

# प्रभा

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation Chronicle

## Prabha



### राजस्थान के सिरमौर कवि कन्हैयालाल सेठिया

“ह

जारी साल नर्गिस अपनी बे-नूरी पे रोती है, बड़ी मुश्किल से होता है चमन में दीदा-वर पैदा।” - यह काव्य पंक्तियाँ कन्हैयालाल सेठिया के व्यक्तित्व व कृतित्व पर सटीक बैठती हैं। सचमुच कन्हैयालाल सेठिया जैसे व्यक्ति सदियों में पैदा होते हैं जो अपनी प्रतिभा से अमर हो जाते हैं। अपनी मनीषा, कर्म-प्रतिभा एवं संवेदनशीलता की त्रिवेणी के साकार प्रतीक, करोड़ों राजस्थानियों की धड़कनों में बसे गीत धरती धोंरां री और पाथल-पीथल के यशस्वी रचयिता, मनीषी कवि, कर्मवीर और लोकसेवक कन्हैयालाल सेठिया का जन्म राजस्थान के सुजानगढ़ कस्बे में 11 सितम्बर 1919 को प्रतिष्ठित व्यवसायी सेठिया परिवार में हुआ। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया के पिता छानमल सेठिया शिक्षानुरागी थे और माता मनोहरी देवी सेवा की प्रतिमूर्ति।

कन्हैयालाल सेठिया की जन्म शताब्दी पर डॉ. घनश्याम कच्छावा का यह आलेख प्रस्तुत है। प्रभा का ये अंक उन महान कवि को समर्पित है।

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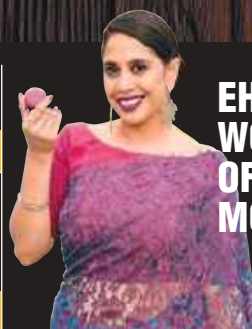


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# A humble homage to the great poet of Rajasthan

Come winter and there is a renewed spirit of celebration and high-strung activity all around. The nip in the air simply adds to the zeal and ambience of our activities across the country. We hope you enjoyed the special edition of the chronicle last month sharing moments from the celebrations of 500 literary boutique events.

This edition of the chronicle is dedicated to the social worker, reformer, philanthropist and environmentalist and one of the greatest patriarchs of Rajasthani and Hindi poetry, Padmashree Recipient Kanhaiyalal ji Sethia. The words of his popular poetry, *Dharti Dhoran Ri* beat in the hearts of Rajasthan like an anthem. He redefined the tone and texture of Hindi and Marwari literature. This issue is our humble homage to the great poet on his centenary.

Our endeavour to support social and literary causes outside the Foundation’s agenda has been hugely appreciated. **Sahyog** – has been lending support and hopes to reach out and touch more lives through social service, art, culture, literature and performing arts.

Our **Ehsaas** women too have been achieving some great milestones on individual level. We look forward to sharing their achievements so as to inspire others. The smallest of efforts make the biggest difference. The Foundation is elated to have this immensely enterprising and motivating team of ladies on board and wishes them success in all their endeavours as they are the essence of the Foundation.

As we always say, your feedback and acknowledgement propels us to strive harder and keep exploring ways to make a difference. Your contribution to the newsletter is truly appreciated. Do keep sharing your words and thoughts as they add to the flavour of the chronicle immensely. We hope you enjoy reading this edition. To keep abreast of the activities of the Foundation, follow us on Twitter as well as Instagram.

You may write to us at [newsletter@pkfoundation.org](mailto:newsletter@pkfoundation.org). We wish to have your continuous patronage and participation.



MANISHA JAIN

Communications &  
Branding chief,  
Prabha Khaitan Foundation



## IN OUR NEXT ISSUE



MEET & GREET FOR EHSAA WOMEN  
WITH SMRITI IRANI IN NEW DELHI

## SNAPSHOT OF THE MONTH



Ehsaas women — Archana Dalmia, Swati Agarwal,  
Neelima Dalmia Adhar and Aakriti Periwal in Delhi

## PRABHA WISHES EHSAA WOMEN BORN IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

### Happy Birthday **OCTOBER**



16<sup>th</sup>

Ramanjit Grover



20<sup>th</sup>

Anvita Pradhan



26<sup>th</sup>

Monica Bhagwagar



27<sup>th</sup>

Shrishti Trivedi



27<sup>th</sup>

Neeta Singh

### **NOVEMBER**



6<sup>th</sup>

Shweta Aggarwal



15<sup>th</sup>

Malika Varma



16<sup>th</sup>

Esha Dutta



17<sup>th</sup>

Priyanshi Patel



24<sup>th</sup>

Kulsum Malik

# राजस्थान और राजस्थानी के सिरमौर कवि हैं कन्हैयालाल सेठिया

हरिजन बंधुओं के साथ  
छुआछूत मिटाने के लिए  
सबसे पहले उन्होंने अपने  
घर में अछूतों का प्रवेश  
करवाया और वाल्मीकि  
समाज को दस्तकारी, बैड  
आदि कार्यों में प्रशिक्षण  
दिलवाकर समाज की  
मुख्यधारा में शामिल किया।  
उनके गृहक्षेत्र के लोग उन्हें  
दूसरा अम्बेडकर कहते थे



## आलेख



डॉ. घनश्याम  
नाथ कच्छावा



“हजारो साल नर्गिस अपनी बे-नूरी पे  
रोती है, बड़ी मुश्किल से होता है  
चमन में दीदा-वर पैदा।” — यह  
काव्य पंक्तियाँ कन्हैयालाल सेठिया के  
व्यक्तित्व व कृतित्व पर सटीक बैठती  
हैं। सचमुच कन्हैयालाल सेठिया जैसे  
व्यक्ति सदियों में पैदा होते हैं जो अपनी प्रतिभा से अमर हो  
जाते हैं। अपनी मनीषा, कर्म-प्रतिभा एवम् संवेदनशीलता  
की त्रिवेणी के साकार प्रतीक, करोड़ों राजस्थानियों की  
धड़कनों में बसे गीत धरती धोरां री और पाथल-पीथल के  
यशस्वी रचयिता, मनीषी कवि, कर्मवीर और लोकसेवक  
कन्हैयालाल सेठिया का जन्म राजस्थान के सुजानगढ़ कस्बे  
में 11 सितम्बर 1919 को प्रतिष्ठित व्यवसायी सेठिया  
परिवार में हुआ। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया के पिता छगनमल  
सेठिया शिक्षानुरागी थे और माता मनोहरी देवी सेवा की  
प्रतिमूर्ति। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया के दादा रूपचंद जी सेठिया  
को तो तेरापंथ धर्मसंघ का महात्मा गांधी कहा गया है। ऐसे  
विशिष्ट संस्कारवान परिवार में जन्मे सेठिया को सह्यदयता  
व साहित्य सेवा के गुण मानो विरासत में ही मिले।

आपकी प्रारम्भिक शिक्षा सुजानगढ़ में हुई और उसके  
पश्चात् उच्च शिक्षा कोलकाता में सम्पन्न हुई। देश के स्वतंत्रता  
संग्राम में भाग लेने के कारण आपका अध्ययन कुछ समय  
के लिए स्थगित भी हुआ जिसे आपने आजादी के बाद पुनः

जारी रखा। काल, समय व परिस्थितियाँ व्यक्ति को प्रभावित  
करती हैं। अपने बाल्यकाल में दर्शन, राजनीति व साहित्य  
का गंभीर अध्ययन करने वाले कन्हैयालाल सेठिया को देश  
व समाज की तत्कालीन परिस्थितियों ने प्रभावित किया। इसी  
कारण व्यवसाय के प्रति उनका रुझान नहीं हुआ और लोक  
सेवा के प्रति अपने जीवन को समर्पित कर इसी में रच बस  
गये। उसी के फलस्वरूप आज हिन्दी व राजस्थानी के शीर्ष  
गीतकारों, चिंतकों व कवियों की प्रथम पंक्ति में आपने स्थान  
बनाया। समझ पकड़ने के साथ कन्हैयालाल सेठिया अपनी  
बाल्यावस्था से ही देश की आजादी के लिए प्रयासरत रहे।

महात्मा गांधी से मिले और मुखर होकर देश के लिए  
क्रांतिकारी बने। आपको आजाद भारत में स्वतंत्रता सेनानी  
की उपाधि मिली पर स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों को मिलने वाली  
सुविधाओं को आपने कभी नहीं लिया। आपने अपनी  
रचनाओं के माध्यम से अपना योगदान राष्ट्र के विकास  
में दिया। अपने कार्यक्षेत्र सुजानगढ़ में हरिजन बंधुओं के  
साथ छुआछूत मिटाने के लिए सबसे पहले उन्होंने अपने  
घर में अछूतों का प्रवेश करवाया और वाल्मीकि समाज को  
लोहे के बर्तन बनाने, दस्तकारी, बैड आदि कार्यों में पारंगत  
करने के लिए प्रशिक्षण दिलवाकर समाज की मुख्यधारा में  
शामिल किया। उनके गृहक्षेत्र के लोग उन्हें दूसरा अम्बेडकर  
कहते थे। सेठिया ने जीवन्त पर्यन्त जनकल्याण के लिए  
कार्य किया।



सेठिया को एक कवि के रूप में जानने वाले लोगों के लिए यह अभिनव जानकारी होगी कि वे एक संवेदनशील कवि होने के साथ-साथ जागरूक जन प्रतिनिधि भी थे। राजस्थान के विकास में सेठिया जी का अभूतपूर्व योगदान रहा। प्रान्तों के नव-निर्माण के समय राजस्थान के साथ न्याय नहीं होने पर सेठिया ने सबसे पहले आवाज उठाई। भाषा, संस्कृति की दृष्टि से मालवा, हरियाणा और गुजरात के ईडर पालनपुर क्षेत्र राजस्थान के अभिन्न अंग थे। इनको राजस्थान में मिलाने के लिए सेठिया पर्यन्तशील रहे। 1948 में देशी रियासतों का एकीकरण होकर राजस्थान बना तो आबू को गुजरात प्रान्त में मिला दिया जबकि आबू इतिहास व लोक संस्कृति की दृष्टि से राजस्थान का अंग था।

सेठिया जी ने इसके लिए लम्बी लड़ाई लड़ी और इतिहास साक्षी है कि माउंट आबू को पुनः राजस्थान में शामिल करवाया। राजस्थान के लिए नहर, देश की नदियों का आपस में विलय, राजस्थान में वन संवर्धन आदि के लिए सेठिया जी सदैव प्रयत्नशील रहें। आबू की घाटियों तथा कोटा के चम्बल क्षेत्र में चाय की खेती की सम्भावनाओं के सम्बन्ध में भी उन्होंने सभी सरकारों का ध्यानाकर्षण करवाया। हल्दी घाटी की पवित्र माटी का वितरण किया, राजस्थान के वन्यजीव संरक्षण के लिए अभयारण्यों की स्थापना में भी सेठिया का महत्वपूर्ण योगदान रहा है। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया जब तक जीवित रहे तब तक निरन्तर राजस्थान व अपनी मातृभूमि सुजानगढ़ के विकास के लिए प्रयत्नशील रहे।

कन्हैयालाल सेठिया साहित्य के मंत्र द्रष्टा कवि के रूप माने जाते हैं। समय की पुकार पर उन्होंने क्रांतिकारी साहित्य रचा। उनका साहित्य दर्शन और आध्यात्म के मूल स्वयं से संचित है। शब्द को खर्च करने में वे मितव्ययी थे। शब्दों को व्यर्थ ही नहीं लिखते अपितु उनका हर एक शब्द कविता को प्राणवान करता आया है।

सेठिया जी ने हिन्दी में अठारह, राजस्थानी में चौदह व उर्दू में दो पुस्तकें लिखीं। हिन्दी में उनका सृजन ज्यादा था। जो व्यक्ति यह कहते हैं कि मातृभाषा का विकास राष्ट्रभाषा के हित में नहीं है उन पर सेठिया जी का यह प्रामाणिक जवाब था। मातृभाषा से अपनी राष्ट्रभाषा में सेठिया जी ने ज्यादा लिखा।

कन्हैयालाल सेठिया की अठारह हिन्दी कृतियों में वनफूल, अग्निवीणा, मेरा युग, दीप किरण, आज हिमालय बोला, खुली खिड़कियाँ चौड़े रास्ते, प्रतिबिम्ब, प्रणाम, मर्म, अनाम, निर्ग्रन्थ, स्वागत, देह-विदेह, आकाश गंगा, वामन विराट, निष्पत्ति, श्रेयस और त्रयी रहीं। इसी प्रकार कन्हैयालाल सेठिया की चौदह राजस्थानी कृतियाँ रमणियाँ रा सोरठा, गळगिचिया, मीझर, कूंकू, लीलटांस, धर कूंचां धर मजळां, मायड़ रो हेलो, सबद, सत्वाणी, अघोरी काळ, दीठ, कक्को कोड रो....., लीकलकोळया और हेमाणी थी। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया ने उर्दू में दो कृतियाँ लिखी ताजमहल व गुलची।



टूठ के विमोचन अवसर पर कन्हैयालाल सेठिया के साथ डॉ. घनश्याम कच्छावा

कन्हैयालाल सेठिया को राजस्थान सरकार ने 'राजस्थान रत्न' सम्मान दिया तो भारत सरकार ने पद्मश्री सम्मान प्रदान किया। उनको मूर्ति देवी साहित्य पुरस्कार, राजस्थान साहित्य अकादेमी की सर्वोच्च उपाधि साहित्य मनीषी, राजस्थानी भाषा साहित्य व संस्कृति अकादमी द्वारा सर्वोच्च सूर्यमल्ल मिस्रण शिखर पुरस्कार आदि सम्मान व पुरस्कार प्राप्त हुए। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया राजस्थानी भाषा के प्रबल समर्थक थे। उन्होंने राजस्थानी भाषा को संवैधानिक मान्यता दिलवाने के लिए जीवन्त तक प्रयास किये। उनका लिखा दोहा - "खाली धड़ री कद हुवै चैरे बिन्यां पिछाण, मायड़ भासा रै बिन्यां क्यारौ राजस्थान" उनकी भावना का जीवन्त प्रमाण है। विगत सात दशकों से भी अधिक समय से राजस्थान अपनी मातृभाषा की संवैधानिक मान्यता के लिए तरस रहा है। सेठिया जी लोक भाषा के विकास को मनुष्य के विकास का सहचर मानते थे।

