



Prabha प्रभा

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation Chronicle

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BY THE BOOK

Pg 4-9

The **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** Book Rack holds pride of place in cities across the country. In this edition we tell you the story of the Foundation's initiative to preserve literature and the culture of reading.

INSIDE

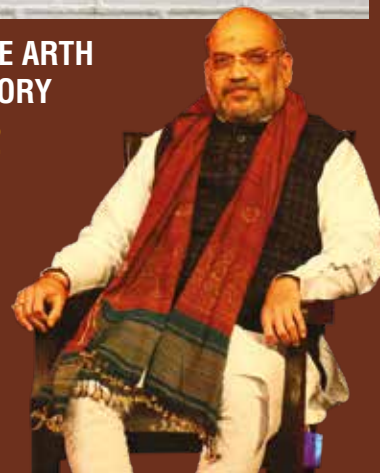


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Bonding Over Books

Awareness and empowerment, achieved through the path of literature, has been the driving force behind the activities of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**. In keeping with the idea of reaching out to book lovers, the Foundation set up its first Book Rack in Kolkata at the Taj Bengal, for the reading pleasure of its dedicated patrons. It was unveiled by the then Governor of West Bengal, Keshari Nath Tripathi. The Kolkata Book Rack houses titles by authors hosted by the Foundation for its exclusively curated sessions and is set up at the Taj Chambers where the sessions are mostly held. The leather-bound volumes are signed by the respective authors and are available to patrons and hotel guests for reading.



MANISHA JAIN
Communications & Branding Chief,
Prabha Khaitan Foundation

We have Book Racks in Jaipur, Patna and Raipur, and we unveiled another Book Rack at Taj Vivanta in Kolkata and one in Taj Hari Mahal in Jodhpur in February. In the coming month, we will be unveiling Book Racks in Bhubaneswar and Udaipur.

In March, the world celebrates International Women's Day. As you know, the Foundation's primary agenda revolves around women's empowerment, which it has been promoting through various literary and cultural activities. The next edition will, therefore, be featuring some of India's most prolific and eminent women writers who will share their journey and work, and address woman-centric issues.

We hope you continue bestowing us with your knowledge and views as they are the beating heart of the success of this chronicle. Do keep writing to us. Your words are our motivation. You can mail us at newsletter@pkfoundation.org. For updates on the Foundation's activities do follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Happy reading!

In our Next Issue

To celebrate International Women's Day, the March edition will feature women writers from the country as they talk about their individual journeys and issues concerning women



Anita Nair



Anuja Chauhan



Arshia Sattar



Bhawana Somaaya



Ira Trivedi



Karen Anand



Mughda Sinha



Paro Anand



Sabyn Javeria-Jillani



Sonal Mansingh

Happy Birthday

Prabha WISHES **EHSAAS** WOMEN BORN IN MARCH



Sonakshi Kundra



Praneet Bubber



Parveen Tuli



Mumal Bhandari

Books to Build a Bond



Sonal Mansingh

In the 2004 American film, *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, the protagonist played by Will Ferrell says the famous line, "I have many leather-bound books and my apartment smells of rich mahogany."

That could well be true of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation's** Book Rack initiative. The Book Racks showcase titles of authors hosted by the Foundation at their exclusively curated sessions. The leather-bound volumes are signed by the respective authors and are available to patrons and hotel guests for reading.

The first Book Rack was set up in 2015 at Taj Bengal, unveiled by the then governor of West Bengal, Keshari Nath Tripathi. Since then Book Racks have been set up in Jaipur, Jodhpur, Patna, Udaipur and Raipur, and many more such Book Racks are on the cards in the other cities where the Foundation holds literary events.

The idea behind instituting Book Racks, was, of course, to celebrate the joy of reading, but also to preserve and treasure books as valuable keepsakes, especially signed editions. For a literature lover, the pleasure of holding a beautifully bound book that has been signed by the author is unparalleled. **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** is committed to spreading awareness and empowerment through the path of literature, and the Book Racks have become a milestone on this literary journey.

Book Rack: Kolkata

Kolkata has always been home to lovers of art and literature. Eight years ago, **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** started its first literary boutique event in this city. It is also the city that set up the Foundation's first Book Rack almost five years ago.



Esha Dutta

Dona Ganguly

Malika Varma



Arindam Sil

Alexey Idamkin



Jerome Armstrong



Anisur Rahman

In February, Kolkata got its second Book Rack to mark the 75th session of **An Author's Afternoon**, which was set up at Vivanta Kolkata.

The second Book Rack was unveiled by Rajya Sabha MP and Padma Vibhushan recipient, Sonal Mansingh. Several eminent personalities from the city were present at the event.

Gracing the occasion were Russian Consul-General Alexey Idamkin, Rekhta Foundation Director Anisur Rahman, American author Jerome Armstrong, **Ehsaas** Women of Calcutta Dona Ganguly, Malika Varma and Esha Dutta, filmmaker Arindam Sil and Raju Barman of the Publishers and Booksellers Guild.

Area Director-East and General Manager of Taj Bengal, Manish Gupta, was also present. Sourav Ghosal, General Manager of Vivanta, welcomed the guests.

The Foundation believes that the books that have found a place on this rack will be read fondly by guests and patrons for many years to come.

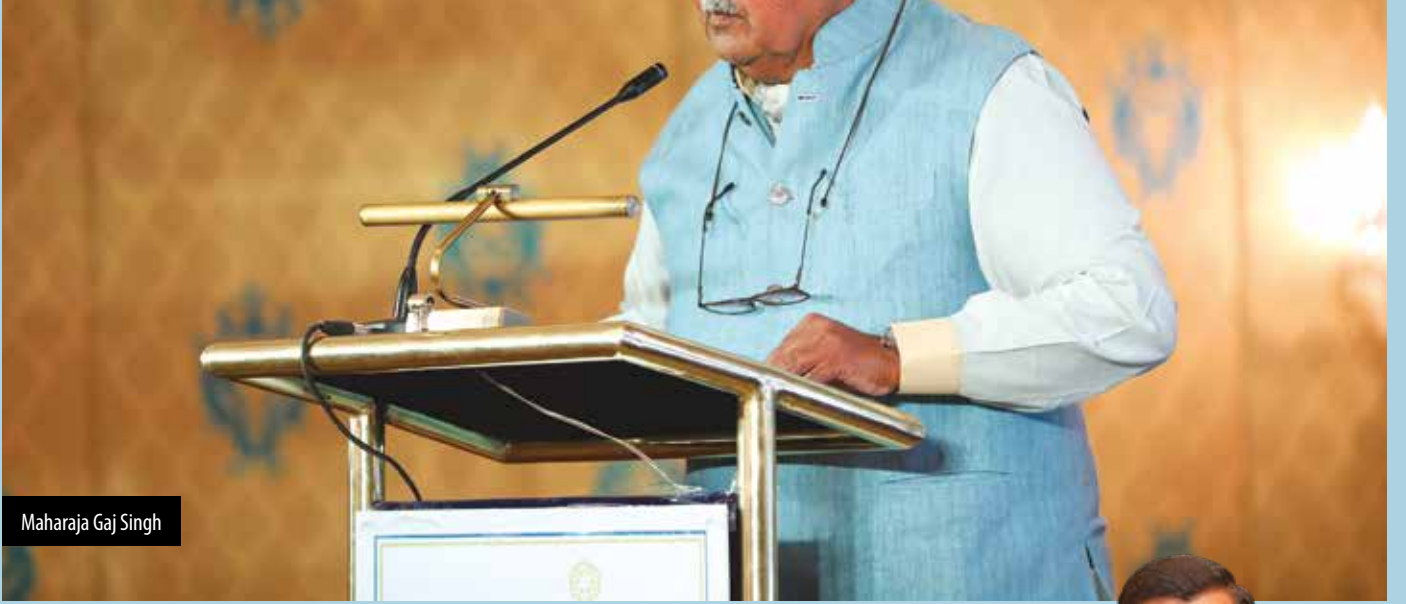


Sourav Ghosal

Manish Gupta

The event was presented by Shree Cement, in association with Taj Vivanta

Book Rack: Jodhpur



Maharaja Gaj Singh

Prabha Khaitan Foundation's Book Rack at Taj Hari Mahal, Jodhpur, was unveiled in the presence of Rajya Sabha MP and Padma Vibhushan recipient, Sonal Mansingh, Maharaja Gaj Singh of Jodhpur and Sundeep Bhutoria, managing trustee of the Foundation.

