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PICK OF THE MONTH



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Celebrating India’s Literary Kaleidoscope: Highlights from New Delhi World Book Fair 2024



The New Delhi World Book Fair 2024 kicked off with a vibrant inauguration ceremony led by Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, India’s Minister of Education and Minister of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship. Emphasizing the enduring significance of books in the digital age, Pradhan highlighted the burgeoning trend of e-learning and e-reading. The event witnessed the launch of several pivotal initiatives, including the National Digital Libraries for All project, aimed at democratizing access to knowledge across India’s diverse linguistic landscape. Another notable unveiling was the innovative e-learning platform, “E-Jaadui Pitara”, aligned with the National Education Policy 2020 and offering inclusive content in 22 languages through Artificial Intelligence (AI) translation.

Moreover, the fair showcased special modules in line with NEP 2020, teaching-learning resources, and subject-specific modules, underscoring India’s commitment

to educational reform. Noteworthy resources promoting G20 initiatives and emphasizing social development and empowerment were also unveiled. Among the publications released were the “Igniting Collective Goodness Mann ki Baat @100” anthology and new titles under the “Creating Intellectual Heritage” project. Additionally, the Hindi and English, Braille editions of “Exam Warriors”, authored by the Hon’ble Prime Minister, were presented, catering to diverse readership needs.

Thematically centered around ‘Multilingual India: A Living Tradition (Bahubhashi Bharat: Ek Jeevant Parampara)’, the fair celebrated India’s linguistic diversity. As part of its tradition, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was honoured as the Guest Country, fostering cultural exchange and dialogue between the two nations. Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman of NBT-India, welcomed attendees, underscoring the fair’s role as a platform for intellectual discourse and promoting readership.



During the inaugural session, Mr. Saleh bin Eid Al-Husseini, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to India, highlighted the mutual commitment to strengthen ties between the countries. Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director of NBT-India, spoke about India's unity in diversity, reflecting on the multitude of languages and cultures that contribute to the nation's rich fabric.

The fair, held from February 10 to 18 February 2024, at Halls 1 to 5, Pragati Maidan, welcomed diverse attendees, including dignitaries, diplomats, authors, publishers, avid readers, teachers, and students. Entry was free for children in school uniform, senior citizens, and differently-abled individuals, with tickets available online and at select metro stations. Overall, the New Delhi World Book Fair 2024 served as a dynamic platform for literary exchange, cultural appreciation, and educational advancement.

India gets its first Digital Library - National e-pustakalay and an e-jaduee pitara at NDWBF

The New Delhi World Book Fair 2024 kicked off with the introduction of groundbreaking initiatives, including India's inaugural digital library, the National e-pustakalay, and the innovative e-jaduee pitara, tailored for children's digital learning.

Dr. Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister for Education; Skills Development & Entrepreneurship, spearheaded the opening ceremony, emphasising the transformative potential of these ventures.

National e-pustakalay emerged as a pioneering endeavour, offering over 1000 books in 22 Indian languages, showcasing inclusivity and accessibility in education. Dr. Pradhan highlighted its features, including PDF formats, audio versions, and AI-powered translations, aligning with NEP 2020 objectives.

The e-jaduee pitara complements this leap, serving as a captivating learning oasis for children aged 3 to 8 years. Bursting with stories, riddles, songs, and interactive games, it empowers educators and parents to nurture young minds effectively.

The launch of "Igniting collective goodness: Mann ki Baat@100,"



a compilation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's radio addresses in 13 languages, promoted linguistic diversity and inclusivity. Additionally, unveiling the Braille edition of PM's "Exam warriors" underscored a commitment to accessibility and empowerment.

Dr. Pradhan unveiled three special modules—G-20, Viksit Bharat, and Nari shakti vandan—as inspirational resources for school children, aligned with the National Curriculum Framework 2023.



Four profound works, including "Financial Inclusion in New India" and "Towards Naya Bharat," were launched, symbolising India's holistic development journey.

The ceremony, graced by the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia as Guest of Honour, highlighted shared visions of progress, emphasising youth empowerment and cultural exchange.

With over 40 countries participating, NDWBF 2024 promised a vibrant convergence of cultures and ideas across 50,000 square meters. Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairperson NBT-India, expressed optimism about the fair's role in fostering a robust reading culture, echoing the theme of "Multilingual India: A Living Tradition." As dignitaries lit lamps, the fair embarked on a nine-day journey, inviting all to immerse in the enriching world of books.



President Applauds PM-YUVA Scheme for Nurturing Young Talent

Hon'ble President Smt. Droupadi Murmu praised National Book Trust, India for its commitment to nurturing young writers through the PM-YUVA Authors project during a significant gathering at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Engaging with 55 PM-YUVA 1.0 authors and 37 PM-YUVA 2.0 authors, she emphasised the project's role in promoting young talent and Indian languages.

