

International Children's Book Fair, Literature Convention and Cultural Festival – 2021

From 19th June to 26th June 2021 at the Public Library premises, Colombo

2nd Convention and International Workshop on Children's and Youth Literature

18th to 20th June 2021 at Goethe Institute, 39, Gregory's Road, Colombo 7

Children's and Youth Literature Awards

14th June 2021 at German Cultural Centre, Gregory's Road, Colombo

International Children's Book Fair, Literature Convention and Cultural Festival – 2021

19th June to 26th June 2021 from 10.00 am to 7.00 pm at the Public Library premises, Colombo

An international children's and youth book fair is being organized for the first time in Sri Lanka, providing a new bracket within the book reading culture in our society. The objective of this book fair, literature convention and cultural festival is to introduce children's books from local and international publishers that conform to high standards of writing and publishing, in order to re-establish and enhance the reading habits of children in our country.

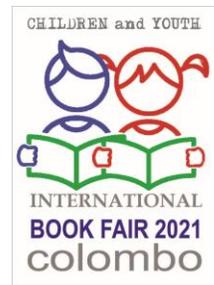
Various activities and workshops on drama, dance, painting, music and other cultural programs shall be organized *vis-à-vis* the aforesaid book fair, in collaboration with National and International Cultural Centers.

Writers, illustrators, editors and others interested in creating and contributing to children's and youth literature will be invited to participate at the aforesaid book fair.

The said book fair will be organized in compliance with the same standards applicable to international book fairs such as those held in Bologna, Shanghai and Sharjah, with its primary

International Book Fair, Literature Convention and Arts Festival for Children and Youth – 2021

Office: 302, Pahalawela Road, Palawatta, Baththaramulla.



objective being to recognize and encourage children to become avid readers.

The following events will be organized at the said book fair:

I. International Children's Book Fair

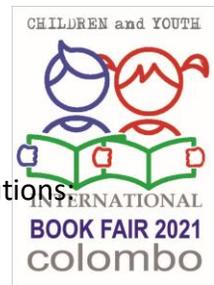
The objective of this book fair is to promote children's and youth literature books produced in Sri Lanka and other countries. There will be no text books and/or stationery items sold at the said book fair, as ordinarily done in other local book fairs. We shall best endeavor to create a child-friendly environment in order to pique their interest in reading, and transport them to a new world of quality reading, with the aid of story tellers, clowns, dancers, singers, artists and other forms of worthwhile entertainment.

II. Convention for Children and Youth

This event will be a more developed extension of the Convention held in the year of 2019, organized by IBBY Sri Lanka Section. This event will be held for three consecutive days commencing on 18th June 2021 and concluding on 20th June 2021. The facilitators of the event will consist of authors, editors and publishers of children and youth publications recognized by local and international platforms. The presenters will contribute by way of physical and online participation. The stakeholders will be selected by calling applications prior to the event.

III. 100 Books Project and Children and Youth Literature Award Festival

This will be a special activity among the many events organized as indicated herein. One hundred children and youth books published within the past decade and conforming to high standards of writing and publishing will be selected and recognized. Three recognized books under the categories of **Best Book for Children; Best Book for Youth; and the Best Books with Illustrations** will be recognized with certificates and cash awards. The selected hundred books will be listed in a specific catalogue in order for promotion among foreign publishers at international forums with the objective of exploring the possibility of translation. In order to evaluate and assess whether such books have conformed to applicable standards, a selection committee shall be



drawn with the participation of officials and/or individuals from the following institutions:

- The Educational Publication Advisory Board of the Ministry of Education
- The Book Development Council of the Ministry of Education
- The Colombo Public Library
- The National Institute of Library and Information Sciences of Colombo University
- Room to Read

IV. Art Festival

Many art and cultural events have been organized to be held from 19th June 2021 to 26th June 2021 including:

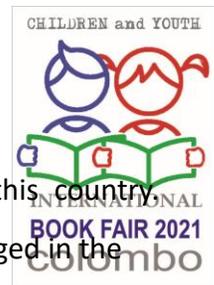
- Full day open-air activities with the participation of local and foreign cultural institutes;
- International children and youth film festival;
- Drama and street drama performances;
- Musical fair;
- Art exhibition and activities;
- Conferences and discussions for children, youth and parents;
- Writers forums;
- Platforms to meet authors, illustrators, editors and publishers of children and youth publications.

