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NBT Newsletter

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CONTENTS

New Delhi World Book Fair Concludes on a High Note 1-2

Union Education Minister Releases PM YUVA 2.0 Books 3

Theme Pavilion attracts Book Lovers

NBT signs MoU with ISLRTC to Convert Books into Sign Language 4

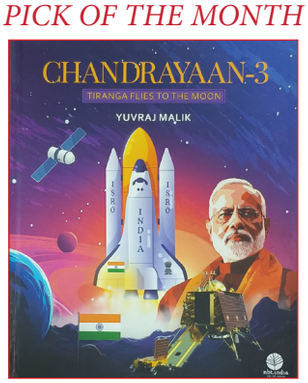
New Delhi Rights Table 5

AI in Creative Writing and Storytelling 6

Celebrating the Spirit of Democracy: Theme Catalogue 7

Digital Experience Zone: An Attraction 8

PICK OF THE MONTH



CHANDRAYAAN-3
Yuvraj Malik
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New Delhi World Book Fair Concludes on a High Note

The New Delhi World Book Fair 2025 held from 1-9 February was organised with immense success, receiving appreciation from the visitors, participating exhibitors, media persons as well as officials.

The Fair was inaugurated by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu at Bharat Mandapam on 1st February, 2025. The Ambassador of Russia to India, Shri Denis Alipov and other senior officials of Ministry of Education also graced the occasion.

The Ambassador of the Russian Federation, Guest of Honour country, Shri Alipov said that it was a great honour for his country to be invited to NDWBF as the focus country, more so this year as it marks 25 years of the India-Russia strategic partnership.

India has timeless epics like the *Mahabharata and Ramayana*, while Russia has literary giants such as Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Chekhov, whose works have inspired generations, he said observing that the emotional and intellectual connections between the two countries run deep.

The President of India stated in her inaugural speech that the Russian Federation's special participation will strengthen the connection between the two nations.

Shri Sanjay Kumar, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India, cited Mahatma Gandhi as a case in point. Noted Russian writers like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Pushkin have inspired Indian readers. He described the friendship between India and Russia as one so deep and vast that

it could fill an entire library, yet leave room for more. Both nations are blessed with rich literary traditions.

He said that Russian writers have inspired the Indian readers, while Indian literature has found interest in readership culture in Russia. "This cultural exchange proves that books bring people together, no matter where they are from", Shri Sanjay Kumar said. Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman, NBT emphasised on the importance of advanced reading technologies in providing digital experiences, such as audiobooks, AR and VR, and so on, to engage the younger generation. He drew the audience's attention to such corners put up by NBT at the Fair. The President later inaugurated the Theme Pavilion and also visited the Russian Pavilion.

This year's theme was "Republic@75: We, The People…". The NBT organised Theme Pavilion tracing this amazing journey right from the making of the Constitution. The proceedings in the Constituent Assembly on the eve of Independence and the singing of the first stanza of Vande Mataram in the House on 14 August, 1947; art illustrations on the pages of the original Constitution and the artists behind it were also on display and group photographs of the 284 members of the Constituent Assembly and their signatures after which the Constitution was formally promulgated were displayed.

On the concluding day, Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman, NBT in his message said that the Russian Federation being the focal country provided a significant platform for many Russian representatives, including authors, artists, and experts from various fields, to interact with the visitors. Many discussions, debates, and events were held with distinguished Russian publishers, allowing Indian readers to get better acquainted with Russian literature and culture. The Russian delegation's participation was noteworthy, representing the richness of their literary heritage. Additionally, numerous cultural and literary programmers from different countries took place in the foreign pavilion, which enhanced India's literary engagement with the world.

"As in previous years, this time too, the Festival of Festivals (FoF) received a commendable response at the Fair. I extend my gratitude to all book lovers for their enthusiastic participation, and am pleased to inform you that next year, we will reunite at the same venue for the New Delhi World Book Fair, scheduled from 10 to 18 January 2026," Prof. Marathe added.

Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT in his message on the concluding day of the Fair said the visit of lakhs of people to this literary, art and cultural Festival for nine days reflects the book culture and affinity for books. Additionally, it also reaffirms our belief that the people in the country have maintained their enthusiasm and love for books.

