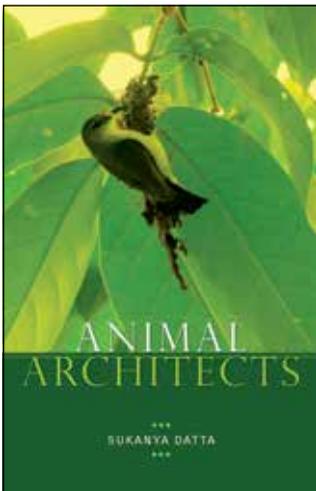


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PICK OF THE MONTH



Animal Architects
Sukanya Datta
Rs 285 234pp
978-81-237-9248-4

NBT Celebrates National Unity Day



“The many cultures of India are like pearls that are strung together by the thread of unity,” said Shri Yogender Chaudhary, Principal Secretary to Government, Haryana (Sports & Youth Affairs Dept.) & Advisor, Resource Mobilization Cell (CM Office, Haryana) while delivering a lecture on ‘Dimensions of National Unity in Cultural Diversity’. The lecture was organised virtually to observe National Unity Day on 30 October 2020.

Shri Yogender Chaudhary added, “Our civilization is very old. It has 1400 dialects and 22 official languages. One can find diversity both in its geography and its culture.” However, he added that, “this

diversity also unites us as a nation.”

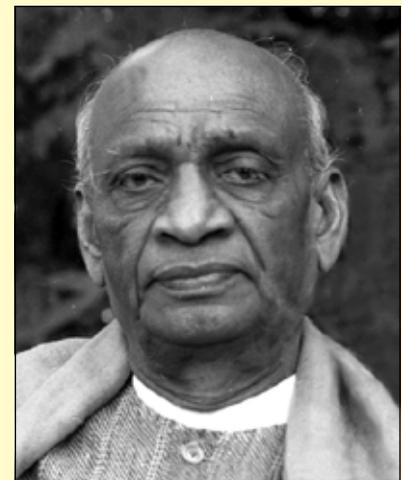
Shri Chaudhary, an officer of the Indian Revenue Service, spoke about his experiences with people from different parts of the country. He observed that despite vast differences in traditions, cuisine, attires and languages, the sense of belongingness among people remains.

Emphasising on the richness of our social and cultural diversity, he observed that we must not lose any opportunity to experience this diversity and for which we must escape from our parochial mindsets.

In his concluding remarks Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT, thanked Shri Yogender Chaudhary for sharing enlightening anecdotes and references about the cultural bond between different parts of India, and hoped that all Indians learn from the life and struggle of great people of India like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and believe in unity as the path for our country’s real success.

The lecture was followed by a question-answer session.

National Unity Day is celebrated every year on 31 October to mark the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the great Indian leader and freedom fighter who made possible the dream of integrating India as one nation. We celebrate this day to remind ourselves of the great people who gave up their lives to unite the country as a whole, and what our responsibility as a citizen of this great country is to ensure that as Indians we stand united and work towards the betterment of the society and the nation.



NBT Observes Vigilance Awareness Week



As part of the Vigilance Awareness Week, the employees of the Trust took Integrity Pledge on 28 October 2020. The pledge was administered by Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT.

While administering the integrity pledge, Shri Yuvraj Malik said that in everyday office routine work, employees are prone to commit errors. Some of these

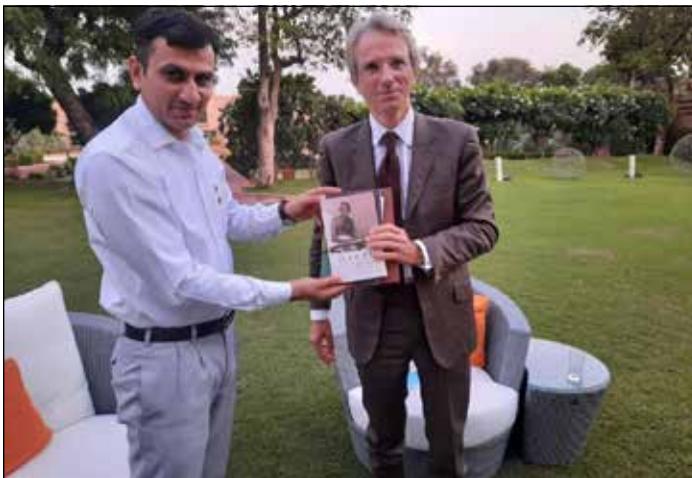
errors occur due to wrong judgement, however, he added that some of the errors are done with an intention. He said that there is a very thin line between the error of judgement and error with an intention. While the former is pardonable, the latter may not be pardonable, rather merits punishment.