Author Nishtha Chhabra, representing the inaugural batch of the PM-Yuva scheme, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to meet the President. She noted how Smt. Droupadi Murmu engaged with each author, discussing their works and appreciating their efforts in highlighting lesser-known aspects of India's independence movement. Chhabra, author of "Cryptic Columns," credited the PM-YUVA scheme with reigniting her passion for writing.

Led by Prof. Milind S. Marathe, Chairman, NBT-India the delegation presented the President with a bouquet of books symbolising the literary creations nurtured under the PM-YUVA scheme. Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT-India briefed the President on the PM-YUVA Mentorship Scheme's objectives and achievements.

The interaction, part of the Sahitya Rachna Shivir programme, provided aspiring authors a platform to engage with mentors and leaders. Among the attendees were Ms. Rita Sonowal Kouli and Mr. M.M. Singh from the Ministry of Education, along with Mr. Kumar Vikram, Editor and NBT-India- Project Head of the PM-YUVA Scheme, highlighting collaborative efforts between government bodies and organisations like NBT- India to foster literary talent and cultural enrichment.



Fostering Cultural Ties with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was celebrated as the Guest of Honour at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2024, symbolising the enduring ties between Riyadh and New Delhi. This partnership aims to enhance cultural exchanges across literature, education, arts, music, and fashion, strengthening the bond between the two nations.

Saudi Arabia's participation was marked by a grand pavilion covering 350 square meters, showcasing its cultural heritage. Led by Mr. Mohammed Hasan M Alwan, the delegation included luminaries from various cultural fields, demonstrating the kingdom's commitment to dialogue and collaboration.

The pavilion hosted cultural events, panel discussions, and dialogues exploring contemporary themes. Discussions highlighted the role of Indian scholars in cultural exchange and the relationship between Indian cinema and Saudi perspectives. Topics included 'The Impact of Indian Cinema on Saudi Society' and 'Cross-Cultural Understanding through Art and Literature.'

At the Saudi Arabia Pavilion, luminaries like Mr. Salman Al Samah and Mr. Asim Altokhais

discussed the influence of Indian cinema on Saudi culture. Altokhais, known for his short film 'Meeting with the Devil,' discussed Bollywood's influence in the Arabian market and Saudi Arabia's film industry developments, including collaborations with Shahrukh Khan and film-making education initiatives.

Mr. Altokhais emphasised cinema's transformative power in transcending cultural barriers, citing films like 'RRR.' Through cultural exchanges, Saudi Arabia and India seek to deepen integration, fostering shared appreciation and collaboration in arts and entertainment.



New Delhi World Book Fair 2024 Launches Festival of Festivals: Uniting India's Literary Landscape

The New Delhi World Book Fair 2024 introduced the Festival of Festivals (FoF), a novel addition to its event lineup, spearheaded by the National Book Trust, India. This innovative platform served as a dynamic space for upcoming book festivals from across India, facilitating an exchange of ideas within the literary community.

The inaugural FoF edition showcased over 100 speakers from renowned festivals such as Ahmedabad Lit Fest, Cine Durbar, Bharat Lit Fest, Pragati-E-Vichar Lit Fest, The Great Indian Book Tour, and Solh Talks, highlighting India's diverse literary landscape.

Dr. Chandra Prakash Dwivedi, the Patron of Bharat Literature Festivals, commended FoF as a noteworthy initiative to promote authors, books, and a culture of reading in the country. He emphasized the shared ethos between NBT-India's motto, 'एकः सूत्रे सकलम्'

(One thread strings all), and Bharat Literature Festival's philosophy, 'आनोभद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विद्वन्ः' (Let noble thoughts come from all directions), highlighting the collaborative spirit driving this venture.

The overwhelming response received by the Bharat Literature Festival at NDWBF 2024 underscored FoF's potential to act as a catalyst for future literary engagements nationwide.

Mr. Kapil Gupta, the Festival Organizer of Pragati-E-Vichar Lit Fest and Solh Talks, lauded NBT-India for orchestrating FoF, providing a robust platform for festival organisers to connect with a wider audience. Mr. Prashant Gupta, personality behind 'The Great Indian Book Tour' and Aspiring Authors' Alliance of India, noted how FoF facilitated knowledge exchange and growth opportunities for budding authors.

FoF's support extended beyond literature to cultural entrepreneurship, exemplified by Cinedarbaar's commitment to promoting arts and culture. Ms. Supriya Suri, the Founder of Cinedarbaar, emphasised FoF's role in amplifying their vision and fostering collaborations across artistic domains.

