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NBT Newsletter

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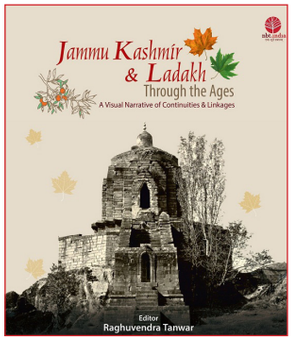
PICK OF THE MONTH



JAMMU KASHMIR & LADAKH
Through the Ages
A Visual Narrative of Continuities & Linkages
Indian Council of Historical Research
ISBN 978-93-5743-289-4
Rs 865.00 (PB)

Patna Book Festival celebrated with Literary Programmes and Cultural Activities

Bihar Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar inaugurated the Patna Book Festival, held from 21 to 27 March 2025 at the historic Gandhi Maidan in Patna. Publishers and exhibitors from all over India put up nearly 300 book stalls which showcased a wide range of books across languages and genres and reported brisk sales.

Shri Sanjay Jha, the Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, participated in the event, where he lauded the launch of the day long literacy and intellectual discourse Nalanda Samvad at Patna Book Festival. On this occasion, he also felicitated the PM-YUVA authors from Bihar namely, Utkarsh Anand, Nisar Ahmad, Safiyah Akhter Subhani and Deepshikha.

Nalanda Samvad was held on Sunday, 23 March 2025, which brought together well-known speakers from various fields to facilitate a rich exchange of ideas across genres and subjects. The event had its inaugural session focused on Shaheed Diwas with an enlightening talk by Prof. Piyush Kamal Sinha, an eminent historian, who shared insights on the association of Sardar Bhagat Singh and his associates with Bihar revolutionaries.

Drawing parallels between artificial intelligence (AI) as we know it today, and AI-like experiments traced back to ancient Bihar, Shri Balendu Sharma Dadhich, discussed 'Bhoot Vahan Yantra'. "Ajatashatru, the Haryanka dynasty king, stationed automated guards to guard the relics of Buddha. These were machines and in a way, were robots of their times," he explained in his session.

"These were the times of the Buddha. And no, I'm discussing this historically, not mythological," he added. Speaking on how people perceive AI and tools like ChatGPT, Shri Dadhich said, "Google used to be considered the undisputed king in the world of research. But now, ChatGPT stands to challenge that position. People prefer ChatGPT over Google to answer questions, since the former gives us readymade answers."

Shri Dadhich further discussed that,

while on one end, people feel nothing is impossible with AI-empowered tools like ChatGPT in command, on the other they're worried what will humans end up doing, if such tools become capable of handling all tasks.

"We are witnessing the 21st century now. But let's go further back - to the Champaran Satyagraha, to Bihar's contribution in the freedom struggle. Have any of these events or facets of history ever been depicted on the big screen?", questioned an award winning film critic, Shri Vinod Anupam, at Nalanda Samvad, noting that the cultural and historical significance of Bihar has often been overlooked when it comes to themes where Hindi cinema borrows from.

Speaking on the topic, 'Decoding the projection of Bihar in 21st century Hindi cinema, the film critic elaborated, "In our search of Bihar's essence in the big screen, we should aim for representation like the one we saw in films like 'Teesri Kasam'. Even if you want to depict the political landscape in Bihar, filmmakers should show viewers the complete view. Not just the negative aspects of it. This approach is what I object to."

In an exhilarating talk on 'Bihar Movement', the eminent historian, Prof Imtiaz Ahmad, stated that the quest for Bihari identity by national movement leaders from Bihar in the late 19th and early 20th centuries not only proved beneficial for the people of Bihar, but also contributed to the social-economic awakening in various parts. The separation of Bihar from Bengal in 1912 coinciding with the shifting of national capital from Calcutta to New Delhi marked a historic national change in the social-political discourse of the country, he said.

