

EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

The book entitled *Education for Social Change: MVF and Child Labour*, authored by Ms. Sucheta Mahajan and published by National Book Trust, was released at a function held at India International Centre, New Delhi.

Releasing the book, Shri Jairam Ramesh, Hon'ble Union Minister for Commerce, said "India and many other countries are under scrutiny on child labour". He felt that though the Union government and various state governments and NGOs like M. Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF) have put in efforts to end the child labour, the problem of child labour still exists.

He added that the prevalence of child labour in many regions especially in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and the problem of migrant labourers is a matter of concern.

"Because of international pressure, most of our exporters are compliant with international standards. The real problem arises not from the export industry, but from the domestic supply chain," He said. Giving an example of gem and jewellery industry, he said that "at export level the industry does not use the child labour, but the material that goes in the industry is provided by the domestic supply chain which uses child labour." Pointing that these issues are



Smt. Shanta Sinha, Prof. Neera Burra, Shri Jairam Ramesh, Shri Anil Boradia and Swami Agnivesh at the release function

becoming the part of the mainstream, he commended the efforts of Dr. Shanta Sinha and the people working with her to end child labour. The work that she has done should be integrated into the mainstream, he added.

Swami Agnivesh, noted activist, said that he started his movement to end child labour with carpet industry. "Eliminating child labour practices from the society is one of the most difficult tasks," he opined. He also commended the method adopted by MVF to identify child labourers—children who do not study in schools and those who drop out from schools. While appreciating that the book helps us to know more about the problem

and inspires us to bring about changes in the society, he also thanked NBT for bringing out the book.

Ms. Neera Burra said that the approach of MVF has been beautifully highlighted in the book. She said that MVF is working at the grassroot level and its main focus is to get children out of work and get them admitted to the schools. The book is short and easy to read, she added.

Prof. Aditya Mukherjee highlighted the efforts and strategies followed by MVF. He said that MVF has firmly adhered to Gandhiji's principle of non-violence and has been able to function in 'ULFA ridden and naxal infected regions'. He also informed that MVF has undertaken meticulous research in collecting data on the subject.

Dr. Shanta Sinha thanked NBT for bringing out the book and said we must appreciate and respect the hard work and the enthusiasm of the volunteers of the MVF.

Shri Anil Boradia suggested that the book should be translated into other Indian languages very soon. Ms. Sucheta Mahajan read out some passages from the book. A short documentary on MVF was also screened on the occasion.

Earlier, Prof. Bipan Chandra, Chairman, NBT, welcomed the gathering.

AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR WORKSHOP

With debates on climate change taking centre stage in global talks, NBT on its part, with the objective of creating an awareness on environment, organised a three-day author-illustrator workshop from 27 to 30 March 2008 at Agartala, Tripura on the theme 'Nature, Environment and Wildlife'. The workshop was organised in collaboration with M/s Akshar Publication and coincided with the Agartala Book Fair.

The workshop was inaugurated by Shri Anil Sarkar, Hon'ble Minister of Higher Education and Culture, Tripura. In his inaugural speech Shri Sarkar said "the National Book Trust has done a great favour to us by deciding to organise this workshop in Agartala. That too, at a time when the city is hosting its annual book fair Boi Mala, a major activity that marks the beginning of the New Year".

The special guests invited for the

occasion were Prof. Arunoday Saha, Vice-Chancellor, Tripura University and eminent Bangla writer Ms. Nabaneeta Dev Sen. While speaking on the occasion Prof. Saha said, "I used to read NBT books as a child and was so enamoured by them that I still revel in that memory. The best part is that even the picture books are so eloquent, multihued and laden with a message that life is a celebration, a true portrayal of the essence of Indian culture. But at the same time, I would like to emphasise here that keeping mind the population and our multilingual disposition, there is an acute shortage of 'Shishu Sahitya'. As a reader it is my accusation that in the state, children are being deprived of their kind of literature, i.e. in the language they understand".

Ms. Nabaneeta Sen said "In children's books illustrations play a vital role. This is one of the reasons why textbooks look horrible. Even grown ups don't like to see

them how do you expect children to like them!"