The Vigilance Awareness Week is

observed across the country every year to fight against corruption and ensure integrity in public administration. This year, Vigilance Awareness Week with the theme 'Vigilant India, Prosperous India' was observed from 27 Oct. to 2 Nov. 2020.

Shri Kumar Vikram, Editor & Chief Vigilance Officer, coordinated the programme.

India: Guest of Honour at Paris Book Fair 2021



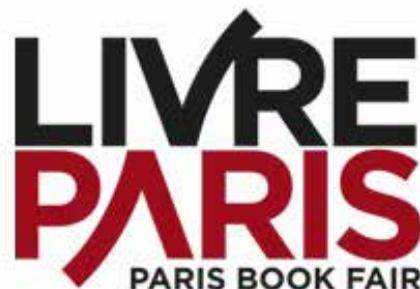
India will be the Guest of Honour at Paris Book Fair (Livre Paris) 2021. National Book Trust, India being a nodal agency to promote Indian books abroad, will be organising Guest of Honour presentation at Paris Book Fair 2021.

To discuss the preparations related to the presentation, Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT met Mr Emmanuel Lenain, Ambassador of France to India at the French Embassy with a delegation of officers from NBT and industry experts

on 16 October 2020. The members of the delegation included Shri Kumar Vikram,

Editor & Project Head, NBT and Shri Suddhasatwa Basu, eminent artist and author of several children's books. From the French side, Mr Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens, Counsellor for Cooperation & Cultural Affairs & Country Director; and Ms Christine Cornet, Books and Ideas Attaché participated.

It may be mentioned that the Guest Presentation that was to be held in the 2020 edition of Livre Paris was postponed amidst COVID-19 concerns.



NBT as Knowledge Partner

@ ASMA Education Leadership Conclave

National Book Trust, India was the Knowledge Partner at the ASMA Education Leadership Conclave – on ‘The Impact of NEP on Early Childhood Education’ held on 22 October 2020.

Delivering the keynote address, Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT, said, “NEP is a vision document which will become a roadmap for future generations. The gap is between where we are and where we have to go; and to bridge this gap we need an implementation strategy.”

According to Shri Malik, “NEP comprises three fundamental principles: equity, quality and access. We need to ensure that it is accessible to all, is affordable and qualitative in nature. It makes us Indian and at the same time, it gives us an international outlook.” He added that the NEP will enable a free flowing environment where its inclusive multidisciplinary approach will accommodate the multilingual nature of our country.

He remarked, “Education system has

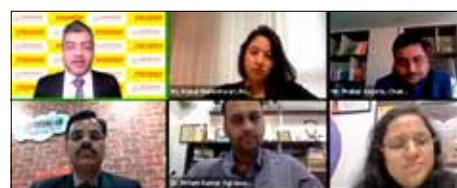


to move from performance to progress; from what to think to how to think and this starts from the basic role of capacity building.”

Shri Malik observed that, “Today, the pre-primary education sector is not integrated into the main education system. Pedagogy has to change. We have to start from the progress of the children and then move upward.” He added, “This is the first time that students are the centres of gravity in the education policy.”



The event organised virtually was followed by two panel discussions involving experts of preschool education sector. The discussions focused on ‘Planning & Implementation of NEP in Early Childhood Education’ and ‘Virtual Learning Methods for Sustained Engagement: The Challenges and Best Practices’. The panelists included Shri Amol Arora, Managing Director, Shemrock & Shemford Group of Schools; Dr SK Rathor, Founder, Chairman & MD, Sanfort Group of Schools; Dr Pritam Kumar Agrawal, Director, Hello Kids; Shri Prahar Anjaria, Chairman, Rangoli Group of Institutes; Ms Amita Bhardwaj, Chief Delivery Officer, Footprints Childcare; Ms Kopal Maheshwari, Founder, Little Einsteins and Dr Mansi Aggarwal, Founder & Managing Director, Scottish Early Years.