Speaking on 'Maithili and Hindi: An Invaluable Bond', Shri Mahendra Melangia, spoke about the historical linkage and parallels between Maithili and Hindi, not just as languages but as carriers of culture, legacies of storytelling and emblems of Indian heritage. The speaker spoke about modern day pillars of Maithili language and the need to preserve and nurture ancient languages in today's times. "It used to be said earlier, that Maithili is a branch of Hindi. But that isn't true. Maithili as an ancient language stands on its own," Shri Melangia stressed.

Finally, eminent pioneer of 'Patna Kalam' school of painting and Padma Shri recipient, Shri Shyam Sharma, provided enlightening perspectives on the major artists and art forms of Bihar, which are generally not known to the wider world. Associating 'Patna Kalam' of painting as a counter-narrative to the European portrayal of natives, Shri Sharma alluded to the rise of Bihari consciousness and social awakening as reflected in folk art forms like Mithila Painting and in modern art form 'Patna Kalam'. The session was followed by an interactive session wherein the audience, especially the young enquired more about the contribution of Bihar to the contemporary art.

A special feature of the seven-day festival was the Children's Pavilion, featuring fun activities, workshops, and sessions tailored specially for kids, focused on skills and art forms like puppetry, storytelling, poetry, theater, and art. Education consultant and storyteller, Seema Wahi Mukherjee brought the joy of puppetry and drawing to the Children's Pavilion. The Pavilion engaged hundreds of children across the duration of the Festival, teaching them in origami and puppetry sessions. Children happily spent their time at the Pavilion learning new crafts, walking back home with their beautiful paper creations.

The Cultural Corner section of the Festival hosted renowned artists and performers, such as Indian novelist, poet, and comedian, Shambhu Shikhar, singing sensations Kalpana Patowary, Chandan Tiwari, Ranjana Jha, and Devanand Jha, among others.

Prime Minister's Scheme for Mentoring Young Authors

In view of the successful completion of the first and second editions of PM-YUVA Scheme with large scale participation of young authors in 22 Indian languages and English, PM-YUVA 3.0 was launched on 11 March 2025.

This Scheme is in tune with PM's vision of Global Citizen and *Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat* that has been launched to train young and budding authors up to the age of 30 years in order to promote reading, writing and book culture in the country, and project India and Indian writings globally.

The themes of PM-YUVA 3.0 are: 1. Contribution of Indian Diaspora in Nation Building; 2. Indian Knowledge System; and 3. Makers of Modern India (1950-2025). The contestants have been asked to submit a book proposal of 10,000 words on any of the theme.

Under the Programme a total of 50 authors will be selected. The selection will be made by a committee to be constituted by the Trust. Applicants who had qualified for the PM-YUVA Scheme 1.0 and PM-YUVA Scheme 2.0 earlier are not eligible for PM-YUVA 3.0 Scheme.

After receiving the book proposals, National Book Trust, India, will organise a Writers' Online Programme for the selected candidates in the form of master classes. The young authors will be trained by

eminent authors/mentors, who will guide them on how to exercise their literary skills in writing the complete book on the chosen theme.

A consolidated scholarship of Rs. 50,000 per month for a period of six months (50,000 x 6 = Rs. 3 Lakh) per author will be paid under the Mentorship Scheme. A royalty of 10% will be payable to the authors on successful publications of their books at the end of the Mentorship Programme.

To encourage active participation in the programme, the National Book Trust, India is visiting colleges and interacting with the young and aspiring authors.

Activities Galore for Children at Kashi Tamil Sangamam

During the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam 3.0 held from 15 to 24 February 2025 in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, many interesting activities and sessions for children were organised. Some of the activities organised were—"Let's Write a Slogan: Varanasi - the Spiritual Center!", a writing competition where the participants brought alive the divinity of Kashi with their creativity. Children moulded their imaginations into words and colours where the young writers created new stories with their creative thinking in the story writing competition. The children brought cultural confluence alive through colours in the painting competition organised on the theme, 'Kashi-Tamil Sangamam'. Also, young artists gave colours to their imaginations in the painting competition on the theme, 'Manor Ghats of Varanasi'. More than 50 students from various schools participated in these activities and presented the culture of Kashi from their perspective.

