

Annual Report 2004 - 2005



Pratham Books



An Imprint of
Pratham Books

Management Report

It has been an eventful year at Pratham Books!

Our goal to publish good books for children while keeping the costs low is being realized with each book we publish. In the past year, we have published 58 individual titles - not counting translations into up to seven languages. We have printed over 1,000,000 copies of our books. With this, we hope we are creating an active paradigm shift in the world of publishing.

Born on January 1, 2004 out of a nationwide movement initiated by the Pratham Network to promote reading, Pratham Books launched a series of books under the imprint of Read India Books with the aim to fill the gaps in children's publishing.

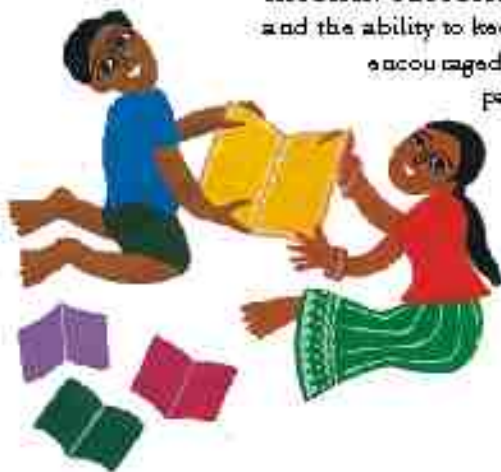
Pratham Books set up its head office in Bangalore and once our core team was in place and our processes and systems tested, we began publishing a few titles ~~generated mostly by Pratham's internal resources. The success~~ of our model ~~and the ability to keep~~ the pricing low

~~encouraged us to form~~ partnerships with other organizations. In collaboration with the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, we developed and published

over a dozen titles including "Khilkhil Tota" and "Suraj ka Gussa" which have won awards. We partnered with the well-known publishers Zubaan to co-publish folk-tales (The Magic Series) written by the former President of India Dr. Zakir Hussain. Pratham Books also entered into an agreement with Chennai-based Wheatstone group, to develop and publish books.

Pratham Books believes that in order to create the best possible products for children in India, we must actively develop an extensive network of resources including, authors, illustrators, designers and industry professionals. In the past two years we have worked with a number of well-known personalities including Manorama Jafa, Olivia Fraser and Sanjeev Saith. We have also tapped local talent in a number of Indian states partnering with renowned regional writers like Sanjiv Jaiswal and Shree Prasad from Lucknow and Venkatramana Gowda and Jayashree Deshpande from Karnataka.

Today Read India titles are being shipped to Pratham's library network in 12 states across the country and the children's response was overwhelming. The positive feedback from the field spurred us to develop even more titles and a number of existing books were reprinted in order to satisfy the growing demand for these books. The books were also



translated into additional Indian languages.

Pratham Books has had a great deal of support from a number of stakeholders. Renowned children's book publishers like Penguin and Orient Longman have expressed a keen interest in collaborating with us in the development of titles. Companies and individuals have come forward to support the development of titles. UNICEF and IL&FS have bought our titles and the Government of Maharashtra has utilized 19 Read India titles in their schools across the state.

In the past 18 months we have established a new model for publishing, which is partly subsidized through philanthropic funding. We are now ready to go beyond the Pratham network and introduce these books to more Government schools and other

NGOs in the education sector. Retail is a distinct possibility in the near future that will enhance our web-based sales.

All these efforts have culminated in a major milestone that we achieved in October this year, Pratham Books reached the ONE MILLION books mark. We have a million books in print under the Read India banner. And we have just begun...

We have been fortunate to attract a committed team to this important initiative. This core team has been instrumental in the success of Pratham Books. We measure this success in the smiles that we see in the faces of children all over the country when they read our books; we measure this success in seeing more and more authors and illustrators and publishers joining us on this important journey called Read India.



Rohini Nilekani
Chairperson

Ashok Kamath
Managing Trustee





The Write Stuff

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the people who have written for Pratham Books is that, apart from the fact that they all write with great charm, they come from completely different backgrounds.

Some of them, like Herminder Ohri, a grandmother and first-time author who writes and illustrates her own books, were 'discovered' by Pratham Books when she walked into our offices with some samples of her work, asking if we would be interested in publishing stories she had made up to entertain her grandchildren. Today, her books are easily some of the most popular on our portfolio. Others, like Subhadra Sen Gupta, Ranjit Lal, and Manorama Jafa, all established children's authors in English, have enthusiastically written original stories for us. Award-winning writers in the regional languages, like the late President of India, Dr Zakir Hussain, and Kannada novelist Vaidehi, have granted us permission to use their previously published work for children.

Apart from which, there is a whole slew of celebrity authors, some of whom have never written for children before, venturing bravely (and successfully!) into uncharted waters at our request - acclaimed Pakistani novelist Bapsi Sidhwa, Indophile illustrator-chronicler Olivia Fraser, musician Shubha Mudgal, marine biologist Kartik Shanker, and publisher-photographer Sanjeev Saith, to name only a few. We released Bapsi Sidhwa's "Sat Poonchhon Wali Chuhiya" and Sanjeev Saith's pictorial journey down the Ganga recently in Delhi and congratulations are still pouring in. The event only underscored our commitment to giving our children the very best in terms of literary and visual variety.