कन्हैयालाल सेठिया के साहित्य में भारतीय जीवन दर्शन और राजस्थान की लोक संस्कृति का गहन तत्व जिस सहजता से प्रस्फुटित हुआ है, वर्तमान युग में उसका जोड़ मिलना कठिन है। गागर में सागर एवं बिन्दु में सिंधु समाने वाली आपकी लेखनी जीवन के गहनतम सत्यों की अभिव्यक्ति का सामर्थ्य लिये हुए है। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया की रचनाओं की यह मौलिक विशेषताएं हैं कि पाठक को कभी वे रचनाएं पुरानी नहीं लगती। पाठक जब भी उनको पढ़ता या श्रोता सुनता है तो काव्य के भाव उनके सामने वह बिम्ब प्रकट कर देते हैं।

सेठिया जी 19वीं सदी के महानतम व्यक्तियों में से एक हुए हैं। मेरे बचपन में सेठिया जी से सम्पर्क उनकी रचनाओं के माध्यम से हुआ और उनके गृह

1948 में रियासतों का एकीकरण होकर राजस्थान बना तो आबू को गुजरात प्रान्त में मिला दिया जबकि आबू इतिहास व लोक संस्कृति की दृष्टि से राजस्थान का अंग था। सेठिया ने इसके लिए लड़ाई लड़ी और इतिहास साक्षी है कि माउंट आबू को पुनः राजस्थान में शामिल करवाया

क्षेत्र का होने के नाते उनकी मुझ पर विशेष कृपा भी रही। मैं अपने जीवन काल में सेठिया जी से कई बार मिला और अन्तिम बार वर्ष 2006 में कोलकाता स्थित उनके निवास पर मेरी पुस्तक टूठ के विमोचन अवसर पर। नये रचनाकारों के लिए तो वे प्रेरणा पुरूप थे। उन्होंने मुझ जैसे सैकड़ों लोगों का पाथेय प्रशस्त किया है। मुझे उनके मुख से उनकी कविताएं सुनने और अपनी कविताएं सुनाने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त हुआ है। वे भविष्य दृष्टा भी थे। आने वाले समय की दस्तक वे सुन और समझने का फन रखते थे। उनके व्यक्तित्व की यह अद्भुत विशेषता थी कि जो भी उनसे एक बार मिल लेता था। वह उनका ही होकर रह जाता। सेठिया जी से मिलने वाले हर व्यक्ति को एक बार मिलने के बाद वे उसे दोबारा मिलने पर उसके नाम से ही बुलाते थे। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया जैसी स्मरण शक्ति मैंने आज तक किसी दूसरे व्यक्ति में नहीं देखी। हर व्यक्ति का सम्मान करना उनकी आदत में ही शामिल था। राजस्थान की भाषा को संवैधानिक मान्यता प्रदान करने के लिए जीवन भर संघर्षशील रहे। चूंकि यह वर्ष कन्हैयालाल सेठिया का जन्म शताब्दी वर्ष है। अतः इस वर्ष यदि केन्द्र सरकार राजस्थानी भाषा को आठवीं अनुसूची में जोड़ती है तो यह कन्हैयालाल सेठिया को सच्ची श्रद्धांजलि होगी।



मैं अपने जीवन काल में सेठिया जी से कई बार मिला और अन्तिम बार वर्ष 2006 में कोलकाता स्थित उनके निवास पर मेरी पुस्तक टूठ के विमोचन अवसर पर। उन्होंने मुझ जैसे सैकड़ों लोगों का पाथेय प्रशस्त किया है

## धरती धोरां री!

(कन्हैयालाल सेठिया)

धरती धोरां री,  
आ तो सुरगां नै सरमावै,  
ई पर देव रमण नै आवै,  
ई रो जस नर नारी गावै,  
धरती धोरां री!

सूरज कण कण नै चमकावै,  
चन्दो इमरत रस बरसावै,  
तारा निछरावळ कर ज्यावै,  
धरती धोरां री !

काळा बादळिया घहरावै,  
बिरखा घूँघरिया घमकावै,  
बिजळी डरती ओला खावै,  
धरती धोरां री!

लुळ लुळ बाजरियो लैरावै,  
मकी झालो दे'र बुलावै,  
कुदरत दोन्युं हाथ लुटावै,  
धरती धोरां री!

पंछी मंधरा मधरा बोलै,  
मिसरी मीठै सुर स्युं घोळै,

झीणुं बायरियो पंपोळै,  
धरती धोरां री !

नारा नागौरी हिंद ताता,  
महुआ ऊंट अणूता खाथा !  
ई रै घोड़ा री के बातां ?  
धरती धोरां री !

ई रा फळ फुलड़ा मन  
भावण,  
ई रै धीणो आंगण आंगण,  
बाजै सगळां स्युं बड़  
भागण,  
धरती धोरां री !

ई री चितौड़ो गढ़ लूँठो,  
ओ तो रण वीरां रा खूँटो,  
ई रो जोधाणू नौ कूँटो,  
धरती धोरां री !

आबू आमे रै परवाणै,  
लूणी गंगाजी ही जाणै,  
ऊँभो जयसलमेर सिंवाणै,

धरती धोरां री !  
ई रो बीकाणू गरबीलो,  
ई रो अलवर जबर हठीलो,  
ई रो अजयमेर भड़कीलो,  
धरती धोरा री !

जैपर नगरयां में पटराणी,  
कोटा बूंदी कद अणजणी ?  
चम्बल कैवै आं री का'णी,  
धरती धोरां री !

कोनी नांव भरतपुर छोटे,  
घूम्यो सूरजमल रो घोटे,  
खाई मात फिरंगी मोटे,  
धरती धोरां री !

ई स्युं नहीं माळयो न्यारो,  
मोबी हरियाणो है प्यारो,  
मिलतो तीन्यां रो उणियारो,  
धरती धोरां री !

ईंडर पालनपूर है ई रा,  
सागी जामण जाया बीरा,

ऐ तो टुकड़ा मरू रै जी रा,  
धरती धोरां री !

सोरठ बंध्यो सारेठां लारै,  
मेळप सिध आप हंकारै  
मूमल बिसर्यो हेत चितारै,  
धरती धोरां री !

ई पर तनड़ो मनड़ो वारां,  
ई पर जीवण प्राण उंवारां,  
ई री धजा उड़ै गिगनारां,  
मायड़ कोड़ां री !

ई नै मोत्यां थाळ बधावां,  
ई री धूळ लिलाड़ लगावां,  
ई रो मोटो भाग सरावां,  
धरती धोरां री !

ई रै सत री आण निभावां,  
ई रै पत नै नही लजावां,  
ई नै माथो भेंट चढ़ावां,  
मायड़ कोड़ां री,  
धरती धोरां री !

## MY LAND OF SAND DUNES



TUHINA SHARMA,  
TRANSLATOR

happiness  
the rain chimes its way in.  
The lightening itself shies from  
the lustre of my land.

In the fields that spread to the  
horizon,  
stalks of millet sway in the  
morning breeze  
the corn beckons;  
nature lavishes its blessings on  
my land.  
it lives in birds which sing soft  
and sweet,  
sugar resonating in their call.

Abloom with flora,  
abound with cattle,  
the bulls of Nagaur, the camels  
of Marwar  
horses with stealth, which has  
no equal  
this is my land of many fortunes.

The fort stands steadfast in

Chittaur,  
home to courageous soldiers,  
Jodhpur guards its corners  
Luni is the pious Ganga herself  
Abu is the emblem of glory.  
Above them all, towers the  
mighty Jaisalmer.

Bikaner is no less proud,  
Alwar, no less determined  
Ajmer stands agleam  
Jaipur, the queen of all cities.  
Who hasn't heard of Kota and  
Bundi?  
Even Chambal chronicles their  
tales.

Bharatpur is no little game  
Surajmal's clout, whence  
the British turned on their heels  
and fled.

There is nothing more  
extraordinary  
than my land of mystic sand dunes.

Haryana and Saurashtra -  
not much different, a brethren.  
Palanpur, the desert's closest  
possession.

Who has ever forgotten Moomal,  
love that transcends boundaries  
that is a reminder,  
love, that is all?

For this faith which lives long,  
let us, bequeath our hearts and  
bodies to this land.  
Let us give it our lives,  
keep its flag fluttering high.  
Let us offer it a platter full of  
pearls,  
smear its soil on our foreheads.

Come, let us hail its prosperity,  
let us stand by its truth and  
never let it down.  
If it comes to it,  
let us not hesitate to offer  
our heads in sacrifice.

O, my land of sand dunes!  
More enchanting than the heavens,  
the gods come down themselves  
people sing ballads in its praise.

The tiniest, darkest sand  
sparkles in the sun,  
the moon showers down its elixir  
the stars look down in adoration.

When dark clouds come,  
they rumble in the skies with



देवकिशन  
राजपुरोहित



आ बात माड़ी है, राजस्थानी आंदोलन रो पेलो पगोटियो तो लेखन इ है। जद आपां नहीं लिखस्यां तो बडकां क लिखेड़ स कितनाक दिन पार पड़सी। नुवीं बातां लिखो, सब तरां की लिखस्यां तो इ पार पड़सी।

कन्हैयालाल सेठिया का कहा राजस्थानी में

## धुन के धनी थे 'धरती धोरां री' के रचयिता

रा

जस्थानी भाषा का इतिहास अन्य भाषाओं जितना ही पुराना है, साथ ही इसकी परम्परा भी अत्यंत समृद्ध है। ग्रियर्सन ने राजस्थानी को पूर्णतः वैज्ञानिक भाषा माना है।

आजादी से पहले दिनाजपुर अधिवेशन में भी राजस्थानी भाषा को मान्य करने की मांग उठी थी। परन्तु स्वतंत्रता के बाद अन्य प्रांतीय भाषाओं को संविधान में मान्यता मिली पर राजस्थानी को इसका हक नहीं मिला। कन्हैयालाल सेठिया ने राजस्थानी भाषा को मान्यता दिलाने के लिए आन्दोलन शुरू किया। उन्होंने इस दौरान 'धरती धोरां री' एवं 'पातल और पीथळ' जैसी अमर रचनाओं से इसे गति दी। सेठिया जी धुन के धनी थे। जवाहर लाल नेहरू से लेकर राजीव गांधी तक सभी प्रधानमंत्रियों को लगातार पत्र लिख कर और व्यक्तिगत मिल कर मान्यता के लिए जूझते रहे। हर बार उनको आश्वासन मिलते रहे।

राजस्थान विधानसभा में मुख्यमंत्री भैरोंसिंह शेखावत के कार्यकाल में बुलाकीदास कल्ला ने इस बाबत बिल पेश किया जिसके विरोध में केवल तीन विधायक रहे। परन्तु उन्होंने कहा जब पूरा सदन साथ होगा तब विचार होगा।

मैं 1982 में कोलकाता गया तब सेंट मांगी लाल बागड़ी के यहां रुका था। मैंने उनसे कहा 'सेठियाजी रा दरसण करणा है', उन्होंने गाड़ी भेज दी। मैं सेठिया जी से मिला, वे बहुत खुश हुए। उन्होंने लेखन के बारे में पूछा, मैंने बताया अब तक तीन किताबें लिखी हैं। वे नाराज हुए, बोले 'आ बात माड़ी है, राजस्थानी आंदोलन रो पेलो पगोटियो तो लेखन इ है। जद आपां नहीं लिखस्यां तो बडकां क लिखेड़ स कितनाक दिन पार पड़सी। नुवीं बातां लिखो, सब तरां की लिखस्यां तो इ पार पड़सी।'

अपनी राजस्थानी भाषा की मांग का मतलब किसी का विरोध नहीं है। सेठिया जी जब भी बीकानेर आते, मिलते अवश्य और नया लिखने की ताकीद भी करते। मेरी पुस्तक उन्हें भेजता, वे पढ़कर उत्तर अवश्य देते।

आज भी उनका पुण्य स्मरण बना रहता है।



प्रमोद  
शर्मा



राजस्थानी भाषा को मान्यता दिलाने के लिये पहला कदम तो लेखनी ही है। जब हम खुद ही नहीं लिखेंगे तो पुराने लेखकों की रचनाओं से कब तक काम चलेगा। नई बात लिखो तो ही पार पड़ेगी।

कन्हैयालाल सेठिया का कहा हिंदी में





Amit Paul, Vikram Sampath, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal - Jagdeep Dhankhar and Parvesh Khanna

# Giving Savarkar his due in history

**JAGDEEP DHANKAR,**  
WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR  
UNVEILS AUTHOR **VIKRAM**  
**SAMPATH'S** REVEALING  
BOOK ON FREEDOM FIGHTER

**K**itaab book launch, organised in Kolkata, showcased the painstakingly crafted research by author Vikram Sampath in his latest biography, *Savarkar: Echoes from a Forgotten Past*. Governor of West Bengal, Jagdeep Dhankar, unveiled the book that opens the discourse on one of the most hotly debated political thinkers of the 20th century. Sampath, who believes history hasn't been just to Savarkar, penned the first volume on this freedom fighter who is credited with the idea of a *Hindu Rashtra*.

Speaking on the sidelines of the launch organised by the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, Sampath said he prefers to write about personalities who haven't got their due such as Gauhar Jaan and Savarkar. "The fact that he was conspicuously absent from any written narratives, including school textbooks and was vilified triggered my interest in him," Sampath said. He insists Savarkar is a bundle of contradictions who was opposed to orthodox Hindu beliefs but turned out to be the most vocal political voice for the Hindu community.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Jagdeep Dhankar spoke of the "great injustice" Savarkar has been meted out and why we should reflect on Hindutva, which has an altogether different connotation.