A well-known storyteller, Ms. Vijayarani narrated stories in Hindi and Tamil, spreading the fragrance of Kashi and Tamil culture, where children felt the depth of history and tradition. Storyteller Rangita Sachdeva narrated a folktale in which the children not only learned the story but also enjoyed singing along. In another session, "Let's Design a Book Cover!", the names of some children's books published by NBT were shared with the participants and they were asked to design covers using their imagination. The best performers were also felicitated with prizes. In Slogan Writing Competition, the children chose one of the five given topics and presented their ideas in the form of impressive slogans. In "Colour by Numbers", the children displayed their creativity and art skills by decorating world famous paintings with colours. One of the star attractions of the Children's Corner was the children's meeting with Dr. Jayanti Murali, who is the granddaughter of Indian freedom fighter and social reformer Chinnaswamy Subramaniam Bharati. Shri Mathan Raj, Assistant Editor (Tamil) coordinated the event.

Exhibitions across the Country

National Book Trust, India exhibited its books at various book exhibitions organised across the country.

During the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam 3.0 held from 15 to 24 February at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, a three-day workshop was organised. During the event, 30 Hindi books were translated into Tamil and the translated books were read and their literary merit was appreciated.

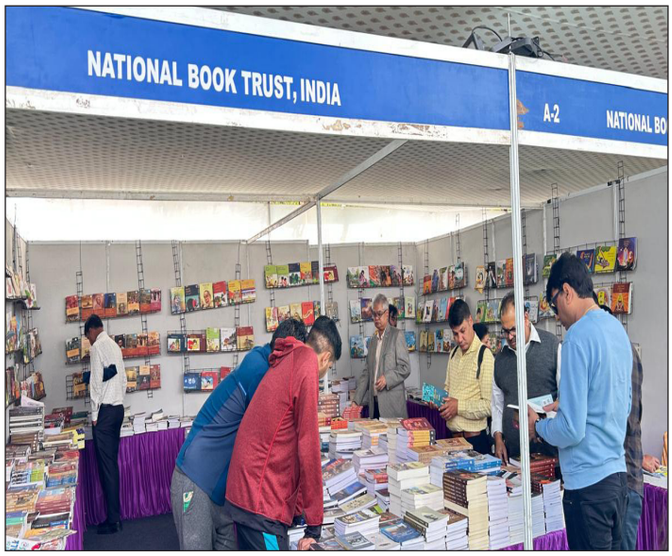
Shri R. N. Ravi, Hon' ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, flagged off the NBT, India Special Book Fair Bus at the exhibition. Shri. J.P. Nadda, Hon'ble Union Health Minister visited the NBT, India book stall at the event and appreciated the multilingual books exhibited. Shri. S Rajalingam, District Magistrate visited the NBT stall and shared his vision to enhance arrangements for the Kashi Tamil Sangamam

4.0. His insights promised an enriching experience for readers and visitors alike.

Shri La. Ganesan, Governor of Nagaland was glad to see Tamil books on display in Kashi, and hoped that bilingual books will pave the way for people in Kashi to learn Tamil, fostering a deeper appreciation for the language. Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister of Culture, visited the NBT stall along with Shri M. M. Singh, Director, Ministry of Education.

During the exhibitions, visitors explored the diverse collection of books at NBT Stall and appreciated the organisation's efforts in promoting cultural diversity through its work. Prof. Jagatheesan, Professor of Tamil at Banaras Hindu University, appreciated the Trust for its commendable work.

As part of the prestigious Kashi Tamil Sangamam 3.0, National Book Trust, India released a set of translated books at Banaras Hindu University (BHU). The book release ceremony was graced by Shri R. N. Ravi, the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, along with Prof. Sanjay Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University. The PhD scholars of BHU, were involved in the translation efforts under the guidance of Prof. Jagadeesan, with active support from Shri T. Mathan Raj, Assistant Editor (Tamil) at the National Book Trust. During his keynote address, Shri R. N. Ravi appreciated the translation efforts facilitated by National Book Trust, India and Banaras Hindu University, highlighting their role in preserving and promoting India's diverse literary heritage. He emphasised the importance of such initiatives in promoting deeper cultural and intellectual connections between Tamil Nadu and Varanasi.



