Heroes of reading

IN a first, Mumbai saw a new award celebrating people who keep the reading habit alive.

The HT Parekh Foundation recently hosted the inaugural Harsha Parekh Librarian Awards at Mumbai's Hall of Harmony. It honoured librarians across India who are inspiring children to pick up books. By spotlighting librarians, the award recognised those who shape young learners into readers.

The awards received 275 nominations from 16 states, from school librarians to community-run reading spaces. Among the winners were Jai Shekhar, teacher-cum-librarian at a government primary school in Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh, and Saba Khan, founder of the Savitribai Phule Fatima Sheikh Library in Bhopal. And, the Organisation for Early Literacy Promotion (OELP), which works to build school and community libraries in rural India, also took home a top honour. The evening also brought together voices from publishing, media and cinema, who reflected on how reading habits are evolving in the digital age.