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FXB Releases Book, *Hopes Alive: Surviving AIDS and Despair*

FXB India recently published a book that narrates the true stories of children, mothers, grandmothers, and other caregivers struggling to overcome poverty and AIDS in India. Titled *Hopes Alive: Surviving AIDS and Despair*, the book aims to raise public awareness of the impact of the AIDS pandemic on families and children, many of whom are orphans.

The book was officially released in Kolkata and Delhi. Showing their support and dedication to the cause, speakers at the book launch included Nobel Prize Laureate Dr. Amartya Sen, Vice President of India Honorable Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari, FXB Founder & President Albina du Boisrouvray, Minister of Health & Rural Development for West Bengal Dr. Suryakanta Mishra, and the Director General of India's National AIDS Control Organization's Sujata Rao.

"I'm concerned about AIDS-affected children across the globe. Their problem is indeed grave," remarked Dr. Sen.

Authored by Patralekha Chatterjee and edited by Sharmila Abraham, the book describes the lives of AIDS-affected children in India in intimate, heartbreaking detail. Some of the most tragic cases are the so-called "platform children." These are homeless, parentless children living at railway stations who often pick through garbage as a means of survival. In addition to orphanhood, these children are also at higher risk of HIV infection and exploitation.

The book serves a call to action for governments, civil society, and concerned individuals to address the problems caused by AIDS and poverty. Although the stories are set in India, the lessons can be applied to any country beset by the pandemic.

Ms. Sujata Rao, Director General of NACO, reiterated the urgency of the situation, saying, "We are very mindful of the fact that for the child it's just not enough only to provide medical care we do certainly need to look at the broader need of the child stigma, education and legal support and above all nutritional support."

FXB India, the Indian branch of FXB International, is a nonprofit organization working to support orphans and vulnerable children and their caregivers in India. For nearly two decades, FXB has worked to improve local health, education, and economic opportunity for children and families hit hardest by poverty and AIDS. In memory of her son Francois-Xavier Bagnoud, Albina du Boisrouvray founded FXB to pursue the compassion and generosity that guided his life.

The Honorable Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari applauded the aim of the book, saying, "The efforts of FXB India deserve full appreciation because of the specific focus on reaching out to children who are infected or become orphans as their parents are infected."

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