16th National Children's Literature Conference Held in Udaipur

Udaipur: The 16th National Children's Literature Conference, jointly organized by Salila Sanstha, Salumber and the Rajasthan Sahitya Academy, Udaipur, was held with grandeur at the auditorium of the Directorate of Extension Education. The three-day conclave, dedicated to nurturing young minds through literature, brought together scholars, writers, and cultural leaders from across India.

Inaugural Session

The opening ceremony, Udgahatan, Lokarpanevam Samman, was presided over by Prof. Ajit Kumar Karnatak, Vice Chancellor, Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology. In his address, he remarked that "the child within you keeps you alive", emphasizing the joy that children's songs and stories bring to human life. Chief Guest Jayanti Ranganathan (Editor, Nandan and Executive Editor, Hindustan Group) delivered the keynote on Balgeet aur Balman ka Antarsambandh, stressing the importance of literature in freeing children from mobile addiction. On this occasion, Dr. Vimla Bhandari's book America Se Mulakat and the special issue of Salil Pravah were released.

Technical Session

The technical session was chaired by Dr. Suraj Singh Negi, senior IAS officer and pioneer of the Pati Lekhan Muhim. Reflecting on the challenges of the digital age, he urged, "Children today are enslaved to mobile screens. Let us befriend them, instill values, and guide them towards writing, reading, and speaking. Children's literature must become the beacon of this noble journey."

Honors and Recognitions

Prestigious literary awards were presented during the conclave:

- Salila Shikhar Samman – Dr. Sanjeev Kumar
- Salila Vishisht Sahityakar Samman – Dr. Suraj Singh Negi and Dr. Meena Sirola
- Salila Sahitya Ratna Samman – Zeeshan Haider Zaidi, Lal Devendra Kumar Shrivastava, Meenu Tripathi, and Dr. Prabhat Singhal

Awardees were honored with shawls, garlands, citations, and honoraria.

Book Releases & Reviews

A wave of children's literature releases added vibrancy to the conference. Notable among them were ChhahAnkon Ka Jadoo and Geet SuhaneBachpan Ke by Dr. Vimla Bhandari, Boojh Saheli Meri Paheli by Prakash Tated, and Bhavon Ki Sarita by Madhu Maheshwari. Scholarly reviews were presented by Dr. Faheem Ahmed, Chakradhara Shukla, Shivmohan Yadav, and Dinesh Panchal, who underlined the role of families in nurturing creativity.

Poetry Symposium & Valedictory

The Children's Poetry Symposium, chaired by Colonel Praveen Tripathi, featured enthralling recitations by poets from seven states, creating a vibrant literary atmosphere.In the valedictory session, Dr. Vimla Bhandari, President of Salila Sanstha, hailed the conference as a milestone, highlighting participation from delegates across Delhi, Haryana, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan. The conclave concluded with the soulful rendering of the National Anthem, leaving the audience immersed in literary pride and cultural harmony.

Narayan Seva Sansthan's 44th Mass Wedding on 30–31 August

Udaipur: The greatest blessing in life is to hold someone's hand and promise to walk together through every circumstance. When two souls vow to share joys and sorrows, the foundation of a family is laid. To extend this sacred bond to those who are deprived of marriage due to poverty or disability, Narayan Seva Sansthan is once again preparing to script a remarkable chapter of compassion and humanity.

A Grand Occasion on 30–31 August - At the Seva Mahatirth campus in Liyo ka Guda, the 44th Free Mass Wedding for the Differently-Abled and Underprivileged will be held with grandeur and sanctity. On this auspicious occasion, 51 couples will take the sacred seven vows, binding themselves as life partners and stepping into the blissful journey of matrimony.

Examples of Love and Inner Strength

Sansthan President Prashant Agarwal shared that among these couples, some are visually impaired, some live without hands or legs, while others crawl their way through life's path. A few pairs have one partner differently-abled and the other fully able. Yet each couple will stand as a living testimony to the eternal truth that—

"True companionship lies not in the body alone, but in the union of soul and spirit."

