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New Delhi

Press Release

Youth Visiting New Delhi World Book Fair in Large Numbers

"Seeing a good number of young people browsing through their favorite books at New Delhi World Book Fair, sends a message across that the habit of reading is increasing," said Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT while speaking to BBC Punjabi at Pragati Maidan. He added that the participation of youth is increasing every day.

It is worth mentioning that several government organisations including NCERT, Sahitya Akademi, All India Radio, Department of Publication, ICAR, ICHR, Publications Division among others are participating and are providing good quality books at low price.

Theme Pavilion

A discussion on 'Himalaya: Sensitivity, Current Threats and Challenges' was organised at the Theme Pavilion. Shri Chandiprasad Bhatt, noted environmentalist and social activist was the chief guest on the occasion. While interacting with the booklovers at the Theme Pavilion, Shri Chandiprasad Bhatt said that in contemporary times, conservation of environment is a sensitive issue. We cannot overlook the issue as it will lead to our own destruction. Talking about the *Chipko Andolan*, he said that the protest was a significant step towards conservation of environment and stopping the felling of trees. There was an active participation of women and youth in the movement which inspired people to plant more and more trees. Shri Sopan Joshi, well-known journalist and Dr Manish Mohan Gore also spoke on the occasion.

At the Theme Pavilion, a programme on Majuli Carbon-Neutral Initiative was organised by the Government of Assam. The speakers on the occasion included A K Johri, Swapan Mehra, Pallav Jha among others. Dr Rita Chowdhury, Director NBT was also present on the occasion. A report on the project was released.

National Book Trust, India organised a seminar on Environment and Climate Change at the Theme Pavilion. Moderated by Shri Amrendra Kishore, the speakers on the occasion were Shri Pramod Bhargav, Shri Sanjay Kashyap and Shri Arvind Kumar Singh. During the seminar the speakers discussed about various aspects of climate change.

Children's Pavilion

An illustration workshop-cum-competition was organised at the Children's Pavilion. During the workshop children were asked to draw illustrations on pollution-free environment. A large number of students from Salwan Public School participated in this contest. The illustrations of winners of the contest would be published in *Champak*, a children's magazine.

European Union

A writing workshop was organised at the European Union Pavilion. The idea behind the workshop was to bring out the best among the budding writers present in the audience. The panel members included authors from various countries like David Machado (Portugal), Osvalds Zebris (Latvia), Jasmin Freilih (Slovenia) and Kallia Papadaki (Greece). They discussed how books came up after a long period of writing and the important things that authors keep in their mind while writing. The programme concluded with the distribution of books to the winners of the workshop.

The musical performance by Martinu Czech Philharmonic Orchestra at Hall no. 7 began with the National Anthem of India and Czech Republic played through their traditional musical instruments. Their lively performance mesmerised the audience. Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT; H.E. Mr Tomasz Kozlowski, Ambassador of European Union to India; and other dignitaries form European Union, Czech Republic, Slovakia and India were also present on the occasion.

Literary Activities

At the *Reflections* Authors' Corner, Ms Amita Baig, well-known author talked about her book *Taj Mahal: Multiple Narratives*. The session was moderated Dipa Chaudhari, editor-in-chief, Om Books International. During the discussion, Ms Amita Baig explained why she had taken Taj Mahal, as centre of her story. She said, "it is not a simple story, it took me a lot of time and I have written it keeping in mind what Shah Jahan, the creator of the monument saw it as and the emotions of the Indians who have respect for their forefather." The book is a correlation between the heritage and the socio-economic factors surrounding it.

At the *Conversations* Authors' Corner, the book *A Man with Golden Seeds*, authored by Rajeev Ranjan Prasad was launched. The book is based on a real story of Dr Narayan Chawda, a farmer who has spent his whole life farming best of the crops in a Naxalite area, Bastar.

Haryana Punjabi Sahitya Akademi, Panchkula in association with Punjab Lokmanch, Delhi organised a poets' meet at Seminar Hall. Later, students of Guru Harkishan Public School rendered poems based on importance of books. The session was coordinated by Prof. Sudarshan.

A *mushaira* was also organised by NCPUL in the evening which mesmerized the people at large. Urdu poetry, nazm, ghazals were rendered. Prof. Sayyed Ali Karim, Director, NCPUL; Dr Shams Equbal, Publications Officer were also present. In addition, Shabana Shabnam, Dipti Mishra, Prof. Farooq Bakshi among others also participated in the event.

Shri Manoj Tiwari and Shri Rajendra Aggarwal, Members of Parliament also visited the Book fair.