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New Delhi

Press Release

Braving the Rains, Book lovers throng New Delhi World Book Fair

Despite the rain and cold Sunday, a large number of people thronged the New Delhi World Book Fair today. More than 80,000 people of all age-groups were seen busy buying their favourite books. Many participated in literary and cultural activities being organised at the Fair. There were long queues of book lovers, patiently waiting their turn at the Hall entry.

Activities at the NDWBF today:

CEOSpeak

The signature event organised on the sidelines of New Delhi World Book Fair, CEOSPEAK OVER CHAIRMAN'S BREAKFAST, by National Book Trust, India in association with FICCI, hosted the first-ever an India-Emirati Publishing Forum at the Hotel Ashoka today in conjunction with the Guest of Honour Presentation of Sharjah at the Fair. H.E. Sheikh Fahim bin Sultan Al Qasimi, Executive Chairman of the Department of Government Relations, Sharjah was present on the occasion as a Distinguished Guest. Welcoming a 125+ strong congregation of CEOs, MDs, Senior Publishing Professionals of India, Emirates, and also from China, France, Poland, Sri Lanka etc, Shri Baldev Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT, said that Indian's relations with the UAE were age-old and through the World Book Fair, NBT was striving to strengthen these bonds.

Giving his key-note address, Mr. Ahmed Al Ameri, Chairman, Sharjah Book Authority, invited Indian publishers to take advantage of the low logistical costs offered by Sharjah publishing city. Mr. Ali Al Shaali, Vice President, Emirates Publishers Association & CEO Alhudhud Publishing House, said that with its focus on publishing, Sharjah has emerged as a leading city in realising the UAE's vision of becoming a global

hub for the creative industries. Mr. Dilip Chenoy, Secretary General, FICCI, said that India was the second-largest English language print book publisher in the world. Making a presentation on Indian publishing scene, Mr. Vikrant Mathur, Director India & Asia Pacific Nielsen Book, said that the total trade market in India was worth INR 24.0 billion and growing at a CAGR of 8.5%.

In the second session, a panel discussion on 'India-Emirati Co-operation in Publishing' was held. Moderated by Shri Ratnesh Jha, MD, Cambridge University Press, the participants included Ms. Sayoni Basu, Ms. Atiya Zaidi, and Mr. Ravi Dee Cee from India; and Mr. Ali Al Shaali, and Mr. Tamer Al Sayed, MD, Kalimat Publishing from the Emirates. The engaging panel discussion was followed by a question-answer sessions. On behalf of NBT, Shri Kumar Vikram, Editor & Project In-charge made closing remarks at the Forum which was anchored by Shri Sumit Gupta, Senior Director, FICCI.

Theme Pavilion

The Theme presentation of New Delhi World Book Fair 2019, 'Books for Readers with Special Needs' brings to light the life and struggles, the trials and triumphs, joy and despair of a very significant part of human society who are called differently-abled or the *Divyangjan*. The Theme focuses on the reading needs of the Readers with Special Needs. The idea is to project the aspirations as well as the achievements of this special community in order to develop a better understanding about them among the people at large.

The specially designed Pavilion is disabled-friendly with steel railings and wheel chairs. Sign language interpreters are also there for visitors at the Pavilion. An exclusive exhibition of 500 books including Braille books, audio books, silent books, tactile books, integrated print-braille books, books for differently-abled, children with sight or ear impairment, autistic kids, children/readers with ADHD, behavioural/psychological problems/anxieties is one of the major highlights of the Theme Pavilion.

A specially designed Experience Accessibility Booth by Microsoft is the centre of attraction at the Pavilion. Divided into four parts, the booth provides a glimpse of various software which are available for visually impaired, hearing impaired, readers with ADHD and mobility disorders. While coming to the booth, one realizes the fact that technology has made both writing and reading easy for the persons with special needs. Besides there is an exhibition of various tools and materials like geometry kits, Braille slates, etc. for visually impaired persons. The exhibition has been put up by All India Confederation of the Blinds. The paintings by visually impaired children and artists add colour to the pavilion.

During the day, several programmes were organised at the pavilion including a painting programme for visually impaired children. The programme was organised by NBT and Inside Me. Ms Shivani Bharadwaj conducted the session and helped children demonstrate their drawing skills. Later, a dance programme was presented by the children of Pingalwada Foundation, who were dancing on the instructions of the sign interpreter, as they could not hear the music. Moreover, everyday documentary films focusing on the Theme are also screened.

Children's Pavilion

A storytelling session and a creative writing workshop was organised at the Children's Pavilion, especially for children with special needs. The session was conducted by well-known children's authors Devendra Mewari and Manjari Shukla. They narrated several interesting stories to entertain the children. Children from various NGOs and schools including Noida Deaf Society (NSD) and Jaago Teens participated in the session. The storytelling session was followed by a creative writing workshop. During the session, the authors explained how to create and write a story.

Jaago Teens organised an interactive session for children. During the session, children were informed about digital games. With the help of different digital tools, children with special needs played digital games. The children followed the instructions easily and were happy to learn the art of playing games.

To mark 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, a storytelling session on Gandhi ji was organised. Through his stories, Dr Ved Mitra enlightened children about the life of Gandhi ji and his principles of peace and non-violence. Besides Jaishree Sethi, well-known storyteller also engaged the children with her stories full of imagination and amusing characters. The session was organised by Institute for Research in Indian Wisdom.

Other Activities

KavitaKosh.org, the largest online repository of Indian literature, organised a panel discussion on literature and its interrelation in different Indian languages at Hall no. 12. The panelists on the occasion were: Prasoon Latant, Amrendra Nath Tripathi, Hari Narayan Singh, Kailash Mishra, Sanjeev Kumar Mukesh, Shruti Puri and Vinay Bhushan. The speakers discussed about the interrelation between various Indian languages like Angika, Awadhi, Bajjika, Maithili, Magahi, Brij and Bhojpuri. At the end of the programme, panelists were presented with mementos and Kavita Kosh calendar 2019.

A children's reading workshop about the biography of Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qasimi, the Ruler of Sharjah, was held at the International Events Corner. The workshop was organised by Arab Children's Book Publishers Forum. The panelists include Dr Saleha Ghabish, author; Ashraf Shahin, Vice-President and Aisha Hamad Mughwer, General Secretary, Arab Children's Book Publishers Forum.

In addition, many dignitaries visited the book fair including the High Commissioner of Bangladesh, High Commissioner of Pakistan, as well as noted writers like Ashok Chakradhar, Narendra Kohli, Siddhaarth Basu among others.