Beginning with the Blessings of Lord Ganesha

On the morning of 30 August at 10:15 am, Founder Padma Shri Kailash 'Manav', Co-founder Kamla Devi, and President Prashant Agarwal will invoke Lord Ganesha, marking the auspicious commencement of the wedding festival. Traditional rituals of mehndi, sangeet, and bindoli will add vibrant colors, while on 31 August, the sacred toran, varmala, panigrahan rituals, and the mangalsutra will unite these couples in a lifelong bond.

Returning to Bless the New Couples - This event is not just a wedding—it is a festival of social rebirth. Couples who were once struggling in despair, and who were given new hope through surgeries, artificial limbs, and vocational training by the Sansthan, will now return with their children to bless the newlyweds.

So far, through 43 such mass weddings, 2,459 couples have built homes filled with dignity and happiness. This time too, the ceremony will be broadcast live, allowing the entire nation to witness these unions.

Echoes of Vedic Tradition

The wedding mandap will be adorned with 51 sacred altars. The chanting of Vedic hymns by learned priests will sanctify the air. Amidst the emotional tears of parents offering kanyadaan, when the couples circle the holy fire in the saatphere, the scene will transcend religious ritual—it will become the most powerful symbol of compassion, dignity, and social responsibility.

A Gift of New Life

To help the newlyweds begin their household, the Sansthan will gift them every essential item—utensils, beds, cupboards, sewing machines, stoves, fans, bedding, and even adornment materials. These are not merely household goods, but blessings in tangible form, ensuring their new journey begins with joy and dignity.

The Emotional Moment of Farewell

The most poignant moment will arrive when the brides, seated in symbolic palanquins, bid farewell alongside their husbands. The Sansthan will ensure their dignified journey back to their native homes. This farewell will carry a message to society—

"Every daughter, whether poor or differently-abled, deserves to leave as the goddess of her new home—with honor and grace."

A Festival of Humanity

This mass wedding is not merely a ceremony; it is a festival of humanity—where compassion, commitment, and social harmony unite to script new beginnings in the lives of many.

Afreen Jahan of Udaipur Achieves MD Selection

Udaipur: Afreen Jahan, daughter of Mohammad Noor and Rabia Bano from Udaipur, has achieved remarkable success by securing selection for MD after completing her MBBS. Out of three lakh candidates across India, Afreen achieved the 1625th rank, bringing pride to her family and community.

Her father Mohammad Noor drives an auto, and her mother Rabia Bano runs a fruit shop to support the family. Despite coming from a modest background, Afreen's dedication and hard work helped her reach this milestone. She aspires to serve society by pursuing MD in medicine.The historic achievement was celebrated by the Anjuman Committee. Sadar Mukhtar Ahmed Qureshi, Secretary Mustafa Sheikh, Joint Secretary Izhar Hussain, Kabina Member Siraj Khan, Aniz Raza, and Nazma Mewafrosh praised Afreen's determination and stated that she has brought honor to the entire community. Spokesperson Rashid Khan said this success is not only the result of her parents' sacrifices and efforts but also serves as an inspiration for all daughters of society.

COAS and AWWA President Pledge Organ Donation

New Delhi: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Upendra Dwivedi along with his wife Mrs Sunita Dwivedi, President AWWA, on August 20, 2025, pledged to donate their organs at Army Hospital (Research & Referral), giving a significant boost to the Armed Forces Organ Retrieval & Transplantation Authority (AORTA). The initiative aims to encourage awareness and inspire the Armed Forces community to lead the nation in organ donation.

Under the leadership of Director General, Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS) Surgeon Vice Admiral Arti Sarin, AORTA has emerged as a national leader in organ retrieval and transplant efforts. The Indian Army has already created a record, with more than 26,000 personnel pledging organ donations in a single campaign.

Speaking on the occasion, General Upendra Dwivedi described organ donation as a service to humanity and an extension of the Armed Forces' spirit of sacrifice and courage. He urged service personnel & their families to come forward and set an example for society. The COAS also lauded AORTA for its consistent efforts in spreading awareness and motivating Armed Forces personnel about the importance of organ donation.

