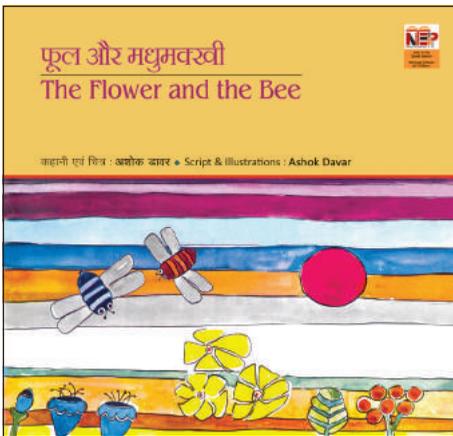


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### PICK OF THE MONTH



**The Flower and the Bee**  
Ashok Davar

978-81-237-9638-3; Rs 55

## Author-Illustrator Workshop at Gangtok



“There is a need to bring out age-appropriate books to nurture reading habit among children and young readers,” said Shri Bhim Thatal, State Project Director, Sikkim, at the inauguration of Author-Illustrator workshop held at Gangtok, Sikkim from 23 to 26 March 2021.

Shri Thatal added that the newly drafted National Education Policy 2020 focuses on the mother tongue as the medium of education and there is a need to bring out more reading material for the

young readers in their own mother tongue.

In his address, Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT spoke about the importance of NEP 2020 and the role of NBT in promoting books in Indian languages and the habit of reading across the country. Urging the young readers to read more and more books, Shri Malik said, “One book, one day will change your life, it will change your entire perspective about life.”

Shri SR Subba, President, Sikkim Akademi appreciated NBT's efforts to promote Nepali language, literature and



its cultural heritage.

Prof. Rudra Poudyal, President, Nepali Sahitya Parishad also spoke on the occasion.

During the workshop around 40 books were developed including silent books, picture books and story books in Nepali language as well as in bilingual format (Nepali-Bangla & Nepali-English).

Addressing a large gathering at the valedictory function of the workshop, Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, NBT, spoke of the role of children's literature in the society. He said, "Children's literature is the backbone of all civilizations and hence, should be given paramount importance."

Prof. Sharma further talked about the importance of India's rich cultural heritage, its reflection on literature and



how it is needed to get in touch with one's roots. He was hopeful that the workshop would help in creating content enriched with the region's culture and ethos.

Well-known authors and illustrators including Arjun Rai 'Yava', Pravin Rai 'Jumeli', Dr Kavita Lama, Meena Subba, Tulshi Ghimirey, Anathbandhu Chatterjee, Dipanwita Roy, Dr Swati

Guha, Diwakar Lamichaney, Sagar Subba, Deepa Rai, Dhiraj Pradhan, Budhi Kr Subba, Debashis Saha, Kalicharan Hembram, and Debabrata Ghosh participated in the workshop.

The workshop was organised by NBT in collaboration with Sikkim Akademi, Culture Department at Sir Tashi Namgyal Senior Secondary School.

The Trust is working towards the promotion of Nepali language and literature through its various activities like publishing quality books in Nepali, promoting young Nepali authors, organising literary programmes and bringing out translations, bilingual books. So far, the Trust has published over 30 books in Nepali language.

The programme was coordinated by Shri Bratin Dey, Bangla Editor, NBT.



## NBT Participates at Amritsar Sahit Utsav

National Book Trust, India participated at the Amritsar Sahit Utsav organised by Khalsa College, Amritsar from 2 to 5 March 2021.

Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT was the special guest at the inauguration of the festival. He spoke about the NEP 2020 and the importance of mother tongue as a medium of instruction. He also talked about the Prime Minister's Mentorship Programme which focuses on providing training to young writers and promote their writings.

Dr Surjit Patar, well-known author was the chief guest on the occasion. The session was presided over by S. Rajender Mohan Singh Chhina, Secretary, Khalsa College. Dr Mehal Singh, Principal, Khalsa College and Dr Atam Randhawa,



Head, Department of Punjabi, Khalsa College were also present on the occasion.

