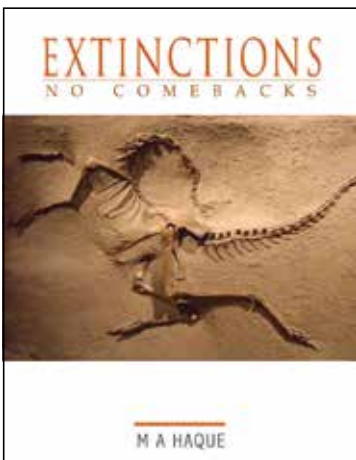


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PICK OF THE MONTH



Extinctions: No Comebacks
M.A. Haque
978-81-237-7951-5; Rs 140

New Delhi World Book Fair 2017



“Books have continued to remain with us – in the past, present and in future,” said Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey, Minister of State for Human Resource Development while declaring open the 25th edition of New Delhi World Book Fair held at Pragati Maidan from 7 to 15 January 2017. He added that whenever we go through difficult times, books are a source of relief. Books help us to understand our thoughts and express them in a better way. Therefore, they have been given a significant place.



Talking about the tradition and significance of books in India, Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey said that books are regarded highly in India, especially sacred books like *Bhagvad Gita*, *Bible*, *Quran* and *Guru Granth Sahib*. In ancient times when the small kingdoms were fighting against each other, books like Kamban’s *Ramayana* through its teachings unified people. He also talked about the tradition of travelogues, from the times of Fa Hein to Rahul Sankrityayan.

Referring to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’s speech in an event held at Benaras Hindu University where he said ‘without books, human beings would turn into robots’, Dr Pandey said that the importance of books has not diminished even in digital age.

He further said that the Theme of the Fair, ‘Manushi’, is in line with the government’s ‘Beti Bachao, Beti Pado’ campaign. He hoped that in these times when we frequently hear about the crime against women, the New Delhi World Book Fair would change the perverted attitude of people towards women.



Anguished by the danger to freedom of speech and assault on human rights, Dr Pratibha Ray, noted Odia writer and Jnanpith awardee, Guest of Honour at the inaugural function, said that she is reminded of Mahatma Gandhi who had said ‘There is no way to peace, peace is the only way’. This is one of the main concerns of us writers.



Fair. Moreover, NBT is celebrating 60 years of its foundation this year.

Reflecting on NBT’s past six decades of journey, he said it is a journey of knowledge. On this occasion NBT has put up a special exhibit showcasing NBT’s achievements and contributions towards promoting books and reading, he added.

According Dr Ray, “Literature is beyond gender and geography and that all writers are humanists, male or female.” She further said that women writings are very powerful and different because views are different and therefore, writings are also different. She remarked that Indian women writings have vitality and variety. Women writers have tried to knit the society with unified spiritual values. They are sensitive to traditional values.

Europe and translations of works from Indian languages like Hindi, Malayalam and Tamil are very popular in European languages including Polish. He also said that the European Union would like to be guest country at next edition of New Delhi World Book Fair.

“India is the land of learning and women have played a significant role in carrying forward the tradition of learning since Vedic times,” said Shri Sharma. He added that Manushi, the theme of the fair is depicting their major contributions in spreading knowledge.

H.E. Mr Tomasz Kozlowski, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to India was the special guest on the occasion. He said that publishing industry is flourishing in India, and is one of top six countries in the world. He also mentioned that Indian literature is widely read in

In her address, Ms Shubhra Singh, Executive Director, ITPO, said that the Fair, this year in particular, assumes tremendous significance as NBT is celebrating 60 years of its foundation. She also added that ITPO on its part has made extensive efforts to make the Fair visitor friendly.

Thanking the Minister Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey, Dr Rita Chowdhury, Director, NBT India, said that “we are happy that he is with us, despite his busy schedule”. She thanked the distinguished guests, authors, publishers, distributors as well the India Trade Promotion Organisation for their support in making the Fair a success. She also hoped that the visitors would get an opportunity to browse through the thousands of the books displayed.

Earlier, Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT welcomed the guests. He said that this edition of New Delhi World Book is very special for NBT as it is the silver jubilee of the book



Theme Pavilion at the Fair

After inaugurating the World Book Fair, Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, inaugurated the Theme Pavilion at Hall No. 7.

The Pavilion, 'Manushi: Writings on and by Women', displayed over 600 books in different genres in all major Indian languages. Panels and posters on/of major women authors, saint-poets, philosophers, social reformers, etc. belonging to ancient, medieval, as well as from the modern era were also displayed at the Pavilion.

