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PRESS RELEASE

Shri Sanjay Dhotre Releases NBT Books at New Delhi World Book Fair

“While going through the displays at the Theme Pavilion of New Delhi World Book Fair, a thought came to my mind that if a line or a word of a book can change the life of a reader, then Gandhi’s life is no less an all-time great book because Gandhi by his words and wisdom changed the lives of millions,” said Shri Sanjay Dhotre, Hon’ble Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Government of India at a book release function held at the Theme Pavilion of New Delhi World Book Fair, Pragati Maidan.

Expressing his immense joy in finding himself amidst great writers and their works along with India’s linguistic diversity, Shri Sanjay Dhotre hoped that the New Delhi World Book Fair would go from strength to strength in the years to come. Earlier, Prof Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, welcomed Shri Dhotre on behalf of all the stakeholders of the Fair.

On this occasion recently published NBT books titled *Gandhi Ahimsa Ka Senani* (Hindi translation of the book *Gandhi: Warrior of Non-violence*, authored by P.D. Tandon and Roland Edgar Wolseley); *Baramah* (Punjabi), *Visithira Thampathigal K Sabha Sirukathaikal* (Tamil), *Bhatke-Vimukta Samaj: Bhasha va Sanskruti* (Marathi); and *Sitakant Mahapatranka Shrestha Gadyakruti* (Odia). Lt. Col. Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT thanked the Minister for his inspiring words and sparing his time to be present at the release function.

Later, a discussion on Gandhiji’s views on education and languages was organized by National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language at the Theme Pavilion. The speakers on the occasion included Prof. Akhtarul Wasey; Prof. Rizwan Kaisar; Shri Qurbaan Ali; Prof. Shahid Akhtar and Shri Aquil Ahmad, Director, NCPUL. The speakers also talked about Gandhi’s commitment towards promoting education in mother tongue and his contribution towards nation building.

Gandhi was a multifaceted personality, he was not only a writer, but also was a publisher, editor, translator and a leader. His different shades of personality were discussed at a panel discussion held at the Theme Pavilion, today. The speakers on the occasion included Dr Mala Mishra, Aditi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi; Ms Shashi Prabha Tewari, poet and senior journalist; Shri Ravi Raj, Programme Officer, Doordarshan; Dr Rajeev Srivastav, filmmaker and Shri Suresh Sharma, Director, National School of Drama. The panelists discussed in detail how Gandhi has influenced the writers like Premchand, Maithilisharan Gupt, Subhadara Kumari Chauhan; filmmakers, playwrights and media. Dr Rajiv Raj remarked that he was one of the best journalists of his times and wrote fearlessly. The panelists were of the view that there is a need to analyse Mahatma Gandhi more deeply in today’s context.

National Conclave on Readership and Book Promotion

A National Conclave on Readership and Book Promotion wherein a panel discussion of State Project Directors and other Stakeholders was organized by National Book Trust, India on the sidelines of New Delhi World Book Fair 2020 at Pragati Maidan.

The discussion focused on presenting content for children in an attracting way in order to augment their knowledge base beyond text books. Inputs were invited from the delegates present on how to incorporate local, cultural and ethnic aspects in the reading material so that young minds can relate to it. Inaugurating the session, Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, NBT said that National Book Trust,

India is probably among first five institutions in the world, which publishes books in 51 dialects and languages. He also informed the audience present that in the year 2019, NBT books reached about three crore young readers.

Lt. Col. Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT said that a teacher actually is the nation builder. Speaking about NBT books for children, Ms Neera Jain, Chief Editor and Joint Director said that NBT endeavors to play an important role in nation building through its books. On this occasion, a documentary on '*Padhe Bharat, Badhe Bharat*' was also launched. The film highlighted NBT's contribution in making the *Padhe Bharat, Badhe Bharat* initiative of the Govt. of India a success.

The session was attended by 35 representatives from 20 states and Union Territories – from top North Ladakh to down South Puducherry and from far North-East Nagaland to western most point of India i.e. Gujarat. The distinguished dignitaries included Secretary School Education, UT of Ladakh Shri Saugat Biswas, IAS, State Project Director from Maharashtra Dr Ashwini Joshi, State Project Director Delhi Ms. Ranjana Deswal, State Project Director Mizoram Shri Lalma Chhuana.

Children's Pavilion

A Digital Storytelling session by noted children's authors Usha Chhabra and Rumi Malik kept the children involved and engaged at the Children's Pavilion. The session was based upon the beauty of the seven-sisters or commonly known as North-east. The stories with a little touch of nature by Rumi Malik mesmerized the children. Usha Chhabra informed about role of digital images in storytelling. Later, a story based upon the life of Saikhom Mirabai Chanu was narrated to the children.

A workshop on the 'Rights of Children' by Law 24X7 was organized at the Children's Pavilion. Nikhil Pandey co-ordinated the event while Bhavana Anand gave a power point presentation. Sarika Varma, the director of Law 24x7 and Kartikey Shukla, a children's rights activist were also present on the occasion. The children carefully listened to the speakers as they talked about interesting and informative things from the constitution. The children were advised that they should always rely on the police if in some problem.