During the festival, the Trust organised several programmes including panel discussions on Life and Works of Guru Teg Bahadur; NEP 2020 and Importance of Regional Languages; and Guru Teg Bahadur: In the Eyes of Historians. Noted scholars, authors and academicians

including Dr Amarjeet Singh Grewal, Dr S P Singh, Dr Ramandeep Kaur, Dr Amanpreet Singh, Prof. Kanwaljeet Singh, Dr Ramendra Kaur, Dr Jaspal Kaur Kang, Prof. Yograj Angreesh and Dr Jagjeevan Singh participated in these programmes. The Trust also organized Punjabi Advisory Panel Meeting on the occasion.

The programme was coordinated by Ms Navjot Kaur, Punjabi Editor, NBT.



# Bodo Children's Writers and Illustrators Workshop

“NBT’s efforts to build a corpus of children’s literature in Bodo language is laudable,” said Dr Dinanath Basumatary, former Director, CUDC, Bodoland University. He was speaking at the inauguration of the three day Bodo children’s writers and illustrators workshop. He was happy to note that NBT is the implementing agency of the Prime Minister’s mentorship programme to nurture young writers and felt that this would help talented youth to flower as good writers.

“There is a large untapped crop of talented young aspiring writers and illustrators in the Bodo community,” said Dr Birhas Giri Basumatary, Principal, Bijni College. Workshops like the one now being organised by NBT here at Bijni could go a long way in realising this potential he added.

Addressing the guests Shri Maneswar Brahma, well known artist and Lalit Kala Akademi Awardee, said that by bringing together writers and illustrators from the region the books thus produced will not only impart a local flavour to the publications but also showcase a society and its unique culture.

Dr Mangal Singh Hazowary, eminent writer and Sahitya Akademi Awardee spoke on the importance of providing good reading material for children especially in their mother tongue. A Padmashree honoured scholar, Dr Hazowary has been a mentor and guide for the many workshops that NBT organises for publishing books in Bodo.



Speaking on the occasion, Shri Rajen Basumatary, publisher, Editor and president of Bodo Writers’ Academy said that for the last many years they have been collaborating with NBT to bring out a series of interesting books for children. While the thrust was on publishing translations of NBT’s books into Bodo, this year the focus is on publishing original books in Bodo written by Bodo writers and illustrated by Bodo artists. Ten books are slated to be published through this workshop.

Writers who participated in the workshop include Umesh Brahma, Baruah

Kanta Brahma, Ananda Ram Wary, Arun Ch. Mashahary, Rajen Basumatary, Mira Brahma, Sadananda Daimary, Lakhiram Basumatary, Sapan Kumar Basumatary, and Sansumai Khangri Basumatary. The illustrators who participated in the workshop include Chhakhlum Boro, Bibungsar Brahma, Hardwrsa Goyari, Lakhen Brahma, Mohit Basumatary, Gwhwm Boro, Jimmy Mushahary and Danswring Narzary. The writers and illustrators were guided by resource persons who include Shri Mangal Singh Hazowary, Sahitya Akademi awarded writer, Shri Rakhao Basumatary, eminent writer, and Dr Dipali Kherkhary, writer and principal of GB College, Howli.

The workshop was organised by NBT in association with Bodo Writers’ Academy from 18 to 20 March 2021 at the Auditorium of Engkhong Publications, Bijni, Bodoland, Assam.

The programme was coordinated by Shri Benny Kurian, English Editor, NBT.



## NBT as Knowledge Partner



### @ Education Leaders' Summit

National Book Trust, India was the Knowledge Partner for the Education Leaders' Summit organized on 20 March 2021 by Manav Rachna Educational Institutions and ASSOCHAM. The Summit brought together the principals from schools of Delhi NCR, policymakers, and institution heads for unlocking the transformation of India's education sector.