*Kitaab Kolkata is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Hyatt Regency Kolkata*



Gouri Basu



Malika Varma



Vikram has given a perspective on Savarkar's contribution. No one has ever been a perfect freedom fighter. There have always been certain lapses. But one needs to take a holistic view of Savarkar's contribution

— Chandra Bose

The concept of Hindutva that he proposed was not anti any religion. If you are a staunch Hinduvadi it doesn't mean you are anti-Muslim or anti-Christian. You have a right to protect your own community

— Madhuparna Dutta

I have visited the cellular jail and I have seen the cell where Savarkar was imprisoned. The way he lived for more than 11 years is certainly creditable. A fighting soul like Savarkar should not be misjudged

— Soumyadip Biswas



# Gyan ki baat: market decides the CHOSEN ONE, NOT US



Rani Sumita



Audience at the event

**“W**hat keeps the lower-middle class going when they have practically nothing,” Pad-mashree Recipient Gyan Chaturvedi asks his audience at Hotel Chankaya in Patna. “Dreams,” he answers. “They have the power of dreams, which carries them through life and keeps a smile on their faces,” he adds. The awarded literary figure was conversing with Rani Sumita about his book *Pagalkhana* (mental asylum) at the **Kalam** session.

Speaking about his book, he said we are being delusional if we believe we have set something of importance in motion because of the choices we make. “You’re mistaken, if you think you have elected a government or a chief minister,” he says. “*Dar-asal bazaar yeh tay karta hai ki kise kab aur kahan rakha jaye* (It is actually the market, which decides

who to place where and when),” he sums up.

Chaturvedi is no stranger to bureaucratic machinations and has had a close brush with it during three decades of service as a doctor with Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited (BHEL). He says his new book is a satire on the administrative system, of which he says, “There is one, and then there isn’t any.”

*Kalam Patna is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Jagran, Hotel Chanakya and Navras School of Performing Arts*

**“***Dar-asal bazaar yeh tay karta hai ki kise kab aur kahan rakha jaye* (It is actually the market, which decides who to place where and when)

— Gyan Chaturvedi



Anvita Pradhan



Gyan Chaturvedi



DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER **SABA DEWAN** SPEAKS ABOUT THE PERCEPTION OF COURTESANS IN SOCIETY DESPITE BEING PROPONENTS OF CLASSICAL DANCES & FURTHERING THE GIRL CHILD

# Tawaifs: The real BETI ENVOYS



Saba Dewan in conversation with Mugdha Sinha

standards of society in her documentary *The Other Song* (2009). She finally followed up her work with the writing of her acclaimed book *Tawaifnama*. "To me, (writing the book) was an exercise in reclaiming the histories of these women (tawaifs)," Dewan said.

The tawaifs were very much a part of celebrations at homes of the privileged and at major temples, she tells the audience. She reminded how they lent their voice for the gramophone recordings in those days, and offered art forms like *thumri* and *kathak*. Dewan and Sinha discussed how they could have been the ambassadors for "*beti bachao, beti padhao* (Save the girl child, educate the girl child)" movement. "Tawaifs were the only section of Indian women, till 19th century, who were allowed to adopt a child," she added.

She narrated how Mahatma Gandhi didn't talk about them being an "outsider to Indian culture" whereas the early Hindu nationalists saw them as bane to the society. "They were seen as those who destroy families, whereas Gandhi saw them as victims," she said.

*The Write Circle Jaipur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with ITC Rajputana, Siyahi, Spagia Foundation and Ehsaas women of Jaipur*



They (tawaifs) are one of the few communities to have traditionally celebrated the birth of a girl child. Tawaifs were the only section of Indian women, till 19th century, who were allowed to adopt a child  
— Saba Dewan

**E**lite tawaifs (courtesans) would have made great ambassadors for campaigns designed to save the girl child, says documentary filmmaker Saba Dewan. She was in conversation with Mugdha Sinha at **The Write Circle** Jaipur session. Dewan drew out the stark contrast in the public perception of the tawaifs, tracking their story from the Aryans to the present day where they were considered a blot but were in fact proponents of world-famous classical dances and furthered the girl child by celebrating the advent of one.

She drew attention to the struggles of the community and their victimisation which she attributes to the double



Vinnie Kakkar



# 'Even at the UN, I'd SPEAK IN HINDI'



Narendra Kohli in conversation with Ayodhya Prasad Gaur

**C**elebrated author Narendra Kohli says there is no limitation to the number of languages one can learn or employ at work but one should never forget one's mother tongue. "My mother tongue is Hindi and I shall, if given a chance to speak at the UN, present my thoughts in Hindi," Kohli said. A Padmashree Recipient, Kohli says one should never be ashamed of one's mother tongue. "*Yadi apni bhasha mein kaam karne par koi virodh bhi karta hai, toh uska pratirodh karna chahiye* (If anyone prevents you from using your mother tongue, you must resist such a move)," he adds.

Kohli was speaking at the **Kalam** session held at Taj Hari Mahal in Jodhpur. In conversation with Ayodhya Prasad Gaur, the awarded author gave an insight into his childhood and told the

**“Yadi apni bhasha mein kaam karne par koi virodh bhi karta hai, toh uska pratirodh karna chahiye** (If anyone prevents you from using your mother tongue, you must resist such a move)

— Narendra Kohli

audience how he picked up writing. "I was one of the younger siblings with several brothers elder to me. I had to heed to them and couldn't answer back even if I felt so," he said.

The feelings trapped in a fertile young mind found a natural outlet in writing. Kohli would jot down his thoughts and



Devendra Singh Ratnawat

whatever he couldn't speak before the elders in his family. During his growing-up years, Hindi wasn't as popular a language as Urdu. But Kohli preferred to pen his thoughts in Hindi, which his elder brothers weren't versed in. "They wouldn't know what I was writing. It is a different kind of a thrill when you manage to say something without anyone knowing about it. This is how I was introduced to writing," he told the audience.

What started in his school days as an outpouring of emotions, would travel through his college days, impress his teachers, fan out in the society and finally bring him acclaim.

*Kalam Jodhpur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Taj Hari Mahal and Ehsaas women of Jodhpur- Preeti Mehta, Shelja Singh, Sushma Sethia*



Narendra Kohli with Shelja Singh, Preeti Mehta and Sushma Sethia





Kavita Kahlon



Inderbir Nijjar



PS Grover



Sarabjot Behl



Irshad Kamil in conversation with Jasmit Nayyar

BOLLYWOOD SONGWRITER **IRSHAD KAMIL** TAKES THE AUDIENCE ON A RIVETING JOURNEY OF SMALL-TOWN BOY'S RISE TO FAME AT THE **KALAM** SESSION IN AMRITSAR

**I**rshad Kamil, whose pen worked the magic on timeless songs of films *Rockstar* and *Aashiqui 2*, spoke about his journey as a poet at the second edition of **Kalam** in Amritsar. The awarded lyricist traced his journey from the first film song *Bhaage Re Mann*, which he penned for the film *Chameli* to the latest hit number *Bekhayali* (*Kabir Singh*) at the session.

He spoke about his book *Kaali Aurat Ka Khwab* (dream of the black woman). "People ask me who is this black lady?" he shared with the audience. He proceeded to answer the query then. "I had been having this recurring dream of this lady in black long before I even stumbled into the glamorous world of filmmaking and song writing," he said.

Kamil said it was only after he was awarded the Filmfare for his lyrics in the song *Aaj Din Chadeya* from the film *Love Aaj Kal* when his dream about the black lady came to fruition. He said the lady he would dream about was the award. "That youth in Malerkotla would be dreaming of this lady and the day when he would lift her up and say, thank you parents," Kamil said, speaking of his journey from the small-town boy to that of a celebrated songwriter. The lyricist said he seeks inspiration from the youth who recognise poetry and appreciate originality.

## Malerkotla boy and LADY IN BLACK



Irshad Kamil with Sheetal Khanna, Jasmit Nayyar, Preeti Gill, Praneet Bubber and Sonakshi Kundra

Kamil said he has resisted the temptation of falling to the commercialisation of talent in the industry and pens what he loves to, till date. "Writing with reason gives meaning to your words," he said. Among the notable attendees at the session were Professor Sarbjot S Behl, Dean Academics at GNDU, renowned physician and photographer

PS Grover, film buff Dr Inderbir Nijjar and Founder President of FICCI FLO Amritsar, Gowri Bansal.

*Kalam Amritsar is in association with Dainik Jagran, Taj Swarna and Ehsaas Women of Amritsar — Jasmit Nayyar, Praneet Bubber, Preeti Gill, Ramanjit Grover, Sheetal Khanna and Sonakshi Kundra*





Neelima Dalmia Adhar in conversation with Parveen Tuli

## ‘Ba chose me to write the story of her life’

AUTHOR **NEELIMA DALMIA ADHAR** SAYS GANDHI WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN THE SAME WITHOUT KASTURBA

**M**ohandas Karamchand Gandhi went on to become the hero of Indian freedom struggle and was ‘knighted’ as the Mahatma and the Father of the Nation, but little is known or given credence to how his wife Kasturba, lovingly addressed as *Ba*, played a pivotal role in his life. Author Neelima Dalmia Adhar opened the session dedicated to her book *The Secret Diary of Kasturba* by sharing with the audience the idea that went into it and how it is meant to honour her role in the Indian history.

Speaking at the **Kalam** session in Nagpur, Dalmia said that she had to spend over six decades of her life, juggling the roles of a devoted wife, a *satyagrahi* and sacrificing mother. Kasturba gave everything she could but all her acts, however selfless, were eclipsed. She writes in the book her deeds went unnoticed “because of a man who almost became God for India’s multitude”. She added, “I didn’t choose Kasturba, Kasturba chose me and Gandhi would have not been



Manoj Bali

Gandhi if Kasturba wasn’t there.”

Dalmia said she owes her candour to her father and the abilities to weave thoughts into writing to her mother. Her first book, *Father Dearest: The Life and Times of RK Dalmia*, was a biographical account of her father, Ramkrishna Dalmia.

*Kalam Nagpur is in association with Lokmat, Radisson Blu Hotel Nagpur and Ehsaas women of Nagpur- Jyoti Kapoor, Monica Bhagwagar, Neeta Singh, Parveen Tuli, Priyanka Kothari*



Monica Bhagwagar, Parveen Tuli, Priyanka Kothari and Neeta Singh



**AUTHOR DEEPAK RAMOLA** ON HOW HE DRAWS POETRY FROM THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE HE HAS MET DURING TRAVELS AROUND THE WORLD



Deepak Ramola



Life is difficult but to get angry about it solves nothing

— Deepak Ramola



Alpika Garg

## When touching tales BECOME POEMS

**D**eepak Ramola shared his journey as an author, the inspiration behind his writing and his love for poetry with the **Kalam** audience in Faridabad. The author was in conversation with Alpika Garg.

Ramola began writing poetry while at school, inspired by one of his Hindi teachers. The interest in writing soon became his passion. The author also shared that he loved to sing, but could not find enough options in Dehradun to hone his skills at that time. He started by adding his own lyrics to existing tunes from Hindi movie songs, and later went on to become a lyricist.

Ramola also read out one of his old poems during the session. “*Woh lamha de diya kisko, woh na lautege mere tumhare bulaane se,*” he recited, receiving huge applause from the audience.

The author spoke about his organisation, FUEL. “Every individual has a story to share at FUEL, life lessons are continuously collected, documented and converted into different activi-

ties,” he said. Ramola, who has taught in 27 countries around the world, started the project (FUEL) when he was just 17 years old. The project has assisted quake-hit residents in Nepal and also helped combat human trafficking in the country.

The author takes home a lot of life lessons from people he meets during his journeys around the world, while working on the project. “I have inter-

acted with around four lakh individuals during this time and learnt something new from each one. I have tried to translate their heartwarming and painful experiences into poetry,” Ramola shared.

*Kalam Faridabad is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Jagran, Books EnBeyond and Ehsaas woman of Faridabad — Shweta Aggarwal*



Niti Khurana and Shweta Aggarwal



# Scribes telling their story through books

AUTHOR **SANDEEP BHUSHAN**  
SAYS JOURNALISM HAS SHIFTED  
FROM INVESTIGATION TO ACCESS

Sandeep Bhushan in  
conversation with Surabhi Singh

**T**o a question from the audience, why an increasing number of scribes are coming out with books to narrate their experiences, veteran journalist Sandeep Bhushan said, "That's because they are not being allowed to tell their stories in the newsroom." Bhushan was speaking at **The Write Circle** session in Raipur.

Bhushan who padded up and played in both formats of journalism – television and print – makes it amply clear that the decibel levels of news anchors in a television studio may be high, but they cannot take away the fact that the real work on getting a story from the field to the editing table is done

by the reporter. "When we think of television, we only think about anchors when actually the footwork is done by the reporters," he told the audience.

He repeatedly stressed on the marginalisation of reporters and how journalism is increasingly centred around access to people who matter, people who make news. "Investigative journalism is out of the window now," he laments. According to

him, "access journalism" is in where people in position of influence and power cultivate a news person than the other way around.

Bhushan has worked with mainstream news channels including such as NDTV and Headlines Today TV and has written for widely regarded publications. His book, *The Indian Newsroom*, is about journalism encapsulated between two covers.

*The Write Circle Raipur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Hyatt Raipur and Ehsaas women of Raipur — Aanchal Garcha, Kalpana Chaudhary, Kirti Kirdatt and Shrishti Trivedi*



Harkaran Singh



Aanchal Garcha, Kalpana Chaudhary,  
Kirti Kirdatt and Shrishti Trivedi



Prakash Hota, Ardhendu Mukherji, Surendra Shukla,  
Shailesh Nitin Trivedi and Gaurav Girija Shukla



When we think of television, we only think about anchors when actually the footwork is done by the reporters — Sandeep Bhushan





Pratyaksha Sinha

# A STRESS-BUSTER CALLED WRITING

AUTHOR  
**PRATYAKSHA SINHA**  
 SAYS IF YOUR  
 PASSION IS YOUR  
 BREAD-EARNER, YOU  
 WILL NEVER GET  
 BORED OF 'OFFICE'

**D**oomsday as someone tweeted is: Monday on a loop. Mondays make us weary and everything around this day drags us down than lifting our spirits. Author Pratyaksha Sinha, however, surprised everyone at the **Kalam** session in Ajmer with her candid admission that she doesn't suffer Monday blues. The author said she, in fact, looks forward to going to office. "I do not have Monday morning blues," she told the audience at the session of **Kalam**, a literary platform that lends voice to authors in vernacular languages, including Hindi.

The author reveals that writing, to her, is a stress-buster. She indulges in writing whenever she is off duty or off work. "When I get tired of office, I get immersed in the world of literature," Sinha added, explaining, "When I'm tired of writing, I go back to work." She said if your passion is your bread-earner then you will never get bored of "office". "If you choose your passion as your work and dedicate yourself to it, then you actually start enjoying it and there is never a dull moment at work," she said conversing with Madhu Khandelwal.

