

NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA
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PRESS RELEASE

Memoir of veteran journalist and social activist Rami Chhabra released

The autobiography of Ms Rami Chhabra veteran journalist and social activist, entitled *Breaking Ground: Journey Into The Media ... And Out* published by the National Book Trust, India was released in a function organised at the India International Centre, New Delhi.

The release was followed by a panel discussion. The session was moderated by **Shri S. Nihal Singh**, Former Editor, *The Statesman & The Indian Express*.

Justice (Rtd.) Shri Rajinder Sachar, Former President, People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), **Shri H K Dua**, MP (Rajya Sabha) & Former Editor-in-Chief, *The Tribune*, **Dr. Mira Shiva**, Founder Member, People's Health Movement, **Dr. Zarina Bhatti**, Former President, Indian Association of Women's Studies participated in the discussion.

The speakers gave deep insight into the personality of Ms Chhabra, her determination and her fighting spirit to carve out her niche in the male dominant society. Shri Sachar talked about her stand for increasing strength of women in Parliament and issues related to sex workers. All the speakers also appreciated her efforts in other social issues like health policies, gender bias and the circumstances in which she worked as a journalist and activist especially in 60's and 70's when the mind-set of the people in the Indian society towards women was not changed. They also opined that this volume is more than an autobiography, it is a kind of social autobiography as it not only talks about her but also about the post-independence society.

Ms Chhabra read out excerpts from her volume about her journey from Mexico to Vietman in 1975 and also about her experience as a journalist.

Earlier, Shri M A Sikandar, Director, NBT welcomed the guests present on the occasion. He hoped that the volume will be well received by the readers. He also informed about NBT's plan to bring out e-books for readers.

The post-Independence India roused unprecedented hopes and expectations in the country, particularly among the educated classes. Growing up during those atmospheric years and starting out professionally in the historic fifties and sixties, Rami Chhabra carved a niche for herself as a pioneering 'woman' journalist. The book, presented as her 'professional memoir', takes us deep into a positive life perspective turning into a complex web of disappointments, bewilderments—and committed battles—as the times changed, particularly in the last two decades of globalization. Fascinating and passionately narrated, with minute details of events throwing light on the struggle for women's equality and public service communication space, in particular the intersection with sexuality, the book offers a rare insight into 'other' sides of nation-building.