"This year, we added a special initiative, Festival of Festivals, which has received a favourable feedback. Many organisers of literary festivals across India participated in this initiative. A notable feature of this year's event has been the organisation of 600+ literary and cultural sessions and participation of over 1100 illustrious authors and litterateurs across the country. This is a significant increase over the previous years," he added.

Shri Yuvraj Malik further added that the NDWBF 2025 had witnessed a 30 per cent growth over last year. The Trust has encouraged Indian publishers to expand their global presence by joining the NBT pavilion at the international book fairs "free of cost."

Union Education Minister Releases PM YUVA 2.0 Books

The Union Minister of Education Shri Dharmendra Pradhan released 41 books by PM YUVA 2.0 authors at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025, and congratulated the National Book Trust, India for its great success. He also released the Hindi translation of *The Saga of Kudopali: The Unsung Story of 1857,* and a book on the works of 14th century mathematician and astronomer Madhvacharya by the Malayalam author, Litty Chacko. Shri Dharmendra Pradhan made a special mention of financial grants in the General Budget this year for the Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Yojana announced by the Prime Minister.

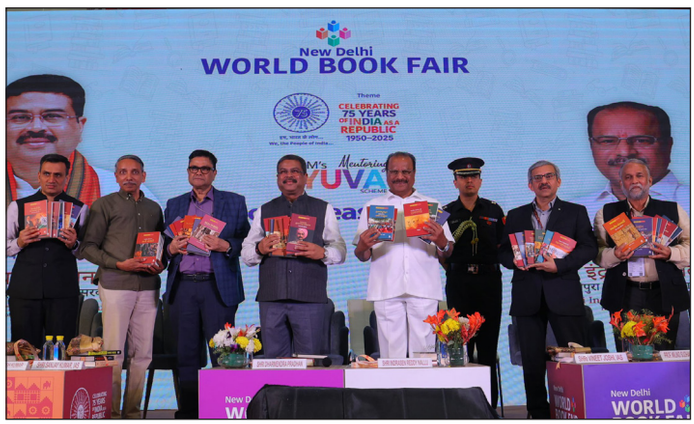
Another important project of the government was that of the National Digital Repository of Indian Knowledge System wherein invaluable ancient manuscripts would be digitised along with their language mapping. These would be accompanied by the underlying meaning and essence of the digitised scripts so that ancient value systems are not lost for the future generations, he added.

The Hon'ble Minister encouraged NBT, and other publishers to collaborate with their global counterparts and expand the reach of Hindi and regional literature across the world and, in turn, publish the celebrated foreign literary works.

Shri Indrasen Reddy Nallu, Hon'ble Governor of Tripura, who was the Guest of Honour, complimented the NBT's activities and was delighted to be part of this momentous occasion.

Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, National Book Trust, India and the CEO, NDWBF said that the NBT had succeeded in achieving its mandate of establishing itself as the organiser of the largest Book Fair in the world. Over the years it has grown from 25 to 30 percent in terms of participation of publishers as well as footfalls.

He also added that NBT will be announcing soon the PM YUVA 3.0 edition in 22 Indian languages and English, which is one of its kind in the global arena.



Theme Pavilion attracts Book Lovers

We the people of India gifted ourselves a Republic seventy-five years ago by enforcing a Constitution that has made India a vibrant and enduring democracy. The National Book Trust, India's, Theme Pavilion at NDWBF-25 traced this amazing journey right from the making of the Constitution to the abiding of its guiding principles of justice, equality, liberty and fraternity by the people through landmark judgements, relevant excerpts from the Constitution of India, quotes from national icons, contemporary imagery, newspaper clippings and folk art.

An imposing gateway heralding the opening lines of the Preamble on one side and a spectacular bookshelf on the other and huge panels on the guiding principles and pillars of democracy such as the legislature, executive, judiciary and media with audio -visual documentaries embarked visitors on a meticulously guided tour of the ideas and moments that went into the making of the Constitution and the country.

A major section of the exhibit highlighted the Constitution's Journey-from its inception and glimpses of the Constituent Assembly debates to its lasting impact as a guiding force for India and its people. The layout of the Pavilion reflected the framework and structure of the Constitution itself.

Art and Calligraphy used in the Constitution of India along with their articles were displayed paying tribute to India's rich and varied socio- cultural heritage. A larger than life display of all the 284 members of the constituent assembly along with their Signatures was also arranged.