A creative writing workshop was also organized by Happy Horizons Trust at the Pavilion. The children were asked to write a letter to or on Bapu. The children wrote how Mahatma Gandhi paved ways for Swacch Bharat Abhiyaan; whereas some wrote about how they wished he would be alive today. The children worked in groups and wrote to him or on relevance of his values in today's time. Few of them drew his illustrations, posters to express their love for him, it was also displayed at the walls of the hall. Another competition was organized for children at Children's Pavilion. They had to write a letter to someone dear, who might be their friend, mother, father or any loved one. The event was organised by Nav Prabhat Jan Seva Sansthan, and co-ordinated by Shri Rajkumar Dubey, the secretary of the organizing committee. The host assured the letters be posted to the designated person, on behalf of the kids. The speakers on the occasion were Dr. Amarnath Amar, former Doordarshan; Gyanendra Rawat, Sr. Journalist and Environmentalist; and Ranveer Singh, Principal, Brahm Shakti School, Sonipat.

A panel discussion on Mahatma Gandhi's Writings was organised by DSBPA at the Children's Pavilion. Moderated by Shri Shekhar Sarkar, the panellists on the occasion included Shri Deepak Vohra, IFS; Shri Abid Surti, noted cartoonist; Dr Gopichandran, and Shri Manas Ranjan Mahapatra, Editor, NBT. Shri Abid Surti shared how Gandhiji is relatively close to his family, and about his initiative of water conservation. Dr. Gopichandran described how books should be written about moments of inspiration. While interacting with the students, Shri Deepak Vohra shed some light upon mobile addiction syndrome, and

how the body responds to it. He also shared an excerpt from Mahabharata. Graphics and photographs of Mahatma Gandhi were also shown during the discussion.

Seminar Hall

A poetry session was organised by Indian Society of Authors at the Seminar Hall. Moderated by Shri Anil Verma, the other speakers on the occasion included Dr Mukta, Dr Harish Arora, Shri Laxmi Shankar Bajpai, Dr Vivek Gautam, Ms Sushma Bhandari and Ms Veena Raghav. Shri Anil Verma shed light on the importance of poetry, especially Hindi Poetry, and how it has plummeted to a great depth in our society. This session aimed at highlighting the beauty of Hindi literature and poetry amongst the audience. Dr. Vivek Gautam remarked that Indian Society of Authors in collaboration with National Book Trust, India hope to bring change in the perspective of people about Hindi literature by conducting events like these at various places in India. During the session, Ms Sushma Bhandari enlightened the occasion by singing beautiful Hindi poems, while Ms Veena Raghav presented some unheard and beautiful couplets.

Authors' Corner

“The teachings and thoughts of Swami Vivekananda are immortal”, said Dr. Ravi Prakash Tekchandani during a book discussion held at the Author's Corner at Hall no. 8. The session was organized by National Book Trust, India and Bhartiya Shiksha Mandal. The speakers on the occasion included Shri Mukul Kanitkar and Shri Anoop A.J., authors of the book; Prof. Sachidanand Joshi and Shri Shekhar Sain, Chairman, Sangeet Natak Academy. Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, NBT was also present on the occasion. While introducing the book “Essential Vivekananda”, Shri Anoop described how Swami Vivekananda has got love and respect, not only from the people of our country, but from people all over the world. He is of the view that at a very young age, Swami Vivekananda was able to bring the change and evolution in our country with his thoughts and teachings.

The cover of forthcoming novel *Kala Naag*, by Surendra Mohan Pathak, well-known author was released at a function held at Lekhak Manch. The release was followed by an interactive session with the author. The session was coordinated by Prabhat Ranjan. The programme was organized by Hind Pocket Books. Later, a book release function was organized by Yash Publications at Lekhak Manch. On this occasion, two books titled *Mere Samay ka Bharat* by Prof. Baldeo Bhai Sharma and *Sakshi hai Samay*, authored by Rajeev Ranjan were released.

In addition, a discussion on ‘Untold history of our Country and how our ancestors defended against invaders’ was organized at the Author's Corner, Hall No. 8. Shri Ankur Pathak, Shri Sankrant Sanu and Ms Manoshi Sinha Rawal were the speakers on the occasion. The programme was organized by Garuda Prakashan.

International Events Corner

A Conference on *Sino-India Publishing* followed by the launch of 20 books, translated from Chinese to Hindi, Tamil, Urdu and English was held at the International Events Corner in the august presence of Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, National Book Trust, India. The programme was organised by Royal Collins Publishing Group Inc., China. Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma recounted the fact of India and China being the two oldest civilizations of the history and the serendipity of the two to be neighbours has strengthened their relations over the years. Prof. Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Dept. of Mass Communication, Central University of Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh and also former Chairman of NBT, briefly described the history of India and China. According to him, “Literature is not just about written words but it actually connects the sentiments of human beings of different societies.” Mr. Zhang Jianxin, Chinese Culture Counsellor, who spoke in Hindi and English talked about Indo-China cultural exchanges. He further added that he used to study Indian books and still reads and expressed that it is

his responsibility to promote friendly relationship through cultural exchanges between the two countries. Prof. Zhang Zhiqian, Dean, Nanjing University, China, presented a brief status of published books in China. Ms. Gong Haiyan, Vice President, East China Normal University Press, talked about her publishing press which works on the development of research, teaching and academics in their country. Prof. Rajendra, the translator of the books from Chinese to Hindi and English said that books are the key element to accelerate friendship between the two neighbouring nations. Bob Song moderated the session.