The author attributed our spiked

stress levels to our busy lifestyles, where we fail to take out "me-time". She said people correlate work and mental stress. The author said it is actually the skewed work-life balance that is responsible for the heightened stress in our lives and consequently lesser interest in our work. "We are losing out on the music of life because of stress," she said, adding, "it is on us to regain it."



When I get tired of office, I get immersed in the world of literature. When I'm tired of writing, I go back to work

— Pratyaksha Sinha

The author believes that gifting children books is one of the greatest services to humanity. Books open up the world before a child and initiate him into reading. Taking a leaf out of her upbringing, she spoke of her parents who created an environment of reading and writing at home. She said that they gifted her books instead of toys throughout her childhood. "This is how the seed of literature was sown inside me," she said.

Sinha said she picked up the habit of writing from her parents who would write regularly. Sinha was plotting her literary journey and was explaining the audience how she picked up writing before she started writing blogs, short stories in journals and finally novels. "My childhood was spent in Ranchi," she said. She said her mother



Madhu Khandelwal



C P Deval

was a good singer and could write very well. Her father too used to write, she added. Her husband and children continued to support her and asked her to keep writing.

*Kalam Ajmer is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with WeCare and Ehsaas women of Ajmer*



NOTED ODIA POET  
AND TRANSLATOR  
**PRATIBHA SATPATHY**  
SPEAKS ABOUT POETRY,  
PROSE & SENSIBILITIES  
OF THE HUMAN MIND

**MYSTERIES  
THAT DRIVE**

**THE HUMAN MIND**

**W**hen a poet whose work expresses the deep sensibility of the human mind meets another writer and actor, a scintillating discussion ensues. Noted Odia poet Pratibha Satpathy, who has spent over 40 years of her life writing and translating, gave the audience a peek into her writing, while in conversation with bureaucrat, writer and actor, Deba Prasad Dash at the second edition of **Aakhar** in Bhubaneswar.

Satpathy's work attempts to explore the mystery of human relationships and beyond. As one of the top writers and poets of the country, Satpathy mesmerised readers with her simplicity and stories of writing at a time when women writers and poets were not encouraged.



Deba Prasad Dash, Pratibha Satpathy, Nidhi Garg and Vedula Ramalakshmi

The discussion in Bhubaneswar revolved around her memoir, *Shaishabru Sansar*. "Though the book has been written like a piece of prose, the words have been put in such a way that one would see poetry in it," Dash said.

The author is also a Kendriya Sahitya Academy Award winner. She won the award in 2001 for her poetry collection *Tanmaya Dhuli*. Interestingly, her daughter Paramita Satpathy, who is also a writer and poet and was present at the event, has won this literary award too.

The author is not only famous for writing Odia poetry, but is also known as a great literary critic. She has also translated a number of famous English works by well-known writers like Pearl S Buck into Odia, besides translating many of her own Odia works into Hindi.

Satpathy has also won many other national and regional awards for her superior writing. These include Sahitya Bharati Samman (2013), Poetess Subhadra Kumari Chauhan Sahitya Samman by Rashtriya Hindi Akademi & Rupambara, Kolkata (2007), RG Na-



Ashutosh Parida presenting a memento to Pratibha Satpathy

tional Sadbhabana Award (2003), N N Thirumalamba Award of Karnataka for the poetry collection *Adha Adha Nakshyatra* (1999), Critic Circle India Award (1996).

"**Aakhar** is a celebration of Indian literature. It was an honour to host Dr Pratibha Satpathyji and listening to her was a unique experience," said Vedula Ramalakshmi, **Ehsaas** woman of Bhubaneswar.

*Aakhar Bhubaneswar is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Mayfair Hotels & Resorts and Ehsaas women of Bhubaneswar — Nidhi Garg and Vedula Ramalakshmi*



**As one of the top writers and poets of the country, Satpathy mesmerised readers with her simplicity and stories of writing at a time when women writers and poets were not encouraged**



# There is a lot to learn from CHANAKYA

**AUTHOR PAWAN K VARMA TALKS ABOUT MASTER STRATEGIST, CHANAKYA, AND THE SHRINKING ROOM FOR CIVILISED DISCOURSES IN INDIA**



Pawan Varma in conversation with Srabonti Bagchi

**A** self-professed admirer of Chanakya, the shrewd political thinker and strategist, author Pawan K Varma was in Bengaluru for the launch of his latest non-fiction, *Chanakya's View: Understanding India in transition*. Varma, who wears several hats, including that of a former diplomat, ex-parliamentarian and a serving spokesperson for Janta Dal (United), believes India has a lot to learn from Chanakya. He was interacting with the audience at Atta Galatta. Varma was in conversation with Srabonti Bagchi.

The author believes there is a lot to

**I hope my book kindles civilised debate among the readers.**

**The space for civilised debate is unfortunately shrinking in spite of us inheriting a legacy of discussion**

— Pawan K Varma

learn from the master strategist. His determination and tenacity in pursuing the goals is admirable. He said he was worried over the diminishing

space for civilised discourses in India. He, however, urged that India will sustain through this phase of transition because it may be a young nation but it has inherited ancient civilisational knowledge and history.

The book, which is a collection of his columns carried by leading publications, covers a range of challenges topical to India. While conversing with audience at the session at Atta Galatta, the former diplomat hoped that his book will kindle civilised debate. The author lamented that, “the space for civilised debate is unfortunately shrinking in spite of having a legacy of discussion.”

The author says he finds time to write because he loves writing and goes on to say that anybody who says he or she is in love with something but can't take out time is lying. A lawmaker until recently, he has authored over a dozen bestselling books, including *Ghalib: The Man, The Times, The Great Indian Middle Class, The Book of Krishna, Being Indian, Becoming Indian*, and *AdiShankaracharya: Hinduism's Greatest Thinker*.

*The Kitaab Book Launch Bengaluru was in association with Atta Galatta*



Guests at the event



AUTHOR **NAVEEN CHOUDHARY** SAYS  
THE AGE OF INNOCENCE  
IS LOST ON POLITICAL  
PARTIES IN INDIA



There is a considerable  
increase in violence and  
the ripples of disturbance  
let loose in the society in  
the name of caste and  
religion come with long-  
term consequences  
— Naveen Choudhary



Naveen Choudhary

# Up, close & personal Pupil Politics

**N**o politician or the outfit he or she represents is innocent or at least honest. The attributes are lost on the current political parties in the country irrespective of whether they are in power or in the Opposition. These are the words of author Naveen Choudhary who was discussing his book *Janta Store* at the **Kalam** session in Raipur.

The author, whose book is fictional take on student politics on campus, was inspired by real-life characters. He admits that writing about student politics is challenging as there are several layers and intricacies to the plot and the characters participating in it.

Speaking to fellow author Ankita Jain, Naveen said he was able to pull off the task of writing about youth politics because he had the opportunity to observe it first-hand. "I have witnessed the politics on campus from very close quarters. That's how the idea was planted in my head to write a story around the politics of the students and young minds," he said.

When asked about his take on the current political scenario in the country, he said politicians are a bagful of tricks. "At the end of the day, they are solely focussed on the benefits accruing to themselves," he added. He rues the fact that there is a considerable increase in violence and the ripples of disturbance let loose in the society in the name of caste and religion come with long-term consequences.



Harkaran Singh

He said, writing in Hindi comes naturally to him. "There is a wide readership of Hindi literature and consequently a great market," he said, adding, "Not only is the audience well-read, but there are a lot of good writers on the horizon," he said.

*Kalam Raipur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Hyatt Raipur and Abhikalp Foundation*



Ankita Jain


 Esha Dutta in conversation  
with Sudha Menon


If you are above 50, it is assumed you have grandchildren or you should retire. And, people keep on commenting on how one should look and behave at 50. Women have started taking charge of their lives. It makes me happy to see such empowerment and liberation — Sudha Menon

## AGE NO BAR

# LIFE IS CALLING AT BIG 5-0H

AUTHOR **SUDHA MENON** SHARES HER BUCKET LIST AT 50 AND SAYS, AS A WOMAN, SHE IS JUST GETTING STARTED

**T**he desire to buy a simple thing such as a red lipstick at a ripe age or admitting to having a crush on Shah-rukh Khan can cause such turmoil of emotions for a woman of 50 is not something many would have the courage to disclose. But author Sudha Menon having reached the Big Five-Oh says she has started looking at life with renewed verve.

Sudha, who authored the *Feisty at*

*Fifty*, bowled the audience over at **An Author's Afternoon** in Kolkata with her unpretentious talk laced with humour. Esha Dutta, **Ehsaas** woman of Kolkata was in conversation with her.

Sudha's candid revelations — the transition in her marital affinity with *Hassled Harry* (her husband) or the excerpts from her book that address issues such as menopause, maternal conflicts, parental disconnect with candour — were much appreciated by the



**She acknowledges that this generation truly inspires her, especially her daughter who has handed her some valuable nuggets of wisdom. Women of this generation have more courage, says the author**

audience who identified issues that they have also gone through at some point in their lives.

Sudha says she wrote the book to tick off those people who believe turning 50 meant the end of one's individual entity and that you are only meant to live your remaining life through the lives of your children or choose to hibernate and seek *Moksha*. Sudha, however, said she is just getting started.

"If you are above 50, it is assumed you have grandchildren or you should retire. And people keep on commenting on how one should look and behave at 50. I was tired of listening to that," she says as a matter of fact. Her bucket list has in fact grown with the years. An all-girls' trip with her mother, siblings and daughters is high on her agenda, she admits.

According to the author, "Being 50 is all being you. If wearing red or colouring your hair gives you joy you should go for it." She acknowledges that this generation truly inspires her, especially her daughter who has handed her some valuable nuggets of wisdom. "Women of this generation

**I am looking forward to read the book through a mother's eye; through a daughter's eye. Being a theatre artist, I am looking for excerpts and material which we all can relate to. We are on to a new production. The conversations at Prabha Khaitan Foundation are really amazing and almost informal, so we could interact with the author. It was a really delightful afternoon**

— RAMANJIT KAUR



While I have tracked almost every episode of AAA from a distance, it was my An Author's Afternoon debut. The ambience was wonderful. The author was remarkably of a light touch in terms of her achievements and ability as a writer. Conversation flowed like drawing room *adda*. No doubt AAA has become a stand out. Conversation is based on books but goes much beyond that

— SUMIT DASGUPTA

I love hearing people. I was trying to imbibe and soak in things. I personally don't differentiate between a man and a woman and if you see, most of my films concentrate on women, who have passed their prime age. They are at least above thirty-seven. I want to absorb what women are saying. I don't really think in order to be a feminist, you have to segregate men out of life

— ARINDAM SIL



Supporting women of all ages and writing books like this is very important. I am looking forward to topics related to social and political issues, gender issues. I am looking forward to talks like this

— PRIYANKA KHANNA

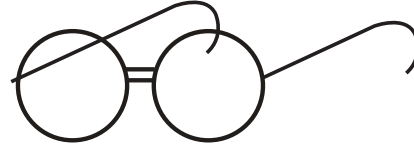
have more courage," she says. Coming from a woman who admittedly had spent most of her younger years worrying about what people, especially her parents, would have to say, this is high praise.

She, however, says she reasons with her mother more after becoming one. "I started understanding my mother only after I had my daughter. I know now what she had gone through," she says. The author says that the relationship with mothers is taken for granted by the children.

*An Author's Afternoon is presented by Shree Cement Ltd in association with Taj Bengal, Kolkata*



Manish Gupta



# AS VIOLENCE TAKES MANY FORMS, WORLD SEEKS STRONGER ACTION

ALONG WITH THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY, **PRABHA** DEDICATES ITS OCTOBER ISSUE TO THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NON-VIOLENCE

**T**

he principle of non-violence — also known as non-violent resistance — rejects the use of physical violence in order to achieve social or political change. Often described as “the politics of ordinary people”, this form of social struggle has been adopted by mass populations all over the world in campaigns for social justice.

When Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi) spoke of non-violence in the backdrop of the country’s struggle for freedom, he was rooting for a peaceful way to earn independence from the British Raj. In today’s context, violence has taken many forms, making the concept of non-violence universally applicable to go way beyond arms and weapons.

Acknowledging the same, the United Nations dedicated this year’s International Day for Non-Violence — celebrated each year on the Mahatma’s birth anniversary, October 2 — to Climate Action, given the global outcry over climate change. The day held special relevance this year as it also

marked the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Professor Gene Sharp, a leading scholar on non-violent resistance, has elaborated upon the same in his publication, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* in similar terms. “While non-violence is frequently used as a synonym for pacifism, since the mid-twentieth century the term non-violence has been adopted by many movements for social change which do not focus on opposition to war,” he said.

“Gandhi constantly highlighted the gap between what we do, and what we are capable of doing. On this International Day, I urge each and every one of us to do everything in our power to bridge this divide as we strive to build a better future for all,” UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in his speech marking the day.

Not too long ago, **Prabha** invoked its associates and readers to contribute towards the global movement against climate change and once again, seeks responsible involvement against all forms of violence.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NON-VIOLENCE

The International Day of Non-Violence is marked on October 2, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence. According to General Assembly resolution A/RES/61/271 of June 15, 2007, which established the commemoration, the International Day is an occasion to “disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness”. The resolution reaffirms “the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence” and the desire “to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence”.





Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man

— Mahatma Gandhi



Gandhi constantly highlighted the gap between what we do, and what we are capable of doing. On this International Day, I urge each and every one of us to do everything in our power to bridge this divide as we strive to build a better future for all

— António Guterres  
UN Secretary-General,  
in his speech on  
International Day  
of Non-Violence



ARTWORK BY  
SUDIPTA KUNDU




 Ishrat Haqu, Garima Tiwari,  
 Purnima Tiwari and Farheen Christy

## ‘POLITICS IS A LIFELONG ADDITION’



Social media has both negative and positive sides. It is for users to decide what kind of content they wish to consume  
 — Naveen Choudhary

If you are addicted to politics, you become an addict for life. The person may leave politics, but politics won't leave the person. The highs and lows of politics affect a person's life both directly and indirectly. Author of the politically charged novel, *Janta Store*, Naveen Choudhary, shared his thoughts on this power-riddled field with the audience of the **Kalam** session held in Bilaspur.