Our Authors

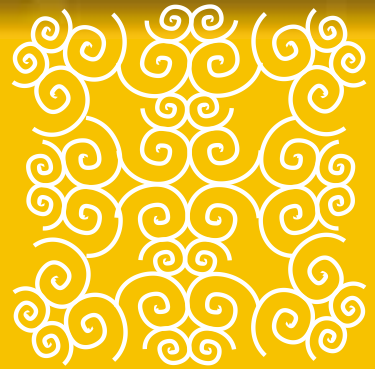




At the end of our first year as publisher, during which we published some fifty different titles, we began to realize that the books children enjoyed the most were ones in which the same or similar characters reappeared again and again. Also, they seemed not at all averse to 'educational' books, as long as the information was presented in fun and engaging ways. What we needed, then, were not just individual, one-off titles, but 'series' sets of books in the same genre and style, with the same look and feel, and peopled with the same characters wherever possible. If these books could also package information in clever ways, they would be a great way to 'educate', in the broadest sense of the word.

Thus was conceived our recently-released series, Once Upon An India, involving four beautiful books featuring children from different eras in Indian history as their main protagonists. Quietly, unobtrusively introduced historical facts and settings ensure that readers take away far more than the entertaining storyline each time they read these books.

In the coming months, there are more series to follow 'Eureka!', a series of four books explaining the science behind everyday physical phenomena in the form of a dialogue between a curious little brother and a wise older sister, 'A World Of Stories', a series of six books, each featuring a folktale from a different part of the world, and hitherto-untitled book sets on Environment & Conservation, Nature and Animals, Tales From The Indian North-East, Musical Instruments of India, Fun



Our Forthcoming Titles

It Gets Better





Math, and Japanese Folk Tales. The Japanese Folk Tales promise to be a visual treat with Japanese style illustrations done by a brilliant Japanese artist, Keiko Tsuji.

There is also plenty in the pipeline to keep our preschoolers happy. A beautifully illustrated series of bilingual books, each of which deal with a specific concept (colours, or spatial understanding, for instance), and charming individual books like 'Can My Nose Hear?' and 'The Moon and My Cap' which inspire and exploit the fertile imagination of the young child. For our early readers, there is a virtual literary feast cooking under the name of Shishuvachan with nearly thirty titles by award winning



authors and artists like Bulbul Sharma, Amar Goswami and Sanjeev Jaiswal Sanjay garnishing it with their talents.

The Christmas basket for the older age group also has many goodies with authors such as Paro Anand weaving urban legends and Feisal Alkazi addressing important issues such as the environment and acceptance of differences with theatrical panache. The Penguin-Dastakar combine has four beautifully illustrated books with stories around crafts as diverse as Ikat weaving from Orissa to Chikankari from Lucknow. They inform and delight as well serve as an excellent tool for visual literacy.

The first among a series on musical instruments planned with musicians Shubha Mudgal and Aneesh Pradhan is an entertaining introduction to the Tabla!



And Better





Important milestones on the journey so far

In a journey liberally peppered with highs, there are some that stand out as particularly significant. We think they deserve to be shared.

After a mere two years in the publishing business, during which we learnt everything we know on the job, we have already shipped out our millionth book.

We currently publish books in no less than five Indian languages, but by the end of the year, we will have books available in an unprecedented nine Indian languages - English, Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati and Oriya.

The Pratham Books cause has captured the imagination of luminaries worldwide, who have shown their support in many different ways. Eminent playwright-thespian and Jnanpith awardee, Girish Karnad accompanied Pratham Books on its inaugural three-city launch. Internationally acclaimed Pakistani author Bapsi Sidhwa retold a children's story especially for Pratham Books. British illustrator Olivia Fraser wrote and illustrated one of the first Pratham Books releases. Sanjeev Saith's journey down the Ganga can justifiably be called the first coffee table book for kids!

International publishing houses like Penguin and Orient Longman have licensed copyrighted material to Pratham Books.

Pratham Books has forged strong collaborations with a wide range of people and organizations in two short years of existence. Partners include the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Young Zubaan, Underscore Records, National Book Trust and Penguin-Dastakar for a set of four charming titles on crafts of India, to name just a few.



Our recent public events reflect our personality as publishers willing to experiment while maintaining our commitment to making great books for kids. We created a very positive buzz in the media with book releases of Subhadra Sengupta's four part series "Once Upon An India" in Bangalore and Sanjeev Saith's "Ganga" and Bapsi Sidhwa's "The Mouse With Seven Tails" in Delhi. The kids wowed us with their enthusiastic response to the Gandhi Look Alike Contest, Shahid Mehdi's warm reading of the Bapsi's story and Sanjeev Saith's slides on the Ganga.

Wearing our activist hat, we organised a short Children's Writing Workshop in collaboration with National Book Trust in Allahabad in the month of July. Twelve children chosen by Pratham Allahabad got their first taste of the basic principles of good writing and illustrating for children's books through a series of readings and gentle mentoring by senior author Amar Goswami and illustrator Jagdish Joshi. Bitten by the writing bug, they wrote and illustrated their own stories, which will soon be seen by the world as their very own published book!