Apra Kuchhal, honorary convener of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** Rajasthan and Central Affairs, introduced to the audience the various activities of the Foundation and the idea behind the Book Rack. It was followed by a talk by Sonal Mansingh.

Mansingh presented *Panchkanya*, depicting five familiar strong and fearless women from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* — Kunti, Draupadi, Ahalya, Tara and Mandodari. Setting aside the popular interpretation, she redefined *kanya* as a woman who is not confined to one man, one who knows no ordinary birth or old age, and one who has been through the fire of life and emerged like burnished gold.

She also recited Sanskrit verses and explained them word by word to an enthralled audience. Her narration had many stories derived from the *Valmiki Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Throughout the session

Apra Kuchhal

Devendra Ratnawat



Sonal Mansingh



Colonel Dr Sonia Puri



Major General A.S. Chauhan



Sushma Sethia



Shelja Singh

she inspired the audience to develop a questioning attitude and delve into the roots of any subject.

The audience was moved by her convincing interpretation of and presentation on these women. Her oratorical skills were complemented by her deep understanding of the subject.

Maharaja Gaj Singh shared a few words of appreciation and also lauded the efforts of the Foundation in promoting local languages and culture. He urged people to save the Rajasthani language and its culture. The event saw the presence of many dignitaries and eminent personalities of the city.



Vikas and Preeta Balia



Pragati Gupta

Padmaja Sharma

Sushma Arora



Pramod Sharma



Preeti Mehta



Vandita Bengani

Subhashini Goyal

The event was presented by Shree Cement, in association with Taj Hari Mahal Jodhpur and Ehsaas Women of Jodhpur.



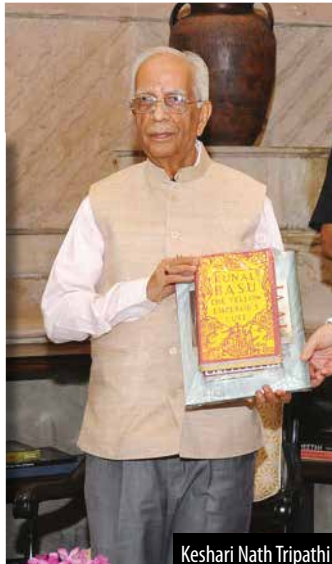
Maharaja Gaj Singh and Sundeep Bhutoria

Book Rack Launches #Throwback

Kolkata



K. Mohanchandran



Keshari Nath Tripathi

An Author's Afternoon reached a milestone in May 2015, when the then Governor of West Bengal, Keshari Nath Tripathi, inaugurated the first Book Rack at the Taj Bengal. It is now one of the attractions at the iconic Kolkata hotel.



Jaipur



Mita Kapur, Sunil Gupta and Lord Meghnad Desai

The Write Circle Book Rack in Jaipur was unveiled by Lord Meghnad Desai at the ITC Rajputana, in 2015.

Raipur



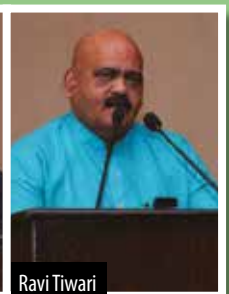
Bharti Bandhu, Anuj Sharma and Anup Ranjan Pandey



Gaurav Girija Shukla and Irshad Kamil



Harkaran Singh



Ravi Tiwari

Padma Shri recipients Bharti Bandhu, Anuj Sharma, Anup Ranjan Pandey, Mamta Chandrakar, litterateur Rajendra Mishra and lyricist Irshad Kamil, among others, launched the **Kalam** Book Rack at Hotel Hyatt in Raipur in March 2019.



Apra Kuchhal



Vedula Ramalakshmi

Jaipur



Aakriti Perwal

Prabha Khaitan Foundation's Kalam Book Rack in Jaipur was launched in November 2016 at the Jaipur Marriott Hotel by Dr Shashi Tharoor.



Rukshmani Kumari

Anju Jain



Saurabh Kakkar



Rohit Dhar, Apra Kuchhal, Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Shashi Tharoor, LP Pant and H M Bangur



Sudhir Kasliwal

Patna



Anvita Pradhan (file picture)



The **Kalam Book Rack** in Patna was unveiled at Hotel Chanakya in 2015 by the then Governor of West Bengal, Keshari Nath Tripathi.



Keshari Nath Tripathi, Usha Kiran Khan and Arun Maheshwari

About The Girls — and The Boys — Who Make a Difference

Writing a book always changes you. From the start till the end, from listening to people's stories, it's always different," said Aparna Jain, leadership coach and author, at **An Author's Afternoon** in Kolkata, in conversation with Simi Gupta.

Jain is passionate about championing women leaders in the workplace and empowering women to overcome challenges. During the session at Taj Bengal, she shared her experience of writing the book, *Boys Will Be Boys*, and spoke about sexual harassment at workplaces and the #MeToo movement.

“

Thank you, **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, for having me. I absolutely enjoyed this little interaction. Everyone was engaged and engaging. What a great initiative — **Aparna Jain**

Aparna Jain

”

“

I loved the session. She was so inspiring. It is very rare in today's society to be a cis-woman and take a stand on something so inclusive of everybody around us, representing the struggles that they have been through.



Ananya Vedsen

“

The conversation was very interesting with some fun moments thrown in. I enjoyed the session thoroughly.



Shaneel Parekh

“

The session was very informative and she touched upon some crucial topics in a very short span of time, like gender equality, transgender rights, women's issues and inspirational men. I loved the way the session was moderated. The classy ambience added to the charm of the session.



Pooja Agarwal

Jain's writing has often centred around the lives and struggles of women. Her books, *Own It: Leadership Lessons From Women Who Do* and *Like a Girl: Real Stories for Tough Kids*, are prime examples of this, as they tell the stories of women with incredible confidence, humanity, talent, intelligence, courage and perseverance.

The impact of the book *Like a Girl* was such that her publisher insisted that she write something for boys as well. Jain described how she then decided to abandon her desire to write a sequel to *Like A Girl* and went on to pen *Boys Will Be Boys: Inspiring Stories for Smart Kids*, a book that includes the story of 45 extraordinary men who dared to be different and make a difference to society as well. The oldest person to be included in her book is J.R.D. Tata who revolutionised the economic sector of the nation, while the youngest is sportsman Pankaj Advani, whose feats in billiards and snooker put India on the international cue sports map.

Soon after she began writing the book, the #MeToo movement began and she was quite worried about whether the men she had chosen to write about might have dark sides to them. She humorously disclosed that she had then thought of writing about dead men as 'dead men tell no tales'.

Jain feels that awards and acclaim are temporary and it is her deepest desire to be able to reach out and motivate people to live better. Her cool demeanour and her wit completely charmed the audience, including Shaneel Parekh and Pooja Agarwal, who had come from Ahmedabad.



Ayushi Kejriwal



Simi Gupta

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



Anshu Harsh

The Ebb and Flow of Poetry



Garima Tiwari



Sanjay Kankane



Anjali Sharma



Author and media entrepreneur Anshu Harsh was the guest at the fifth session of **Kalam Bilaspur**. In conversation with Sunita Mishra, Harsh spoke about her journey from homemaker to editor, publisher and poet. She is currently the editor and publisher of a weekly newspaper, *Voice of Jaipur*, and a monthly bilingual magazine, *Simply Jaipur*. She is also the author of a poetry collection.

Gaurav Girija Shukla of Abhikalp Foundation delivered the opening address and **Ehsaas** Woman of Bilaspur, Garima Tiwari, introduced Harsh and Mishra to the audience.

Harsh, who married at an early age and immersed herself entirely in her responsibilities as a homemaker for 10 years, gave writing a shot in 2008. She shared with the audience the ups and downs she had to go through and how she chose to address them headlong, without letting any of the negativity impede her journey towards achieving her dream slowly and steadily.

She explained that the title of her collection of poems, *Shabdon Ka Samundar*, mirrors her ethos. Harsh defined her poems as "spontaneous" and "free-flowing" — just like the sea — which cannot be contained by one particular stream of thought. And just like the sea, the outpouring of her words is ever-flowing, gushing, yet calm.

Harsh shared that she loved to play with colours and believes that art and literature complement each other. She said that she is hugely inspired by beautiful paintings that captivate her imagination and enhance her creativity.

