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PRESS RELEASE

Day 5 of the New Delhi World Book Fair: Book Lovers Can't Have Enough

The middle of the week saw a larger crowd of the book lovers thronging the fairgrounds, as if it were a weekend. People of all age-groups could be seen carrying bags of various hues weighed down with the number of books in each. The business was thriving and the publishers could be seen happy although busy handling customers.

This year, a number of government publishing houses including NCERT, Sahitya Akademi, Publications Division, ICHR, Jawaharlal Nehru University, CAPEXIL, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, National Institute of Open Schooling, Central Hindi Directorate, Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology, Punjabi Academy, National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language, National Council for Promotion of Sindhi Language among others are participating. The stalls of these government organisations are drawing attention of the readers as they can buy quality books at reasonable prices.

Theme Pavilion

A panel discussion on 'Readers with Special Needs: Issues and Challenges' was organised at the Theme Pavilion. Moderated by Dr G N Karan, the other speakers on the occasion were Dr Kusumlata Malik, Dr Shailaja Chennat, Dr S K Prasad, Dr Ashima Nehra, Dr Anju Kakkar and Dr R K Sarin. The speakers discussed about the various issues related to the persons with special needs including accessibility, low-cost textbooks for students, need for culture of inclusive learning in the society, the rights of differently-abled according to the Constitution of India.

A discussion on the theme of the book fair 'Books for Readers with Special Abilities' was organised. Moderated by Shri Irfan, Rajya Sabha TV and host of popular show *Guftagu*; the other speakers on the occasion were Prof. Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT; Shri Rajesh Yadav, Hindi Officer and in-charge of Production at Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya; and Shri Lalit Kumar, Founder of Kavita Kosh and recipient of National Award for persons with disabilities; and Shri Balendu Sharma Dadhich, Senior Product

Manager, Microsoft. Talking about the theme of the book fair, Prof. Baldeo Bhai Sharma said that this year's theme has been chosen to create a sense of respect and equality for persons with special need. He said that over 500 books by different publishers have been exhibited on the theme, in addition to the several literary and cultural programmes that are being organised in which noted differently-abled celebrities are participating. Shri Rajesh Yadav talked about the publishing programme of Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, while Shri Balendu informed about the various tools being developed by Microsoft. Shri Lalit Kumar remarked that accessibility is one of the major issues which need to be addressed.

in an interesting session, the noted journalist Shri Anant Vijay interacted with Ms Sonal Mansingh, renowned classical dancer. She talked about how the steps taken by NBT to shed light on such a sensitive topic has touched her heart. Ms Sonal Man Singh also said how symbols are the best form of sending out messages, as per her experience in dance industry, as words can be wrongly interpreted but not symbols. Prof. Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT also spoke on the occasion.

International Events Corner

A discussion on 'Latin America Experience: How to Apply this Experience in India and Other markets?' was organised by Sharjah Book Authority at the Sharjah Pavilion. The discussion focused on how much successful have cultural and literary exchange of Emirates been with other countries of the world; Latin America and Brazil in particular. Besides, there was a discussion on 'India in the Arabic Manuscripts' where Dr Hamad bin Saray said that India has had a prominent position in the Arabic manuscripts. Ancient works do mention different aspects related to India like Hind-Sindh trade, Arab kings' love for Indian swords. He also informed that poets like Hasan bin Zabbit has written a lot about India, Indian sandalwood, spices, rice etc. Several travelogues in past had also been written, he added.

Literary Activities

Noted writer Surendra Nath Pathak talked about 'Crime, Women and Nation' at an event held at Authors' Corner (Hall 8). He was of the view that people who do heinous crimes against women should be shown no mercy. The moderator questioned the author about his series 'Sunil'; and why he chose the criminal in the series to be a journalist, to which he replied that he didn't want to copy the trend of other writers and bring in a new perspective of criminals, shifting the focus from the most common criminals to the most neglected ones.

At Author's Corner, Hall no. 8, the book 'Pultizer at 16', written by an upcoming author, Abhishek Behera, was released. The event was organised by Blue Rose Publications. The young author, at the age of just 16, penned down an amazing book, about a boy and his journey to achieve 'Pultizer', an award for journalism, literature and music. Abhishek in his interview spoke about the hurdles he faced and how he left no stone unturned to get his book published.

An interaction with acid attack survivor, Reshma Qureshi and Tania Singh, an activist was also organised at the Authors' Corner. While talking about her book, 'Being Reshma', she said that she was attacked when she was just 17-years-old by her own brother-in-law. However, she said that she has left her dark past behind with her achievements. She has started a campaign called 'Beauty Tips by Reshma.' Tania Singh remarked that today's India is changing towards such survivors.

Children's Pavilion

Several programmes for children were organised at the Children's Pavilion including a workshop on how to make a magazine by Anuvrat Global Organisation; illustration workshop by NBT in which Prof. Manjula Chaturvedi from Kashi Vidyapeeth gave a few tips to children to make attractive sketches. She informed that in prehistoric times, human beings used to communicate through the medium of paintings. Later, a panel discussion on children's literature was organised by Sahitya Akademi in which the speakers were: Rajnikant Shukla, Dr Madhu Pant and Rajendra Jain. In addition, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation organised a Mime Performance.

Foreign Pavilion

The booklovers are delighted to find books literature from across the world. They can find biography of Max Mueller and Goeth, books on Second World War, Miguel de Cervantes, among others. Readers of Hindi literature are also happy to find Hindi translations of world literature. Over 20 countries including Abu Dhabi, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Kenya, Japan, Iran, Italy, Mexico, Pakistan, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Sharjah, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, USA and International agencies like UNESCO, etc. are participating in the Fair. They are housed at the Foreign Pavilion, Hall No. 7ABC.

In addition, there is an interesting poster exhibition on Octavio Paz showcased at Hall 7 by the Embassy of Mexico in India. Octavio Paz achieved the confluence of two strong cultural rivers, the Mexican and the Indian. The union of the two shaped a poetic work so important that years

later it was awarded the Nobel Prize. On the 50th anniversary of his departure from India and 20 years after his death, graphic designers from both the countries concur creating posters based on his poetic word in this poster exhibition.

This year, Sharjah is the Guest of Honour at New Delhi World Book Fair. The beautifully designed Pavilion is attracting a large number of visitors at the Fair. One of the major highlights of the Guest of Honour presentation is the exhibition of books. The booklovers are happy to note that a large number of Hindi translations of Arabic books are also available.