There were a mix of 18 participants from Delhi, Kolkata, Guwahati and Agartala and all of whom were senior illustrators, authors and editors. The illustrators participated in the workshop included Aparesh Paul, Arya Praharaj, Debabrata Ghosh, Debasish Deb, Durlabh Bhattacharjee, Priya Nagarajan, Samaresh Chatterjee, Subir Roy, Suddhasatwa Basu and Swapan Nandi. The authors included Buddhadeb Guha, Deepa Agarwal, Bimalendra Chakraborty, Swapnomay Chakraborty, Buddhary Debbarma, Kumud K Choudhury and Santanoo Tamuly.

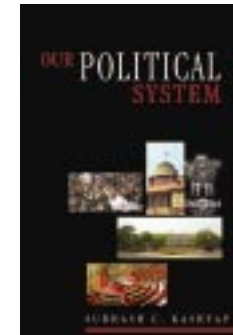
About twenty-five illustrated manuscripts were prepared in the workshop, which are likely to come out in book form very soon.

(Pictures of workshop can be seen on centrespread pages 4-5)

NBT PUBLICATIONS OF THE MONTH

Our Political System

Subhash C. Kashyap
ISBN 978-81-237-5251-8; Rs. 90.00 (PB)
ISBN 978-81-237-5252-5; Rs. 300.00 (HB)



The present day Indian political system has grown out of a long evolutionary process and can be seen as a system that seeks to address the myriad socio-political, economic and cultural expectations of India as a modern nation state in a holistic manner. The present book, while tracing the political systems as existent in India in the ancient and medieval times, introduces the different components of modern Indian polity in terms of their structure and functions and how they interact in making it citizen friendly. The book, written for the general reader in a simple and non-technical language, is likely to appeal to a spectrum of readers including teachers and students, and anybody interested in understanding the functioning of the Indian polity.

Of Science and Scientists

A.N. Kothare, Sudhanshu S. Palsule
S.M. Parekh and M.P. Navalkar
978-81-237-0917-8; Rs. 70.00 (RP)



Although a lot of material is available in the form of biographies and writings of scientists, very little information is found on what made these scientists not only great discoverers but humane too, blessed with humour, humility and humanism like us, the lesser known mortals. Science is in a continuous state of progression, and those involved in this unique adventure bring out the modes and methods of their investigation. The basic discoveries of scientific investigation have been discussed in different essays in this book with the hope that the layman may achieve 'scientific literacy', even if it is in a small measure. Authors of this book A.N. Kothare, S.S. Palsule, S.M. Parekh and M.P. Navalkar are eminent popular science writers.

Abbas Tyabji

Aparna Basu
978-81-237-5078-1; Rs. 45.00



Abbas Tyabji (1853-1936) was the Chief Justice of the Baroda High Court before becoming a staunch follower of Gandhiji. His absolute integrity as an individual, moderate persona, simmering nationalism and fairness as a judge were recognised even by anti-Congress extremists. He was one of the members of the committee appointed by the Indian National Congress to review the charges against General R. Dyer for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. After listening to and cross-examining hundreds of eye witnesses and victims of General Dyer's brutality, Abbas became the most devoted co-worker of Gandhiji and a staunch champion of the Swadeshi movement. Abbas' services and sacrifices endeared him to the nation and earned him the title of 'Chhota Gandhi'.

SELECTED SHORT STORIES OF JAINENDRA KUMAR

The book entitled *Selected Short Stories of Jainendra Kumar*, translated by eminent poet and critic Dr. Ravi Nandan Sinha and compiled by Pradeep Kumar was released at the India International Centre, New Delhi. This English edition has recently been published by the National Book Trust, India.

While releasing the book, eminent critic Shri Namvar Singh said that it is difficult to translate the works of Jainendra Kumar, especially in English. He also cited some examples to corroborate his viewpoint. He felt that Jainendra Kumar couldn't be matched with Premchand, one of the distinguished writers in Hindi literature. He also observed that the period between 1928 and 1940 was a significant period, in which Jainendra Kumar wrote some of the finest works like Parakh, Sunita, Tyagpatra, etc.

Shri Rajendra Yadav, eminent story writer also gave insight into the language, prose style and women characters in the stories of Jainendra Kumar. He said the language of the writer is closer to Chekhov, his narrative style is

simple and contains dramatic element. He also discussed the psychological aspect of the stories; he said that the writer has beautifully expressed the human emotions. He commended that Jainendra Kumar expresses the agony of women but does not examine the social causes behind the pain women undergo.

Eminent poet Shri Ashok Vajpayee also presented his viewpoints on the style, language and characters in the works of

Jainendra Kumar. He said that Jainendra introduced a new technique of story telling, very considerate while choosing the words and picked words tentatively. Shri Vishwanath Tripathi, noted critic, said that in the era of Premchand, Jainendra presented a different technique of story telling.