The poet feels that her poems reflect life, too. A world that is home to sorrow, happiness, joy, struggle and so many other emotions, inspires her pen to etch a wide spectrum of thoughts.

At the end of the programme, Harsh and Mishra were felicitated with mementos by Dr. Anjali Sharma. The audience received signed copies of *Shabdon Ka Samundar*.

Kalam Bilaspur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Nayi Duniya, Abhikalp Foundation and Ehsaas Women of Bilaspur.



Sunita Mishra

An Evening of Reflective Poetry with Anshu Harsh



Jaishree Dewangan



Aishwarya Ravedkar

Shweta
PaddaPritha
ShuklaGaurav Girija
ShuklaSubhas
Bansod

Kalam Raipur celebrated its 44th session with media entrepreneur and poet Anshu Harsh in conversation with Jaishree Dewangan, programme executive of Doordarshan, Raipur. Harsh, who said that her poetry is a reflection of her name, which means "joy", shared her writing experiences and discussed her book, *Shabdon Ka Samundar*, with the literary enthusiasts present at the event.

The poet, who is the editor and publisher of the bilingual magazine, *Simply Jaipur*, and the *Voice of Jaipur newspaper*, shared that she had a habit of writing one poem each day and that her work is a reflection of who she is. "I am what I write," said Harsh, for whom her poems are like her daily diary. She believes that in case of poetry, the characters have to be completely immersed in the narrative, and named Gulzar and Amrita Pritam as poets who inspire her to write.

After an engaging question and answer session with the audience, Gaurav Girija Shukla, the founder of Abhikalp Foundation, delivered the vote of thanks. Neelima Bansod felicitated Harsh, while Prabir Chatterjee felicitated Dewangan with mementos.



Debjeni



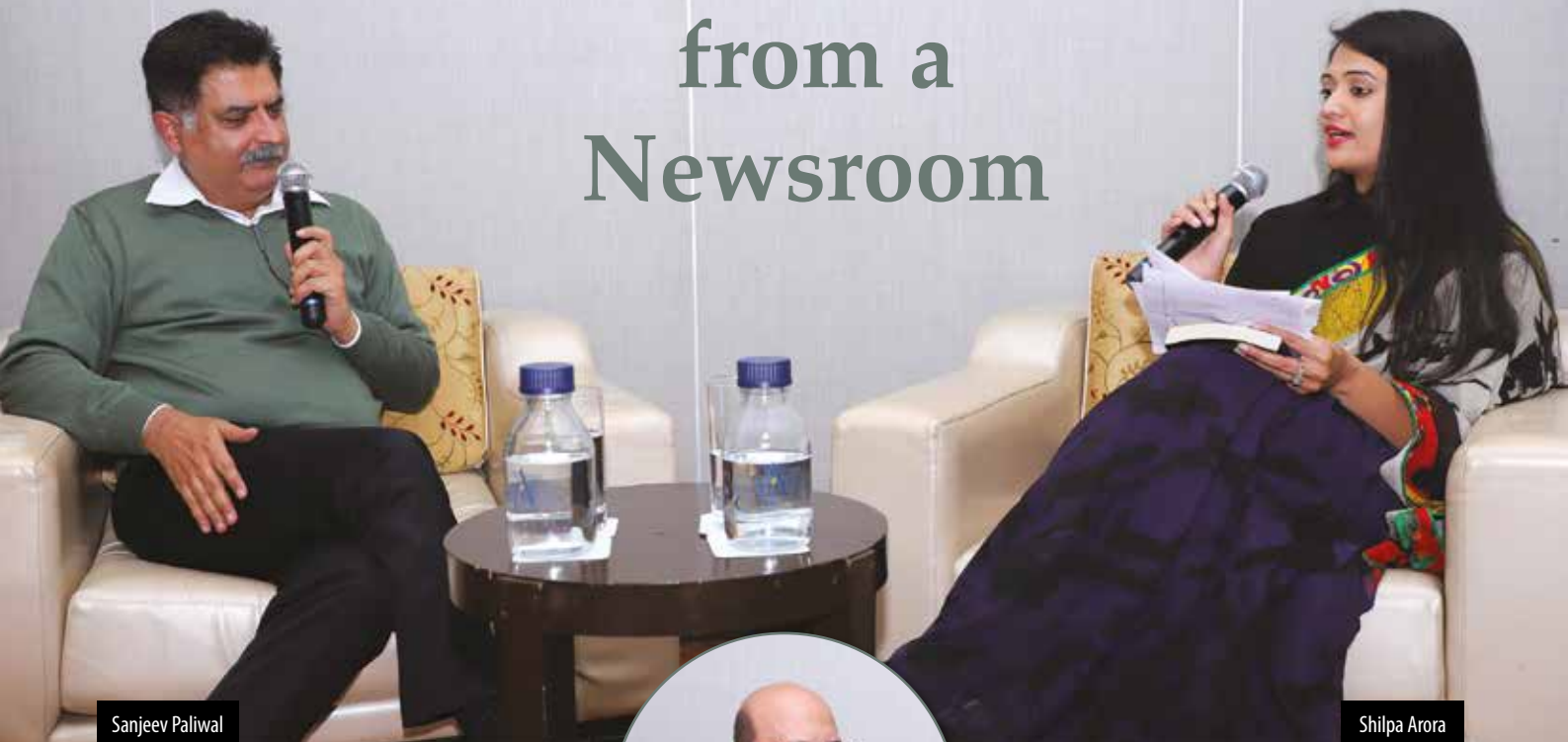
Prabeer Chatterjee



Neelima Bansod

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

Life Lessons from a Newsroom



Sanjeev Paliwal

Shilpa Arora

Kalam Faridabad hosted the Executive Editor of *Aaj Tak*, Sanjeev Paliwal, for tete-a-tete on his debut novel, *Naina*. The author was in conversation with Shilpa Arora, a lawyer by profession and café owner by passion.

Paliwal has been a media person for the past 30 years and currently oversees the international channels of nearly 60 countries. He began his career with IBN7 and has been a part of many popular talk shows.



Saket Mittal

the industry. The author shared his struggle to land a job and how he once spent three months walking the roads of Faridabad in search of a job, but had to return empty-handed.

Paliwal told the audience that his friend, Jai Prakash Pandey, was the driving force behind his foray into writing. Paliwal described how Pandey would ensure that Paliwal penned down at least 500 words for him to read every day. On being asked what *Naina* meant to him, the author said that it was a dream that was coming true.

He shared that he had begun writing the book long ago and that the words and thoughts had evolved over time. Paliwal said that the newsroom and the news anchor has always been a topic of controversy and curiosity. He disclosed that he had drawn on his own personal experiences while writing and had poured his emotions into the book.

His novel *Naina* uses the media room as a muse and the narrative revolves around a young anchorwoman and her journey in

Kalam Faridabad is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Jagran, Books EnBeyond and Ehsaas Women of Faridabad.



Shweta
Aggarwal

Inspiring Tales of Achieving Impossible Dreams



N.C. Lohani and R.Y. Maurya



Nishant Jain and Rajendra Singhal

Author Nishant Jain (IAS) inspired the audience in Meerut as he spoke about his journey and his book *Ruk Jaana Nahin* during the **Kalam** session at the Crystal Palace. Jain, who was in conversation with professor Navin Chandra Lohani, said that his book was about people who paved new ways, people who will motivate others to keep moving forward to achieve their dreams.

Jain himself is one such person who dreamed big and fought hard to achieve that dream. A Hindi-medium student, he was a topper among the Hindi-medium UPSC examinees and secured the 13th rank all over India. He spoke about how his book captures his journey of being a student in Meerut College, doing a part-time job, studying in Delhi University, working a full-time job

and studying for Civil Services Examinations. He also said that his book is about other people like him and for people who are grappling with similar situations.

He shared that *Ruk Jaana Nahin* also holds up the untold stories of 26 people who successfully cleared their Civil Service Exams, despite odds. One of the stories he shared with the audience was about Ilma Afroz, the daughter of a farmer from Moradabad and the challenges she faced. She lost her father at a young age and despite coming from an environment that did not encourage education she trained to become an IAS officer. He said that stories like Ilma will inspire many young people.

During the session, students in the audience asked him how he managed to take time out from his studies for part-time jobs. Jain responded that time management was the key to success and that if one did that, they would stand out in the crowd. He urged students to follow their passion, saying that if their interest lay in writing, they should write rather than wasting time on something else.

One mantra that he told the audience to always remember — the ones who stay happy keep others happy too.