Besides, the specially designed



Theme Pavilion hosted a series of panel discussions and interactive sessions with women writers, as well as dance / music performances on women.

The paintings included in NBT's Calendar 2017 based on the Theme of the Fair were also displayed. The Calendar features 12 great women personalities of ancient India who made their mark through their intellect, writings and debates and contributed to the development of Indian philosophy.

Going around the Pavilion Shri Pandey said that the Pavilion reflects the rich tradition of women's writings in India.

Programmes organised at the Pavilion on the inaugural day included Dr. Pratibha Ray's talk on 'My Life My Literature' and a conversation with Ms. Yashodhara Mishra; Dr



Sonal Mansingh's interaction with Dr Anil Rai 'Ankit' at the 'Ek Mulaakaat' programme; a 'Naari Katha' performance from Gujarat; and, Sattriya, a classical dance from Assam.



NBT Books Released

Ek Prayas Dharti Ke Chor Par, a recently published book by National Book Trust, India was released at Sahitya Manch (Hall no. 8), Pragati Maidan. Authored by Rekha Bhatia, the book was released by Admiral Arun Prakash, former Chief of Naval Staff in the presence of Dr Rita Chowdhary, Director, NBT India.

Brigadier Ranbeer Kumar Bhatia and Ms Gurcharan Kaur were the special guests on the occasion. Speaking about the book, Rekha Bhatia said that the book is based on the true

stories of the families of ex-servicemen from Punjab who were migrated to the secluded village Campbell Bay in Andaman and Nicobar Islands under a Pilot Project initiated in 1969 by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. These families faced several difficulties to survive in this isolated land. The project was started to protect the island from foreign interference.

At another function held at the Authors' Corner in Hall No. 11 of the NDWBF, *Celiac Disease—A Comprehensive Guide*, a recent book

published under NBT's Popular Science Series, was also released. Written by Dr Pankaj Vohra, the book discusses the celiac disease, about which there is a lack of awareness among the general public.

Like diabetes, celiac disease is also a silent killer and in most of the cases it remains undiagnosed. According to Dr Vohra 1% of our population is afflicted with this disease, both children and adults. It damages stomach, liver, bone, intestine etc., and can cause permanent disorder.



Reading is Life : Prakash Javadekar

“Reading culture is a very important aspect of our cultural ethos,” said Shri Prakash Javadekar, Hon’ble Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India while delivering the keynote address on ‘Culture of Reading and Nation-Building: Challenges in the Digital Age’ organised on the sidelines of the World Book Fair at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on 10 January 2017.

“Children should read beyond textbooks,” added Shri Prakash Javadekar. He said that if one wants to become a good human being, then one should read books.

Referring to Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi’s initiative to promote the culture of reading in Gujarat, ‘Vanche Gujarat’, he said that the mission continues to move forward with campaigns like ‘Padoge to Badoge’, and ‘Pade Bharat, Bade Bharat’.

On this occasion, Shri Javadekar released the NBT Calendar 2017 which has been prepared on the Theme, ‘Manushi’, and NBT’s recent publications including a collection of short stories by Odia women writers (*Nabalekhan: Odia Likhikanka Kshudragalpa*), *Sanskrit Alochana Ki Bhumika* and *Thiruvalluvar Thirukurral Jeevan Path*.

After releasing the calendar, he said that that we presume that education of women began about hundred years ago but their education began much before. The calendar reflects this rich and long tradition of women writers and thinkers, which portrays Gargi to Bahina Bai. He added that women writers have made significant contributions in literature.



He added that the contribution of women towards literature is a matter of pride and honour for us.

Appreciating New Delhi World Book Fair, he said that world of books is a different world, it is a *gyan sagar*. It helps us to see a wider vision of the world. He remarked that efforts would



be made to promote it at a larger scale across schools, colleges and universities.

To promote the culture of reading, Shri Prakash Javadekar said that we need to make reading interesting and reach out to more and more people through mobile vans and reader’s clubs. He also said that we should also make efforts to bring out more Braille books, ebooks and audio books.

During the programme, Shri Prakash Javadekar also released the book *Cyber Pathshala*. He said that with digitalization and demonetization,

new words have been added in the vocabulary. He hoped that this book would enlighten people about the new words. Authored by Shri Tarun Vijay and his daughter, Shambhavi, the book has introduced new words like C for Cashless, D for Demonitisation, H for Hacking, etc.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Subhash Kashyap, former Secretary-General, Lok Sabha and noted author, said that he has had a long association with the National Book Trust, India. His first book *Our Constitution* published by NBT was released by the Speaker of British House of Commons in 1979.