They discussed strategies and best practices to catalyse India's transformation into one of the top 10 innovation-led countries of the world. Speakers included Shri Anurag Tripathi, Secretary, CBSE; Padma Shri Dr V S Chauhan, Executive Chairman, NAAC; Dr Prashant Bhalla, Chairman, ASSOCHAM National Council on Education and President, Manav Rachna Educational Institutions; Dr Ashwin Fernandes, Regional Director

- Quacquarelli Symonds Middle East, South Asia & North Africa; Shri Narayanan Ramaswamy, Partner & Head, Education and Skill Development Practice - KPMG, India; Shri Venkatesh Sarvasiddhi, Senior Head - Digital Skills, Innovation, Partnership & CSR – NSDC; and Shri Amarendra Pani, Joint Director - Research, Association of Indian Universities. They also discussed the rapidly changing education scenarios around us and how necessary steps should be taken to overcome the challenges we face as a nation.

All the speakers at the summit were felicitated with books by NBT. The Mobile Exhibition Van was also present at the event for the participants and speakers to browse and purchase NBT books.

### @ Open Mic Story Reading Session

On the occasion of International Children's Book Day, an Open Mic Story Reading Session was organized by Mini Clubhouse in Guwahati, Assam. The National Book Trust, India was the Knowledge Partner at the event.

Children aged 4-16 years as well as some popular authors and poets from the region participated the event. They read out excerpts from their favourite books



to the audience. NBT had provided of some of its popular books in English, Hindi and Asamiya for the children to read and take home with them. The Open Mic encouraged young children to read as many books as possible to help them develop literary skills early on in life.

NBT awarded books to all the children who participated in the reading session.



## Tamil Translation Workshop

National Book Trust, India organized a two-day Translation Workshop at Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu on 27-28 March 2021.

Inaugurating the workshop, Smt Jayashree, Sahitya Akademi awardee for translation, spoke about the importance of translations in strengthening ties between different cultures. She also shared some of her experiences as a translator. Speaking on the occasion, Shri A.S. Ilangovan, poet and translator, appreciated NBT's efforts toward holding such workshops.

On the occasion, the translators also shared their views on various aspects of translation, particularly on children's



books. This, in their experiences, requires special efforts as the translator has to ensure its comprehension and the text should be simple and crisp, for the target age-group.

The translators who participated in the workshop included A.S. Ilangovan, Kamalaalayan, Saravanan Parthasarathy, R. Shahjahan, Ramu, Suhana, Valliyappan, Jayashree, Chandramohan and Anarkali.

About 20 books for children, originally published by NBT were translated into Tamil during the workshop. These include: *Birds and Animals in Indian Art, Our Home Our Hearth, A Helping Hand, The Royal Sweeper, The Cactus, All Time Stories for Children, Fly High in the Sky, Clever Mouse and The Ascetic.*

Shri T. Mathan Raj, Tamil Editor, NBT coordinated the workshop.

# Bilingual Books for Children

“India is a land of several languages and dialects. Therefore, bringing out bilingual books is a huge challenge,” said Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, NBT while chairing a panel discussion on ‘Bilingual Books for Children: Dynamics on Teaching Languages at Primary Stage – Indian and Global Perspectives.’ The panel discussion was held on 6 March 2021 during the virtual edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair 2021.

Speaking of the importance of dialects and preserving them, Prof. Sharma said that there are dialects which do not have good literature, but if they are neglected, they will soon become extinct. It will be a great tragedy, if a language or a dialect becomes extinct. It is necessary to preserve them and enrich them with good literature.

He added that dialects have their limited geographical boundary, if the people of that particular region wish to go beyond their territory; they may need to be familiar with a regional or national language. There is a need to provide them bilingual books. Therefore, NEP 2020 has laid greater emphasis on regional languages, which will also help in preserving different culture and traditions and save the languages from extinction.

Highlighting the advantages of bilingual books, Mr Lawrence Schimel, noted author and translator said, “Very often bilingual books are useful for families where one generation speaks or does not speak a common language. Bilingual books allow different generations to share same story in their own language.”