The Theme pavilion celebrated India's identity as a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular and Democratic Republic. The layout of the theme was designed by National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad.

NBT signs MoU with ISLRTC to Convert Books into Sign Language

The National Book Trust, India and the Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to convert NBT books into the Indian Sign Language (ISL). The programme was organised at the Theme Pavilion during the New Delhi World Book Fair on 7 February, 2025.

The copies of the MoU were exchanged between Shri Kumar Raju, Director, ISLRTC, and Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT India at the signing event. Shri Raju said, "It will help many students (with hearing disabilities) get the education they deserve. MoU fulfils the objective underlying the Right to Education Act, the New Education Policy (NEP), and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, besides abiding by the overarching theme, Republic@75".

Shri Rajeev Sharma, Joint Secretary, Department of People with Disabilities (PwD) said, "To begin with, 500 books would be "handpicked" for conversion into the Digital Sign Format". He added that I.C. Institute will ensure quality production in developing the content.

CEOSpeak

The NBT organised the CEOSpeak based on the theme "Publishers as Nation Builders" as part of Republic@75 Dialogues. Crucial role of publishers and creative industry in shaping national identity, culture and fostering a reading nation was highlighted by leading lights of the industry. Shri B.V.R Subrahmanyam, CEO, Niti Aayog; Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman NBT, and Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT and CEO of NDWBF shared their thoughts on the occation.

The NDWBF 2025 hosted the 12th edition of the CEOSpeak on 2 February bringing together leading national and international publishers from the Russian Federation, UAE, Sri Lanka and 50 other countries. The reports highlighting the Russian publishing industry were presented by Evgeny Kapiev, CEO, Eksmo Publishing House and Tatiyana Solovyeva, Editor-in-Chief, Alpina Proza Publishing house.

A report on the Moscow International Book Fair was also presented by Sergei Kaykin, CEO, General Directorate of International Book Exhibitions and Fairs.

Librarians' Meet

A librarian's meet was organised by National Book Trust, India, at the NDWBF 2025. During the meet, the role of librarians as gatekeepers of authentic knowledge was discussed. Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman, National Book Trust, India, inaugurated the event, and stressed upon the need to buy publications that enrich the collection of libraries.

Shri Manish Joshi, Secretary, UGC urged librarians to develop reading promotion modules to be integrated into teacher training programmes. He also highlighted how foreign universities setting up campuses in India would bring the best practices in library science, thus strengthening the movement. Dr. Pradeep Rai, Senior Vice President of the Indian Library Association (ILA), observed that libraries are not just storehouses of books, but dynamic spaces for education and enlightenment. He cited Nalanda, and asserted, "Books are meant for use, not for safekeeping." Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT said, "from next year NBT will also have a 'Librarian's lounge', wherein librarians from educational institutions would meet and interact with publishers."

New Delhi Rights Table

The New Delhi Rights Table has been significant component of the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025, focusing on B2B interactions in publishing. The two-day event facilitated rights exchanges, enabling books to be translated and published across different languages and markets. It encouraged collaboration between Indian and international publishers, ensuring a diverse and rich literary landscape. It also aimed at fostering global readership by facilitating the availability of quality literature in multiple languages.

At the inaugural of the event, Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT outlined the initiatives and services offered by NBT to engage with the book industry in a big way. He invited countries to send eminent writers, poets, and illustrators for literary tours to India.

Buoyed by the success of NDWBF, Shri Malik also spoke about NBT's plans to set up a major book fair in South India with the same infrastructure and global outreach as Delhi.

Presenting the perspective of Russian Publishing Industry, Shri Dmitry Silin, the International Relations Head of Russian Publishing House, said, "One of the most important tasks for us is to promote the Russian language all over the world, especially in Asia, where Russia's main trading partners are concentrated and where new forms of relationships are being built in various spheres— culture, science, and education."

Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman, NBT highlighted the importance of Rights exchange in global publishing. Speaking of the New Delhi Rights Table, Prof. Marathe said, "I am hopeful that many good transfers of rights will come up through these two days". Shri Kumar Vikram, the Chief Editor and Joint Director of NBT, emphasised upon the importance of books saying "If there is a crisis in the book industry, then it won't be a crisis of the book industry; it will be a crisis of society."