Kalam Meerut is presented in association with Dainik Jagran, Crystal Palace and Ehsaas Women of Meerut

Garima Mithal and
Anshu Harsh

MUSIC IS MUSIC, IT HAS NO RELIGION: PANDIT JASRAJ



Pandit Jasraj

Sur, saaz and sahitya came together at the **Kalam** event in Jaipur with Pandit Jasraj and his biographer Sunita Budhiraja in conversation at Four Points by Sheraton.

During the event, Budhiraja shared with the audience what she had learned about the life, musical journey and the vast experience of Pandit Jasraj while writing the book *Rasraj: Pandit Jasraj*. Pandit Jasraj reminisced about Begum Akhtar and Lata Mangeshkar and recalled his performance in Jaipur, which he stated, was one of his most memorable performances. "Music is music, it has no religion," said Pandit Jasraj while sharing his experience of performing in Pakistan, where all differences disappeared amidst music and lyrics.

Budhiraja, a senior communications professional and the author of 11 books, also brought into the conversation stories about Pandit Jasraj's childhood, his parents and his friendships, giving the audience a rare glimpse into the maestro's life outside that of his music. Pandit Jasraj shared many anecdotes from his life, leaving the audience laughing at times and thoughtful at others.



Arun Maheshwari



L.P. Pant



Sunita Budhiraja

Kalam Jaipur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Bhaskar and We Care



Apra Kuchhal

The Tharoor Imperative

Shashi Tharoor

Sumit Das Gupta

Delighted to be back in one of his favourite cities, author-MP Dr Shashi Tharoor launched his new book, *The New World Disorder and Indian Imperative*, co-written with Samir Saran, at the **Kitaab** Kolkata event at The Bengal Club.

In conversation with Sumit Das Gupta, former deputy editor of *The Telegraph* and founder-director of Allcap Communications, Tharoor spoke about the nostalgia that ties him to Kolkata and remembered the happy, educational high school years that he spent here in the '60s. Despite all its political complications, he terms Kolkata to be intellectually stimulating and also as a city full of heart. When asked about whether he defines himself as spelled out in his Twitter bio — "Author of 19 books. Former Minister of State, Govt. of India. Former Under-Secretary-General, United Nations" — Tharoor replied that he was all of them, and "hopefully much more".

He explained that as a human being he reacts to whatever he sees around him, some of which he manifests in his books, hoping to make a difference.

"A fun thing to do" is how he termed his "one-off" attempt at stand-up comedy and said he feels no regret having done it. "I thought I was being courageous but if I tried to do it too often I might tip it over to foolhardy," Tharoor added with his trademark wit.

Pronab Dasgupta

In the context of his book, Tharoor spoke said he was often accused of being an optimist. He also touched upon about lack of conviction and passionate intensity, strongmen politicians and populist rule that seems to be the trend across the world, the intransigence of the United Nations and the need for change in the Congress Party.

The conversation then veered towards the impact and influence of social media on attitude and agenda and how it has also degraded political discourse. As usual, Tharoor left the audience at The Bengal Club enthralled and entertained.



Shukla Sil and Arindam Sil

Ehsaas Woman of Ranchi, Seema Singh, felicitated Tharoor. Gynaecologist and obstetrician Dr Pronab Dasgupta delivered both the opening address and the vote of thanks.

*Kitaab Kolkata is presented by
Shree Cement Ltd*

Seema Singh,
Ehsaas Woman of Ranchi

Make Hindi a Part of Your Life: Geetanjali Shree



Geetanjali Shree

Only if we make Hindi a part of our lives will we be able to understand it and save it, said writer Geetanjali Shree during the **Kalam** Nagpur session at the Radisson Blu Hotel, where she was in conversation with **Ehsaas** Woman of Nagpur Monica Bhagwagar.

A vocal champion of Hindi literature, Shree said that the world is moving ahead at top speed but language and literature need a sense of calm, and that people have become careless and reckless when it comes to language. She warned the

audience that we can't afford to do that.

She urged them to make Hindi a part of their lives.

She told the audience that we should be ashamed of ourselves for running only after English and forgetting our own language. We need to be abreast of the new literature being written in Hindi and encourage both Hindi novels and writers.

Sanket Aathewal, Front Office Manager, Radisson Blu Hotel, felicitated Shree with a memento.



Monica Bhagwagar



Priyanka Kothari



Jyoti Kapoor



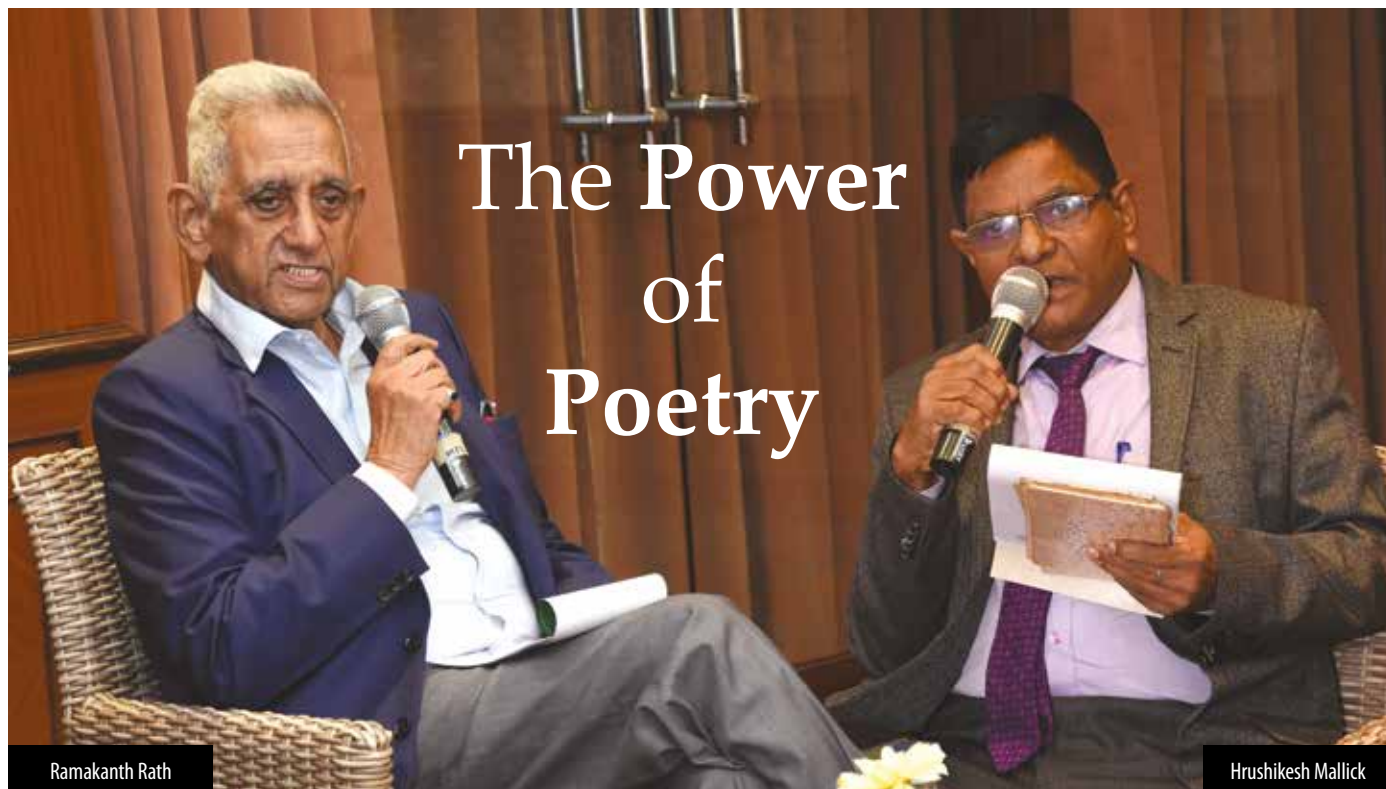
Parveen Tuli



Anjali Thakur

Kalam Nagpur is in association with Lokmat, Radisson Blu Hotel Nagpur and Ehsaas Women of Nagpur

The Power of Poetry



Ramakanth Rath

Hrushikesh Mallick

The latest edition of **Aakhar** Bhubaneswar saw renowned Odia poet Ramakanth Rath, in conversation with poet Hrushikesh Mallick at the Mayfair Hotels and Resorts. Odia literature connoisseurs in the audience were in for a treat as they got a glimpse into the life and works of the poet.