At Gumla Literature Festival held at Birsa Munda Agro Park, Jharkhand 15 - 17th January, 2025 the Trust offered a wide selection of books on diverse subjects to readers.

The Trust participated in Awadh Connection hosted by Red FM on 15 February at the Sangeet Natak Academy, Lucknow. NBT stall showcased an extensive range of books covering Lucknow's heritage, music, cuisine, and many more, along with a diverse selection of titles across various genres.

At Patrika Book Fair held in Jaipur, NBT, India presented a collection of informative and interesting books on various subjects. The book fair was organised at Shilpgram, Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur from 15 to 23 February 2025.

NBT participated in the All-India Marathi Literature Conference 2025 held at Talkatora Stadium, Delhi from 21to 23 February. The Trust showcased a wide range of Marathi literature, celebrating the rich cultural and literary traditions of Maharashtra.

The Trust participated at Bundelkhand Literature Festival organised from 21to 23 February 2025 at Shahid General Bipin Rawat Park, Jhansi and exhibited a variety of books.

NBT participated at the Delhi University Literature Festival organised from 21to 23 February 2025 at the Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi, and exhibited new arrivals of its published books.

Odia Book, *Mo Desha Mo Sangram* Launched

A new NBT book comprising memoirs of freedom fighters from Odisha was launched at the Theme Pavilion during the New Delhi World Book Fair.

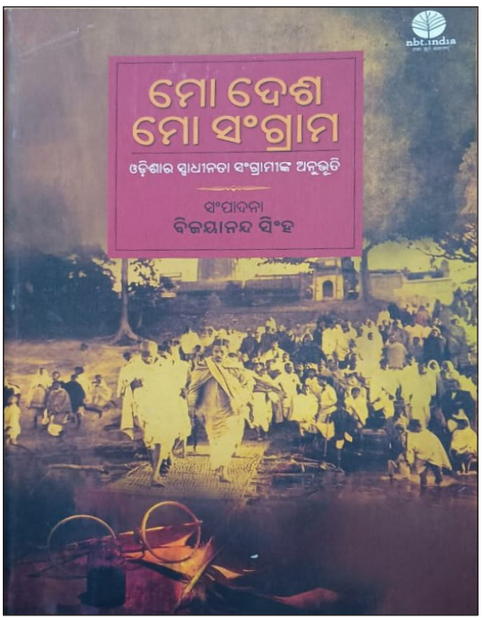
The book, *Mo Desha Mo Sangram* (My Country, My Struggle), is a compilation of writings by freedom fighters from the state.

The book release was followed by a discussion on the contribution of the people of Odisha to the freedom struggle.

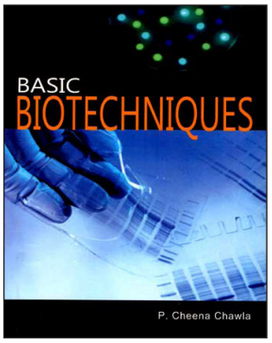
The discussion featured Prof. Kishore K. Basa, the book's compiler, along with Shri Bijay Kumar Nayak, Additional Press Secretary to the President and a prominent writer, and Prof. Bijayananda Singh, who has edited the volume.

Prof. Basa highlighted state's significant role in India's independence, mentioning leaders like Gopabandhu Das, Chittaranjan Das, Annapurna Maharana, and Rama Devi, among others. Prof. Basa also spoke about the 1817 Paika Rebellion.

A number of literary programmes, including book releases, were held at the Theme Pavillion during the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025.



NBT Books on Science & Technology



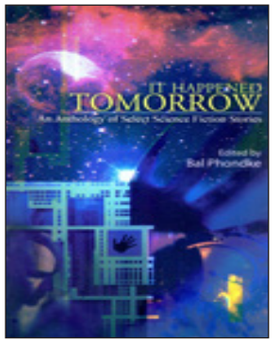
Basic Biotechniques

P. Cheena Chawla

108 pp Rs. 160

Biotechniques are the basic tools of biotechnology in the form of analytical techniques that are integral in achieving practical results in this field. This book, a stepping stone for enabling easy understanding of most commonly used techniques in a biotechnology laboratory, is a must-read for all young biotechnologists and general readers.