While bringing out the challenges in presentation of text in bilingual books, Mr Schimel said that some of the languages have the same alphabet or are written in roman text. The bilingual book should be presented in a way that helps reader identify the language, for instance by printing both the languages in different colors. He also appreciated the presentation style of bilingual books recently published by National Book Trust, India. He remarked



Ms Neera Jain, Chief Editor & Joint Editor, NBT said, “We have been publishing translations of our books for children. So far we have translated books in 58 languages which has been quite a challenging experience. Bringing out bilingual books for children can be even more challenging because you are integrating one text into two languages which has to match with the illustrations also. She added that in India we have around 1900 languages and dialects. It is quite challenging for us to select the languages for bilingual books.”

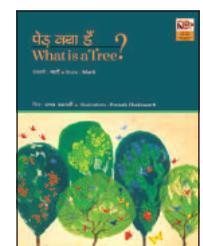
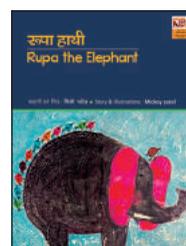
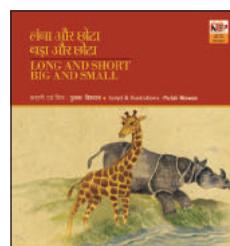
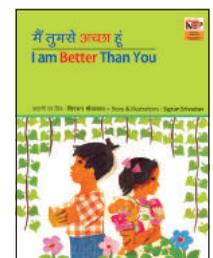
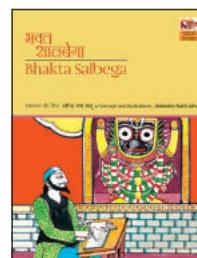
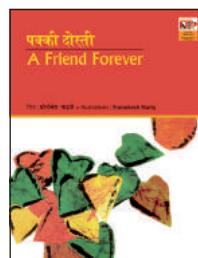
“A language does not only give you literacy, it also gives you emotions, bonding, values and morals,” said Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT. However, he added that the values and knowledge systems can only be instilled through mother tongue. He further said that a child may understand in one language and we need to do linguistic pairing to help the child correlate with another language. He said that the new education policy has come up with new a flavor and emphasizes on mother tongue. Keeping in view of these reforms, NBT is bringing out books which are interactive, quality based, affordable with a sense of accountability. The speakers also discussed about bringing out bilingual books in different foreign languages.

The session was moderated by Shri Kumar Vikram, Editor, NBT.

that all the languages have been given equal importance.

During the discussion, Ms Fatima Abbas, literary agent said that bilingual books especially for children are important. They help in building language skills. Once children start going to the school, they are ready to read, write and learn in both languages. These books also improve their vocabulary. She added that bilingual books help them to accept and learn from other’s culture. She further said that bilingual books help in the social and emotional development of the children.

Talking about the challenges of bringing out bilingual books as per the requirement of our multilingual society,



## Role and Contribution of Thematic Book Exhibitions

Thematic book exhibitions have an important role to play not only for booklovers but also for publishers. They help publishers to develop new content, look for new prospects and business opportunities. A panel discussion on the topic 'Role and Contribution of Thematic Book Exhibitions in Promotion of Content and Ideas' was held virtually on 8 March 2021.

The panelists on the occasion were Mr Ramesh K Mittal, former Chairman, CAPEXIL and President, FIP; Ms Tanishka Kachru, Senior Faculty, NID, Ahmedabad; Mr Simon De Jocas, President, Quebec Education Committee, Canada; and Mr Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT. The session was moderated by Mr Kumar Vikram, Editor, NBT.

"Thematic book fairs help publishers improve their publishing skills," said Mr Ramesh K Mittal. He added that the book fairs provide publishers an opportunity to showcase their books on the topic and encourage them to write something new. He added that India's Guest of Honour at various international book fairs, has provided many business opportunities including copyright arrangements,



translations of books from Indian to foreign countries and vice versa.

