

WORLD BOOK DAY

REPORT

by

Ms. Eshatair Razia (Youth Book Ambassador)

Ms. Ambreen Alwani (Faculty member at Development Studies Dept)

Edited by Saadia Bano

On 23rd April 2019, the Archives of Department of Architecture and Planning, NED University of engineering and technology initiated and organized celebrated the World Book Day to promote the love of books, readings and libraries in the youth and professionals of today. It was an open to public event which was widely attended by literary figures, school students and journalists catering to people of all ages. The event was planned with two sets of activities in two locations. One module targeted literary fans who gathered to hear their favorite people speak about books and reading along with a documentary movie show and dramatic readings. The other module was for fourth grade children from “The AMI School”, Karachi, where youngsters were enlightened with interesting information in engaging sessions of storytelling, singing, reading and writing activities. The world book day 2019 began with a short introduction of the event along with a documentary on DAP-NED Archives and Library by Ms. Saadia Bano, Co-ordinator of world book day 2019.

First speaker was Ghazi Salahuddin, a senior journalist and activist, said that as a nation we do not have the habit of book reading. He linked it to the dryness of textbooks that repel children from book reading from a very young age. Mr. Salahuddin encouraged his audience to read fiction. He claimed that there were great benefits of getting into fiction; it teaches empathy, it helps readers identify their emotions and it lets a single person live many lives in form of characters.

Second speaker was Dr. Rais Ahmed Samdhani, Professor at Quaid e Azam University. Dr. Rais pointed out that a book is not paper and ink but the container of knowledge. He blamed the education system for not having a library legislation due to which in the public sector only 2% schools have libraries. According to Dr. Ahmed, it is not the internet that drove us away from books. He blamed the parents for this separation from books and book reading culture. He believed that a child copies his parents, if there is no book reading culture at home, children will not develop this habit.

After this, an amazing documentary ‘These silences are all the Words’ by Madiha Aijaz (late) was projected. Later on the documentary was analyzed by M. Ali Hakeem, editor of the film, who told the audience about the stages and processes this documentary went through. He said that the film recorded real life daily conversations at a library. Library is a refuge for many and

though it seems such an average space because it is under utilized. Moreover, he spread some light on the Ms. Aijaz's association with book reading.

Later, Dr. Asif Farrukh came on stage. He declared that as a nation, we are scared of books and that no matter how proud '*ahl-e-kitaab*' we claim ourselves but reality fact is we have '*khauf-e-kitaab*'. He made an alarming deduction that the cultural indicators show progress of a nation and as a nation we are increasingly building shopping malls and not even bothering towards construction and development of libraries. To end his part, Dr. Asif read a beautiful piece of poetry by Fehmida Riaz, which he wrote in her last days of life.

At this point a wonderful and expressive reading was delivered by Asma Mundrawala and Saife Hasan of Zambeel Dramatic Readings. They read '*Reserved Seat*' by Intizar Husain.

Now some glimpses of the kids' activities, which was simultaneously happening at the ground floor lecture hall. Initially, The AMI students enjoyed a visit to DAP-NED reference library. Then the celebration started with a brief session on elements of architecture conducted by Ms. Dua, student volunteer of 3rd year Architecture. This session was followed by a fun filled song of 80's "*Bunder road se Kemari*" performance by Mr. Hadi and Ms. Huda, student volunteers of Development Studies Program.

Acknowledging the expression of poetry, youth book ambassador, Mr. Hasnain and Ms. Javeria Khanum narrated enchanting poem for students "*Karachi ki Bus Main Safar Horaha hai*". Keeping in mind the creative ways of expressing oneself, Ms. Unaiza Shoaib conducted a reflective activity on "*My favorite book*", where students were provided a Performa in which they need to write and draw about their favorite part of their already read book.

Finally art of storytelling was conducted by educational consultant and founder of Goread.pk, Ms. Nusser Sayeed on her latest edition on "*Olive and Khatarnaak Plogger*" addressing the current issue of ocean pollution and its impact on ecosystem.

Finally, the event end with a pledge taking ceremony by team of youth ambassadors, who took an oath to serve the cause of reading and promoting books. The pledge-taking ceremony was supervised by Mansoor Raza, a faculty member of DAP-NEDUET.

Lastly, Dr. Noman Ahmed, Dean of Architecture and Management Sciences, presented his gratitude to the chief guest. He thanked everyone who visited and was happy that people of all ages managed to attend the event. He suggested the students to read various type of books including prohibited books (due to social or political reasons) because they also help to build the versatile perspectives.

Later on, Dr. Anila Naeem, Chairperson, Department of Architecture and Planning, NED University, presented her closing remarks. She nostalgically recalled the time when everybody used to keep a book near the bedside for reading before sleeping. She claimed that now in our society reading is no more a joyful delight, it has to be force as an assignment to the youngsters. The event culminated with distribution of souvenirs, certificates and refreshments.