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Ministry of Education, Government of India

Accelerating the Process of Learning Even During Lockdown

In a freewheeling conversation, Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Hon'ble Union Minister of Education, Govt. of India, shared his views on E-learning, enumerating the various initiatives undertaken by the Ministry and NBT, India during the pandemic and his journey as an author.

On the initiatives of the Ministry to help students avail best content

In order to support teachers, and accelerate the process of learning, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) provides a plethora of educational applications and platforms at both school and higher education level. The platforms make available engaging content for students, teachers, and parents to facilitate the process of learning at the times of social distancing and nationwide lockdown.

To encourage reading, MHRD has provided students with a huge database of digital books that can be found on National Digital Library and National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER).

NROER provides homogenous collaborative resources for students and teachers. It has 697 Collections, 5,906 Documents, 1,357 Interactive, 1,863 Audios and 6,157 videos. The National Digital Library has a repository of over 4.3 crore e-content material (Text/Audio/Video/ Simulation/Graphics) on multiple disciplines from primary to PG levels. The e-content has been collated from 250 sources; in 300+ languages.

For curricular and research, students can use platforms like DIKSHA, NISHTHA, SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, NROER, PG Pathshala, Shodhganga, E-Shodhsindhu, E-Yantra, FOSSE, Virtual Labs, SAMARTH, VIDWAN, Shodh Sudhi among others. There has been an increase in the consumption pattern of the e-learning platforms. Number of hits on key online educational portals in higher education like SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, Virtual Labs, FOSSEE, E-Yantra and Spoken Tutorial has gone up to 5 times since lockdown. Within a week of lockdown, there was 2 times increase in the use of DIKSHA (National Digital Platform for Teachers).

I also launched a #MyBookMyFriend campaign on the occasion of World Book



Day i.e. on 23rd April (2020), with an objective to encourage reading. Through this initiative, I urge people across the country to read inspiring books in a year, and share their current book using the hashtag #MyBookMyFriend.

On initiatives of the Ministry to reach books to the readers

As per the MHA guidelines, shops selling books have now been allowed to open. Parents and students can visit the nearby shop, although taking into account all the necessary precautions and measures of social distancing, wearing a mask while going to the shops, and sanitizing their hands.

The step was imperative to our belief that books are the primary avenue to all knowledge for all age groups as it offers access to information, aspirations and happenings of both the past and the present. Thereby, we have been encouraging reading and development of libraries from the past through our 'Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat' scheme. However, at the same time I would want to reiterate that the Ministry has made available all learning resources online on various e-learning platforms as discussed earlier.

On efforts to encourage reading habit

The Ministry is working vigorously for promoting reading as a habit. Measures have been strategically adopted at the

policy level and implementation level. The 'New Education Policy' recommends that all communities and education institutions – schools, colleges and universities – will ensure an adequate supply of books that cater to the needs and interests of all students, including persons with disabilities and other differently-abled persons.

The policy suggests constructive steps for increasing access, affordability and quality of books in all Indian languages of both print and digital versions, deployment of library staff and devising career path for them, strengthening all existing libraries, setting up rural libraries and reading rooms in disadvantaged regions, making widely available reading material in Indian languages, opening children's libraries and mobile libraries, establishing social book clubs across India and across subjects, and fostering greater collaborations between education institutions and libraries.

Further, the Ministry is also coming up with the 'National Book Promotion Policy.' The policy envisions a knowledge society imbued with an awareness that comes from reading of books and the positive ideas embedded in them. It also envisions a reading and learning society in which books will be available and accessible to everyone utilising the advancements made through Digital Technology. The policy lays emphasis on 'Improving the Accessibility of Books and Library Movement.' Also, for readership promotion, the policy recommends measures for inculcation of book reading habit, conduction of book fairs and exhibitions, enabling libraries to act as nodal points for reading promotion, development of children's book hubs and reader's clubs, implementation of scheme of book coupons, integration of library services with post-literacy programme, promotion of neighbourhood library system and conduction of literary festivals and national readership surveys.

At present, an annual library grant is being provided in all Government schools to inculcate the reading habits among students of all ages and strengthen school libraries in tandem with the activities under 'Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat.' I am happy to share that the budget allocation was increased by 50% from 473.96 crores to 711.65 crores in 2019-20 vis-a-vis 2018-19; leading to increased number of libraries.