Choudhary, who was in conversation with Gaurav Girija Shukla, also shared the story of the genesis of the book. The novel takes its name from the real Janta Store, located near the Rajasthan University that had been a hub of student politics with Choudhary himself playing an active part in the same. “That helped me write on politics, which is actually a complex subject to handle if you're trying to

### HIGHS AND LOWS OF POLITICS AFFECT A PERSON'S LIFE, SAYS JANTA STORE AUTHOR NAVEEN CHOUDHARY

pen it down,” he told the audience.

Choudhary advised aspiring writers to read more. “It is important to read as much as you write. But at the same time, one has to be careful not to be too inspired by another author's writing otherwise you run the risk of imitating them,” he said. The author discussed how the written word is interpreted based on the reader's own viewpoint. “A writer's work takes off from his own ideas and thoughts, but the reader perceives it the way he/she wants to,” he told the audience.

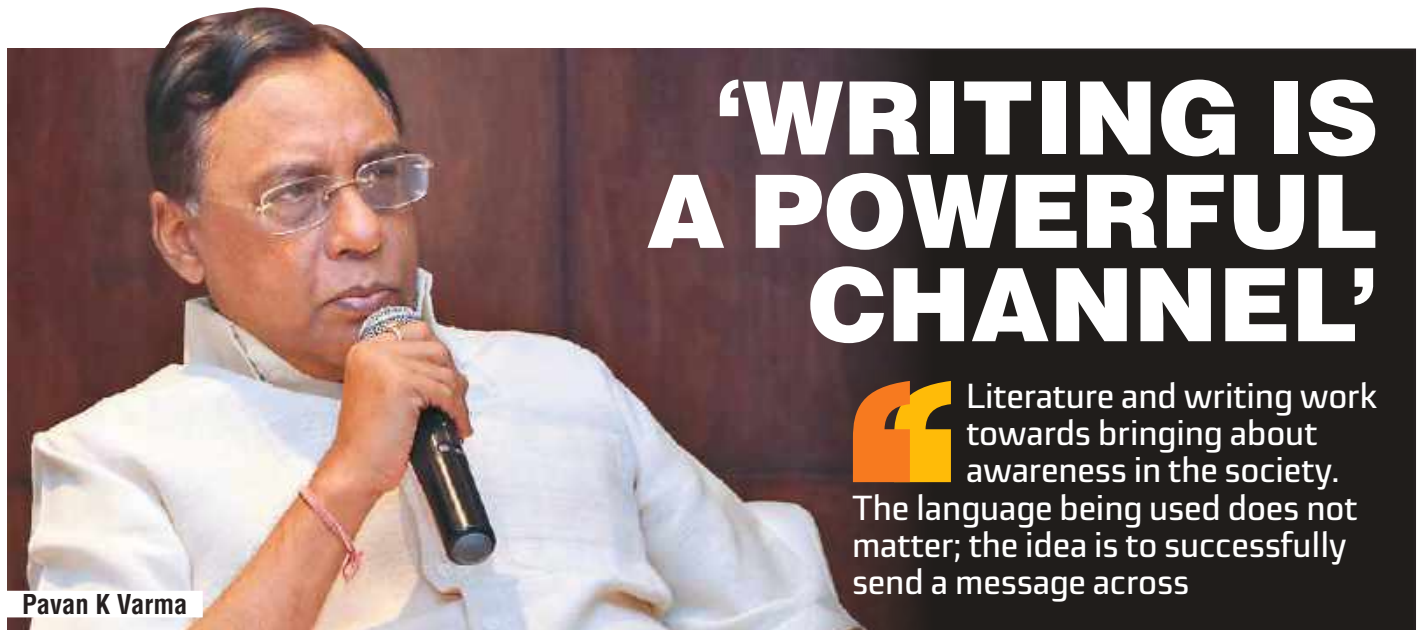
Given that burning issues are brought into the limelight through social media, Choudhary also attributes its consumption specific to users. “There are both negative and positive aspects to social media. Users decide what kind of content they wish to consume,” the author shared.

Further, Choudhary sees no harm in the use of English words in Hindi writing. “That is the kind of language we converse in. I don't think there's anything wrong with using these words in Hindi writing,” he added.

*Kalam Bilaspur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Nayi Duniya and Abhikalp Foundation*


 Naveen Choudhary in conversation  
 with Gaurav Girija Shukla





Pavan K Varma

**PAVAN K VARMA**  
SAYS DUE RESPECT  
SHOULD BE GIVEN  
TO ALL LANGUAGES  
INSTEAD OF  
ENGAGING IN  
LINGUISTIC  
CHAUVINISM



Ina Puri

**P**avan K Varma, who has transitioned from being a diplomat to Member of Parliament to National General Secretary and National Spokesman of the Janata Dal, also happens to be a prolific writer. Author of over a dozen best-selling books, Varma recently lunched his latest, *Chanakya's View: Understanding India in Transition*.

Varma feels that the written word is a powerful medium. "Literature and writing are powerful channels to bring about awareness in the society. The language being used does not matter; the idea is to successfully send a message across," he said, while in conversation with **Ehsaas** woman of Gurugram, Ina Puri at the **Write Circle** session.

Given the fact that India has 22 recognised languages, Varma feels that we should give due respect to each one instead of engaging in linguistic chauvinism. Over time, any of these languages, if spoken by a large cross-section of people, could become kind of a 'link language', instead of deciding upon national language.

Varma also hopes to initiate conversation through his writing. Through his book too, Varma analyses the challenges that the country faces and the changes that Indians need to make, such as respecting institutions, shunning intolerance, and accommodating dissent. He

feels that people should not allow the country and the conversation to be hijacked by 'illiterate bigots'. For this, he feels, people need to be informed about public issues.

Varma mentions the accomplishment of Chanakya, from unseating a popular king to grooming another, throwing out the Greek to building the largest empire that India has ever seen. This, he insists, was because of Chanakya's clarity of vision and focus, which he didn't lose under any circumstances.

Varma spoke about finding content for his book, *Adi Shankaracharya: Hinduism's Greatest Thinker*. "India is a land of gurus that has shown the world moral values for centuries. I researched on Shankaracharya and found that his thoughts find scientific recognition as well," he told the audience in Gurugram.

Varma believes that India will sustain owing to its great civilisational heritage and the strength of its people. He is convinced that these years of transition will ultimately lead to a maturation worthy of the world's largest democracy.

Varma also says that a day has enough hours and each individual should cultivate a hobby or sport, else they run the risk of becoming monotonous.

*The Write Circle Gurugram is in association with Dainik Jagran, Andaz Delhi Aerocity and Ehsaas woman of Gurugram - Ina Puri*



Shweta Aggarwal





Padmesh Gupta and author, Manisha Kulshreshtha with guests

HINDI WRITER **MANISHA KULSHRESHTHA** TELLS THE AUDIENCE AT **KALAM LONDON** THAT CHATACTERS HAVE A MIND OF THEIR OWN

**A** writer may create the characters of his story, but somewhere along the way they take their own identity and guide the author towards the conclusion. Hindi novelist and poet Manisha Kulshreshtha was speaking to the audience in London at the **Kalam** session.

Kalam, which is a flagship boutique literary event of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, lends platform to writers in local languages, including Hindi. As a part of promoting literature in vernacular languages, the organisation brought in fellow writer and blogger Shikha Varshney to converse with Manisha in London. The effect was magical as the spontaneity of the two Hindi writers brushed off on the audience at the event.

Sharing her experiences on writing, Manisha said she finds her characters, which then take over. "My characters guide me to the conclusion of the story," she said.

**'I CREATE CHARACTERS, THEN THEY GUIDE ME'**



Manisha Kulshreshtha



Shikha Varshney

The author of several short stories said research is primary to her writing. "I spend a lot of time in researching on my stories and believe in getting to the root of my subjects so they appear in flesh and blood," she said.

She took the opportunity to recite several of her poems, including the one of Queen Cleopatra, which was appreciated by the audience. Manisha said it is an incredible feeling to find such an audience for Hindi in London and interact with them.

*Kalam London is in association with Quilon, Vatayan, Vani Foundation and British Council*

It is an incredible feeling to find such an audience for Hindi in London and interact with them. I congratulate the team of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** for working for this cause

— Manisha Kulshreshtha



HEER'S WAR WAS AGAINST THE DIKTATS OF LIFE AND THE SOCIETY, SAYS AUTHOR **MANJUL BAJAJ** ADVOCATING THE IDEA OF 'GETTING CARRIED AWAY'



Shradhaa Murdia, Shubh Singhvi, Manjul Bajaj, Mumal Bhandari and Swati Agarwal

# CARRIED AWAY IN SEARCH OF HEER

**S**he loves to imagine herself as a tree and believes her only job in life is to breathe as deeply as she can and to help keep the air around her clean. Meet the vocal environmentalist and author, Manjul Bajaj, who was in conversation with Akshaya Sidhwani at The Write Circle session in Udaipur.

She advised her audience to "get carried away". There is nothing wrong with wanting to look good for someone or feel like singing or simply feeling good about something, she says and articulates the same feelings in her book, *In search of Heer*; which happens to be a tribute to her parents who had grown up in Pakistan. Her parents were avid readers and her father, who was a great admirer of Ghalib, inspired her craftsmanship.

The book, set against a historical backdrop, has a contemporary narration keeping in mind the modern reader. Heer, according to Man-

jul, was a warrior, like any of us, armed with our degrees and skills. Her war was against the diktats of life and society, she said.

*The Write Circle Udaipur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Radisson Blu and Ehsaas women of Udaipur*

— Kanika Agarwal, Mumal Bhandari, Riddhima Doshi, Shradhaa Murdia, Shubh Singhvi and Swati Agarwal



Akshaya Sidhwani



Manjul Bajaj



## ANIRBAN GANGULY ENGAGES THE BHUBANESWAR AUDIENCE WITH HIS ACCOUNT OF THE PARTY'S RISE AT THE FIRST-EVER **WRITE CIRCLE** SESSION



Anirban Ganguly and Nidhi Garg

# STANDING TALL: THE RISE OF BJP

**A**uthor Anirban Ganguly, who is also the director of Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Research Foundation and member of the policy research department of Bharatiya Janata Party, lit up the first-ever session of **Write Circle** in Bhubaneswar with his views on the party, its leaders and their rise in the Indian political setup, as is also outlined in his book.

Ganguly, who was in conversation with Nidhi Garg, **Ehsaas** woman of Bhubaneswar, has been particularly motivated by Mukherjee and his contribution towards architecting India's industrial policies. During the session, he spoke about his childhood and his role as the director of the institute and also why Shyama Prasad Mukherjee is not so popular in Bengal.

Ganguly's celebration of the journey of the BJP along with Amit Shah is outlined in his book, *Amit Shah and the March of BJP* — from the formation of the Jana Sangh to its metamorphosis into one of India's largest ruling political parties. According to the author, Shah has played an equally



Deba Prasad Dash and Anirban Ganguly



Vedula Ramalakshmi

prominent and strong role in formulating the ideologies and guidelines of the BJP. His contribution in strengthening the support towards the party is established in the book. Ganguly believes that Shah's banishment from Gujarat was actually the phase that elevated him to a national political icon. Ganguly believes in sharing the story literally as it is. He unwaveringly relives tough times that the leader and the party went through during the CBI investigations and the strength of faith which held them together and helped tide over the trying times.

The author kept the discussion humorous to keep the session engaging and light.

*The Write Circle Bhubaneswar is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Mayfair Hotels & Resorts and Ehsaas women of Bhubaneswar — Nidhi Garg and Vedula Ramalakshmi*



IF A BOOK SHOWS THE WAY TO A READER, THEN ITS WORDS WILL HAVE WORKED THEIR MAGIC, BELIEVES AUTHOR **GEETANJALI SHREE**

## ‘HAPPY ENDINGS DON’T MAKE A STORY BETTER’

**A**n author who has been writing for over thirty years, Geetanjali Shree does not believe in getting into too much of research for her work. She feels this keeps her writing fresh. “The way I have been writing, my works will always feel new to the reader,” Shree said, while in conversation with Bhavana Shekhar at the **Kalam** session held in Patna.

While Shree pursued higher studies in history, she wanted to be a writer despite her father being dead against the idea. She has written many essays in English but prefers to write novels in her mother tongue, Hindi.

Shree’s book, *Ret Samadhi*, chalks out the nature of women in detail. The book took a while to complete, as the author immersed herself in the story in order to develop the characters. She also makes use of inanimate objects and animals in her writing. “There’s no symbolism or message that I am trying to put forth by introducing these. I just wish to recreate a multi-dimensional world and I make use of words to do the same,” Shree shared.

“If you are forced to think about a subject, or issue, after finishing a work of literature, then the writer’s hard work has paid off. A happy ending doesn’t make a story better. But if a book shows the way to a reader, then the words will have worked their magic,” she said, adding, “I believe literature should make people aware.”