Mr. Umashanker Yadav, the founder-director of Ahmedabad Lit Festival, observed how FoF provided a gateway to reach a larger audience, aligning with their vision of expanding outreach and inclusivity. Ahmedabad Lit Fest curated six engaging sessions within FoF, featuring accomplished authors and thought leaders.

Under the Festival of Festivals (FoF) banner, a diverse array of speakers offered enriching perspectives and insights, contributing to the dynamic discourse of the event. SOLH Talks, a notable participant, hosted distinguished guests such as Colonel R. S. N. Singh, former R&AW chief, and author Kapil Kumar, fostering meaningful dialogue and reflection.

The Great Indian Book Tours celebrated the diverse voices and expressions of Indian poetry through a session on 'Poetry through the Lens of India' at the FoF platform. Another FoF partner, the Bharat



Literature Festival, explored India's foreign policy through a session on 'Diplomacy in Indo-Pak Relations'.

Additionally, Cine Durbar delved into the cultural significance of food in fostering bonds and connections through a session on 'Food, Friendship, and Communion: A Conversation with Chefs and Cookbook Authors'.

The inaugural Festival of Festivals (FoF) at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2024 emerged as a resounding success, uniting prominent literary festivals from across India under one inclusive platform. The event featured engaging sessions, book launches, and cultural exchanges, adding vibrancy to the literary celebration. Prof. Milind Marathe, Chairman of National Book Trust, India, emphasised NBT India's commitment to fostering collaborative synergy in achieving their shared mission.

Mr. Yuvraj Malik, Director of National Book Trust, India, highlighted FoF's role in celebrating the written word and artistic expression, reaffirming NBT-India's dedication to nurturing a dynamic literary ecosystem and fostering unity within the literary community. FoF's debut marked a significant milestone in India's cultural calendar, promising continued growth and evolution in the years to come.



Global Publishing Leaders Convene at CEOSpeak: Exploring AI Integration and Cultural Evolution

The CEOSpeak, a key feature of the Chairman's breakfast hosted by the National Book Trust, India since 2013, remains a pivotal gathering for CEOs, MDs, and senior publishing professionals



globally. This year's assembly welcomed participants from various countries including Austria, Bangladesh, France, Iran, Italy, Nepal, Russia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.

Away from the bustling New Delhi World Book Fair grounds, discussions focused on the evolving book culture and the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in publishing. Dr. Subash Sarkar, Minister of State for Education, emphasised the importance of quality and quantity balance in AI implementation, underlining the role of the National Education Policy in promoting knowledge dissemination in regional Indian languages.

Mr. Nadim Sadek, author of 'Shimmer, Don't Shake – How Publishing Can Embrace AI' and founder-CEO of Shimmer AI, UK, delivered a compelling presentation on AI's transformative potential

in book publishing. Mr. Yuvraj Malik, Director of NBT-India, acknowledged the contested nature of AI, recognizing its roots in human intelligence.

The panel discussion, moderated

by Mr. Kumar Vikram, Editor at NBT-India featured insights from industry experts from Sri Lanka, Germany, and India. Prof. Milind Sudhakar Marathe, Chairman of National Book Trust, India highlighted NBT-India's pioneering efforts in multilingual publishing in India.

The event also featured a presentation on 'The Book Market in Saudi Arabia' by Dr. Abdullatif Abdulaziz Alwasel, General Manager of Publishing Literature, Publishing, and Translation Commission, Saudi Arabia. Dr. Alwasel emphasised the potential for intellectual exchange and collaboration between India and Saudi Arabia in the literary sphere.

CEOSpeak provided a dynamic platform for industry leaders to exchange ideas, shaping the future of publishing in an interconnected world. It emphasised embracing technological advancements while preserving the integrity and diversity of literature globally.

Books for All: An Inclusive Initiative by NBT-India

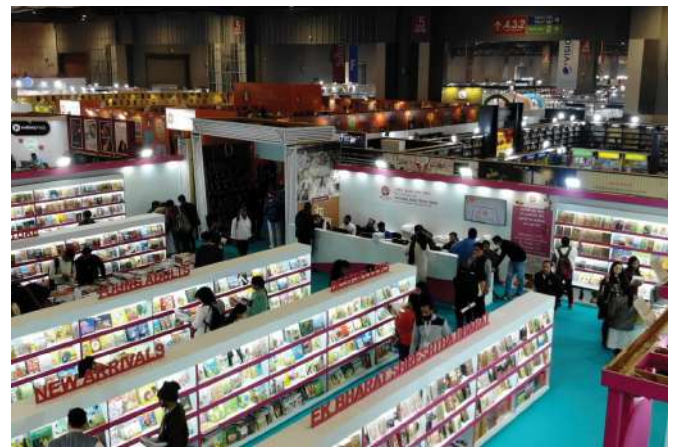
Under the NBT-India's 'Books for All' initiative, free Braille books were being provided to visually impaired people during the New Delhi World Book Fair 2024. A total of 13 Braille books, in both English and Hindi, were available for children with special needs (CWSN). They could get them for free by providing their UDID (Unique Disability ID) No. and Aadhar number.