ISBN 978-81-237-6332-3



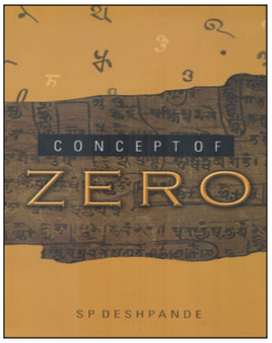
It Happened Tomorrow

Bal Phondke (Ed.)

270 pp Rs. 270

This anthology of 19 select stories presents the trends in Indian science fiction where the basic theme, be it in any language, is primarily anthropocentric, dealing with the interplay between scientific developments and human emotions or societal foundations.

ISBN 978-81-237-0619-1



Concept of Zero

S P Deshpande

130 pp Rs. 165

The idea of zero as a number was the greatest conceptual leap in the history of mathematics.

The genius of 7th century, Indian mathematician, Brahmagupta, first used zero as part of mathematical operations, the book takes us through the history of zero and its evolution.

ISBN 978-81-237-8048-1

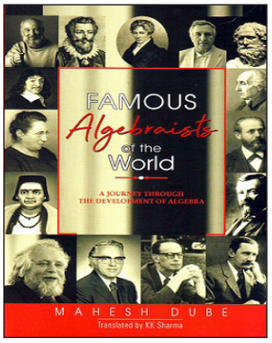
Mantra, Magic And Miracle: A Scientific Exploration

Badiuddin Khan & Hasan Jawaid Khan

144 pp Rs. 155

This book aims to take its readers on a scientific exploration of age-old concepts and beliefs that have no validity today, besides intending to free us of the many baseless, irrelevant and irrational beliefs that have conditioned our mind since ages.

ISBN 978-81-237-5514-4



Famous Algebraists of The World

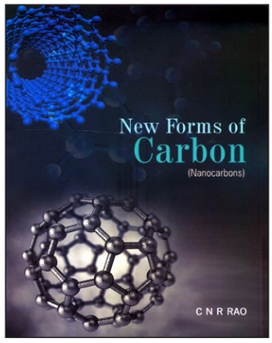
Mahesh Dube

202 pp Rs. 235

Algebra, one of the broad components of mathematics, finds its application in the varied fields of science & technology.

The book introduces the reader to some of the greatest algebraists and their remarkable contributions to this field of mathematics.

ISBN 978-81-237-9605-5



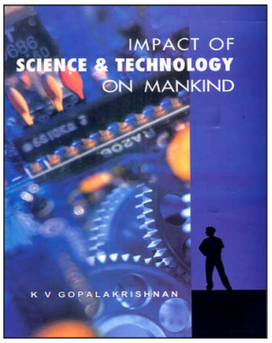
New Forms of Carbon

82 pp Rs. 175

This book gives a brief introduction to various nanocarbons, their synthesis, properties and applications.

It is not written like an elementary textbook, but in a form that would raise questions in the minds of readers.

ISBN 978-81-237-7759-7



Impact of Science and Technology on Mankind

KV Gopalakrishnan

160 pp Rs. 170

Warfare has been a constant feature of human history and the most powerful impact on it has been due to the application of science and technology in the past few centuries.

ISBN 81-237-4060-3

Once Upon a Blue Moon: Science Fiction Stories

Sukanya Datta

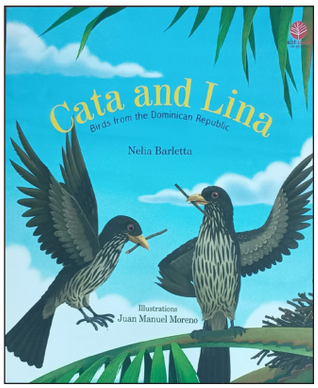
172 pp Rs. 185

A delectable spread of twelve science fiction stories, all poised at the point of the 'Just Possible'!

Flawlessly blending scientific truths and the flight of imagination, the stories exemplify all that good science fiction should be.