Congratulating NBT on completing 60 years of its foundation, Shri Kashyap said NBT has made remarkable contributions in promoting books and culture of reading. Shri K K Sharma, Officer on Special Duty, Ministry of Human Resource Development was also present on the occasion.

Earlier, Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT welcomed the guests. He said that books are man’s best friends. He added that NBT has been putting efforts to promote the culture of reading among children and youth of India.

Dr Rita Chowdhury, Director, NBT proposed the vote of thanks. She said that NBT will continue to work towards its mandate to promote books and reading.

Shri Javadekar visited the Theme Pavilion and the NBT’s 60 Years Pavilion and browsed the books on display. Later, he went around the Fair.



60 Years of NBT: There is No Looking Back

We are turning sixty. As an institution in the minds of generations of readers, we continue to be an indelible presence. The six decades of our journey, as Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, the Chairman of NBT aptly put it at the inauguration of the NDWBF 2017, “it is a journey of knowledge,” a journey which on its way lit the darkened areas of our understanding and brought about in its wake an awareness on the importance of books and reading concomitant with the needs of a nation on the path of development.

The 1950s was an important decade in the history of post-independence India. It was the time when many cultural and literary institutions were set up. Speaking at the Foundation



various outreach programmes to promote books and foster a culture of reading. We spread out to every nook and corner of the country, with literary

to the publishing industry towards its growth.

We pioneered the concept of book fairs, mobile book fairs that move across villages, small fairs in small towns, national fairs in state capitals and the 25th edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair. In furthering the reach of Indian books to a global audience we participate in various international book fairs and as the nodal agency for book promotion, we coordinate the Guest of Honour presentations.

Publishing good books in over 40 languages and across genres for a general readership has been our achievement. Perhaps, the reason, why we are known as one of the biggest multilingual publishing houses in the world.

In the many posters, panels, books displayed, reading corners, rare photos, illustrators' works, etc. at a special pavilion 'There is No Looking Back' at the NDWBF, one could feel our sense of work, commitment, and achievements. It was no looking back but a brush with our past to look ahead.



Day of NBT on 1 August 1957, Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan underlined the role of books in disciplining the minds of people and fostering national solidarity, a vision that we took up as a mission and pursued.

Over the next six decades, we initiated and experimented with

programmes, workshops, discussions, meet the author sessions, seminars related to books, reading, publishing industry, readership surveys that pulsed the health of reading habit in the country as well as training courses in publishing conducted by experts that continues to send trained professionals



CEOSpeak

Underlining the importance and relevance of promoting a reading culture in an era where the Internet has taken over the world by storm, Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey, Minister of State for HRD (Higher Education), Government of India, said that “despite the challenges in the sector, education must be spread across the country”. He also emphasised that regional languages must be promoted as it will help in reaching out to a wider readership and enhance the habit of reading. Also there is a need to acknowledge regional publications, he added.

He was delivering the keynote address at the 5th edition of the ‘CEOSpeak over Chairman’s Breakfast 2017’ on the theme ‘The Idea and Business of Creating Culture of Reading: Experiences & Challenges Across Societies’. The event was organized by National Book Trust, India in association with FICCI, on the sidelines of the New Delhi World Book Fair.

In his address, Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, National Book Trust, India, said that to inculcate the habit of reading amongst people it is imperative to make books available in far-flung regions of the country at an affordable cost. He added that books and reading has the ability to shape a nation as it can enable a person to emerge as a better human being.

Further, Shri Sharma said that books and reading have been an integral part of India’s heritage. NBT organises book fairs including the New Delhi World Book Fair. NBT also



provides subsidy to language publishers to encourage their participation. He added that to develop a reading culture, parents must gift their children a book on their birthday.

Ms. Alessandra Bertini Malgarini, Direttore, Italian Embassy Cultural Centre, shared that in recent survey it was found that in Italy 92 per cent people watch TV everyday, 58 per cent listen to radio and 60 per cent are connected to internet whereas only 42 per cent people read one book in a year. Also women read more than men and students in the age group of 15-17 years have a reading habit.

Mr. Salim Omar Salim, Director of Sales & Marketing, Sharjah Book Authority, said that Sharjah Publishing Institute and public libraries were being established to promote reading and encourage the next generation to read books.

Dr. A Didar Singh, Secretary General, FICCI, said that FICCI is establishing a Google Translation Centre

in association with Google to reach out to regional centres and different publications in India. He added that FICCI will support the government’s book promotion policy and facilitate in making India a knowledge nation and spread this knowledge across countries.