Inspired by poets like T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, Rath is recognised as one of the modern poets in Odia literature and is known to experiment with the style and form of poetry. "One can't become a poet just by trying. Poetry is a spontaneous flow of feelings. The words come so easily to a poet," said Rath.

Ehsaas Woman of Bhubaneswar Dr Vedula Ramalakshmi delivered the welcome address. "Aakhar is a celebration of Indian literature. It is an honour to host Ramakanth Rath and listen to such a stalwart," she said.

Rath's poems *Shree Radha*, *Sri Palatak* and others formed the centre of the discussion between the two poets.



Jitendra Biswal



Pratibha Satpathy

Ehsaas Woman of Bhubaneswar Nidhi Garg delivered the vote of thanks. Rath was felicitated by poet Pratibha Satpathy, while Mallick was presented with a memento by actor Jitendra Biswal.



Nidhi Garg and Vedula Ramalakshmi

Aakhar Bhubaneswar is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Mayfair Hotels & Resorts and Ehsaas Women of Bhubaneswar

Writing is a Way to Understand the World: Amanthi Harris



Archana Dalmia



Amanthi Harris

Writing is a way to understand ourselves and to understand society, said Amanthi Harris, the author of *Beautiful Places*, during **The Write Circle** session in Delhi, where she was in conversation with **Ehsaas** Woman of Delhi, Archana Dalmia.

According to Harris, whose website bio describes her as: "I've been a terrible trainee solicitor, a very bored editor of law books and a blissfully contented bookseller, writing and making art along the way", writers turn to books to alleviate their loneliness. She said she identifies herself more as a reader than a writer.

Harris was born in Sri Lanka and grew up in London. She studied Fine Art at Central St. Martins and has degrees in Law and Chemistry from Bristol University. Her novella, *Lantern Evening*, won the Gatehouse Press New Fictions Prize 2016 and was published by Gatehouse Press in 2017. Her short stories have been published by the British independent publishing firm, Serpent's Tail, and broadcast on BBC Radio 4 for the literary programme, Afternoon Readings.

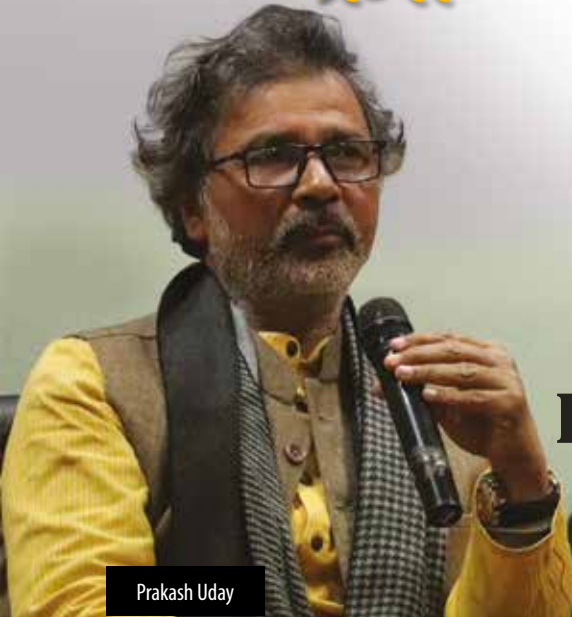
Beautiful Places is a captivating novel about leaving and losing home and making a family.



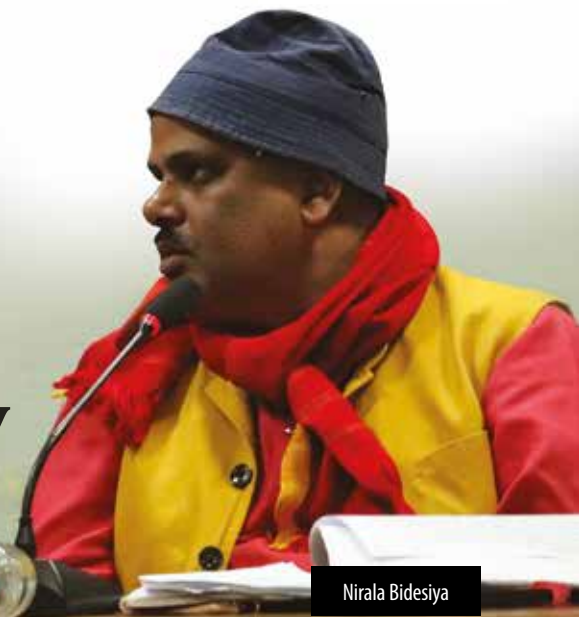
Neelima Dalmia Adhar

The Write Circle Delhi, is presented in association with Dainik Jagran, Dinesh Nandini Ramkrishna Dalmia Foundation and Ehsaas Women of Delhi.

There is No Lesser or Greater Language: Prakash Uday



Prakash Uday



Nirala Bidesiya



Aradhana Pradhan

No language in the world is weaker than any other language, as long as there is will power," said Hindi and Bhojpuri litterateur Prakash Uday, who was in conversation with journalist Nirala Bidesiya at the **Aakhar** Patna session held at the Rajdhani Hotel. The topic of

his students to use their mother tongue and held their interest in learning and understanding it.

He emphasised the fact that the world had no one language that was more important or above any



discussion was the perception of the Bhojpuri language and literature today.

Uday spoke about how in today's world people have lost the habit of purchasing books and reading them. He rued how some authors today even have to publish their own books while bearing all costs relating to sales or marketing of the book themselves.

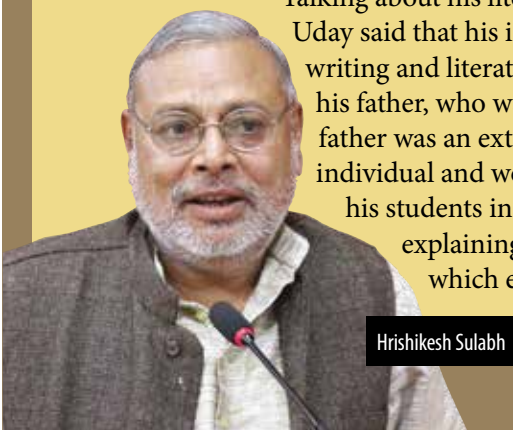
Talking about his literary journey, Uday said that his inspiration for writing and literature came from his father, who was a teacher. His father was an extremely learned individual and would teach his students in Hindi while explaining in Bhojpuri, which encouraged

other language in the world. He spoke about how much of serious literature being written in Bhojpuri was ignored because no one was aware of it. He rued the fact that many resorted to vulgarity to make the language popular and to take it to a wider audience.

He spoke at length about the richness and variety of literature in Bhojpuri. In order to highlight this, he went on to read a few lines of a poem in Bhojpuri, which helped shed light on the depth of the language.

Aradhana Pradhan, honorary convener of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** Activities, Bihar Affairs, delivered the vote of thanks at the end of the engaging session.

Aakhar Patna is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Masi Inc.



Hrishikesh Sulabh

Bringing a 'Paaltu Bohemian' to a New Generation



Prabhat Ranjan



Reshmi Sharma

Author Prabhat Ranjan first met writer, journalist and screenwriter Manohar Shyam Joshi under the pretext of giving him Bruno Schulz's *The Street of Crocodiles* and that started a journey that brought Ranjan close to Joshi. At the **Kalam Ranchi** session, Ranjan, in conversation with Reshmi Sharma, spoke about his book, *Paaltu Bohemian*, which is a biography of Joshi. The event was hosted by **Ehsaas Women of Ranchi**, Poonam Anand and Seema Singh.

Joshi, who was one of the foremost screenwriters in the 1980's with television serials like *Hum Log* and *Buniyad* to his credit, was the subject of Ranjan's PhD thesis and he studied Joshi's life in detail.

Ranjan spoke about Joshi's rigid schedule and how he followed it like religion. He would write every day from 10am to 5pm, without taking a break. If anyone were to come to him at that time, there was a high possibility of doors being slammed, since he hated being disturbed while he worked. Ranjan shared that Joshi spent a lot of time writing and worked on a number of projects, but he never actually wrote using pen and paper, he simply thought out loud or recited his thoughts and his typist would type them out for him.

Ranjan said that *Paaltu Bohemian*, which is what Joshi called himself since he was a rebel but took care of his family at the same time, was written in order to take the works of Joshi and the lifestyle that he adopted, to the younger generation, and he hoped that the biography would be a source of inspiration for them.