Earlier, Ms. Nuzhat Hassan, Director, NBT, welcomed the guests. In her welcome note she also gave information regarding the publishing programme of the Trust on the works of Jainendra Kumar.

The book is a collection of twelve short stories by Jainendra Kumar (1905-1988), one of the greatest Hindi short story writers who gave a direction to Hindi short story in the initial stages of its development. In his work he has explored the tensions implicit in human relationships and has displayed a deep and sympathetic understanding of human motivation, psyche and ethical values. The stories in this collection cover a period between 1927 and 1965 and are some of his most memorable works.



Shri Namvar Singh, Shri Rajendra Yadav, Shri Ashok Vajpayee and Vishwanath Tripathi

OBITUARY



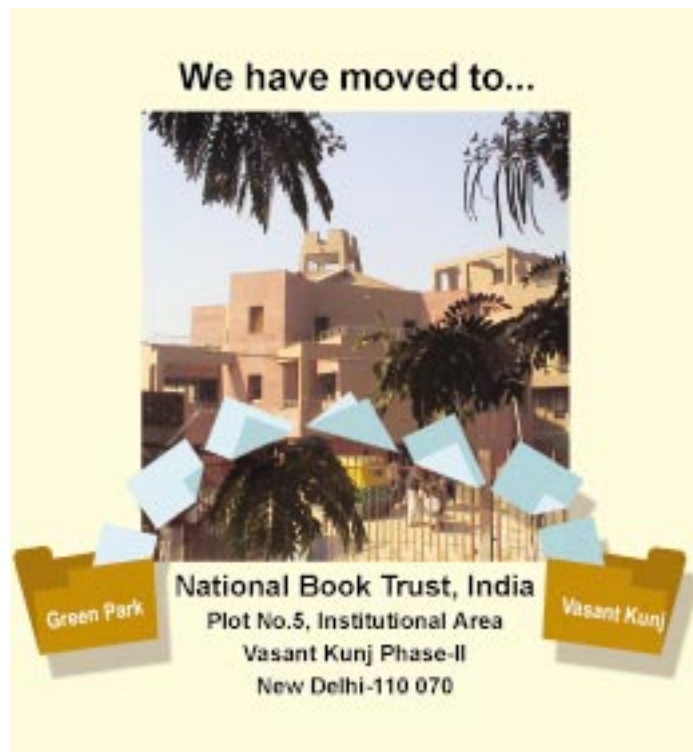
Vijay Dhondopant Tendulkar, popularly known as Vijay Tendulkar (b. 1928) passed away on 19 May 2008 in Pune. A leading playwright, movie and television writer, literary essayist, political journalist, and social commentator, he is best known for his plays. Many of Tendulkar's plays derived inspiration from real-life incidents or social upheavals, which provides clear light on harsh realities. Tendulkar had been a highly influential dramatist and theater personality for over five decades.

He wrote, directed, and acted in his first play when he was eleven years old. At the age of fourteen he participated in the 1942 Quit India Movement. Tendulkar began his career writing for newspapers. His early struggle for survival and living for some time in tenements in Mumbai provided him first-hand experience about the life of urban lower middle class. He thus brought new authenticity to their depiction in Marathi theater. In his writing career spanning more than five decades, Tendulkar has written 27 full-length plays and 25 one-act plays. Some of his well-known plays include *Ghashiram Kotwal*, *Shantate! Court Chalu Ahe!* and *Kanyadhan*. His plays have been translated and performed in many Indian languages. He has translated nine novels, two biographies, and five plays into Marathi. His other writings include a biography; two novels; five anthologies of short stories; 16 plays for children; and five volumes of literary essays and social criticism.

Tendulkar was honoured with many awards including Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Padma Bhushan, National Film Award for Best Screenplay, Saraswati Samman, etc.

Vijay Tendulkar was very closely associated with the National Book Trust, India. He was a member of the Board of Trustees, and Member of Advisory Panels of the National Biography series and Marathi language.

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TRACING THE HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL INDIA

"Prof. Habib has contributed a great deal to know more about the technology in the medieval times," said Prof. Satish Chandra, eminent historian, at the book release-cum-discussion of the latest title of the National Book Trust titled *Medieval India: The Study of a Civilization*. The event was organised in collaboration with Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murti House, New Delhi. Prof. Satish also congratulated NBT and the author of the book. He added that Prof. Habib has shown that although there were many negative features but the science and technology has grown.