*Kalam Patna is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Jagran, Hotel Chanakya and Navras School of Performing Arts*



Geetanjali Shree

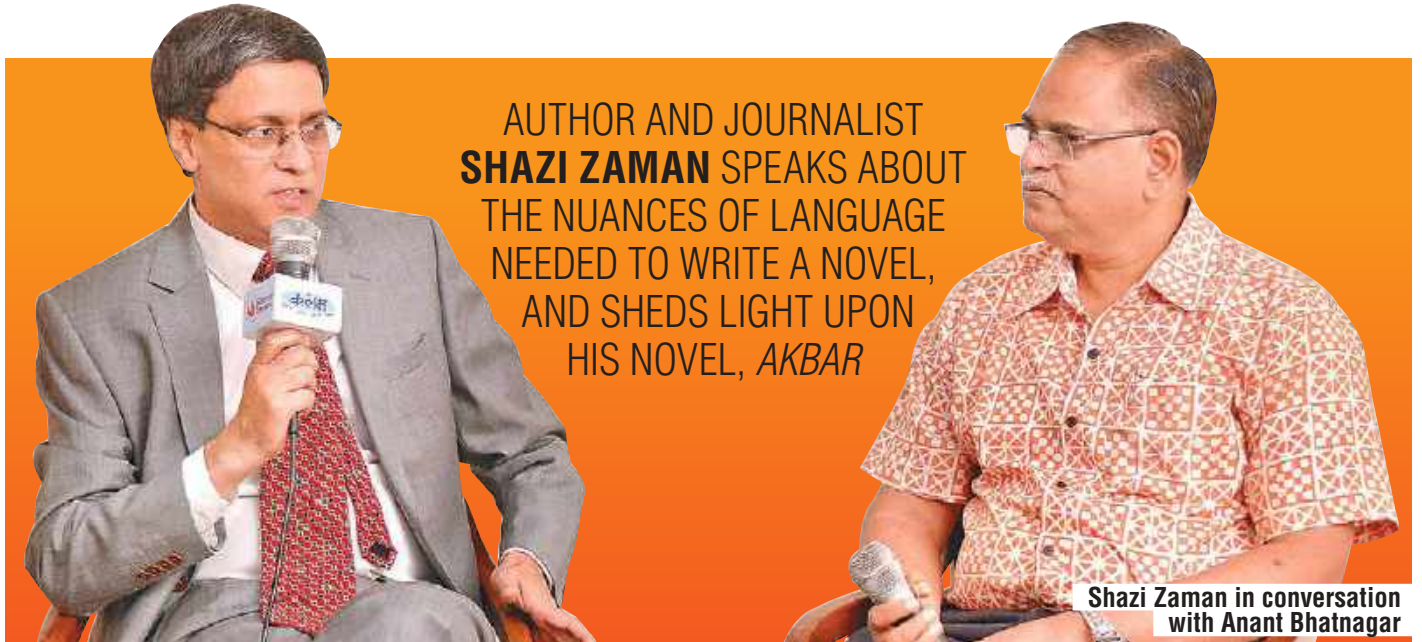
Bhavana Shekhar



There’s no symbolism or message that I am trying to put forth by introducing these (animals and inanimate characters). I just wish to recreate a multi-dimensional world and I make use of words to do the same

— Geetanjali Shree





AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST  
**SHAZI ZAMAN** SPEAKS ABOUT  
THE NUANCES OF LANGUAGE  
NEEDED TO WRITE A NOVEL,  
AND SHEDS LIGHT UPON  
HIS NOVEL, *AKBAR*

Shazi Zaman in conversation  
with Anant Bhatnagar

# WRITING AND JOURNALISM ARE TWO DIFFERENT FIELDS

**S**hazi Zaman, who has worked as an electronic journalist in both English and Hindi media, feels that people's grasp over languages, in general, is decreasing these days. Zaman himself writes in Hindi but says that all languages he is versed with — Urdu, Hindi and English — are his own. Zaman was in conversation with Anant Bhatnagar during the **Kalam** Ajmer session.

While it may be assumed that the progression from journalism to literary writing is natural, Zaman said the two are completely different fields. "An exceptional journalist may not be a good writer; similarly, an excellent writer need not necessarily be a fine journalist," he said. "You should be familiar with the nuances of language while writing a nov-

el," he added.

Before he took up writing the novel *Akbar*, Zaman read books on the Mughal emperor and understood the intricacies of photographs and artwork of the era. "Akbar had visual thinking, which made it easy for me to understand his ideas. He was perturbed by the power equation of religion and wanted to bring people together. Therefore, he had to challenge the power-play of religion," the Delhi-born author said. Ajmer also finds mention in the book, which Zaman feels is not a biography. "A biography is based solely on facts, it has no place for imagination. A novel, on the other hand, has an element of creativity," Zaman said.

*Kalam Ajmer is presented by  
Shree Cement Ltd, in  
association with WeCare and  
Ehsaas women of Ajmer*



Q&A session

**“**An exceptional journalist may not be a good writer; similarly, an excellent writer need not necessarily be a fine journalist. But the bottom line is we should put our hearts into whatever we are doing — **Shazi Zaman**



ONE OF INDIA'S FINEST LITERARY CRAFTSMEN, **PERUMAL MURUGAN**  
SPEAKS ABOUT LENDING VOICE TO THE VOICELESS

# OF INVISIBLE STORIES AND **UNHEARD SONGS**



Perumal Murugan in conversation with Sai Kothai

**A** writer who loves to tell stories of the underdog in his novels, poetry and songs, Perumal Murugan was the guest at the **Aakhar** session held in Bhubaneswar. In conversation with Sai Kothai, the writer and Carnatic music lyricist spoke about the essence of his stories and his journey as an author.

“Isn’t writing about telling stories of the invisibles? I believe that writing is the voice of the voiceless — that is its essence. As a writer, your words should bring attention to matters that are not everyday affairs. Why would you want to write about something that is already known? Your writing should provide readers with a new per-

**“** People need free space to express themselves but I think that today, there is also the need to reiterate the importance of patient listening  
— Perumal Murugan

spective about the others,” Murugan shared the perspective behind his Carnatic songs on crows and manual scavengers.

The award-winning novelist, who has penned works like *Koola Maathaari*, *Nizhal Mutram*, *Madhorubagan* and *Pookkuzhi*, has collaborated with vocalist TM Krishna as a Carnatic music lyricist. During his early years, he couldn’t find much to read beyond the

text books prescribed by the school in his village where he studied. “Every week, we’d have a fair in our village and my mother would go there to buy groceries and home supplies. The sellers would wrap items like tamarind, puffed rice, etc in old newspapers or pages torn off from weekly magazines. When my mother returned, I would wait for her to unwrap the papers so I could read them,” he recollected.

The love for words made Murugan start writing poetry as early as elementary school. While pursuing masters, Murugan saw his first story published. Now, he is one of India’s most reputed contemporary writers who has received awards from the Tamil Nadu government as well as from Katha Books.

*Aakhar Bengaluru is in association with Atta Galatta and Ehsaas women of Bengaluru — Babita Kathotia, Shruti Mittal, Surekha Prahlad*



Subodh Sankar





Geetanjali Shree in conversation with Mukti Shahdeo

AT THE KALAM SESSION IN RANCHI,  
**GEETANJALI SHREE** TALKS ABOUT  
HER JOURNEY AS A HINDI WRITER

## THE JOURNEY THAT STARTED ON A TRAIN



Audience at the event



My father said that the  
future belongs to English,  
but I always wanted to  
write in Hindi  
— Geetanjali Shree

**T**he day when Geetanjali Shree, as a young girl, turned her back to a Rs 100 note that accompanied her father's wish to see her as an administrative services officer was her first step toward being a writer. "I didn't want to become an IAS officer and then marry one. I wanted to be a writer, a Hindi writer," Shree shared with the **Kalam** audience in Ranchi.

In conversation with Mukti Shahdeo, the author shared many facets of her life and writing at the session. "My father was of the opinion that I'll ruin my life if I wrote in Hindi. He would say that the future belongs to English," she said. "I studied in English medium but my mother spoke Hindi and that language was my mother tongue. It was the post-freedom era and people of the country felt love towards their own language. During that time, we even got to hear many Hindi fiction writers," she added.

Despite the clarity over taking up

writing professionally, Shree started writing very late. She was around 27-28 years of age, already married and pursuing her PhD. "I was taking a train journey with my husband and asked myself what had I written so far if I want to be an author. With that dilemma, I wrote my first ever story on that train itself. When my husband read the story, he said it didn't seem the writer was penning a story for the first time. That's how the journey began," Shree recalled.

Geetanjali Shree's fifth novel, *Ret Samadhi*, is known for its sweeping imagination and the sheer power of its language.

*Kalam Ranchi is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Jagran, Navras School of Performing Arts and Ehsaas women of Ranchi*





आनंद कौर व्यास



प्रमोद शर्मा

# साहित्य समाज का दर्पण है - आनंद कौर

गांव के स्कूल से उनके साहित्यिक जीवन का सफर शुरू हुआ। इसे प्रोत्साहित किया स्कूल की टीचर रमा बहन ने

गां

व में 5वीं तक ही स्कूल थी। टीचर रमा बहन सभी बच्चों को कवितायें और कहानी सुनाती थी। रमा बहन के इस प्रोत्साहन और सीख से शुरू हुआ आनंद कौर व्यास के साहित्यिक जीवन का सफर। आनंद कौर व्यास की पहचान आज राजस्थानी भाषा की जानी-मानी साहित्यकार के रूप में है।

आनंद कौर ने अपने साहित्यिक जीवन की यादों को होटल आईटीसी राजपूताना में आयोजित आखर कार्यक्रम में साझा किया। इस कार्यक्रम का आयोजन प्रभा खेतान फाउण्डेशन द्वारा ग्रासरूट मीडिया फाउण्डेशन के सहयोग से राजस्थानी साहित्य, कला व संस्कृति से रूबरू कराने के उद्देश्य के तहत किया गया। आनंद कौर व्यास के साथ संवाद लेखिका मोनिका गौड़ ने किया।

उन्होंने बताया कि उनका जन्म बीकानेर के एक गांव में हुआ था। गांव में शिक्षा को कोई खास माहौल नहीं था। बस, एक स्कूल थी, 5वीं तक। गांव के इसी स्कूल से उनके साहित्यिक जीवन का सफर शुरू हुआ। इसे प्रोत्साहित किया स्कूल की टीचर रमा बहन ने। उन्होंने बताया कि रमा बहन सभी बच्चों को कहानी-कवितायें सुनाकर प्रोत्साहित करती थी। मीरा जयंती पर माहौल कुछ और ही रहता था।

उन्होंने बताया कि जब वह 13 साल की तो परिवारवालों ने शादी कर दी। शादी के बाद माहौल बदल गया। साहित्यिक साधना में ठहराव आ गया। जब बच्चे बड़े हुए और पति का सहयोग मिला तो

साहित्य सृजन की यात्रा फिर शुरू हुई। 1955 में आनंद कौर ने राजस्थानी भाषा में लिखना शुरू किया। स्त्री शिक्षा, स्त्रियों को नौकरी करने के दौरान आने वाली परेशानी, विधवा विवाह, बाबा-साधुओं का ढोंग, सामाजिक कुरीतियां, पारिवारिक मूल्यों की स्थापना करने वाली बातें उनकी रचनाओं में प्रमुखता से देखने को मिलती है।

कार्यक्रम के दौरान यह पूछे जाने पर कि उनकी रचनाओं में क्रांतिकारी चरित्रों को प्रमुखता दी जाती है। इस पर आनंद कौर ने बताया कि साहित्य समाज का दर्पण है। हमारे आस-पास निरंतर कहानियां बन रही हैं व घट रही हैं। इसलिये आप किसी भी विषय से अछूते नहीं रह सकते हैं। महिलाएं, और उनमें खासकर कामकाजी महिलाएं, अपने जीवन में विविध तरह की चुनौतियों का सामना करती हैं। कई सामाजिक समस्याएं और कुरीतियां भी उनके विकास में बाधक बनती हैं। अतः यह आवश्यक है कि इन सभी विषयों पर बात की जाए।

उन्होंने राजस्थानी की लेखिकाओं को साधुवाद देते हुए कहा कि वे बेहतर लिख रही हैं और विषयों में नवीनता का समावेश किये हुये हैं। वे अपनी रचनाओं में उन अनछुए पहलुओं को को भी सम्मिलित कर रही हैं, जिनमें परम्परागत रूप से लोग बचते रहे हैं। अपने संवाद के दौरान आनंद कौर व्यास ने अपनी कथाओं मोल मिनखाचारै रो, मून रा चितराम, वै सुपना और चितराम आदि का पाठ भी किया।

आखर जयपुर के प्रस्तुतकर्ता हैं श्री सीमेंट लिमिटेड, सहभागिता आई टी सी राजपूताना और ग्रासरूट मीडिया फाउंडेशन



मोनिका गौड़



महिलाएं, और उनमें खासकर कामकाजी महिलाएं, अपने जीवन में विविध तरह की चुनौतियों का सामना करती हैं। अतः यह आवश्यक है कि इन सभी विषयों पर बात की जाए।

— आनंद कौर व्यास



AUTHOR OF *AKBAR*, **SHAZI ZAMAN** SAYS MUGHAL EMPEROR'S ATTEMPTS TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER AFFECTED HIS IMAGE

## ‘Akbar tried to learn about MANY RELIGIONS’



Shazi Zaman



Ashwani Pareek



Apra Kuchhal

**F**rom his perceived image, as propagated by films like *Mughal-e-Azam*, to the sensitive man that Akbar really was, author Shazi Zaman spoke about some interesting facets of the Mughal ruler's life at the **Kalam Jaipur** session. In conversation with journalist Ashwani Pareek, Zaman discussed the emperor's life and thoughts in light of his book, *Akbar*.

“Rulers of that era had to be cruel. If they had not been so, they ran the risk of being usurped of power as there's no scope for mercy in the battlefield. The time for being merciful is before and after war. In addition to being a successful emperor, Akbar was also a sensitive person. He wanted people to use their mind instead of imitating mindlessly,” Zaman said. “Imitation are ideas that are earned as legacy, but intellect leads you towards an untravelled path,” he added.

Zaman feels the film *Mughal-e-Azam*

caused the maximum amount of damage to Akbar, since it is completely a work of fiction. On rebellion, he added that it was almost a duty for each prince to rebel against his father in those times. “Rebelling was like a public service exam during that era. Then, as is the case now, nobody wants to give up their seat of power. There was no scope for voluntary retirement at that time; of course, retirement was still a possibility if one lost their life,” he added, creating an interesting narrative for the audience.

The author discussed how Akbar's ideals and the activities undertaken under his rule affected his image as an individual. “Many myths had taken shape around Akbar. People had begun to think that he was straying from his religion. Christian priests were present when Akbar died in Agra. This led to questioning about his religion. People would say they are unsure what religion he was born to and whether he died by the same religion. All these speculations were a result of the fact that Akbar tried to learn about different religions,” Zaman added.