Seema Singh delivered the vote of thanks. Author Ashok Priyadarshi felicitated Ranjan.



Poonam Anand



Seema Singh



Kalam Ranchi is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Jagran and Ehsaas Women of Ranchi

A World Built on Friendship is the Need of the Hour



Anamika



Sunita Gupta and Meher Jha



Alok Dhanwa

In order for society to be one, it must help one another with their problems," said poet and author Anamika at the **Kalam** session in Patna in conversation with Sunita Gupta, a professor of Hindi at L.N. College in Bhagalpur.

Anamika, who is a professor of English in Delhi University, started the discussion talking about equality in society and how no distinction should be made on the basis of caste, creed, race or religion. Equality, according to her, is facilitated by friendliness and tolerance. If an individual is unfriendly or hurtful towards another, it means that the individual has a problem and society at large should embrace the individual in order to help them grow.

She also spoke about the present place of women in society and

how she believes that the changes that she is seeing in the way women are approaching education and life in general today will eventually lead to the evolution of society.

Talking about religion, Anamika said society using religion as a basis for carrying out actions that have negative consequences deeply saddens her. "If you take the LCM of all religions, the answer will amount to love," said the poet. Love, according to her, is the fulcrum of every religion and it's what binds every religion together. Society, she believes, should emphasise on love more than anything else as love will eventually bring about the necessary change in society.

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



Anvita Pradhan

Falling, Fighting & Flying High



Lalit Kumar



Riddhima Doshi



Aruna Doshi



Manisha Jain

Lalit Kumar, author, motivational speaker, and Founder of Gadyakosh, KavitaKosh, Techwelkin and We Capable, was in conversation with Ehsaas Woman of Udaipur, Riddhima Doshi, at Kalam Udaipur. Kumar spoke about his journey and expressed his desire to illuminate more lives with the positivity of his words and experiences that he describes in his book, *Vitamin Zindagi*.

The book is Kumar's memoir and follows the inspirational journey of a polio survivor, the hurdles he faces and his success story. Explaining why he chose the title, *Vitamin Zindagi*, Kumar expressed his hope that the book would be a capsule of positivity for people who are brought down because of their disabilities and will serve as a pill for a healthy, positive mind with the right elements of belief, faith, courage and hope.

Along with physical and mental disability, Kumar drew attention to social disability as a major issue that needs to be addressed. He said we need to acknowledge the fact that our society has drawbacks that prevent it from being referred to as an ideal society. He said that being a woman is a disability in itself in our society, where they are deprived of even their basic constitutional rights. Kumar stressed that we should aim at overcoming our handicaps and weaknesses and utilise our strengths. This is possible only if the environment around us is amicable.

Vitamin Zindagi is divided into three parts – *Girna*, *Sambhalna* and *Udaan*. *Girna* is the part where he shares his earliest childhood memories until he develops polio. *Sambhalna* is where he describes his struggle with the disability. *Udaan* is the story of his flight to achieve his dreams.

He read out anecdotes from his book, divulging the cruelty of his fellow classmates and the insensitivity of his school administrations, and how the support of his family inspired him to aspire and achieve high.

The author shared that he is currently facing the challenges of Post-Polio Syndrome which will take his health-graph downwards, but his spirit remains undaunted, and he continues his crusade to change the mindset of society towards disability and those living with disabilities.

Kalam Udaipur is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Radisson Blu Udaipur and Ehsaas Women of Udaipur.

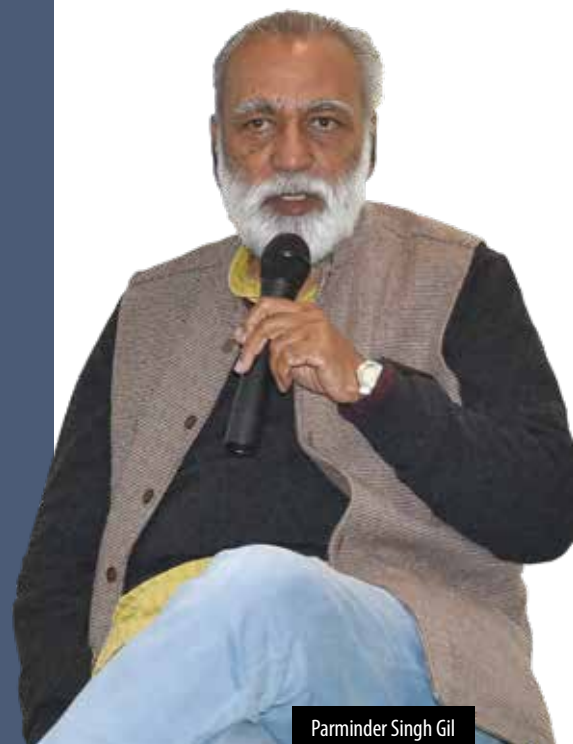


Swati Agarwal



Desraj Kali

Writers and their Role in Punjabi Literature



Parminder Singh Gil

One of the most influential writers of Punjab, Des Raj Kali, was the guest at the second **Aakhar** session in Amritsar. In conversation with Parminder Singh Gill, former head of department of English, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, the author spoke about his early influences, his work on Dalit literature and the importance of promoting the reading and writing of the Punjabi language.

The poetry of Lal Singh Dil and Sant Gulabdas shaped the mind of the young author in childhood, and the Dalit consciousness has thus been a major part of Kali's literature. He said that his work has always aimed to bring into focus the Dalit intellectual identity, including Sufi and Nath traditions.

A historian and documentarian of Dalit literature, Kali's short story collections like *Kaath Kali*, *Fakiri* and *Yahan Chai Achhi Nahi Banti* delve into the Dalit consciousness and struggle. His novels like *Parmeshwari*, *Antaheen* and *Nar Natak* deal with the common man's struggle with the after-effects of terrorism and economic problems. According to him, deconstructing literature was important but it is even more necessary for literature to be born out of personal experiences.

Kali also believes that it is the responsibility of writers to bridge the gap between

the youth and the rich Punjabi literature and culture. He urged people to remember that cultures keep evolving and it is important to move with the times and still remain connected to one's roots.

Among the audience were both lovers and connoisseurs of Punjabi literature who made the session even more lively with their interesting questions for the author.

A minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect in memory of well-known Punjabi writer Dalip Kaur Tiwana, who died in January.

Aakhar Amritsar is presented in association with Majha House

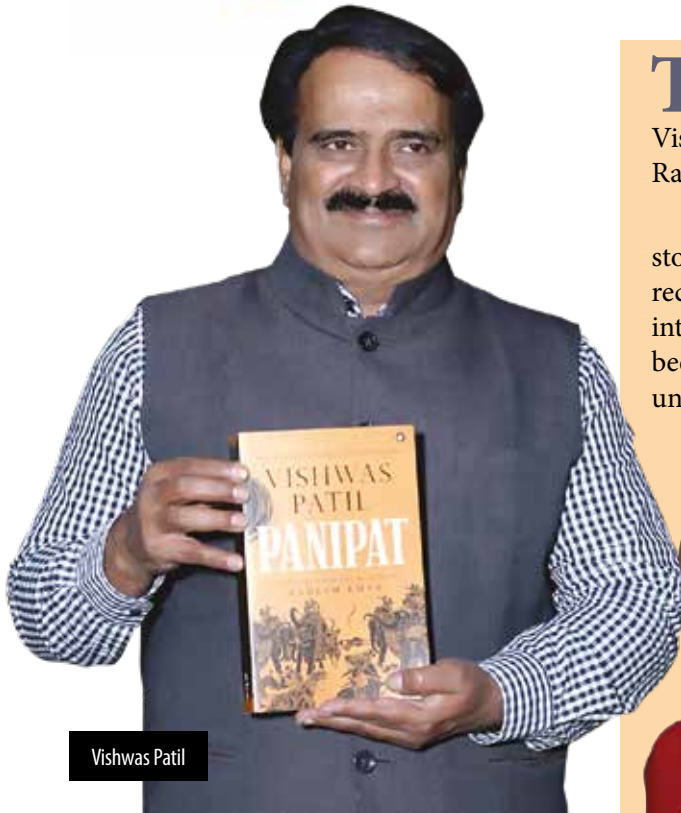


Arvinder Chamak



Jasmit Nayyar





Vishwas Patil

Lessons from Panipat, with Vishwas Patil

The Write Circle Bengaluru relived moments from the pages of history through the words of Marathi author and historian Vishwas Patil. The author's translator for many years, Keerti Ramachandra, steered the conversation for the session.