Over 80 publishers from India and abroad including Brooke O'Donnell, Senior VP, Independent Publishing Group, USA, Kamaljeet Singh, CEO of Design Art Studio, Nabin Khatiwada of Parichaya Publication, Nepal, participated in the event.

Malayalam Edition of Book on Qatar Released

The Malayalam edition of the book, *Qatar Through My Eyes: History, People and Sovereigns* by Qatari businessman and philanthropist, H.H. Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim al Thani, was launched amidst thunderous applause at the Theme Pavilion of New Delhi World Book Fair 2025. The book delves into the modern history of the Arab Emirate giving a first person account of the events that have shaped its culture.

Expressing his gratitude to the National Book Trust, India for hosting the event, the author said, "I am thankful to the organisers of NDWBF for giving me this opportunity, and the people to accept and appreciate my work. The relation between the two countries goes decades back. I have also mentioned that in my work". When asked about the reasons behind choosing Malayalam as the language for translation, he responded, "Many people from India live in Qatar."

Shashi Tharoor Enlightens Visitors with his Talk

At an event called "A Thousand Threads: Weaving the story of Bharat", litterateur and former diplomat Shri Shashi Tharoor, who has published more than 25 books, spoke about what he understands from the words, Hindu and Bharat. He mentioned the liberal aspects of Hinduism and how the writings of Swami Vivekananda had made a deep impression on him when he was growing up.

"Hinduism is liberal about how to worship the divine. It could be through *Bhakti, Gyana, Rajayoga* or *Karmayoga*. Hinduism never claims to be the repository of all truth. Its original philosophy also includes a certain amount of incertitude, and that makes it tolerant and expansive," he averred.

Bollywood and Youth Celebrities at New Delhi World Book Fair

A number of Bollywood celebraties such as famous Hindi singer and author, Kailash Kher; and motivational speaker, Ankur Warikoo graced launch of their books. Motivational speaker Shiv Khera; seasonal author Amish Tripathi; actor Pankaj Tripathi and producer actor, Prakash Jha also graced the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025.

AI in Creative Writing and Storytelling

A discussion took place at the Author's Corner at NDWBF25 on the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in creative writing. The Speakers of the session were Vandana Kumar, Deepak Sharma, Geethica Mehra and Arpit Mishra.

Renowned life coach and author Deepak Sharma when asked whether AI could understand human emotions like a human being does, he stated that AI lacks the depth of human emotions, making it incapable to truly replicate personal experiences in writing. Poet and entrepreneur Arpit Mishra shared thoughts on AI's role in preserving history and he acknowledged its usefulness in translation and editing, but emphasised that deeper historical understanding requires human insight beyond AI generated content.

While discussing AI's role in poetry, Vandana Kumar highlighted that poetry is deeply personal and introspective. While AI can assist in refining text, true poetic expression must come from within, making AI's contribution minimal in this field. As a wellness coach, Deeepak Sharma dismissed AI's effectiveness in dealing with human behaviour, stating that emotions and experiences vary from person to person. "If AI could do my job, why would clients come to me?" he asked.

On AI's potential as a learning tool for history and culture, Mishra acknowledged its benefits in visualisation, digitisation, and editing, but that true understanding requires human engagement beyond AI assistance.

Speaking on AI's role in translation, Vandana shared a valuable lesson from one of her teachers: "Unless you dream in another language, you can't truly understand it." She was skeptical about AI's ability to translate complex literary works accurately, noting that while AI aids in basic translations, it cannot replace human translators.

For blogging, Geethica stated that AI can assist in refining content but warned against over-reliance. "Experienced writers can easily tell when AI-generated content is used excessively," she noted. A common question to all panelists was to address AI's impact on online content writing and social media. Deepak emphasised that creative writing should remain a natural process. "If an author relies on AI entirely, how can they take pride in their work?", he concluded.

Distribution of Braille Works at the NDWBF

National Book Trust, India launched "Books for Everyone", where free distribution of Braille books was made at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025.

Readers were asked to provide their Unique Disability ID number and Aadhaar number to avail these books. The Trust has been promoting the culture of reading for several years and had collaborated with the All India Confederation of the Blind to help the visually impaired to easily avail reading materials. These books are made available in Hindi and English, and several regional Indian languages.