ISBN 978-81-237-4853-5

Recent Publications and Forthcoming Titles

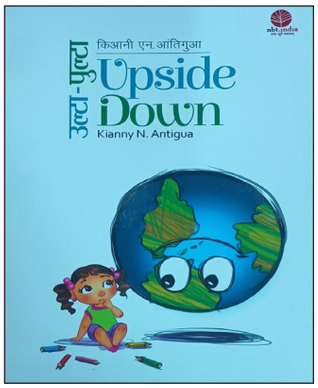


Cata and Lina

The story transports us to a magical world where various bird species eagerly await humans to choose the National Bird of the Dominican Republic.

Through the voices of the Palmchat, Ashy-faced Owl, Hispaniola Parrot, and Emerald Hummingbird, this colourful book beautifully highlights the unique characteristics of these endemic birds. Read on to discover some of the fascinating bird species found in the Republic. This book has been written by Nelia Barletta.

Published in English and Hindi



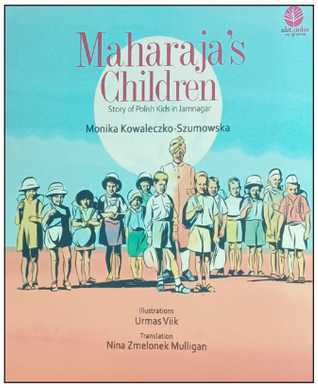
उल्टा-पुल्टा Upside Down

This billingual (Hindi-English) story brings to light modern day's situation of working parents, who don't spend quality time with their children.

Tiana's working mother has little time to spend with her daughter. So she spends days with her grandmother. The little girl imagines that the world would be upside down if the children go out to work and their parents stay at home and play.

This book has been written by Kianny N. Antigua.

Published in English - Hindi (Billingual)



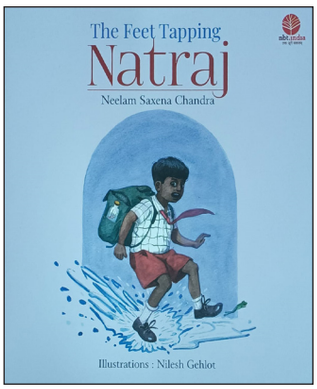
Maharaja's Children

This novella is based on a true WWII story. When Polish orphans, who had been deported to Siberia were evacuated in 1942, Maharaja Jam Saheb Digvijay Sinhji offered to provide them a home in his princely state of Nawanagar.

The story takes us through the journey of Polish children finding a new homeland and their adventures in the Camp, where they recover their lost childhood.

This book has been written by Monika Kowaleczko-Szumowska.

Published in English



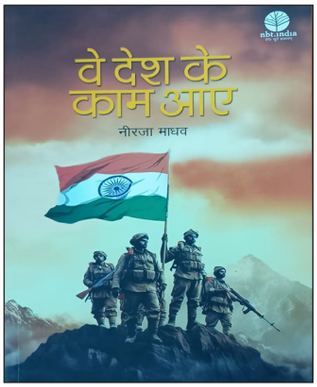
The Feet Tapping Natraj

Young Natraj is a hyperactive child and struggles with school work but he discovers his passion for dancing amidst societal expectations.

As his family grapples with the unconventional path, they ultimately choose to nurture his talent instead of compelling him to conform to academic standards. Supported by love and acceptance, Natraj takes his first baby steps.

This book has been written by Neelam Saxena Chandra.

Published in English



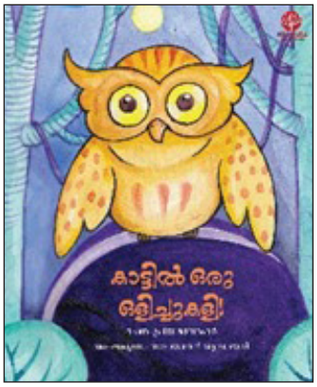
Ve Desh Ke Kaam Aaye

The present story collection is based on the stories of such brave soldiers who fought with enemies on the country's borders and terrorists inside the country during the Kargil war and many other occasions.