Spikes On The Graph



Balance Sheet As on 31.03.2005
(01.04.2004 to 31.03.2005)

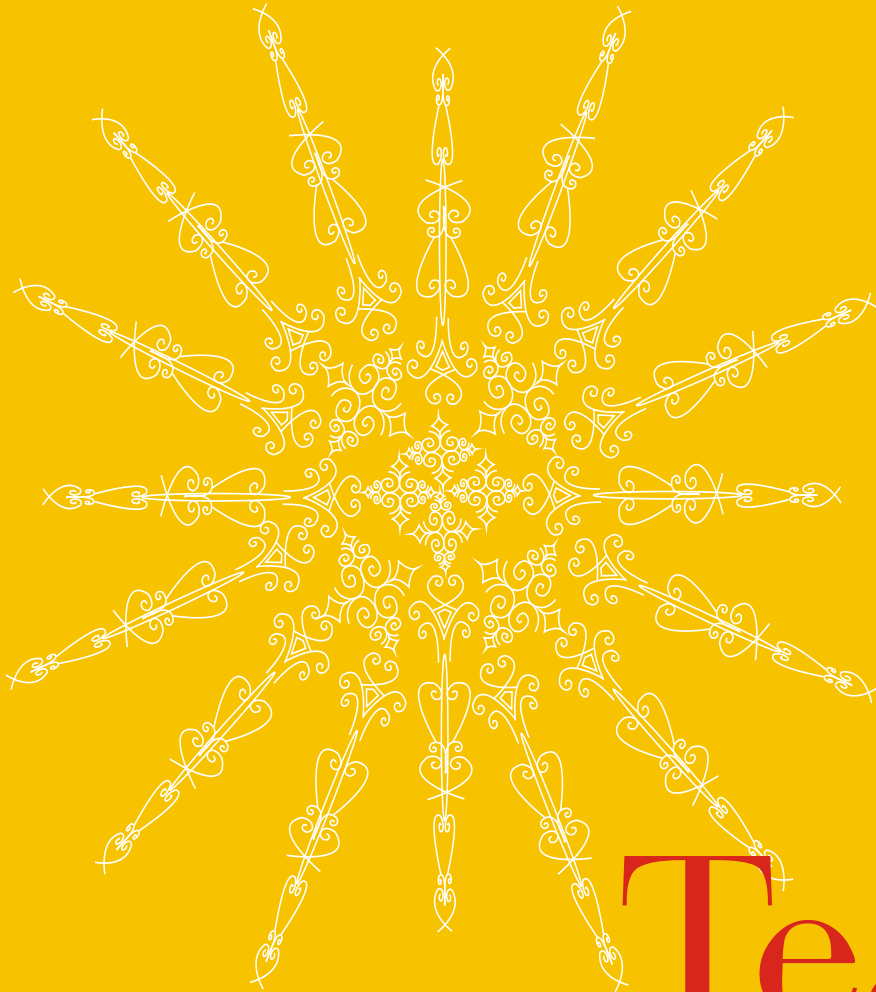
Liabilities	Amount (Rs.) 31.03.2005	Amount (Rs.) 31.03.2004
Corpus Fund	941,450	2,510,001
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation Fund A/c:		426,595
Advances Received from Buyers	1,417,761	-
Current Liabilities	518,244	79,385
TOTAL	2,880,455	3,015,981

Assets	Amount (Rs.) 31.03.2005	Amount (Rs.) 31.03.2004
Fixed Assets	123,211	78,032
Deposits	4,617	-
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation - Receivable A/c.	71,827	-
TDS Recoverable	3,625	10,151
Cash in Hand	2,868	1,029
Cash at Bank	225,806	1,722,228
Development Expenses Deferred	1,620,967	869,765
Debtors	129,568	-
Advances		334,476
Closing Stock	697,936	-
TOTAL	2,880,455	3,015,981

Income & Expenditure Account for the year ending 31.03.2005
(01.04.2004 to 31.03.2005)

INCOME	Amount (in Rs.)
Sales	3,421,608
Donations Received	2,000,010
Closing Stock	697,936
Other Income	29,153
Excess of Expenditure over Income	1,565,552
TOTAL	7,714,559

EXPENDITURE	Amount (in Rs.)
Book Development Expenses	6,611,067
Administrative Expenses	895,694
Promotional Expenses	123,709
Depreciation	84,089
TOTAL	7,714,559



Team

Ms. **Rohini Nilekani**, Chairperson

Mr. **Ashok Kamath**, Managing Trustee

Ms. **Rekha Menon**, Trustee

Ms. **Sampurna Murti**, Regional Manager (North)

Ms. **Manisha Chaudhry**, Editorial Consultant

Ms. **Roopa Pai**, Editorial Consultant

Mr. **Ishwar Daitota**, Editorial Consultant

Dr. **Utkarsha Manish**, Editorial Consultant

Mr. **Mukesh Aggarwal**, Design Consultant



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