The author's ability to weave gargantuan research into effortless storytelling truly shines through in his book, *Panipat*, which has received 38 awards since its publication and has been translated into several languages. The events that transpired at Panipat have been told and retold many times over the years. However, what Patil unveils in his book is the large-scale loss of life, the grief, and the other ramifications of this momentous war. He had the audience in splits when he shared the story of how he had got into trouble for being cheeky over not knowing the answer to a question on



Keerti Ramachandra



Jahnavi Barua



Jija Harisingh

Panipat. The author called this his first lesson on Panipat.

Another incident that he said was close to his heart was his

visit to Japan, where Netaji

Subhas Chandra Bose's companions welcomed him by singing *Sare Jahan Se Achcha*. The moment had completely overwhelmed him. His book *Mahanayak* on Netaji was also very well-received and he explained how Bose's daughter had sent him a letter, where she said that the book brought to light the human side of the great leader that he was.

"Failure is not important. It is not a curse," emphasised the author. He compared the devastation of the Battle of Panipat to the destruction caused during the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings. Patil described the Battle of Panipat as the battle of youngsters and lamented the young lives that were sacrificed in this battle for power. The author's knowledge and representation of the battle and its aftermath is unique and his recounting of it lent a certain newness to the historical event.

Shruti Mittal delivered the vote of thanks at the end of the event. The author was felicitated by Jija Harisingh while the moderator was felicitated by Poonam Anand.



Babita Kathotia, Shruti Mittal and Surekha Prahlad



The Write Circle Bengaluru is presented in association with Taj West End Bengaluru and Ehsaas Women of Bengaluru

The Truth Behind Writing About Truth



Hrishikesh Sulabh



Nagendra Pratap

From women's status in today's society to the reach and influence of politics — all this and much more were discussed at the Kalam session in Lucknow's Hotel Hyatt Regency, where author Hrishikesh Sulabh was in conversation with journalist Nagendra Pratap about his book, *Agnileek*.

Fearlessness, according to Sulabh, is the first prerequisite to writing, and telling the truth a writer's primary responsibility. And only when a writer is able to tell the truth, whether it is based on reality or fiction, will his writing be successful. Speaking about his novel, *Agnileek*, he said that discipline is of utmost

importance for any writer. Sulabh also pointed out that presenting the truth in an artistic way is where the talent of a writer comes to the fore.

He passionately spoke about rural literature, which is often neglected by the mainstream,

Ashish Kumar



Shubhra Mittal

adding that it appeared to him sometimes that being from a village often felt like not being human at all.

Speaking about the women in his book, he said that it is the women who are bringing about changes. These women may not be educated but they have learnt important lessons from life and have lived life on their terms. The change, Sulabh said, maybe slow but it's deep.

He also spoke a lot about how politics influences our daily lives, whether we acknowledge it or not. He said it's easy to write about politics since it is present in every sphere, either openly or layered in shadows.

He defined 'love' as a reflection of freedom and told the audience that if you love someone you should never tie them to you but set them free.

"We have many book lovers in our city. These sessions and the authors give us a new perspectives and brings together literature lovers

and intellectuals," said Ashish Kumar, GM of Hyatt Regency Lucknow.

Kalam Lucknow is presented in association with Dainik Jagran, Hyatt Regency Lucknow, Lucknow Expressions and Ehsaas Women of Lucknow



Dimple Trivedi

Kanak Rekha Chauhan

World Yoga's Calcutta Connect

“

"How wonderful an event! I really enjoyed the discussion and the questions afterwards. Calcutta is such a great city and **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** is an exemplary representation of its rich culture."

— **Jerome Armstrong**

”

Yoga has evolved over time. It's not simply a strenuous and rigorous physical practice, it has transformed into a modern practice, with spiritual components over time," said political strategist, entrepreneur and author, Jerome Armstrong, at **An Author's Afternoon** in Kolkata. In conversation with yoga coach Varuna Shunglu, Armstrong spoke about his book *Calcutta Yoga* and the journey he undertook to write it.

His book weaves the story of how Buddha Bose, who was born to stage magicians and married into the family of Bishnu Ghosh and Yogananda, took yoga from Kolkata to the rest of the world. Armstrong divulged how he had accidentally come across the manuscript of the yoga legend, Buddha Bose, in San Francisco and was so intrigued that he decided to delve into the vast yoga legacy of India. The art dealer he acquired the manuscript from was happy to hand over the document for publishing but had advised Armstrong to visit Kolkata to research the topic further.

Armstrong explained the difference between the yoga that Bikram Choudhury was teaching in the West, which was more class-oriented and basic, and what Buddha Bose had conceived of, which was deeper, therapeutic and customised to individual needs. In fact, the orientation of Bose's style of yoga led him to visit Bishnu Ghosh's Yoga College in North Calcutta to acquire more information. "I didn't know how to speak Bengali, and thus faced cultural hurdles. I took help from research assistants during my initial days in Calcutta," said Armstrong.

During the tenure of his research Armstrong recalled that he was fondly referred to as the '*ghorer chhele*' (a son of the house). His journey was like a treasure hunt where



Bishwanath Ghosh



The session was very illuminating and engaging. It is always great listening to Jerome. The ambience was enhanced by the efficiency with which the session was conducted and the presence of a close, like-minded audience.



Suvina Shunglu



I loved the ambience and the manner in which the session was conducted. It was indeed a lovely experience to share my family heritage with such an awesome audience.



Chandrashekhar Bose



Swati Gautam



I have been a yoga practitioner for 20 years and Jerome Armstrong's words made us see it from a different dimension altogether. A treasure which had been lost has been rediscovered by the author. I am so happy that such a book has been published. The session was absolutely beautiful. The fact that the young people were asking so many questions was really encouraging.



Manish Gupta



Gouri Basu



Varuna Shunglu

one revelation led to another and he kept on acquiring priceless information.

Armstrong discussed how yoga has evolved over the years, from being an individual practice for well-being to merely a fitness fad for many. The audience was enthralled by the stories Armstrong shared about Bose's childhood, his association with Ghosh and how the magician's son became one of the pioneers of the ancient practice of yoga.

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

The Romance of Writing

The audience at **The Write Circle** Ahmedabad session was in for a fun and intriguing evening as author Sundari Venkatraman shared some very interesting anecdotes about her writing journey as she spoke to Shaneel Parekh at the Mangalbag Gallery of the House of MG.

While talking about her book, *The Runaway Bridegroom*, Venkatraman spoke about her writing journey that began at 40 and the challenges and roadblocks she faced — from rejection to dismissal of her work to writer's block — and how she still persevered to author over 40 books and gain a fan base across the UK, Canada and Australia. Venkatraman engaged the audience with her honest and witty remarks.

Her undying belief in romance and magic is not just apparent in her books but also in the way she talked about them during the session.

When the floor was opened to the audience for questions, Venkatraman answered each of them with candour.

Ehsaas woman of Ahmedabad, Priyanshi Patel, delivered the welcome address. Kusum Chopra presented the author with a memento.