*Kalam Jaipur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Bhaskar, Jaipur*



In addition to being a successful emperor, Akbar was also a sensitive person. He wanted people to use their mind instead of imitating mindlessly. Imitation are ideas that are earned as legacy, but intellect leads you towards an untravelled path  
— Shazi Zaman





Neelima Dalmia Adhar in conversation with Mrinalini Anant

NEELIMA DALMIA ADHAR BRINGS ALIVE THE REAL WOMAN BEHIND KASTURBA GANDHI IN THE **KALAM** SESSION AT MEERUT

# THE WOMAN BEHIND BA

Until the age of 62 years, *Ba* (Kasturba Gandhi) struggled to find balance between the roles of a Satyagrahi, a wife and a giving mother. Fame took over when her life ended, but the woman again got lost — **Neelima Dalmia Adhar**

**N**eelima Dalmia Adhar, who was inspired by her mother, author Nandini Dalmia's words, both spoken and written, dedicated her first book to her father, industrialist RK Dalmia. She discussed her latest book, *The Secret Diary of Kasturba*, at the **Kalam** session held in Meerut. In conversation with Mrinalini Anant, Adhar spoke about the book and the role of Kasturba in Mahatma Gandhi's life. As detailed in her book, Adhar brought to life the real woman behind Kasturba Gandhi (or *Ba*) in the **Kalam** session, speaking about all that Gandhi's wife had to suffer living in the shadows of a 'hero'. "There's a great divide between being a woman and

being the wife of a superhero figure. Until the age of 62 years, *Ba* struggled to find balance between the roles of a Satyagrahi, a wife and a giving mother. Fame took over when her life ended, but the woman again got lost," Dalmia shared.

The author has touchingly

portrayed the pain experienced by Kasturba throughout her life, without questioning Mahatma Gandhi's image. The story focuses on the boy named Mohandas and the girl named Kastur, who were married to each other. "Not only did Kastur come from a more well-off family than that of Mohandas, she was also more liberal and daring than him," Dalmia added. The author speaks about Kasturba's pain openly in spite of her father having shared a strong relationship with both Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi.

*Kalam Meerut is in association with Dainik Jagran, Crystal Palace and Ehsaas women of Meerut — Anshu Mehra and Garima Mithal*



Anshu Mehra

Garima Mithal



# ‘DESIRE CANNOT BE DEFINED’

**MADHAVI MENON** ON WHY DESIRE IS NOT LIMITED TO THE BODY, THE ACCEPTANCE OF SEXUAL CATEGORIES IN SOCIETY, AND THE CHAPTER ON LORD AYYAPPAN IN HER BOOK



Madhavi Menon

**F**rom the embodiment of desire to the realms of gods, goddesses, mythology, tantra and sufism, the 73rd session of *An Author's Afternoon* in Kolkata touched upon contrasting, sometimes controversial, subjects that have fired up the minds of academicians and writers for a long time. The session saw Madhavi Menon in conversation with Esha Dutta, *Ehsaas* woman of Kolkata.

On the subject of identifying desire, the professor of English insisted the ideas of desire in India are often influenced by Western scholars. “What fascinated me while writing this book was that we have a long and deep tradition attached to religion where desire has been seen as a thing that does not have a body. It is completely opposite to the situation with which we are occupied today,” she said, quoting the example of Lord Kama, who was burnt to the ground by Lord Shiva and then brought back without a body.

Menon added as a human, one is encountering and interacting with desire all the time. “From the way we dress up to the way we speak, everything is attributable to the idea of desire,” she told the audience. She also said while many terms like sex, passion and love are synonymous with desire, she finds ‘passion’ to be the closest



Madhavi Menon with Anupama Sharma

since it is fairly value-neutral.

In the light of Sufi tradition, where addresses were made towards men, Menon added that most of male-male love poetry came from the Indian sub-continent. My students, who are mostly grown up in the Americanised way where they are seeing ideas like gay liberation and male homosexuality in a dominating manner, are often left shocked when they come to know about this fact. “The idea of gender as something which does not make sense in the world of ecstatic worship could always be seen uniformly and constantly in the world of Sufi poetry,” Menon said.

In her book, Menon takes the readers on a journey, spanning centuries and across geographies, to tell her tale of how different societies – from *Puranic* to Islamic — have interpreted the concept of desire.

On the chapter about Lord Ayyappan in her book, and a controversy that her writing about the deity had created earlier, Menon said that anything can be deemed offensive when one knows nothing about it. “Lots of political controversies had occurred around the decision (the Supreme Court decision on a complaint against Menon). One point which was highlighted this time

**“**We have come up with terms like heterosexual or bisexual for male sexual orientation. I personally feel that it is not a good move and it is much sexier and funny not to have a name and a category **— Madhavi Menon**





Esha Dutta

was that Ayyappan was a celibate god. So, you cannot have presumably sexually active women in his shrine. The assumption that defense makes was that Ayyappan was a celibate god, this fact really fascinated me.

Speaking about sexual categories and their acceptance in society, Menon agreed that we had indeed regressed in place of making progress. "If you look at the text of the Sufi poetries and even

in the case of *Kamasutra*, you will find the case of sexual categories does not exist. It is a text about pleasure and barely mentions marriage. It is sad to see where we have reached today. I think we have many other models that speak about several alternative ways of perceiving it," she explained.

*An Author's Afternoon is presented by Shree Cement Ltd in association with Taj Bengal, Kolkata*



Malika Varma

This is a topic which has not been explored much. I think she has done extensive



research to come out with such a book. I would love to read this book because it has got me thinking on

another level. I have always thought of desire as something without form; it is something which is infinite beyond happiness, materialistic needs. Happy to see that she has the same opinion

— Kangan Bhalla



I enjoyed listening her speak about spirituality, tantra. Also learned something. I didn't know about the Islamic tradition that is related to yoga. That was very interesting. I think what she said about desire is so true. I have felt the same while reading various texts. We can't quantify or typify desire. It isn't just sexual. Desire can take so many forms — Oindrilla Dutta



It was a very scintillating, very energetic and a very dynamic afternoon of conversation. Madhavi has explored a lot of ideas in this book. I think it was really a brilliant roller-coaster ride and it's going to be very beneficial for younger people who are the audience here today. The idea of desire floating in the wind... and how we try to find and shape it; every moment we breathe, every moment we think is governed by desire. Recently, I have made a film on Rituporno Ghosh 'Bird of Dusk', which explored the same ideas — identity, sexuality, desire — Sangeeta Dutta





# A TREAT FOR KIDS

ON DURGA PUJA THIS YEAR,  
**PRABHA KHAITAN FOUNDATION**  
INVITED UNDERPRIVILEGED  
CHILDREN FROM **FUTURE HOPE**  
TO JOIN THE FESTIVITIES AT  
MANICKTALLA CHALTABAGAN

**O**n the occasion of Durga Puja, **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** undertook an initiative to make the festivities special for underprivileged children from Future Hope. In the event, which was organised by **Education For All**, the children were invited to the Manicktalla Chaltabagan Durga Puja Pandal on October 5. Children visiting the *pandal* joined in the festivities with other attendees to make them be a part of the community. Besides, they were also provided with lunch and refreshments.

**Education for All** is an initiative of Prabha Khaitan Foundation to provide education to underprivileged children. Presently, around 20,000 children are being assisted through this programme. The **Education For All** project prioritises need above merit, with the belief that any child who wants to continue going to school has the right to do so.



A photo from the event. Due to unavoidable circumstances, we had to use plastic at this event. We regret using the same



# ‘हिन्दू कोई धर्म नहीं बल्कि राष्ट्रीयता है’



महेश शर्मा और विजय त्रिवेदी

महेश शर्मा ने बताया कि आज भी लोगों को पता नहीं है कि गोवा की आजादी में बलिदान किस-किस ने दिया, अगर लोग यह जान जायेगें तो वह पं दीनदयाल उपाध्याय को भी जान जायेगें

ग्रा

सरूट मीडिया फाउंडेशन के द्वारा भारतीय राजनीति के संबंध में होटल आईटीसी राजपुताना में मीमांसा सीरीज की शुरुआत की गई। जिसके अंतर्गत दीनदयाल उपाध्याय के वाङ्मय के संदर्भ में ‘भारतीय राजनीति की विरासत’ विषय पर टॉक शो आयोजित किया गया। कार्यक्रम में राज्यसभा के पूर्व सांसद डॉ महेश शर्मा से जाने-माने पत्रकार विजय त्रिवेदी ने संवाद किया।

टॉक शो में डॉ महेश शर्मा ने पं दीनदयाल उपाध्याय के ‘एकात्म मानववाद’ और ‘भारतीय राजनीति में उनके योगदान’ पर विस्तृत चर्चा की। इस

दौरान महेश शर्मा ने बताया कि आजादी के बाद जब भारत में पूंजीवाद और समाजवाद में से किसी एक को चुनने की बहस चल रही थी तब पं दीनदयाल ने एकात्म मानववाद का विचार प्रस्तुत किया जिसमें व्यक्ति, समाज, प्रकृति और परमात्मा को एक-दूसरे से अभिन्न बताया। उन्होंने कहा कि जब आप कृतत्व को नहीं जानोगे तो व्यक्तित्व को कैसे जानोगे।

उन्होंने कहा कि हिन्दू कोई धर्म नहीं बल्कि राष्ट्रीयता है इसलिए संप्रदायों की लाइन में हिन्दू को खड़ा करना हिन्दूत्व का अपमान होगा। आज विश्व के पास राष्ट्र की कोई परिभाषा नहीं है। इंडियन का सही शाब्दिक हिन्दू है और सिंधु के पार

रहने वाले लोग हिन्दू हैं। इस दौरान महेश शर्मा ने कहा कि 15 अगस्त को लाल किले से प्रधानमंत्री यह तो कहते आए हैं कि आज का दिन आजादी वाला दिन है, लेकिन आज तक किसी भी प्रधानमंत्री ने यह नहीं कहा कि आज का दिन, देश को मजहब के नाम पर बंटवारे का दिन भी है। विभाजन के दौरान वे कौन लोग थे जो अखंड भारत के पक्ष में थे लेकिन लोग आज भी उनके नाम नहीं बात पाएंगे।

आगे बात करते हुए महेश शर्मा ने बताया कि आज भी लोगों को पता नहीं है कि गोवा की आजादी में बलिदान किस-किस ने दिया, अगर लोग यह जान जाएंगे तो वह पंडित दीनदयाल उपाध्याय को भी जान जाएंगे। अखण्ड भारत की बात करते हुये अखण्ड भारत शब्द की विस्तृत परिभाषा भी बताई। इस दौरान डॉ महेश शर्मा ने सभी श्रोताओं के प्रश्नों के विस्तार पूर्वक जवाब भी दिए।

ग्रासरूट मीडिया फाउंडेशन द्वारा ‘भारतीय राजनीति की विरासत’

पर ये आयोजित टॉक शो ‘सहयोग’ के अन्तर्गत किया गया था, जो प्रभा खेतान फाउण्डेशन द्वारा एक सामाजिक पहल है



हिन्दू कोई धर्म नहीं बल्कि राष्ट्रीयता है इसलिए संप्रदायों की लाइन में हिन्दू को खड़ा करना हिन्दूत्व का अपमान होगा। आज विश्व के पास राष्ट्र की कोई परिभाषा नहीं है। इंडियन का सही शाब्दिक हिन्दू है और सिंधु के पार रहने वाले लोग हिन्दू हैं।

— डॉ महेश शर्मा





Ajit Pradhan, Pavan Varma, Sundeep Bhutoria,  
Ravi Shankar Prasad, Vidushi Padma Talwalkar and Geeta Chandran

## HOW IT DAWNED... THE FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE ON MUSIC WITH KISHORI AMONKAR'S BLESSINGS



AJIT  
PRADHAN

**F**estival of Literature on Music का ख्याल मुझे आठ साल पहले आया था। किशोरी अमोनकर पटना आयी हुई थीं। किसे मालूम था कि वो पटना में उनका अखिरी कार्यक्रम होगा। The concert was at Gandhi Maidan... लेकिन कुछ बदतमिज और बेअदब लोगों के कारण उन्हें बीच concert में ही stage छोड़ना पड़ा। बहुत मित्रों के बाद वो दोबारा गाने को तैयार तो हुई लेकिन वो गाँधी मैदान के उस stage पर गाने को तैयार नहीं थीं, जहाँ बीच गायकी में उन्हें उठने पर मजबूर कर दिया गया था।

Shri Krishna Memorial Hall खास तौर पर उनके लिए खोला गया। सुबह के तीन बज रहे थे। There were only a handful of us there in the hall to listen to her. By the time she finished singing it was 7 am. I think it was just my music teacher who was there with me and 7-8 people more in the hall. After she finished singing I went up to her with tea.

“कार्यक्रम के बाद मैं बात नहीं करती। बहुत थक गई हूँ और दूसरी बात... I don't like to talk to strangers about music,” she told me. I told her I have just come with tea for her. “How much do you understand music?” she asked me.

“Tell me what was I singing?”

“राग ललित,” I told her, “but at times it appeared like राग तोड़ी to me,” I added.

“And do you know why it appeared like राग तोड़ी? Do you understand what मुर्छना is,” She asked. I told her that I do understand what मुर्छना is.

“So Lalit is a मध्यम प्रधान राग और ‘म’ को अगर ‘सा’ मान कर गाओगे तो राग तोड़ी हो जायेगा,” she said. “लेकिन तुमने सोचा भी कैसे कि मैं इस वक्त तोड़ी गाऊँगी। तोड़ी का समय तो ये नहीं है,” किशोरी जी ने कहा।

“तो फिर आपने यमन कल्याण में ‘मारो प्रणाम’ क्यों गाया? सुबह 6:00-6:30 बजे ‘यमन

कल्याण” का तो समय नहीं था,” I asked her.

“मैंने यमन कल्याण कहाँ गाया? मैं तो भजन गा रही थी — ‘मारो प्रणाम’ — and I used शुद्ध मध्यम only once and that too towards the end, because that was the blessing from the divine — and then I stopped. Lord Krishna was there,” she said.

“And, did you see the Lord or were you just listening to यमन कल्याण?,” she asked me.

“देखो बात करते करते अब तो सच में ‘तोड़ी’ का समय हो चला,” she said.

I offered that I could get an extra round of hot tea for her from home. She, however, declined the offer saying, “I think you should leave now, or else तुम्हारे favourite राग — राग ‘गौड़ सारंग’ का समय हो जायेगा।”

(I had told her earlier that I love ‘गौड़ सारंग’ and love her ‘पिहु पल न लागी मोरी अखियाँ’ in गौड़ सारंग)

“And do you know the difference between the 2 मध्यम used in गौड़ सारंग and the 2 मध्यम used in यमन कल्याण she asked.

