

Agartala, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2022

**40<sup>th</sup> Agartala Book Fair grand inauguration**

**Books play a vital role as a guide in the fight against violence and injustice: TLA Speaker**



The road to fight against war, violence and injustice is paved through books. Our relationship with books is a lot like our mothers. Just as a mother's debt cannot be repaid, similarly a book's debt cannot be repaid, enunciated Tripura Legislative Assembly Speaker Ratan Chakraborty after inaugurating 40<sup>th</sup> Agartala Book Fair at Hapania International Mela campus yesterday organized by Information & Cultural Affairs department. He said, just as we wait all year for Durga Puja, book lovers wait all year for the book fair. The smell of the new book evokes a unique kind of feeling. Although the touch of modernity is everywhere, this scent has not lost its uniqueness. He said, Book Fairs do not discriminate. Everyone wanders under the open sky, acquires knowledge. Whatever be the age of the book, books take us thousands of years ago. Aristotle's book is still relevant to us today. Everyone who comes to the book fair will find invaluable resources of knowledge. He said, the light of this knowledge will enlighten others as well. Only then will the real purpose of the book be served.

State Minister of Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh K. M. Khalid said, India's relationship with Bangladesh is one of brotherhood, love and goodwill. Recalling the contribution of Tripura people in the liberation war of Bangladesh, he said that the way in which Tripura stood by Bangladesh in the liberation war could never be repaid. The people of Tripura at that time have sheltered refugees which was more than the population of Tripura. There is a striking resemblance between the cultures of the two countries. This culture, tradition can be confined to geographical boundaries but cannot be kept away from alliances. Referring to the way in which the present Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi has extended his hand of cooperation to Bangladesh in various fields, he said that relations with Bangladesh have been further strengthened during the tenure of the present Government of India. He also mentioned the positive role of Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb in this regard.

The inaugural programme of the 40<sup>th</sup> Agartala Book Fair was presided over by Information & Cultural Affairs Minister Sushanta Choudhury. He wished success to the Book Fair and called for expanding the scope of knowledge through this Fair. He said, the Department of Information and Cultural Affairs does not only work on expanding the scope of knowledge. It also creates awareness among people to acquire knowledge. Through this, the meaning of the theme 'My Tripura, My Pride' will be served in a true sense. It will be possible to make this book fair historic in the future. He said, apart from the State-Level Book Fair, the state government is also organizing District- Level Book Fairs. Book Fairs have already been organized in Unakoti district, North Tripura district, Dhalai district and Khowai district. After the State-Level Book Fair, Book Fairs will be organized in South Tripura district, Gomati district and Sepahijala district. He called for expanding the scope of knowledge and taking Tripura to the pinnacle of further development in the future.

Tribal Welfare Minister Mevar Kumar Jamatia called for making the state more self-reliant and prosperous. Besides, Cooperative Minister Ramprasad Pal wished overall success to Agartala Book Fair. Mayor of Agartala Municipal Corporation Dipak Majumdar greeted State Minister of Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh K. M. Khalid on behalf of the people of Agartala. He said, Book Fair is not just a meeting of buyers and sellers, it is a bond of unity. Secretary of ICA department Dr. P. K. Goyal highlighted the context of organizing the Book Fair. He said, it was possible to organize this Fair in a very short time amidst Covid-19 situation. Not only Agartala Book Fair, but Book Fairs are also being organized in other districts of the state. On the same day, the cover of 'Smarinika 2022' of the Information and Cultural Affairs Department and the literary and cultural magazine 'Gomati 2022' were unveiled by the programme inaugurator, chief guest and other guests. MLA Rehati Mohan Das, MLA Sudhangshu Das, Director of ICA department Ratan Biswas, Assistant High Commissioner of Bangladesh Assistant High Commission Arif Mohammad were present during the inaugural programme. At the end of the inaugural programme, the guests felicitated the lyricists of this year's Book Fair theme song, Bikash Rai Debbarma in Kokborok and Manoj Kumar Ghosh in Bengali and the composer of Bengali theme song Guru Dipan Acharya. At the end of the inaugural session, the guests visit few other stalls of the Fair including the Bangladesh Pavilion.



Publishers and booksellers from different places including Kolkata, Delhi and Bangladesh have participated in the Book Fair. The number of stalls in the Book Fair is 162. Kabi Sanmelan are being held on March 26, 27 and April 1 to April 3. It is to be noted that 10 free bus services are being provided daily in front of Radhanagar, Chandrapur and Rabindra Bhavan in Agartala for the convenience of visiting the Book Fair being organized at Hapania International Mela campus.

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