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Press Release

New Delhi World Book Fair, 2013 kicks off

“Nothing delights me more than enlightening Indians who read”, said **Dr Shashi Tharoor**, Hon’ble Minister of State for Human Resource Development while formally declaring open the New Delhi World Book Fair 2013 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

The inauguration was held at the Children & Youth Pavilion, Dr Tharoor said that it is particularly noticing that rainy weather has given us the chance to see Children’s Pavilion and this weather is a warm welcome to the changes that are being introduced in the book fair.

Dr Tharoor himself being an acclaimed writer and avid reader talked about his reading habit and his childhood days. He said that he did not spend a single day without books. He used to read different kinds of books like *Tenali Rama*, *Champak* etc which gave him a unique experience to learn different aspects of India.

He also welcomed France as the ‘Guest of Honour’ country at the Fair. He said that French celebrate books and reading, we must learn from them.

Talking about the theme of the Fair, **Indigenous Voices: Mapping India’s Folk and Tribal Literature**, he said that I speak for vast majority of readers. I think we need to give attention to this tribal literature also.

He said that the book fair would be a wonderful occasion for book lovers as they will be able to interact with authors at Authors Corner. He was also happy to note that a special corner has also been designated for digital publishers for discovering the world of e-books.

“French have not invented printing, writing and internet but we are producing books in history, science etc. We are happy to be here as the Guest of Honour country. This will be a very fruitful experience”, said **Mr François Richier**, Ambassador of France for India. He said that the French Pavilion will be showcasing 2100 titles and visitors would also get an opportunity to see some of the rare books as their manuscripts are not easily available.

Dr Karan Singh, the eminent author, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations was the Guest of Honour on the occasion. He said, “For anybody who loves reading there is no greater treat than book. It epitomizes the heart of civilization. We have many languages which reflect plurality and diversity of our country.” He added that we need to have value added education in curriculum to introduce children to universal values like compassion, respect for elders, love for nature etc. He said that every language that flourishes in India is ‘Indigenous’.

No language is second class. He also stressed upon the need to preserve Indian languages and democratic values.

Mr Richier added that this is not just an exhibition of books as three well-known authors from France will be interacting with the people. We have an opportunity to boost cultural relation between France and India as we have the democratic values as the common factor between two of us. Books are not only treasure of knowledge but also freedom of knowledge.

Ms Rita Menon, Chairperson-cum-Managing Director, India Trade Promotion Organisation also spoke on the occasion. She was hopeful that the collaboration between NBT and ITPO would lead to bigger and better New Delhi World Book Fair.

Earlier, **Shri A Sethumadhavan**, Chairman, NBT welcomed the participants, dignitaries and guests present on the occasion. He said that NBT will rise to the occasion to make New Delhi World Book Fair as a memorable event. He also informed about the new initiatives taken by NBT like Rights Table to conduct business, Authors Corner, Book Art Exhibition among others.

Shri Sudhir Malhotra, President, Federation of Indian Publishers was also present on the occasion.

At the end, Shri M A Sikandar, Director, NBT proposed the vote of thanks.

Inauguration of Children & Youth Pavilion

Later during the day, **Shri Vineet Joshi**, Chairman, CBSE inaugurated the Children & Youth Pavilion. He said that there is a perception among people that examination system is driving away children from books that are not part of curriculum. He said that books help enhance skills. He said that he will encourage children to read books apart from text books.

Shri Joshi also released three NBT titles in English and one title in Kashmiri for children entitled *My First Aeroplane Journey*, *Boond*, *A Helping Hand* and *Haput Ti Tangi Haatch* respectively.

Shri A Sethumadhavan, Chairman, and **Shri M A Sikandar**, Director, NBT were also present on the occasion.