Needless to say, these stories will not only instill courage and valour in our present-day youth, but will also infuse in them the spirit of forsaking everything for the country.

This book has been written by Neeraja Madhav.

Published in Hindi



Kaattil Oru Olichukali

The story narrates about a day when the young animals in the forest play a game of hide and seek, helping children to understand the forest and its creatures.

From the lion cub and the baby mongoose to the little butterflies, all these characters come alive in the story.

This book has been written by Priya Manohar.

Published in Malayalam

Contribution of Women in Law-making

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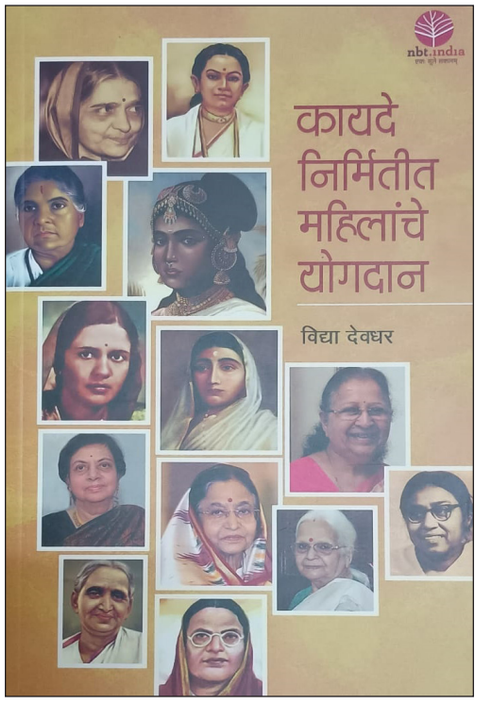
Laws shape societies, but who shapes the laws? This thought provoking question echoes through the pages of *Kayade, Nirmitit Shriyanche Yogdan*, a Marathi book authored by Dr Vidya Deodhar.



The book was released by Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman, National Book Trust, at the New Delhi World Book Fair-2025. It sheds light on the often overlooked contributions of women in law making that stretches far beyond the parliamentary chambers and run deep into India's historical roots.

While laws today are debated and drafted in legislative halls, the journey of women's influence in law making dates back to the Vedic period, said Dr. Deodhar, who has presented an account of 450 such women in the aforementioned book in Marathi that loosely translates as the Contribution of Women in Law-making.

While this book includes the stories of remarkable women like Ghosha, Maitreyi and Apala, who were trailblazers centuries ago, Dr. Deodhar is working on another book comprising 600 women in the medieval period, out of which 200 were freedom fighters.

Panel Discussion on The Martyrs of Kudopali

The Theme Pavilion at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025 hosted a panel discussion on the book, *The Saga of Kudopali: The Unsung Story of 1857*, shedding light on a chapter of India's freedom struggle. Published by the National Book Trust, India, and compiled by the Indian Council of Historical Research, the book is a collection of essays that explored the heroic resistance against the British rule in Kudopali in Sambalpur district in Odisha.

The discussion featured Shri Dipak Kumar Panda, a historian dedicated to Odisha's cultural heritage; Dr Bibhudatta Pramod Kumar Mishra, a scholar who has uncovered hidden stories of Odisha's past; and Dr Sujit Kumar Pruseth, a faculty member at IIM Sambalpur and writer of historical narratives.

The panelists highlighted the guerilla tactics and bravery of Surendra Sai and his fellow fighters, who had led a fierce resistance against British imperialism in 1857.

The book provides a detailed socio-political analysis of that period, along with insights into the cultural impact of colonial rule.

The discussion brought forth the sacrifices of 53 martyrs who were killed in battle, and four others, who were later hanged by the British.

You can also find the e-Newsletter on our website www.nbtindia.gov.in

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Editor: Kanchan Wanchoo Sharma
Executive Editor: Dwijendra Kumar
Assistant Editors:
Surekha Sachdeva, Vasundhara Lal & Carolyn Pao
Production Officer: Narender Kumar

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Ministry of Education, Government of India
5 Institutional Area, Vasant Kunj
New Delhi-110 070
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