Recognising the vital role of healthcare workers, the Army Chief presented on-the-spot Chiefs Recommendation Cards to three frontline staff engaged in organ transplant care, including a housekeeper who diligently maintained hygiene and sanitation for patients. This gesture reinforced the Army Medical Corps' commitment to compassionate patient care.

The event included a heartfelt tribute to donor families who extended the gift of life through organ donation. These families were felicitated in a solemn ceremony for their compassion and courage

Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin Visits City Palace

Udaipur: His Holiness Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, 53rd spiritual head of the Dawoodi Bohra community, visited the City Palace on Wednesday and was warmly received by Shriji Dr. Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar. Syedna Saheb was honored with a ceremonial Guard of Honour in the palace courtyard before a half-hour courtesy meeting at Durbar Hall, Fateh Prakash. Dr. Lakshyaraj Singh presented books on Mewar's glorious history and rare archival photographs. The two leaders discussed historical and spiritual ties between Mewar rulers and Dawoodi Bohra spiritual heads, reaffirming the enduring bonds of faith, culture, and mutual respect between the community and the royal family.

Act on Water Conservation, Not Just Talk

Udaipur: At the Girwa Block-level Principals' Forum, senior physician and Water Hero–Jal Mitra, Dr. P.C. Jain, stressed that while NGOs frequently organize water rallies, street plays, and poster campaigns, actual rooftop rainwater harvesting at homes remains minimal. "Most precious rainwater is still being wasted in drains," he noted.

Program Began with Traditional Rituals - The event commenced with the Jal Kalash Poojan, followed by a soul-stirring song, "Jal hi jeevanhai, aajnahi to kal jayega, jal bin jeevanjaljayega," sung by retired commissioner M. Mohan Rao, reminding attendees of water's essential role in life. Dr. Jain emphasized the urgency of saving water during daily life and the monsoon season, questioning, "We have blocked every path for water to seep into the ground. How, then, will groundwater levels ever rise?"

Hands-On Demonstrations and Scientific Guidance - Teachers were trained to test TDS levels in drinking water and advised on safe consumption limits. Using hospital models, Dr. Jain demonstrated rooftop rainwater harvesting as the simplest and most economical method. Sharing successful case studies, he urged schools to capture rainwater on rooftops and recharge groundwater through hand pumps and tube wells, highlighting long-term benefits for students.

He also introduced the concept of virtual water—the hidden water used in producing clothing, food grains, and electronics—urging the audience to avoid unnecessary consumption as a form of water misuse.

Cultural Segment Inspires Commitment - The session included a Jal Geet (water song) and a dance performance featuring Manisha Joshi, Tarun Prabha Sharma, Asha Soni, Lalita Meena, and Manju Shrimali. Participants were then encouraged to pledge rooftop rainwater harvesting at their homes, setting an example for society and students alike.

Urgent Call for Rajasthan - Using a map of India, Dr. Jain highlighted that Rajasthan leads the country in groundwater over-extraction at 148%, making immediate conservation action more critical than ever.

Neerja Modi School Holds Investiture Ceremony

Udaipur: Neerja Modi School, managed by the Sojatia Group, hosted a grand investiture ceremony for its newly appointed student council of the academic session 2025-26. Students from all four houses—Neer, Agni, Vayu, and Prithvi—participated with enthusiasm. Key office-bearers, including Head Boy Jivyansh Dangi, Head Girl Hani Chawla, Deputy Head Boy Tejas Gaggar, Deputy Head Girl Prisha Gulati, house captains, and class prefects, were officially inducted.

The event began with a warm welcome to chief guest Dr. Mahendra Sojatia, CEO Reena Sojatia, Secretary Dr. Dhruv Sojatia, and Trustee Nehal Sojatia, followed by a lamp-lighting ceremony in front of Goddess Saraswati.

Director Sakshi Sojatia administered the oath, while Dr. Mahendra Sojatia highlighted the importance of leadership, self-discipline, and honesty in nurturing youth as future contributors to nation-building.