I was beginning to understand a little by then what made her music so divine were the incredible variance between 2 swars. I got up and was about to leave at the sublime (divine) note of ‘शुद्ध म’, when Kishori Amonkar Ji told me.

“संगीत का बहुत शैक है तुम्हें। कभी बैठेंगे, संगीत पर खूब बातें करेंगे तुमसे। हालाँकि मैं संगीत पर बात करने में विश्वास नहीं करती। मैं तुम्हें बताऊँगी the difference between the ‘रे’ (रिषभ) used in राग ‘शुद्ध कल्याण’ and the ‘रे’ used in राग ‘भूप’। I will tell you the difference between the 2 मध्यम used in ‘गौड़ सारंग’ and 2 मध्यम used in ‘यमन कल्याण’; और तुम्हें दिन के वक्त नहीं, शाम के वक्त राग ‘गौड़ सारंग’ सुनाऊँगी।

And, then I spoke to her a couple of years later. I wanted to invite her to Patna and organise a **Festival of Literature on Music**. जहाँ संगीत के साथ संगीत पर बातें होंगी। I wanted to honour her in my own small way — honour an artist who was least bothered about awards and recognition. I was very glad that she remembered me.

“कब कर रहे हो ये कार्यक्रम — ये संगीत और संगीत पर बातचीत,” कुछ धीमी सी आवाज में किशोरी जी ने पूछा। “जी, गर्मियों के पहले ही, और आपको आना है जरूर,” मैंने कहा।

“अगर जिंदा रहे तो जरूर आयेंगे,” she told me over the phone.



**PRABHA** FEATURES CHANDIGARH'S **MANISHA JAIN**, AN  
ENTREPRENEUR FOR THIS EDITION'S **EHSAAS** WOMAN OF THE MONTH

# LET THERE BE LIFE WHERE THERE IS LIGHT

**A** Danish national who has been living in Punjab for more than 20 years, Manisha Jain is the Managing Director of one of the world's top laboratory glassware companies, Glassco Laboratory Equipments.

Manisha, who was born in 1976, delved into the deeper ends of biotechnology as a young woman. While she had offers from Denmark's Technical University and Punjab University, she chose to pursue MBA in International Marketing at Niels Brock (Copenhagen) instead.

As a teenager, Manisha tried her hand at and succeeded as a junior television artist in Denmark, classical and *bhangra* dancer, and as an interior designer. Today, she is the founder and co-owner of

**Manisha has her own production line of lab instruments. She aims to produce machines that can help science discover faster cancer-fighting drugs**

three companies — Design and Marketing Director at Glassco (since 2007, specialised in disruptive innovations), owner of Glassco Laboratory Equipments (since 2003, trade business) and Managing Director of Dan Logitech (manufacturing of electronic bench top machines).

A wife and a doting mother to two girls (aged 18 and 5 years), Manisha has her own invented production line of Laboratory Instruments, which she also proudly calls her babies. Her mission is to produce machines that can help science discover faster cancer-fighting drugs.

Manisha lives by the motto, "Let there be life where there is light."







Pari Chaudhary in conversation with Nandita Devraj

# Inside a woman's WORLD

DIVERSE SPEAKERS,  
ENRICHING SESSIONS  
MARK THIRD EDITION  
OF **WOMAN UP!**  
**SUMMIT 2019**

**A** series of enriching sessions, delivered by inspiring speakers coming from diverse backgrounds, marked the Woman Up! 2019 summit held in Jaipur on October 14-16. Organised by **Siyahi**, the summit was supported by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** under its **Sahyog** vertical.

Over the course of three days, the summit saw 14 sessions, two mentoring

sessions and two performances with 24 speakers and performers participating to inspire more people to Woman Up!

"We are the youngest nation in the world which means that India has the largest number of literate youth in the age group of 35-40 years. However, women only contribute 17-18% to the GDP of the country's economy. In rural India, 40% women are working in agricultural fields but only 9% of the agricultural lands are allotted to women. If all women in the country start working, then by the year 2025 our country's economy will be at an unimaginable state," said Rajiv Arora, Regional Co-ordinator (West Zone) of All India Professionals Congress and the Vice President, Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee.

The third edition opened with a spell-binding performance by Rajasthani folk singer, Bhanwari Devi, who gave an enthralling performance of *Sawariyo Ghat Mai*, a devotional song in the praise of Lord Krishna. The summit also featured the Woman Up! Pop-Up, carefully curated

to include a wide range of products by craft persons, particularly of languishing crafts, local artisans, women entrepreneurs who exhibited handmade textiles and handicrafts.

Students from various universities and colleges got an opportunity for real-time engagement in mentoring sessions with founder of **SHEROES**, Sairee Chahal and chairperson of Kamla Poddar Group of Institutions, Kamla Poddar. A mesmerising storytelling performance by actress Shashwita Sharma was also held. She performed *Chui Mui*, which is a short story by Ismat Chughtai. Shashwita was enthralling on stage and incorporated a lot of movement into her character. The story was about how women are written off in society.

Speakers over the three days included professional actor and Kathak dancer, Shashwita Sharma, folk singer Bhanwari Devi, Secretary, Science & Technology Department, Government of Rajasthan, Mugdha Sinha, among others.



Ruma Devi



**O**ne of Taj group's finest luxury hotels and the oldest running hotel in the country, Taj West End opened in 1887 as a high-end club. The hotel, which has a legacy of hosting renowned global names over its 130-plus years' history, is spread over 20 acres of magnificent gardens.

Taj took over the property in 1984 and since, Taj West End has hosted the likes of Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Charles, Winston Churchill, Julia Roberts, Richard Gere, Bill Gates, Warren Buffet and heads of various states from around the globe. The hotel partners with **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** to host the **Kalam**, **The Write Circle** and **Ek Mulakat**.

Taj West End is the first of the Taj Hotels to be Earth Check Platinum Certified (2019). It won the Iconic Hotel of the Year Award in the Editorial Choice Awards category by Food Food Awards 2019 (South & West). It also won two

## HOME TO THE GLITTERATI

**Taj West End**, which has 130 years of glorious history behind its name, is not just a *desi* favourite, but continues to host international celebrities and heads of state

awards at the South Asian Travel Awards 2019, held at Amari Galle in Sri Lanka in September 2019.

One of the hotel's highlights is The Tata Suite, a 7,500 square ft Presidential Suite. It also houses 12 Taj Club rooms, 23 suites and 27 Luxury Grande rooms; the Indian-themed Masala Klub; one of India's first Vietnamese restaurants, Blue Ginger; the open-air Blue Bar and the multi-cuisine Mynt.

The Taj West End also has room for meetings, conferences and events with



**Somnath Mukherjee,**  
Area Director, Karnataka and  
General Manager, Taj West End

five well appointed halls, a grand pillar-less ballroom, Prince of Wales Lawns and Blue Ginger Lawns. It offers a fitness centre and a wellness spa for its body and mind conscious guests, making it a complete experience in luxury.







VISITING AUTHORS ARE PRESENTED WITH DOKRA ARTEFACTS AS A SOUVENIR OF KOLKATA'S ARTISTIC HERITAGE AND SERVED JHALMURI THAT GIVES THEM A TASTE OF THE CITY'S STREET FOOD

## FROM THE STREETS AND WORKSHOPS OF KOLKATA



**T**he city of Kolkata has a lot to offer in terms of art and crafts, given its rich cultural and artistic heritage. Needless to say, all events hosted under the umbrella of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** (An Author's Afternoon, Ek Mulakat and Kalam) witness a rich serving of both — local handicrafts and Bengali fare. The very mention of Kolkata's street food, like *jhalmuri* is enough to make one's taste buds go tingling. This month, we take a look at the city's Dokra handicrafts and this spicy-tangy street food.

### A DYING ART

The art of creating Dokra handicrafts originated in West Bengal. The earliest evidence of the lost wax-crafting technique similar to Dokra is the legendary figurine of the Dancing Girl found from the Mohenjo-daro site. This craftsmanship was pioneered by the local Dhokra Damar Tribe, giving it the name Dokra, and has been practiced for over 4,000 years. The elaborate technique and intricate designs of this craftsmanship make it very popular in the global market.

Hollow casting is the more traditional method used for Dokra art. The technique uses a clay core, which is roughly the shape of the final cast image. The clay core is coated with a combination of pure beeswax, resin from the tree *Damara orientalis*, and nut oil. When the wax cools, the desired design and shape is carved on it with great artistic finesse. The wax is then covered with layers of clay. Ducts are made in the clay layers and put on fire. Upon heating, the wax under the clay layer melts and dribbles out through the ducts. Then, liquid metal is gradually poured in the hollow space and allowed to cool. The bronze and copper-based alloy is mostly used for Dokra work. The clay layer is carefully chipped off





Jhalmuri is served to our guests with piping *cha* and *garam singara* (left)

## The elaborate technique and increasing cost of raw materials has led to a decrease in the production of the exquisite Dokra craft

to unravel the beautiful handicraft which is then given its finishing touches and polished.

Apart from deity idols, Dokra craftsmen make figures of birds and animals and santhal jewels, like anklets and tinkling dancing bells. Contemporary work has spread to household items and more elaborate jewellery, lamp holders, lamps, chains, vases and stands. Though Dokra is said to have originated from Bengal, there are other states which craft this skill too, such as Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Telangana etc. The elaborate technique and increasing cost of raw materials has led to a decrease in the production of this exquisite primitive craft.

As you are aware, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** works primarily on the ideology of connecting lives to their roots and culture. In keeping with this intention, guests invited for sessions in Kolkata are felicitated with Dokra artefacts. We hope this little effort from our end will help boost some awareness of this declining craftsmanship.

### JHALMURI, A LIP-SPACING MIX

The delight of watching a *muriwalla* skilfully toss around puffed rice or *muri* with *chana*, *jhuri bhaja*, onion and powdered masalas with a dash of lime juice and mustard oil is indeed a lip-smacking experience. The expertise with which the maker tosses in the right measure of ingredients, the clanging of his spoon against his mixing utensil, the smell of the mustard oil, the haggling over the extra peanuts, the newspaper *thonga* (paper bag) — all seem to add zing to this popular street food of Kolkata. Be it the couples in Victoria or penny-wise students, the tired office-goer or the elderly watching the evening news, everyone seems to be in love with this spicy and low-calorie concoction of puffed rice rustled with ingredients of their choice.

This distinct street food originated in Bengal but has gradually gained popularity all over the country with different ingredients or names such as *churmuri* in Karnataka or *bhel puri* in Mumbai. The *jhalmuri* in winter will find the inclusion of fresh peas while in Mumbai the *murmura* is laced with a generous proportion of sev. The *jhalmuri* is extremely popular with our guest authors visiting from other cities. Served with hot piping *cha* and *garam singara*, it sets the perfect culinary treat for the Kolkata word lovers at our sessions.





If we succeed in popularising voluntary cancer screening then the disease burden will fall and so will private and public expenditure on cancer

— Dr Harsh Vardhan  
Union health minister

ARTWORK BY  
SUDIPTA KUNDU



## NATIONAL CANCER AWARENESS DAY

National Cancer Awareness Day is observed on November 7, the birth anniversary of the eminent scientist Madame Curie. Marie Curie is known for her discovery of radium and polonium, and her huge contribution to the fight against cancer. Her work led to the development of nuclear energy and radiotherapy for the treatment of cancer.

# BEING AWARE IS BEING SAFE

FOR ITS CAUSE OF THE MONTH IN NOVEMBER, **PRABHA** CALLS FOR AWARENESS TOWARDS SYMPTOMS AND EARLY DIAGNOSIS OF CANCER IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DISEASE

A

woman dies of cervical cancer every 8 minutes in India. One out of every two women, newly-diagnosed with breast cancer, succumbs to the disease. In 2018, India alone saw 7,84,821 deaths caused by cancer. Out of these, tobacco accounted for 3,17,928 deaths (approx). Currently, around 2.25 million people are estimated to be living with the disease and nearly 1.1 million new cases are being reported annually.

The word 'cancer' is enough to conjure a disturbing image in the mind. The facts, revolving around this form of malignant disease, are scarier. But we had not set out to scare readers by quoting these numbers. **Prabha** seeks your involvement to spread awareness in preventing the disease from occurring and spreading. Early diagnosis can help, which is why the motto 'Be Safe, Be Aware' sums up the fight against cancer.

Observed in the country each year on November 7, National Cancer Awareness Day aims to educate people about cancer, its treatment, and its symptoms. In 2014, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan first announced that the day will be dedicated to early detection and cure of cancer. National Cancer Control Programme was initiated in 1975 with a view to provide cancer treatment facilities in the country. The programme was modified in 1984-85 to provide thrust to prevention and early detection of cancer.

The campaign focuses on early detection since diagnosis at an advanced stage reduces patients' chances of survival. A Lancet report reveals that the use of tobacco is a risk factor for 14 types of cancer. Other causes include alcohol, drug use, and poor diet. Unsafe sex is also the main risk factor for cervical cancer and is the second most common cancer type in women. There is high risk of lung cancer in tobacco use and air pollution.

## PREVENTION

- MAINTAINING A HEALTHY WEIGHT
- FOLLOWING A HEALTHY DIET
- ENGAGING IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- VACCINATIONS
- PROTECTION FROM THE SUN
- AVOIDING TOBACCO & SMOKING



# IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

GUEST	EVENT
Padmesh Gupta	Kalam Udaipur
Lalit Kumar	Kalam Bhubaneswar
Manjul Bajaj	The Write Circle Raipur
Deepak Ramola	Kalam London
Geetanjali Shree	Kalam Delhi, Lucknow
Christopher C Doyle	An Author's Afternoon Kolkata
Anu Singh Choudhary	Kalam Nagpur
Hrishikesh Sulabh	Kalam Ranchi
Shehpar Rasool	Lafz Jaipur
Vir Sanghvi	Kitaab Book Launch Kolkata
Chalchitra: Special Screening of Ghawre Bairey Aaj in Kolkata	
PKWVA Long List Announcement Kolkata	
Education for All: Art Competition with Oxford Bookstore & Chalk About with Think Arts Festival Kolkata	
Kalam Special Session-Vaad Vivaad Kolkata	



Padmesh Gupta



Lalit Kumar



Manjul Bajaj



Deepak Ramola



Geetanjali Shree



Christopher C Doyle



Anu Singh Choudhary



Hrishikesh Sulabh



Shehpar Rasool



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