"Who are the audience, what are they looking for, how do we engage them, are some of the questions that arise while designing thematic exhibitions," said Ms Tanishka Kachru. She was of the view that this challenge requires multidimensional approach and needs extensive research into the theme to create connection with the people of all age groups. She further said that the presentation should be in such a manner that the theme brings out new interpretations and new nuances.

Speaking of the opportunities such exhibitions provide to the exhibitors, Mr Simon De Jocas said that one thing which is common is books and what we have to do is business. He added that through books we can enrich the world with our knowledge.

Mr Santiago Sanchez, Head, Culture and Education Attache, Embassy of Mexico, New Delhi said within the book fairs several programmes are organized, which are diverse. He added that thematic book exhibitions can further enhance this diversity. He also said that thematic exhibitions present new interpretations and improves the editorial inputs.

According to Mr Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT, "Thematic exhibition is the future." However, he added that it also requires extra efforts and research. Discussing on the impact of thematic exhibitions, Mr Malik cited the example of 150 years of Gandhi as the theme of the last edition of New Delhi World Book Fair, and said that we showcased literature, content, chronology at the Theme pavilion. The maximum time that visitors spent was in the theme pavilion and the maximum queries were on the theme. He also remarked that NBT will be organizing many thematic exhibitions to mark 125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and will bring many publishers together under one umbrella.

## Discussion on Braille Books in Mother Tongue

"If you visit any state of our country, you will hardly find Braille textbooks in mother tongue," said Shri J L Kaul, Secretary, All India Confederation of the Blind (AICB), at a discussion on the topic 'Mother Tongue and Braille Books' held at AICB Auditorium, New Delhi on 8 March 2021. He further added that though some of the textbooks have been published by NCERT, they are also not easily available for students.

Speaking of the challenges in the publication of Braille books, Shri J L Kaul said that most of the printing machines for Braille books are imported from other countries and in the wake of technical snags, the printing of books are delayed. He urged that a panel of engineers may be



created to overcome technical problems. He also added that there is always a scarcity of paper, which also makes the printing of Braille books difficult.

Appreciating NBT for its continuous efforts in bringing out books in Braille in different Indian languages, Shri J L Kaul said that many of these books are being distributed free of cost to various schools, universities and libraries. During

the second session, the poets and students from AICB rendered poetry based on 'Patriotism.' The participants included Ms Sushila Negi, Shri Rajnish Rajat, Shri Anurag Pathak, Ms Devki, Ms Abhilasha, Shri Ankur and Shri Pawan Kumar. Braille books were also presented.

Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT, expressed his happiness at the rendition of patriotic poetry by the participants. He remarked that through the medium of Braille books, we can help the visually impaired to feel the world around them and empower them. He also thanked AICB for their collaboration in publication of books and organising programmes.

The programme was moderated by Dr Kamlesh Kumari, Hindi Editor, NBT.

## Excerpts from ‘Tagore: A Life’

Every year 7 May is celebrated as Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti. The Trust has published many works both on and by Tagore. Herein we reproduce excerpts from the chapter “Encounter with the West” in the book *Tagore: A Life*, authored by Krishna Kripalani.

Meanwhile the intelligentsia of Bengal tried to make amends for their past neglect of their greatest poet by celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of his birth on 28 January 1912 in the Town Hall of Calcutta, under the auspices of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, the leading literary society of Bengal. Tagore was due to sail from Calcutta on 19 March, but suddenly fell ill on the night before his departure and the doctors forbade an immediate voyage. His luggage, already on board, had to be sent back from Madras where the ship halted next. Disappointed at this unforeseen postponement of his voyage, he sought consolation and strength, as of old, by retiring to Shelidah on the banks of his beloved river Padma. It was here that he began to translate, for the first time, some of his Gitanjali songs into English. But let him tell the story in his own words, although his own words were in Bengali and the excerpt quoted below is an English rendering:

“You have alluded to the English translation of Gitanjali,” he wrote to his niece Indira from London. “I cannot imagine to this day how people came to like it so much. That I cannot write English is such a patent fact that I never had even the vanity to feel ashamed of it. If anybody wrote an English note asking me to tea, I did not feel equal to answering it. Perhaps you think that by now I have got over that delusion. By no means. That I have written in English seems to be the delusion. On the day I was to board the ship, I fainted due to my frantic efforts at leave-taking and the journey itself was postponed. Then I went to Shelidah to take rest. But unless the brain is fully active, one does not feel strong enough to relax completely; so the only way to keep myself calm was to take up some light work...