Along with setting up of libraries, we encourage schools to make libraries functional, and to develop and display print-rich environment in the libraries. We recommend that in case a primary school has space constraints, Reading Corners with Children's Literature can be set up. Graded Reading Series (e.g. Barkha Series developed by NCERT) for self-reading of children and developing reading skills as whole and children's magazines are to be made available in the library for facilitating reading for joy and creativity. The child-friendly components in the light of 'Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat', such as Reading and Activity Corner, Poem Corner, Message Boards, Folk Stories, etc. are to be taken into account while including books and other reading material for the library. Bilingual story books may be given special priority. Age-appropriate series of books are to be provided – 'Bulbul' for Pre-primary and Primary classes, 'Mynah' for Upper Primary and 'Koel' for Secondary classes.

States and UTs have also been advised to set up Readers' Club in schools in a phased manner to promote the habit of reading. Various activities may be organised for promotion of book reading in schools. Teacher capacity building to be an important part of these activities. National Book Trust, India through its Children's wing NCCL has set up more than 80,000 Reader's Clubs in various schools across India. NBT, India also provides quality age appropriate reading material in more than 50 Indian languages and dialects (including tribal languages).

Besides these, the Ministry encourages the use of e-platforms like National Digital Library, NROER and others as listed earlier.

On how National Book Trust, India is reaching out to readers, the special initiatives undertaken by NBT especially during pandemic

In the wake of Preventive Measures of the Govt. of India to contain the spread of Covid-19, and to encourage people to #StayIn and #StayHome, the National Book Trust, India has started its initiative of #StayHomeIndiaWithBooks! Through the initiative, NBT is providing its select and best selling titles for FREE Download. The 100+ books, in PDF format, can be downloaded from the NBT's website, which are available in many Indian languages covering all genres of fiction, biography, popular science, teacher's handbook, etc. The books are majorly aimed for children and young adults.

Secondly, NBT, India has launched the Corona Studies Series, that has been especially conceptualized by NBT to document and to provide relevant reading materials for all age-groups for the post Corona readership needs, under the first-sub series of books focused on 'Psychosocial Impact of Pandemic and How to Cope With' prepared by a Study Group comprising of seven psychologists and counsellors constituted by NBT. The titles launched following the Study, look at the various aspects of psychosocial impact on seven different segments of the society through personal interviews, case studies and community perceptions based on the response to the on-line questionnaire floated through the website and their social media handles.

The Study, which was conducted and analysed between 27th March and 1st May 2020, recommends 'Strengthening of Preventive Mental Health component of the National Mental Health Programme' as a long term strategy to prepare a resilient and well-adapted post Corona society, along with physical health, and socio-economic adaptability.

Further, in order to promote the #MyBookMyFriend campaign, to encourage the youth to read so that more people engage in this positive activity during these difficult times and gain from it, NBT, India, in collaboration with various schools has launched an Essay

competition on #MyBookMyFriend where the best entries will be gifted books and participation certificates. In addition, a quiz competition on books and reading is also being launched by NBT, India.

On online learning

The pandemic has surely derailed the classroom process, but the learning process cannot be stopped. Thereby, the Ministry is putting in every effort and resource to make learning possible through both digital and non-digital methods.

I believe that e-learning can be made supplemental to the classroom learning and also ensure that learning reaches far flung areas. Therefore, I encourage all the students to continue learning using the e-resources. E-Learning surely provides opportunities for enhanced learning, flexibility of learning at your convenience, uniform quality content delivery, re-usability of the content, less paper for handouts and books, saves time by enabling quick access to information and the ease of research across subjects. As we are seeing, the teachers and students are putting in remarkable efforts.

I believe, the future of education sector will now be embellished by 'Blended Learning' and 'Flip-Learning Classrooms.' Thus, e-learning will be made more immersive and constructive to the teacher and student community than it is today. The school and higher education institutes should become strategic competitive to foster constant innovation and become more resilient.

On India as a Global Publishing Hub

We are coordinating with all stakeholders. Lockdown has caused some obstacles but we will definitely overcome them. As I often keep mentioning that India itself is a big market. If we count our teachers and students, we have more than 350 million people. Besides a large number of people are directly or indirectly connected to publishing. I think we can be globally competitive if we focus on quality and innovation. Digital and E-learning are the ways to move ahead.