Prof. Satish Chandra and Prof. Irfan Habib at the release function

Prof. J.S. Grewal, well-known historian and former Chairman of Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla, brought out the salient features of the book. While discussing the subjects touched upon by the author in the book, he said "the scope of the book is universal".

Prof. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya,

Chairman, Indian Council of Historical Research, stated that the book gives us "the flavour of the period" and will be useful to the researchers. He said that the author has covered the topics like the culture, society, caste system, the growth of feudalism in India, science and technology, etc. in depth,

which make the book remarkable.

Prof. Iqtidar Alam Khan, former professor of History, Aligarh Muslim University, appreciated the content and illustrations of the book. He felt that the book has presented the "humanitarian aspects in an interesting manner" as the book traces the emergence of Indians as historical entity, shows how Indian nationalism arose and highlights the social inequalities in medieval period.

The author of the book, Prof. Irfan Habib, former professor of History at the Aligarh Muslim University was also present on the occasion.

Earlier, while welcoming the guests, Prof. Bipan Chandra, Chariman, NBT, said, "it is a proud moment for NBT to publish the book". Prof. Mridula Mukherjee, Director, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, also spoke on the occasion. Ms. Nuzhat Hassan, Director, NBT, proposed the vote of thanks.

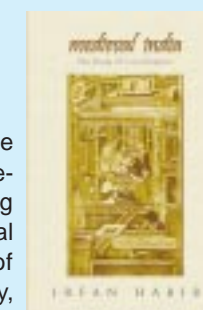
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Medieval India: The Study of a Civilization

Irfan Habib
978-81-237-5255-6; Rs. 85 (PB)
978-81-237-5256-3; Rs. 300 (HB)

The period spanning 600 AD to 1750 AD is perceived as the long phase of India's transition from the ancient times to the immediately pre-colonial times. The book tells the story of medieval India, a defining and eventful chapter in the making of its cultural and political history. It is a period marked by a multiplicity of states, spread of urbanisation, foreign invasions, growth of science and technology, achievements in literature and philosophy as well as consolidation of the subcontinent. Drawing upon primary materials, archival records, historical narratives and accounts of travellers and European commercial records, the book is an authoritative introduction to this era. The book has been authored Prof. Irfan Habib, widely regarded as one of the foremost historians of medieval India and Marxist historiography.





AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR WORKSHOP ON NATURE, ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE

27-29 MARCH 2008
AT AGARTALA
TRIPURA



Shri Anil Sarkar, Minister of Education and Culture, Tripura (right) and eminent Bangla author Nabaneeta Dev Sen (centre) inaugurating the workshop while Shri Subabrata Deb (left) of Akshar Publication assists them



Inaugural session in progress



Buddhadeb Guha and Nabaneeta Dev Sen reading their stories while Debabrata Ghosh illustrates



Smt. Neera Jain, Editor (NBP), welcoming the guests



Interplay of imaginative strokes of pen and brush



August gathering listening with rapt attention

CUTTACK BOOK FAIR

“Not political, but the cultural history of a race paves way for its intellectual built-up. In the development of educational and cultural fervour the role of a book fair has always been significant,” said Shri Sameer Dey, Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education & Public Grievances, Orissa, while inaugurating the Cuttack Book Fair. Organised by National Book Trust in collaboration with Orissa Publishers and Booksellers Association, the Fair was held from 22

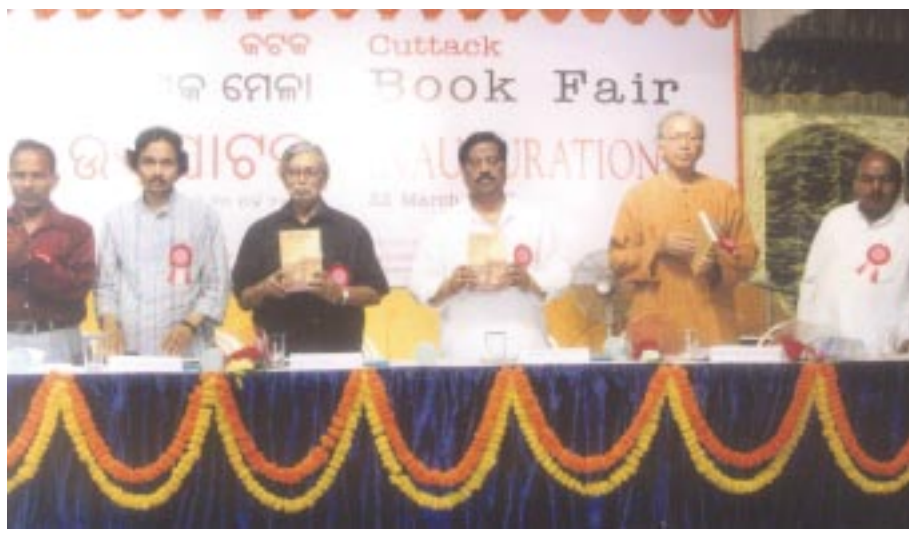
to 30 March 2008 at Cuttack. Shri Sameer Dey appreciated the combined effort of NBT and the association and called on the teachers and students to avail the scholarly opportunity offered by the Fair.