The ceremony featured a disciplined parade, vibrant house flags, and inspiring addresses, culminating with the National Anthem, leaving the students motivated and committed to uphold their responsibilities.

Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Happy Home School

Udaipur: The Golden Jubilee celebrations of Happy Home School, located at Pratapnagar, were held with great splendour at Sukhadia Rangmanch under the auspices of Udaipur Municipal Corporation. The event marked a significant milestone in the school's five-decade-long journey of academic excellence and holistic education.

The chief guests of the ceremony included Rural MLA Phool Singh Meena, former SIERT Director Dr. Sharatchandra Purohit, educationist Jawaharlal Jhanwar, and G.L. Kumawat. The evening came alive with vibrant cultural presentations, ranging from devotional renditions like Shiv Tandav Stotra and Ramkatha to patriotic songs, folk dances from different states, and awareness performances on environmental protection. Performances by students, from the youngest to senior batches, added immense charm to the celebrations.

In his welcome address, Founder Jagdish Arora shared the institution's growth journey and emphasized the school's commitment to the all-round development of students. He highlighted how the school consistently expanded its faculties over time and now offers recognized teaching streams in Commerce, Science, and Arts.

On this occasion, a commemorative souvenir was released, documenting 50 years of the school's academic legacy, along with the experiences of teachers, students, alumni, and parents. Adding to the pride of the evening, Jagdish Arora was conferred with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Education Promotion Committee for his outstanding contribution to education and holistic development in the region. The Private School Association also felicitated him with special honours.

The celebration witnessed enthusiastic participation from alumni and parents, who expressed joy and nostalgia in being part of the historic occasion. Addressing the gathering, MLA Phool Singh Meena lauded the school's dedication towards quality education, noting that its students are now excelling in prestigious positions across India and abroad, bringing pride to their families and the city.

Managing Director Kunal Arora spoke about the institution's future vision and upcoming goals, underlining its commitment to nurturing talent in line with modern educational needs. The programme was conducted smoothly by Dr. Rashmi Parashar and Prerna Mahawar, while Academic Director Dr. Sushma Arora proposed the vote of thanks.

The Golden Jubilee celebration stood as a testament to Happy Home School's enduring legacy of shaping generations with knowledge, values, and culture.

Vidya Vaibhav Conference and Awards 2025 Celebrated in Udaipur

Udaipur: The Vidya Vaibhav International Educational Conference and Awards 2025 unfolded with grandeur at The Ananta Resort, Udaipur, bringing together leading educators, policymakers, and scholars from India and abroad.

The conference was inaugurated by Dr. Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar, who lauded the initiative for creating a meaningful platform to exchange ideas on the future of education. He emphasized the crucial role of teachers as torchbearers of knowledge and praised the organizers for hosting purposeful discussions in Udaipur.

Honoring Mewar's Educational Legacy

In memory of Late Maharaja Arvind Singh Mewar, two new recognitions were introduced:

- Mewar Legacy Award for Education (Schools) – presented to Seedling Group of Schools, Udaipur under the leadership of Hardeep Bakhshi.
- Mewar Legacy Award for Individual Education – conferred upon Ms. Archana Mankotia, Director of MGD Girls' School, Jaipur.

Keynote Sessions and Discussions

The first day featured thought-provoking sessions on technology adoption in schools and aligning education with Sustainable Development Goals. Dr. Gururaj Karajagi from Bengaluru delivered a keynote on the power of training to change mindsets, while Princess Jahnavi Kumari addressed the role of policy in education and the need to strengthen children's mental health.

Recognition of Educators

The evening saw awards presented in ten categories, honoring teachers purely on merit. The transparent process, with no nomination fees, emerged as the hallmark of the ceremony.

Day Two and Conclusion

The second day continued with panel discussions and awards in eight categories for schools. The conference concluded on a cultural note, with educators from across India and abroad participating in a festive evening showcasing their traditional attire, celebrating both knowledge and heritage.

The Vidya Vaibhav Conference and Awards 2025 stood as a vibrant testament to educational excellence, cultural pride, and the enduring legacy of Mewar in advancing learning for future generations.