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New Delhi

**PRESS RELEASE**

**“The New Delhi World Book Fair will soon be the world’s biggest book fair”, says HRD Minister while inaugurating the New Delhi World Book Fair 2020”**

“We are in the midst of ocean of books,” said Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank,’ Hon’ble Union Minister for Human Resource Development, while inaugurating the 28<sup>th</sup> edition of New Delhi World Book Fair 2020 (NDWBF) at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on 4 January 2020. Dr Nishank added, this *Mahakumbh* of books is filled with thoughts, the thoughts which give power to humanity. “This book fair is a place where people meet each other, and generate and share new thoughts and ideas,” said Dr Nishank. He added that the books help youth of India to come across new thoughts.

Talking about the Theme of the Book Fair this year, which is GANDHI: WRITERS’ WRITER, Dr Nishank said, “We are celebrating 150 years of Mahatma Gandhi, in times when we need him the most. The world today is facing several challenges including terrorism, and it is time the world learnt non-violence and peace from this great man.”

“The world, the nation, the society and all individuals, need Gandhi because of his vision and his philosophy of peace and non-violence,” he added. Dr Nishank also urged publishers to promote books and the habit of reading as people are dwindling away from books, and a book fair like the NDWBF ensures that books and reading is preserved and increases.

Dr Nishank appreciated the fact that the New Delhi World Book Fair is arguably Asia’s biggest book fair and he was hopeful that this fair would soon become the world’s biggest book fair!

Prof. Girishwar Misra, eminent Gandhian scholar, and the Guest of Honour on the occasion spoke in detail about the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Prof. Girishwar Misra said, “Though a common man, Mahatma Gandhi was the Man of Century”. He showed the path of truth, peace and non-violence because of his wide reading of books including *Gita*, *Quran* and *Bible*. He imbibed the essence of all the knowledge he gained. In his writings, he could bring in universal ideas through local wisdom.

While welcoming the guests, Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, NBT informed the audience about this edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair, and said that through this world of books, one can gain more and more knowledge in different fields and show us new direction.

On this occasion, Shri Madan Mohan, Joint Secretary, MHRD, and Shri Rajesh Aggarwal, Executive Director, ITPO were also present.

While thanking the guests, Ms Neera Jain, Director, NBT said that “For over 60 years we have been with the world of books, sharing its knowledge, culture and civilizational heritage among millions of readers. In this long journey, NBT has continually to raise the bar higher and higher to fulfill our mandate, especially New Delhi World Book Fair.”

**Theme Pavilion**

The theme of the New Delhi World Book Fair 2020 is ‘Gandhi: The Writers’ Writer’ to commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi was a prolific writer, editor, publisher, Printer and Institution Builder. The theme is an attempt to give booklovers a glimpse of how Mahatma Gandhi, a great strategic communicator, inspired and influenced generations of writers and how the writers understood and emulated Gandhiji in words. In the specially designed pavilion (inspired by Sabarmati Ashram), with hand-spun materials as wall cladding; there is an exclusive exhibition of 500 books of 100 publishers on and by Gandhi in different Indian languages, as well as 30 panel discussions, book launches and performances related to the theme. The archival

materials on display at the Theme pavilion are from Navjivan Trust, Ahmedabad and National Gandhi Museum, New Delhi. The Pavilion has been designed by National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad.

Prof. Girishwar Misra inaugurated the Theme Pavilion today in the presence of Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, NBT and other dignitaries. Prof. Misra also glanced through the books, panels and posters at the pavilion. He appreciated the specially designed pavilion reflecting the various facets of Gandhi's life.

As part of several literary and cultural programmes being held, a performance was held on the folk songs close to Mahatma Gandhi's heart, like *Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram*. The artists on the occasion, Shri Akshay Kumar Naagar, Shri Sankalpa, Shri Tara, Shri Narendra, Ms Anjali, among others who rendered these songs mesmerized the audience and helped further create the ambience of the Theme Pavilion.

#### **Inauguration of Children's Pavilion**

The attractively designed Children's pavilion was also inaugurated today in the presence of Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman National Book Trust, India, and Shri Manas Ranjan Mahapatra, Editor, NCCL.

Children from National Bal Bhavan presented a folk medley, which also included melodious and mesmerizing folk songs in Punjabi, Haryanavi, Garhwali and Rajasthani. Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman interacted with children and said that the fair would be incomplete without kids, just as a home is so silent without kids. The children were overjoyed knowing that the events will be organized everyday from the first day till the last, i.e. 12th January, 2020. He also added that the happy noises of children is what makes the fair come alive.

The inaugural event also had a story telling and narration by children from Janjatiya Shodh Evam Vikas Sangathan titled 'Adivasi Bal Kahani Vachan'. A Tribal drawing competition, 'Chitrakala' was also organized where a many creative minds were busy in portrayal of tribal themes and elements related to the tribal communities.

#### **Author's Corner**

A book release function, organised by Sterling Publishers, was held at the Seminar Hall no. 8 (1st floor). Dr. Kiran Bedi, Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry released the book *Where Kindness Spoke* authored by Shivani Arora. The book is talks about Dr. Kiran Bedi, about her life changing events and how she became an inspiration for women. Shri S. K. Ghai also spoke on the occasion.

A session on Spiritual Science of Kriyayog was organised at the Author's Corner by Yogiraj Shyamcharan Mission. During the session, Ms Jyoti Kapur, the Founder President of Yogiraj Shyamcharan Mission, informed that Kriyayoga is being practised by the saints, yogis, etc. in our country since ages. She said that Kriyayoga consists of various techniques of prayanama, basically breathing process, to accelerate one's spiritual development.

#### **Crowd of Booklovers**

The first day of the book fair saw a train of eager visitors thronging the fair grounds. By evening, more than 60,000 people had visited the fair. They waited patiently in long queues to enter the fair halls of their choice and buy their favourite books. The rest of the book fair days are sure to see an even greater footfall.