Prof. Shantanu Kumar Acharya, noted novelist who was the Guest of Honour on the occasion, praised the role of NBT in translating a very large number of books into Oriya. However, he stressed the need for translating Oriya literature into other Indian and foreign languages. Further, he emphasised on the making up of a cultural reawakening of Oriya identity.

Presiding over the function, eminent poet Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra presented his world view on book production and display and lauded the efforts of NBT for enriching Oriya literature through translation and creating a favourable climate for publication and propagation of books in Orissa.

Dr. Bijaynand Singh, Dy. Director & OSD, Department of Culture, Govt. of Orissa, who was the coordinator of the Fair, introduced the guests. Shri Krishna Chandra Behera, President, Orissa Publishers & Booksellers Association, thanked the guests and expressed his gratitude to NBT for organising the Fair at Cuttack, the book capital of Orissa.

About fifty publishers from different parts of Orissa and outside participated in the Fair. Four Oriya titles published by the Trust were released in the Fair: *Rajkishore Patnayakanka Shrestha Galpa* and *Bhagabati Charan Galpamala* (both original



Dr. Bijaynand Singh, Dr. Pramod Sar, Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra, Shri Sameer Dey, Prof. Shantanu Kumar Acharya, Shri Krishna Chandra Behera

Oriya titles), *Rebellion: 1857* and *Bhagat Singh: Select Speeches & Writings* (both translations from English).

Cultural and literary activities organised by local organisations made the evenings on the Fair ground both enjoyable and informative. On 23 March a symposium on “Readers’ Role on Literary Creation and Publication” was organised by *Janasudha*, a reputed literary journal. Noted playwright Dr. Ratnakar Chaini, Prof. Babaji Pattnaik, Dr. Umesh Chandra Patri and Dr. Arya Kumar Harshabardhan expressed their views, while noted poet Prof. Sarat Chandra Pradhan presided over the symposium. Shri Brahmanand Panda, MP, graced the occasion as Chief Guest. All the speakers opined that literary endeavours have to be reader-centric.

24th March was more emotional than argumentative. Odia Geetikabi Samaj, an association of Oriya lyric poets organised a programme, in which a good number of poets sang out their hearts with a call for ‘wedding



Shri Ramakant Rath at the NBT stall

of poetry to music’. On 25th and 26th there were book release functions organised by *Jeevan Ranga*, a reputed journal and Orissa Book Emporium.

Gokarnika Sahitya Samaj, a rural based literary organisation, organised a Poetry Reading Session on 27th evening. Poets from remote parts of the state participated in the meet. While the 27th evening was country-based, the 28th was city-based. ‘Cuttack-50’, an association of city poets, organised a unique poetry

reading as well as lyric singing session based on the millennium city Cuttack. Young poets of the city read their own poems on Cuttack and recited a good number of poems penned by famous poets written down the ages. Some famous lyrics composed on Cuttack were also sung.

Utkal Sahitya Samaj, the premier literary organisation of Orissa, organised a symposium on ‘Spread of Literature through Literary Organisations’ on 29th March. Prof. Krishna Chandra Behera, Shri Nadiya Behari Mohanty and Dr. Guruprasad Mohanty participated in the discussion while Shri Annada Prasad Roy chaired the meet. CYSD, a social organisation presented cultural programmes based on the tribal culture of Orissa in the afternoon.

The valedictory function was held on 30 March. Eminent critic Prof. Dasarathi Das, Prof. Pathani Pattnaik, former President, Orissa Sahitya Akademi & Utkal Sahitya Samaj and NBT Oriya Advisory Panel member Dr. Pritish Acharya spoke on different aspects of the Fair and praised the Trust for their endeavour. The Fair concluded with a reading session of humorous poetry organised by Orissa Publishers & Booksellers Association.