On #MyBookMyFriend campaign, its conception and purpose

The world today is facing an unprecedented

crisis – a severe pandemic that has left the masses wondering what the ‘new normal’ will be in the days to come. In such tough times, we look with hope towards positive steps being taken by various individuals and organizations to keep our future alive and bright.

On his journey as an author

I developed a passion for writing from a very young age. In fact, I started writing as part of penning down my day-to-day experiences and my thoughts about them. Gradually, I started writing for magazines and newspapers. I also had a short stint with the All India Radio Station as a Presenter.

My first collection of poems, imbued with patriotism, was highly appreciated by the readers. Since then, I have been writing continuously.

On authors who inspired him

There are many authors who have inspired me through their writings, however, I have been deeply inspired and touched by the writings of Swami Vivekananda, Maharishi Aurobindo, Munshi Prem Chand, and Rabindranath Tagore.

On his childhood and early education

I belong to a poor and ordinary family. My father was a gardener and my mother a housewife. Since childhood I have closely seen and experienced poverty and misery. From an early age of adolescence, I started supporting my mother by working with her in the fields, tilling the land, cutting wood for fuel, and getting fodder for the cattle from the forest – all these chores I did while studying side-by-side.

I completed my early education from the school in my village. Thereafter, I used to walk seven kilometers, passing through dense forest, to reach Damdeval High school, where I completed my high school studies. Since our economic and financial condition was not strong, my parents discouraged me from obtaining secondary education, and also since there was no inter-college nearby or even far away. However, looking at my persistence, my parents sent me to an Ashram in Haridwar for free studies. There, while doing several jobs for the Ashram, I completed my studies.

From being Minister of Development, Uttar Pradesh, to Minister of Culture, Minister for Finance, Minister of Health in Uttarakhand, and then Chief Minister and at present a Cabinet Minister, and finding time for writing

I have given a great importance to management in my life. Be it politics, social or literature, I try to use every single minute of the day in the most efficient way. Despite my busy schedule due to political responsibilities, I do ensure to take out some time for my passion of writing. For me, writing is as important as is food for sustenance. Even when I am travelling, whether it be in a car, train or plane, I keep my writing alive. Besides, I have also reduced my sleep time. For last many years, I sleep for just about four or five hours, and so in the remaining 20 hours, I make sure to make some time for my passion of writing.

About his favourite genre

I have touched almost all the genres of Hindi literature in my writing. I have tried, even if a little bit, to write in all of the genres. As for the topics, in my poems and stories, I have tried to write in simple words about our society and the common man—his sufferings and his problems. You can say that the common man and his sufferings take the preference of topics in my writings. During my regular busy political schedule, I meet hundreds of people every day. And while listening to their problems, their pains and while trying to solve them, I get topics for my writings.

I have been in publishing line for the last 40 years and served in various capabilities. Lots of my stories are inspired by real time experiences. Apart from stories, novels and poems, I have written a lot on Indian culture, tourism and personality development, in addition to writing for children as well. But if I have to choose my favourite genre, I must admit that I prefer poetry, because one can say a lot in just a few words.

About research on his works, and their adaption into songs and films

Yes, it is my good fortune that more than two dozen major and minor researches have been done on my literature, while others

are in process. In addition, songs written by me are played on many stations of All India Radio across the country. Audio, videos of many of my songs have also been released by a few companies, including T-Series, Rama among others. Films have also been made on my novels titled Major Nirala and Beera. A few television serials are also under production.

Honours for his works

It is a matter of great privilege that almost all the Presidents of India and Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee ji have honoured my books. As regards to other countries, it is my pleasure that my books have been honoured by more than a dozen countries including the President and Prime Minister of Mauritius, the Prime Minister of Nepal, the Prime Minister of Uganda, the Prime Minister of Bhutan, and other dignitaries.

On the occasion of World Book Day on April 23rd, the #MyBookMyFriend Campaign was launched to encourage people, especially young minds, to read books of interest during the time of lockdown. In these difficult times, reading books will effectively shape the minds of people and young children in coping up with the mental and psychological distress, and will hopefully work as a constructive step towards fighting this pandemic together. As I often say, “There could be no better friend, better strength, better motivator, or a better mentor than books.” It is a matter of great encouragement that many celebrities and people of renown have come on the forefront to support #MyBookMyFriend campaign – from Amitabh Bachchan to Prasoon Joshi, to Shradha Kapoor, Esha Pandey, Acharya Balkrishan, Rajkumar Rao, among others. The power of books has to be leveraged to combat the psycho-emotional bond with oneself and with society and further stimulate our intellect and creativity. Thus, I encourage everyone to express their love for books and reading.