So I took up the poems of Gitanjali and set myself to translate them one by one. You may wonder why such a crazy ambition should possess one in such a weak

state of health. But, believe me, I did not undertake this task in a spirit of reckless bravado. I simply felt an urge to recapture through the medium of another language the feelings and sentiments which had created such a feast of joy within me in the days gone by. The pages of a small exercise-book came to be filled gradually, and with it in my pocket I boarded the ship.”

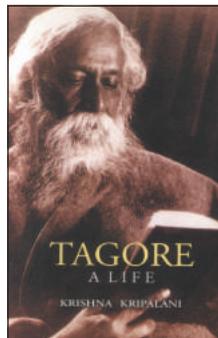
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In September he sailed for India, having achieved both fame and health. It was while he was in Santiniketan that the news came, on 13 November of the award of the Nobel Prize for his Gitanjali. The news was received with no small surprise and much rejoicing all over the country. In the little asrama at Santiniketan the children, who hardly knew what the Nobel Prize was but understood that their beloved Gurudev (teacher) had been honoured by the world, went wild with joy. What did the poet himself feel? No doubt, he felt elated and proud and happy — and above all justified. He would not have been human if he felt otherwise. The patriot in him felt happy, too, that his country’s name had been put on the world’s literary map and felt proud that he was the reason of it. But the poet in him was too sensitive not to feel a misgiving that his days of peace, of quiet and uninterrupted pursuit of his vocation as a poet and as a teacher of little children, of intimate whisperings with his

God, were over. Five days later he wrote to Rothenstein: “The perfect whirlwind of public excitement it has given rise to is frightful. It is almost as bad as tying a tin can at a dog’s tail making it impossible for him to move without creating noise and collecting crowds all along. I am being smothered with telegrams and letters for the last few days and the people who never had any friendly feelings towards me nor ever read a line of my works are loudest in their protestations of joy. I cannot tell you how tired I am of all this shouting, the stupendous amount of its unreality being something appalling. Really these people honour the honour in me and not myself.”

The thought rankled in his mind and the patriot in him found it humiliating that the majority of his countrymen had needed the stimulus of foreign recognition to turn their grudging appreciation of his service to their language and literature into adulation. This sad and bitter thought found public expression on 23 November when a large deputation of 500 distinguished citizens of Calcutta representing diverse professions and interests came by a special train to Santiniketan to offer him the nation’s felicitations. In blunt but poetic words the poet told them that he could not accept a homage that was so unreal. Those among his audience who had always been his warm admirers understood for whom the snub was meant; the rest, thus deflated, never forgave him for what they considered his “inhospitable reply.”

Though the Prize was awarded on the merits of an individual work whose poetic excellence and high idealism were almost universally acknowledged, the fact that it was given to an Asian invested the award with a significance which such awards do not normally have and made it look almost like a unique phenomenon. It was received everywhere with a shock of surprise and turned Rabindranath from an individual into a symbol — a symbol of the West’s grudging recognition of Asia’s submerged potential and its imminent resurgence.



**Tagore: A Life**

*Krishna Kripalani*

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NBT organised mobile book exhibition in Uttar Pradesh from 13 March to 6 April 2021. The vans travelled across various districts, towns and rural areas including Varanasi, Mau, Gorakhpur, Basti, Ayodhya, Sultanpur and Lucknow.

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Shri Shivanand Tiwari, former Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, visited NBT Book Promotion Centre in Patna and browsed through NBT books.

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