Dr. Bijaynand Singh, Advisory Panel member of NBT’s Oriya language books and also the coordinator of the function, expressed his gratitude to all for their cooperation for the success of the Fair.

—Dr. Pramod Sar

REMEMBERING ABBAS TYABJI

A biography of one of India’s greatest leaders Abbas Tyabji, authored by Aparna Basu and published by the Trust, was released at the India International Centre, New Delhi. The release function was followed by a discussion.

While releasing the book, Prof. Mridula Mukherjee, Director, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, said that today not many people know about Abbas Tyabji. “Yet,” she said, “if you read the book you would realise that he was indeed one of the foremost leaders of our national struggle.”

She also felt that the publication of this book raises many issues and questions, one among them being “why has it taken us so long to bring out a biography on Abbas Tyabji?” She said that good biographies on national leaders not only help us to know

about the history but also makes us understand what influenced the complete transformation of individuals like Abbas Tyabji, C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru from the elite Indian British loyalists into moderate nationalists.

“Looking at the photographs and sculptures of the Dandi March, many people have asked who is this bearded man in the march,” said Dr. Varsha Das, Director, National Gandhi Museum. She felt that this biography would help people to know more about Tyabji. She also informed that a wonderful relationship was shared between Mahatma Gandhi and Abbas Tyabji.

Anil Nauriya, well-known intellectual and an advocate in Supreme Court, thanked the author for “putting Abbas Tyabji on a library map because so far there was no book

available in English on Abbas Tyabji.” He said that as a member of the committee appointed by the Indian National Congress to review the charges against General R. Dyer for the Jallianwala Babh massacre, Tyabji collected evidence for the report meticulously. He collected 600 affidavits and brought out the report in less than a year after the massacre. He felt that Abbas Tyabji was pioneer in bringing out ‘classic report’.

Prof. Aparna Basu, author of the book, also gave an insight into the life of Tyabji. She also mentioned the names of the sources from which she has taken help.

Prof. Bipan Chandra, Chairman, NBT, concluded the function and thanked the guests. He also informed that gathering that the book would be translated into all Indian languages soon.



Prof. Aparna Basu, Prof. Mridula Mukherjee, Shri Anil Nauriya and Dr. Varsha Das at the release of Abbas Tyabji



Prof. Bipan Chandra, Chairman, National Book Trust, speaking at the function

LITERARY PROGRAMMES ORGANISED IN PUNJAB

The National Book Trust, India organised two literary programmes in Punjab, on 24 and 28 March 2008, in Bathinda and Gurdaspur, respectively. Held at the Regional Center for Punjabi University Patiala at Bathinda, the inaugural session of the function on 24 March saw the release of eight Punjabi books published by the NBT.

Releasing the books, Dr. Dharmpal Singhal, well known critic and writer commended NBT for publishing low-cost books suitable for all age-groups.

Prof. Satnam Singh Jassal, Professor at the Regional Centre, Bathinda, praised NBT for organising such literary programmes.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Nirmal Singh Preet, distinguished Punjabi writer

expressed happiness on the increasing number of books published in Punjabi by NBT and the reasonable pricing, making it available and affordable for all.

Other speakers included Shri Om Prakash Gaso, Shri Jasveer Singh Bhullar, Shri Miter Singh Meet and Prof. T. R. Vinod, among others. The session ended with a Kavi Darbar with eminent Punjabi poets rendering their pieces.

Organised at the Ramsingh Datt Deshbhakt Yadgar hall at Gurdaspur, the second literary function on 28 March 2008 was attended by over 250 people, which included writers and litterateurs. The inaugural function saw the release of another set of eight Punjabi books.

Releasing the books, Shri Jagjit Singh Anand, former Lok Sabha Member and Shri Sul Khan Sarhadi, well known lyricist commended NBT for the good work. Speaking on the occasion, Shri K. L. Garg, distinguished Punjabi writer praised the released books for their good content and suitability.

The session was followed by a seminar on ‘Declining Interest in Reading: Problem and Solution’. The function ended with a Kavi Darbar where eminent poets from various regions participated.

Earlier, Dr. Baldev Singh, Chief Editor & Joint Director, NBT introduced the audience to the various activities of National Book Trust, India.