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### Press Release

#### NDWBF 2018 Opens with a Message to Conserve the Environment

"The world of books is unique. Books enrich the life of people," said Shri Prakash Javadekar, Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development, while declaring open the New Delhi World Book Fair through a video message at the inauguration at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi from 6 to 14 January 2018.

Shri Javadekar added that books are as important as we require food to live and sleep to take rest. Books and reading help humans to develop. Books encompass all the knowledge. He further said that the forthcoming nine days would be a grand affair for booklovers. They will have an opportunity to browse books from across the world.

Shri Javadekar said that the theme of the Fair, 'Environment and Climate Change' is significant. We are living in the 21st century. We have been exploiting the natural resources provided by the Earth. It is necessary that we all need to work together for the protection of environment. We should all try to conserve the environment through simple methods like reducing the use of plastic, vehicles and disposing-off electronic items like mobile phones carefully.

He expressed his happiness that this year European Union is the Guest of Honour. He said that 35 authors from Europe are participating in the Fair and will interact with the book lovers. He hoped that the children's pavilion will bring children closer to the books.

While welcoming the guests, Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT said that India may have a tradition of *Kumbha Mela* after every 12 years but New Delhi World Book Fair is the annual *Maha Kumbha* of books. Speaking of the 60 years' journey of the Trust, Shri Sharma said that the Trust has been bringing out books in different Indian languages, promoting books and reading culture throughout the country through book fairs, book exhibitions among others. She added that the Trust has also recently brought out books in Sanskrit and initiated the scheme of 'Har Haath Ek Kitab'. He also talked about 'Mahila Lekhan Protsahan Yojana' for women authors below the age of forty. He urged the people present on the occasion to present books to children on their birthday, which will play an important role in shaping their lives.

On this occasion, three NBT titles in Hindi, namely *Ya Se Yashaswini* *Ya Se Yatra*, authored by Ms Yashaswini Pande; *Johadi*, authored by Ms Kaushal Panwar and *Rani Kamlapati* authored by Ms Indira Dangi were released. The books have been published under the 'Mahila Lekhan Protsahan Yojana' in which writings from young women authors below 40 years are published. In addition, Calendar 2018 brought out by the Trust on the theme 'Environment and Climate Change' was also released on the occasion.

"As Ambassador of European Union to India, I am happy that the European Union is the Guest of Honour at the New Delhi World Book Fair," said H.E. Mr Tomasz Kozlowski, Ambassador of European Union to India at the inaugural function of New Delhi World Book Fair. Mr Tomasz remarked that book fairs are wonderful occasion to learn, trade and exchange ideas. He added that World Book Fair attracts a lot of attention in India and hoped that this year too, book lovers would participate in reading sessions, discussions, etc. Talking about the theme of the Fair, Mr Tomasz said that climate change is critical and threatens both European and India. He added that both European Union and India are working steadily to deal this challenge. He also informed that European Union will organise 35 events including readings by authors, workshops for children and will showcase its literature at the Pavilion.

"Throughout the years, writing has given me hope, it gave me personal space I was longing for," said Ms Kallia Papadaki, renowned author from Greece while sharing her journey as an author and importance of books in her life. Ms Kallia said that in childhood reading was a safe haven for her. She added that she finished her high school and started working upon her journey, to fulfill parental expectations. She worked as a broker in stock exchange, she tried to fulfill the expectations of people with numbers and graphs. However, she observed that how so many people have same expectations. She was playing against odds and wondered if it was worth and started writing in despair and hope. She added that it took six years to write her first book.

Highlighting the importance to protect environment, Ms Sunita Narain, distinguished environmentalist said that it is in India, we are seeing the impact of climate change. The victims of the climate change are the marginalised and poor farmers of India. She added that though a number of programmes are being held but there is a need to translate them to reality. While congratulating NBT for selecting the theme on environment, Ms Narain hoped that the theme of the book fair would create awareness among people.

Shri Madhu Ranjan Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development, observed that we need to hand over the clean environment as was given to us by our ancestors.

Shri Deepak Kumar, Executive Director, ITPO said that New Delhi World Book Fair is an ideal platform for promoting reading habit, books and publishing. He observed that for bibliophiles the book fair would offer a large number of books in different languages from across the world. He also informed that the Pragati Maidan is being converted into a new convention centre which will have 27 meeting halls, amphitheatre, sitting arrangement for 7000 people and underground parking.

Dr Rita Chowdhury, Director, NBT said that a book fair of this magnitude cannot be successful without so many stakeholders. She thanked ITPO, Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development, delegates of European Union and other associates.