The session was followed by a panel discussion ‘The Business of Books in South Asia’ moderated by Ms. Urvasi Butalia, Chair, FICCI Publishing Committee. The panelists were Mr. Vijitha Yapa, former President, Sri Lanka Book Publishers Association; Mr. Naveen Gupta, General Secretary, FIP; Mr. Bidur Dangol, Nepal Booksellers and Publishers Association and Mr. Ramesh Mittal, Chairman, CAPEXIL.

Delivering the closing remarks, Dr. Rita Chowdhury, Director, National Book Trust, assured that NBT, India will work on the actionable points that have emerged during the discussions. Mr. Sumeet Gupta, Director, FICCI, gave the vote-of-thanks.



My Life, My Literature

“Life and literature are inter-dependent on each other. I breath, I survive, I derive my oxygen from literature,” said Dr Prathiba Ray, noted Odia writer and Jnanpith awardee, in conversation with Dr. Yashodhara Mishra in a discussion ‘My Life My Literature’.

There are two qualities in a writer: love and fearlessness. Without love and fearlessness one cannot become a writer. At the age of nine, she fell in love with nature – river, trees etc. She imagined the bindi on her mother’s forehead as the rising sun. After experiencing her childhood friends suffering from caste discrimination, she questioned her father about the existence of discrimination.

She added that there is no discrimination in the life of a writer. “What she believes, she practices, what she practices, she writes”. She is seeking for an unconditional love which is yet

to be found. Being a lone traveler, she had visited around 40 countries and during her difficult times in a foreign country, people of different nationalities, especially Pakistanis, had come to her assistance. She likes to stay anonymous while travelling and that is how she is able to understand the fact that every human being is basically good. Only the visa she possesses, while travelling, confirms that she belongs to that country.

To her, unconditional love means loving everyone till her death. Her novels reveal the message of peace and love. It is not an answer to questions. Instead, her novels are filled with open ended questions which she expects the readers to complete. One has to create God in one’s own heart. “Give me your



heart and I will be your God,” she adds.

Thanking NBT India for bringing together people from all walks of life on a common platform, she said that NBT should initiate a campaign for Right to Literature (RTL) with the message that everyone has the right to read and create a character of their own.

The conversation took place at the Theme Pavilion organized by NBT India. The Theme of the Fair ‘Manushi’ focuses on women’s writings.

From Gargi to Bahinabai

The portraits of 12 representative women scholars from Gargi to Gargasati of the ancient and medieval India were developed for the 2017 calendar of National Book Trust, India, brought out as part of the Theme Pavilion at the NDWBF.

Since the ancient times, India has had a great tradition of women scholars who brought forth an alternative vision of life—of love, of devotion, of rebellion, of a society having greater equality among women and men. The present calendar seeks to portray some of them representing, what is generally known as Ancient India and Medieval India. The calendar aims to introduce the contemporary generation to the glorious tradition of women scholars of India.

The Calendar was developed at a National Workshop organised by National Book Trust, India with the participation of select MFA students of six major art colleges of India, namely, Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda; Govt. College of Art & Craft, Agartala; Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai; College of Art, Delhi; Govt. College of Art and Craft, Calcutta; and Govt. College of Fine Arts, Chennai.

The calendar includes the portraits of Gargi Vachaknavi, Auvaiyar, Andal, Akka Mahadevi, Sant Janabai, Gangasadi, Lal Ded, Meerabai, Atukuri Molla, Gul-Badan Begum, Chandrabati and Bahinabai.



Vivekananda in Himalayas

To mark the 154th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda and the National Youth Day, National Book Trust, India organized the book release of *Himalaya Mein Vivekananda*.

"It is a matter of great joy and happiness that the book *Himalaya Mein Vivekananda* is being released on the occasion of birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda," said Shri Manohar Lal Khattar, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Haryana, while releasing the book at New Delhi World Book Fair. He added that Narendra who became

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Vivekananda after coming to Himalayas, spread the message of Indian culture across the world.

Shri Khattar felt that Swami Vivekananda is an ideal for youth; his life is a remarkable combination of courage and determination. He inspired youth by saying 'Arise, Awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.'

The author of the book, Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, Hon'ble Member of Parliament and former chief minister of Uttarakhand also spoke on the occasion. He said that even though Vivekananda faced several difficulties in life, he gave new heights to India and Indian culture in the world.

Earlier, Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT said that whenever we think of Swami Vivekananda, it gives us strength and this book gives us a vivid description of his life.

The other speakers on the occasion were Shri Yogendra Sharma 'Arun', Prof. Harishankar Mishra and Shri Mahesh Chandra.



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