

FICCI to take up the case of the publishing sector for grant of industry status

New Delhi, February 16, 2014: The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in association with the National Book Trust, India (NBT) organized CEOSpeak over Chairman's Breakfast on 16 February 2014 at The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi. The objective of the program was to facilitate greater interaction within the publishing community in India, and to establish a forum of CEOs to discuss and share business and book-trade related issues and concerns. Initiated last year as a part of the New Delhi Book Fair, this edition of CEOSpeak aimed to discuss and share common issues and concerns to evolve a composite agenda of the Indian publishing industry. Dr. Arbind Prasad, Director General, FICCI welcomed the dignitaries and delegates for this important discussion and moderated the session.

Mr. A Sethumadhavan, Chairman, NBT while making his welcome address to the CEO's present at the programme, emphasized that India has no dearth of good content. We have a flourishing publishing industry with literature in vernacular languages adding to the richness and depth of scholarship in India.

Dr. Vivek Lall, President and CEO, Reliance Industries, highlighted that the sector must strive to get the industry status, which will enable the industry to get corporate loans at low interest. It is very important that this promising sector should focus on getting more organized and initiate a scientific study to bring out growth prospects for the sector. He related that FICCI had lobbied for the entertainment industry, including films, to get industry status in the year 2000 and should take up the case of the publishing sector.

The event was inaugurated by **Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Member, Planning Commission,** Government of India. He emphasised that India has the advantage of the demographic dividend, besides a growing adult literature segment that constitute about 74 % of the reading audience. The way forward for the sector is to get organized, seek industry status and actively collaborate with the higher education institutes.

Ms. Beata Stasinska, Vice President, Foksal Publishing Group introduced the Polish publishing market to the august gathering and highlighted issues of distribution and readership in the industry, besides drawing a parallel between the Polish and Indian publishing sector.

The programme also witnessed the results of the **industry pulse survey conducted by FICCI.** The objective of the survey is to assess the perception of publishers toward growth of the sector and to highlight major areas of concerns for policy change. About 75% of the respondents were publishers, 11.5% are

distributors/retailers, 13.5% are other service providers. The **top 3 challenges identified for the publishing sector in next 2-3 years are collections, distribution channel and piracy.**

Ms. Winnie Hung, Publishing and Cross Segment Strategy Development Manager, Asia Pacific and Japan, HP Indigo & InkJet Press Solutions highlighted the changing nature of printing technology. Mr. R Ramachandran, Executive Director, National Book Development Council of Singapore and Executive Secretary, Asian Festival of Children's Content, Singapore underlined the sustainability and demand of Indian Book Industry in the ASEAN countries. The forum also had an "open house", moderated by Ms. Urvashi Butalia, Chair, FICCI Publishing Committee and Director, Zubaan, to discuss major issues that the publishing community faces. **It was reiterated that FICCI will lobby for getting industry status for the publishing sector.**

Dr. M. A. Sikander, Director, National Trust, MHRD, Government of India gave the closing remarks, and supported the need to seek industry status for the publishing sector. He congratulated FICCI for bringing key people together for the cause.

The event was attended by over hundred CEO's from publishing houses both national and international and was graced by a delegation from Poland which is the Guest of Honour Country at the New Delhi World Book Fair 2014.