A LAND IN SEARCH OF ITSELF

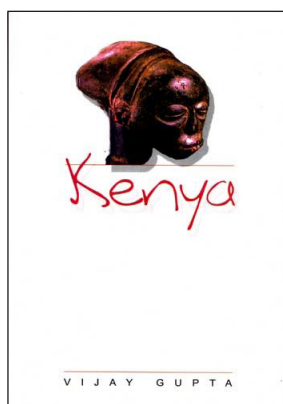
Mohan K Tikku

2024 | 134 pp | ₹ 170

At the time of its independence in 1948, Sri Lanka (or Ceylon as it was then called) was a torchbearer in social and human development among the newly independent countries of the Third World.

The present book surveys the island-nation's colourful past and enigmatic present and seeks to provide an insightful introduction to the general reader about this multi-dimensional and significant South Asian nation.

ISBN 978-81-237-5157-3



### KENYA

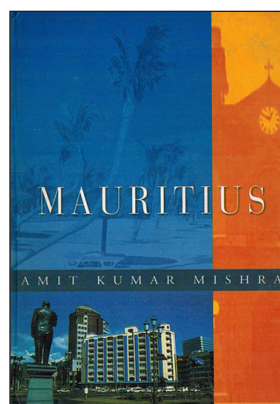
Vijay Gupta

2024 | 192 pp | ₹195

Kenya has been described as the 'cradle of humanity' since some of the oldest fossil discoveries of man's ancestors have been found in its Great Rift Valley. It is a multi-ethnic and multi-racial country and is home to a large number of tribes including the Maasais, the Kikuyu, the Samburu and the Turkana.

This book offers a fascinating window to the land, its people, society, literature and polity, and will interest both the specialist and the general reader.

ISBN 978-81-237-5262-4



### MAURITIUS

Amit Kumar Mishra

2024 | 176 pp | ₹190

In this book, the history of Mauritius, its multi-cultural socio-political identity, the political and administrative setup, its economic profile, its links with the Indian civilization impinging upon its culture and customs, etc. have been presented in a simple but analytical manner.

ISBN 978-81-237-5431-4

# Russian Journalist and Author Interacts with Book Lovers at NBT

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**N**ational Book Trust, India, organised a special literary session titled 'Writing Beyond Borders' at its premises in New Delhi on 25 February 2026. The event celebrated the enduring literary and cultural dialogue between India and Russia, bringing together authors, scholars, students, and members of the Russian diplomatic community. The session featured Mr Ilya Leonidovich Vinogradov, noted Russian author and translator. It was moderated by Dr Sonu Saini, Associate Professor, Centre for Russian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

emphasised the value of sustained people-to-people dialogue in strengthening India–Russia cultural relations. He noted the growing momentum in translations of Indian works into Russian and vice versa, underscoring translation as a vital cultural bridge.



In his address, Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT, highlighted the importance of intimate literary exchanges alongside large international book fairs. Recalling NBT's participation as Guest of Honour at the Moscow International Book Fair 2025, he

The event, attended by officials from the Russian Embassy and the Russian Centre of Science and Culture, emphasized the role of literature in strengthening the cultural bond and people-to-people dialogue between India and Russia.

Mr. Vinogradov, a former physicist turned writer and journalist, discussed the deep-rooted popularity of Indian epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana in Russia, attributing their success to a shared interest in spiritual and philosophical inquiry.

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