***M. Safeer* - Chairman of Book Fair Committee**

Having worked in the book publishing industry for 22 years, I always wished to discover a new dimension within the book industry. I have consistently tried to create some awareness through our publications to further community development in some way, be it the simplest. One of the things I learnt when I gained some international experience and exposure in book publishing over the years was a mechanism to develop the book industry in a small country like ours in order to conform to international standards. So with that in mind, I thought it would be a

International Book Fair, Literature Convention and Arts Festival for Children and Youth – 2021

Office: 302, Pahalawela Road, Palawatta, Baththaramulla.



good idea to promote reading among the children and youth community in this country. Accordingly, two years ago, a group of approximately fifteen people who were engaged in the

book publishing industry got together to address this issue, and to make plans for the future of the book industry and the reader. Awareness was and is being raised. One of the main realizations was that literature could not be revived without promoting reading. As a road to such revival, it was suggested that for the first time, a children's and youth book fair should be held in accordance with international standards. The proposals for the same are expanding, growing, and have resulted in a massive national effort to achieve a new culture of reading by strengthening writers, readers and publishers. We have great confidence that we will receive the support of all.

Dinesh Kulatunga – President IBBY Sri Lanka Section

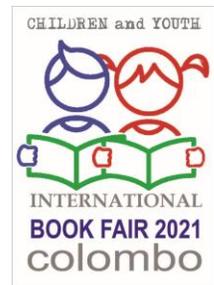
The Sri Lanka Board on Books for Young People (SLBBY) is the local section of the International Board on Books for Young People established in 1953, which is a non-profit organization operated by volunteers. Its objective which is in line with the modern global movement is to develop relationships among nations through good books which enables such nations to understand the diverse cultures and traditions contained within each such nation and thereby lead the future for a harmonious and peaceful world.

As responsible Sri Lankans it is our duty to promote children's and youth literature of our own nation and that of other countries by way of translation. To achieve this great objective and in order to address the common issues of the world, we should be equipped with high standard literature. In this sense, we comparatively, fall below applicable international standards and so we must develop our writers and illustrators while promoting reading habits in our society. Therefore, our immediate approach is to balance all these objectives and as a whole to develop this sector of literature in our country.

The members of the said IBBY section consists of state and non-state institutes which are responsible for children's affairs with special focus on matters concerning literature and books.

International Book Fair, Literature Convention and Arts Festival for Children and Youth – 2021

Office: 302, Pahalawela Road, Palawatta, Baththaramulla.



The relevant stakeholders are therefore publishers, writers, illustrators, teachers, librarians, book promoters, book sellers and researchers. Thus, the organizing committee of the International Book Fair, Literature Convention and Book Awards consists of representatives of all the aforementioned sectors.

The objectives of this book fair are:

- a) Understanding the true status and feasibility of literature for Sri Lankan children and youth;
- b) Identifying avenues of enhancing the appreciation of literature for children and youth;
- c) Identifying a programme to pique interest in literature for children and youth among children, youth, teachers and parents;
- d) Updating knowledge and reviewing regional and international literature for children and youth;
- e) Appreciating and awarding outstanding writers and illustrators.

Some parents encourage children to read only textbooks, and do not encourage them to read story books, illustrated children's story books, or teen novels, etc., because they do not know or understand that the real results of educational text-book reading can also be easily obtained through reading a creative and constructive piece of artistic literature. Further, a child who reads such a story book develops his knowledge and understanding of society, the environment, culture, national heritage and value systems and thereupon may lead a meaningful existence within society. In other words, "reading maketh a man". We believe it is an important national duty and responsibility cast on all of us, especially the media, to disseminate these ideas.