--excerpted from the conversation of Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’, Union Minister of Education with the magazine *All About Book Publishing*.

NBT Books on Governance

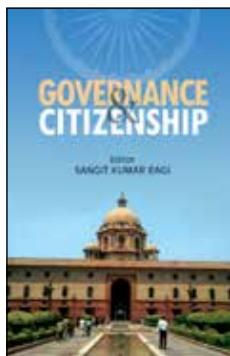
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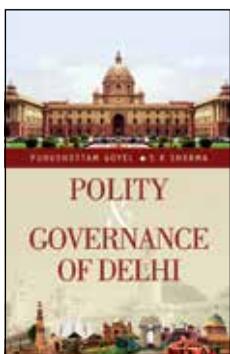
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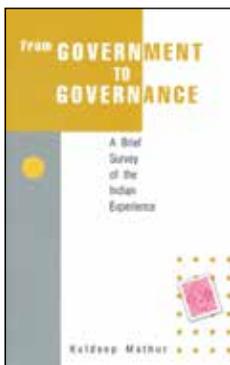
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Right to Information Act: A Primer

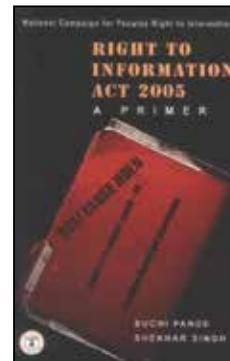
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This Primer is designed to help seekers of information, its custodians and RTI appellate authorities. Through a question

answer format it introduces the lay reader to the RTI ACT and its implementation, its use and function as well as details of how information can be accessed and appeals filed. The Primers also highlights the rights and duties of public information officers and public authority. Also includes sample application form and appeal formats.

ISBN 978-81-237-5075-0



Employment Guarantee Act: A Primer

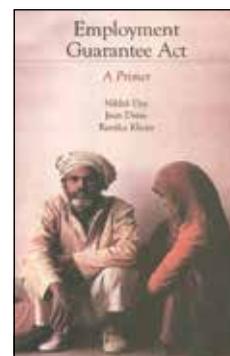
Jean Dreze & others

Rs. 25.00 46 pp

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 is a law whereby any adult who is willing to do unskilled manual labour at the minimum wage is entitled to being employed on public works within fifteen days. This Primer is a simple introduction to the Act. Through a question-answer format, it informs an unemployed person in India how to take advantage of the Act.

It also educates concerned citizens as to how the Act can be implemented effectively for the benefit of all concerned.

ISBN 81-237-4728-4



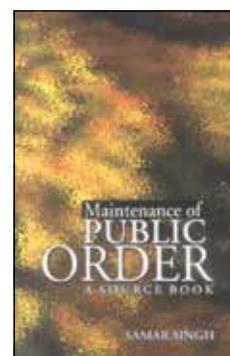
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Samar Singh

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Panchayati Raj in India

M Aslam

218 pp Rs 100.00

The institution of Panchayati Raj is now recognised as an important mechanism for decentralising power and ensuring people's participation in development activities. This publication considers the various stages through which it evolved and also the promise it holds for the future.

ISBN 978-81-237-5188-7



NBT @ Delhi Book Fair

The 26th edition of Delhi Book Fair was held from 30-31 October 2020. The Fair was organized by the Federation of Indian Publishers with CAPEXIL as co-organiser.

Hosted virtually on PragatiE, the Fair was inaugurated by Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Hon'ble Union Minister of Education. The booklovers registered online and visited the exhibitors' stalls and browsed through books. Over 100 exhibitors participated in the Fair. Several webinars were also organised in which well-known publishers, authors, among others participated. An online literature festival 'Pragati Prasad' was also organised at the fair where the issues related to the book publishing and social aspects were discussed. The Fair was also complemented by the Stationery/Office Automation and Corporate Gifts Fair held concurrently with its product profile.

National Book Trust, India also exhibited a wide range of its publications across genres at Stall no. 83. Many booklovers visited NBT stall and browsed through its large collection of books.



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The views expressed in the signed articles do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Trust.

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