The newly-launched Braille edition, along with the audio and electronic versions of Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi's Exam Warriors were also available. Other Braille titles by Indian authors included 'Growing Up with Trees, A Simple Life of Swami Vivekananda' and 'The Fourth Friend.'

The 'Books for All' initiative encompasses five aspects: Braille books, audio books, e-books, virtual reality books and general books. Around 300 e-books and 20 audio storybooks have been made available on a trial basis at the Fair. NBT-India is currently working on 80 audio books, with the goal to increase this number to 2000 this year. Visitors at the NDWBF 2024 have highly appreciated this inclusive initiative by NBT-India, sharing their comments in the visitors' book.



Glimpses from NDWBF 2024



Glimpses from NDWBF 2024



Diverse Cultural Extravaganza Enlivens New Delhi World Book Fair 2024

The New Delhi World Book Fair 2024, themed “Multilingual India: A Living Tradition,” showcased diverse cultural programs representing the nation’s rich heritage. Cultural performances from various Indian regions, including Kathak, Garba, Katputli, and folk music, highlighted the colourful tapestry of India’s traditions. International guests contributed with Saudi Arabia presenting the Ardha, sword dance and Russia showcasing traditional dances, emphasising India’s unity in diversity.

At the Amphitheatre, the fair turned into a cultural extravaganza with spectacular performances by sitar players from Delhi Public School, Rohini, and a captivating Saudi Arabian sword dance. Even young attendees participated, joining POGO mascots ‘Chhota Bheem’ and ‘Little Singham’ in lively dances. Kathak Kendra (Noida), the College of Vocational Studies, Dashugs from Ladakh, and poets Rajpal Yadav and Sunil Kumar Sharma added depth to the event. Throughout the fair, the amphitheatre remained a magnet for cultural enthusiasts



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Editor: Kanchan Wanchoo Sharma
Editorial Associate: Simran Kalsi, Akash Greenwold
Production Officer: Narender Kumar



NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA
 5 Institutional Area,
 Phase-II, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110 070
 E-mail: office.nbt@nic.in
 Website: www.nbtindia.gov.in

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with performances such as the fusion music of Shadaj Band, Himalayan beats led by Faisal Ashoor Khan, hhand Kerala-based multi-genre band Thaikkudam Bridge, captivating the audiences. The fair celebrated India’s cultural diversity through music, dance, and poetry, offering a glimpse into the vibrant soul of the nation, embracing its multilingual heritage with pride and joy.

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Creative Convergence: Italian and Indian Artists Illuminate New Delhi World Book Fair 2024

The New Delhi World Book Fair 2024 saw the convergence of esteemed Italian artists at the Italy-India Illustrators Exchange Forum, nestled within the creatively designed space of the Illustrator’s Corner. This enclave served as a captivating retreat for both art enthusiasts and professionals, offering a plethora of enriching workshops and sessions.

Distinguished artists such as Mr. Ivan Canu, an accomplished illustrator and author, shared invaluable insights into portfolio refinement, offering professionals expert guidance.



Ms. Elisa Macellari, a celebrated comics artist, led an engaging workshop titled “Drawing the Invisible,” unveiling innovative techniques for visualising abstract concepts. Participants were treated to a unique opportunity during the “Reading Faces: A Portrait Workshop,” where they crafted self-portraits and interpreted portraits of notable Indian personalities. The ‘Ask Me Anything’ session with the artists provided a rare glimpse into the illustrator’s world, fostering a deeper understanding of the craft.

Ms. Sophie Benini’s portfolio review sessions provided illustrators with tailored feedback, empowering them to identify strengths and navigate their career paths with confidence. The masterclass on “Books Inside and Out: Creative Processes and Design of the Illustrated Book” equipped attendees with a comprehensive understanding of the intricate processes involved in book illustration and cover design, especially for children’s literature.

Well known Indian illustrators such as Mr. Mohit Suneja, Ms. Neeta Gangopadhyaya, Ms. Ajanta Guha, and Mr. Mitrarun Halder also participated, facilitating a vibrant exchange between Indian and Italian artistic sensibilities. The Illustrator’s Wall showcased a captivating display of multilingual interpretations by renowned Indian artists, enhancing the cross-cultural dialogue and fostering artistic collaboration.

You can also find the e-Newsletter on our website www.nbtindia.gov.in

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