Apart from this, NBT has published more than 360 books in Braille. These titles are categorised on the basis of Braille books, audio books, e-books, virtual reality books and general books.

Culture Minister addresses Book Lovers

Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Hon'ble Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, has said that 140 crore Indians proudly identify with the nation's progress and the Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat.

"India now holds a respectable position in the world," Shri Shekhawat said at an event organised by the Bharat Literature Festival at the New Delhi World Book Fair.

He mentioned *Rashmirathi*, an epic poem by Rashtrakavi Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, and *Mritunjay* by Shivaji Sawant. He also spoke about the Maha Kumbh Mela, calling it a symbol of India's unity that has existed for centuries.

Cultural Events

The NDWBF 25 witnessed the audience enjoying the cultural performances held every day at the Amphitheatre 1, Bharat Mandapam. The events started at 5:30 evening with the live performances by eminent artists. While book lovers and enthusiasts

swarmed at the myriad stalls and shelves browsing books of their favourite authors, they were also enthralled by the perforances.

J & K Day, a folk presentation marked the inauguration of the Festival. The Russian musical duet 'Ladi' was also held.

Celebrating the Spirit of Democracy: Theme Catalogue

Based on the theme of the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025, Republic@75 with the slogan We, the people of India.हम भारत के लोग, The National Book Trust , India brought out a special catalogue featuring the finest literature on the subject from every nook and corner of the country.

"We have documented a select collection of books published in various languages that deal with the book fair's theme. The publications in this category showcase the spirit and ethos of democracy while focusing on the Indian Constitution, its makers, various authorities upholding the constitutional framework, and other related topics," said Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT.

A few titles that reflect the theme of this catalogue include i.e *Satyache Prayog Athava Aatmakatha (Marathi), Mazi Aatmakatha (Marathi), Minoo Masani, Hindustan Mein Urdu Ki Dastoori aur Qanooni Haisiyat (Urdu), Aazadi Kee Anmol Dastan (Hindi), Democracy 80: Questions and Answers, and Our Parliament, Our Judiciary, Our Political System, Mother of Democracy: India, Our Constitution: Essence and Elucidation (English)*.

The catalogue comprises nearly 100 titles in English, Hindi, Marathi, Urdu, and Punjabi Languages. NBT leads the list of publishers with the maximum titles in this catalogue, which have been carefully curated. The books selected are among the finest. Each title is accompanied by a thumbnail illustration of the cover and a short summary of the book. The names of the authors are also given along with the details about the publisher, year of publication, and number of printed pages.

J. Sai Deepak graced NDWBF

"Books are irreplaceable". These words spoken with conviction by Indian activist and lawyer J. Sai Deepak, echoed through the Theme Pavilion at New Delhi World Book Fair, 2025. The illustrations from the Constitution of India, meticulously crafted, stood as a testament to the nation's rich legal and historical traditions.

Amidst this intellectual splendour, the arrival of J. Sai Deepak on stage was met with applause, from the eager audience of young minds ready to engage in thought-provoking discussions. From democracy to international affairs, Deepak addressed questions that burned in the minds of India's youth.

He emphasised on the unique role of book fairs in fostering intellectual discussions, particularly in a country where history is experiencing a grand resurgence. Deepak remarked, "We have a very youthful democracy and an explosion of Indian history. I am very optimistic about India's farsightedness on the world stage."

Digital Experience Zone: An Attraction

A new addition to the New Delhi World Book Fair 2025, was the Digital Experience Zone, one of the major attractions.

Featuring a Digital Quiz Wall, Virtual Library Experience, and Face Swap Technology, the section captivated visitors of all ages. The Face Swap Technology was displayed at the fair, wherein visitors could see themselves transformed into famous cartoon characters like Krrish, Shaktimaan, Jasmine, Hermione, etc. Virtual Library Experience provided a VR- based immersive tour of a digital library. Both adults and children enjoyed getting into the range of the AI camera for their transformation.

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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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एकः सूते सकलम्

NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA
Ministry of Education, Government of India
5 Institutional Area, Vasant Kunj
New Delhi-110 070
E-mail: office.nbt@nic.in
Website: www.nbtindia.gov.in

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