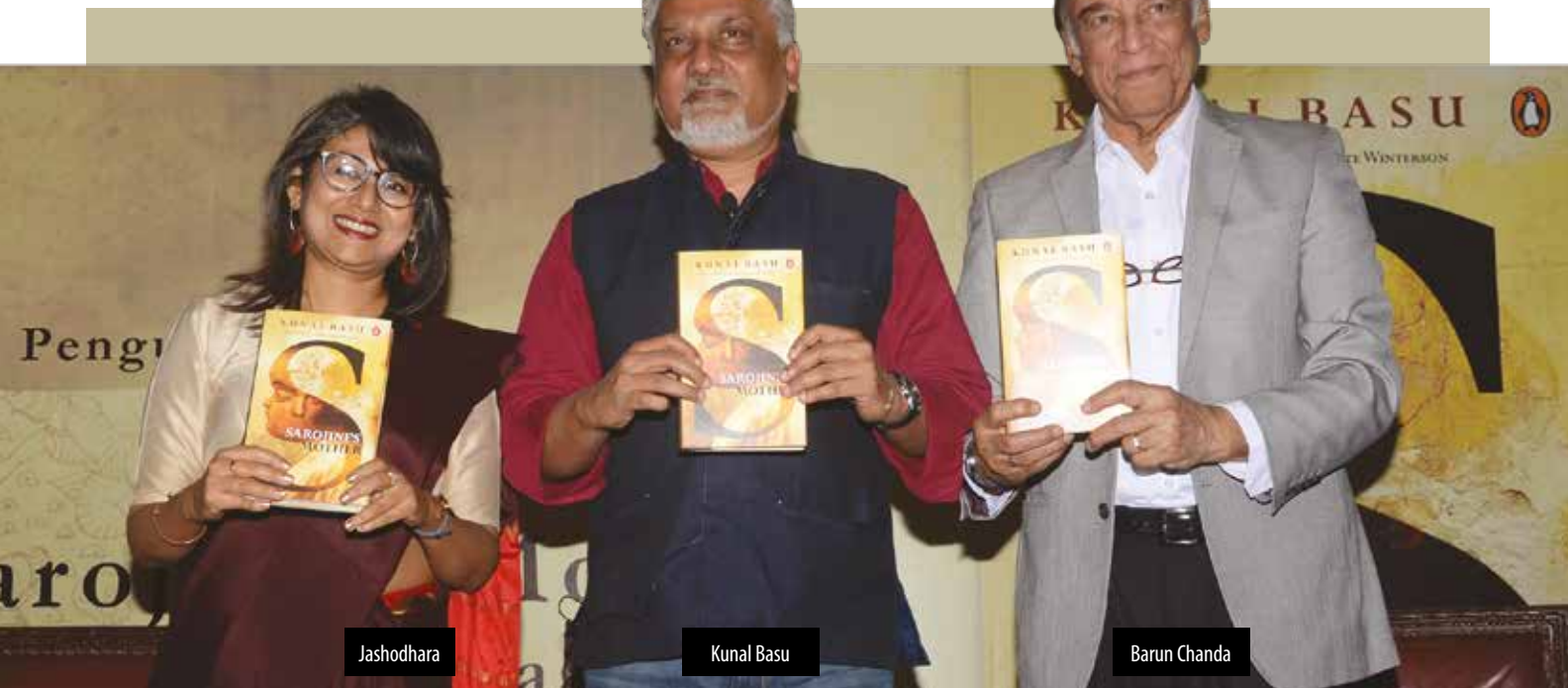


Shaneel Parekh and Payal Jain



Kusum Chopra

The Write Circle Ahmedabad is presented in association with The House of MG—Mangalbag, Karma Foundation and Ehsaas Women of Ahmedabad



Jasodhara

Kunal Basu

Barun Chanda

An Evening of Mystery and Motherhood with Kunal Basu

The emotional quest of a woman trying to trace her birth mother, or a suspense thriller that unfolds at a heady pace — which one these lines aptly describes Kunal Basu's latest novel, *Sarojini's Mother*?

Booklovers and members of The Calcutta Club were presented with this mystery at **Kitaab** Kolkata, where the writer unveiled the book, and joined in a lively conversation with veteran actor Barun Chanda and Young Adult novelist Jasodhara.

Kunal Basu, who has previously penned titles like *The Japanese Wife*, *The Miniaturist* and *Kalkatta*, among others, said he was thrilled to see the myth that reading was on the decline proved wrong by the number of people who had stepped out of their Netflix zones to be present at the launch. He introduced his protagonist, Sarojini Campbell aka Saz, with a lot of tenderness. Adopted as a child and taken to England, her wish to connect with her biological mother brings her to Kolkata, where she meets a Elvis Presley lookalike, Chiru Sen, but known to everyone simply as "Elvis". Basu described his Elvis as "a person with his body in Kolkata but soul in Memphis."

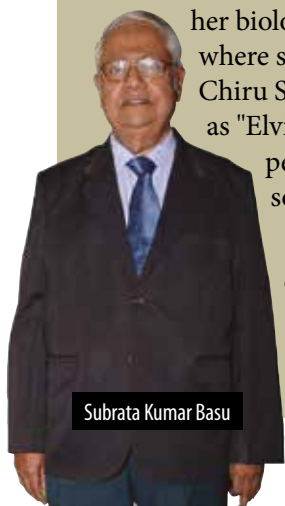
Together with Elvis, Saz embarks on a search for her mother, roaming the nooks and corners of Kolkata,

which Kunal has revisited many times in his writings, and finds not one but two women who insist she is her daughter.

The two "mothers", Urvashi and Jamuna, couldn't have been more different! As Basu put it, the two women represent two absolute ends of the social spectrum. While Jamuna is a domestic help, Urvashi belongs to the upper echelons of society, she could be just like any of the women at Calcutta Club.

But why are both women hell-bent on proving their blood ties to Saz? And why isn't Saz getting a DNA test to solve this conundrum once and for all? Basu said he did a lot of research into DNA testing, and realised its fallibility. Who is to say the results cannot be manipulated? Especially when there is some unseen, unholy scheme that is afoot to claim Saz, and possibly her money.

The mystery was laid out deliciously but not disclosed, and the audience made a beeline to pick up a copy of *Sarojini's Mother*.



Subrata Kumar Basu



Alaknanda Roy



Kitaab Kolkata was presented in association with Penguin India and Calcutta Club.



From Page to Screen — The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

Arpit Vageria, Manoj Rajan Tripathi, Bhagwandas Morwal and Anant Vijay

Books and movies are like apples and oranges. They both are fruit, but taste completely different —
Stephen King.

Books, films and book adaptations have always been a point of debate between the literature lover and the movie buff. This perennial debate led to an invigorating discussion at Arth – A Culture Fest in Delhi, where a panel of experts discussed the topic, *Sahitya Se Cinema Tak: Literary Influence on Celluloid*. The panel consisted of storyteller Bhagwandas Morwal, journalist and dialogue writer Manoj Rajan Tripathi, and columnist and author Anant Vijay. The **Kalam Special** session was moderated by scriptwriter and author Arpit Vageria.

Morwal said that cinema and literature were two separate entities, and added that cinema has not been very kind towards wordsmiths. Many films have been based on the works of legendary writers, but their real stories have been twisted. He urged filmmakers to retain the authenticity of a story while recreating it on celluloid.

Vijay, on the other hand, asserted that though many present-day authors penned their words with scenes in mind, the success of a book cannot be judged by whether it had been adapted into a movie or web series. He felt that the authenticity of a storyline, when recreated many times over the ages, gets diluted. Vijay added that cinema's primary purpose is to entertain, and that it does not need the mental preparation or environment that one needs for the act of reading.

Tripathi said that literature would never bow to cinema. Though readers may have dwindled, literature is cherished and nurtured by a discerning readership, while cinema is for all and sundry.

The panelists went on to explain how cinematic adaptations have distorted authentic words or incidents for the purpose of commercial gain. Vijay pointed out how dialects, slang and explicit sexual imagery have adulterated cinema. Speaking about the lost culture of storytelling, he said that if children were allowed to be a part of their grandparents' lives, the art would revive itself.

Snapshots from Arth - A Culture Fest where Prabha Khaitan Foundation was the Knowledge Partner





A discussion on different Indian faiths with David Frawley, Dushyanth Shridhar, Hema Hari and Hindol Sengupta, in conversation with D.K. Hari



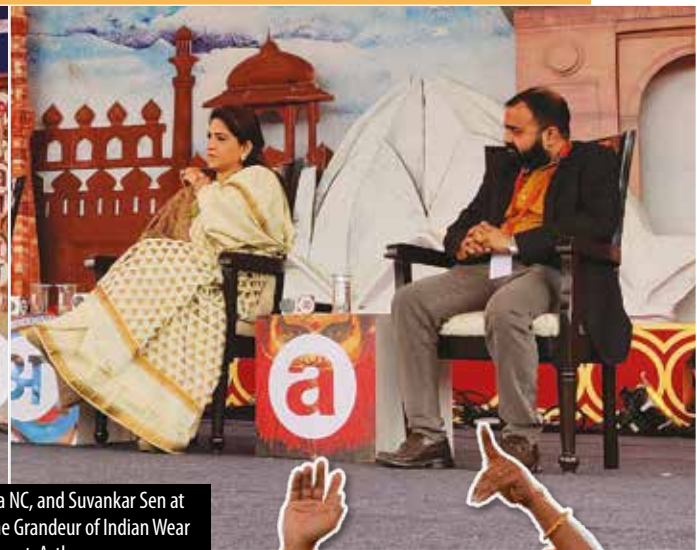
Dr Palash Sen of Euphoria in performance



Subha Mudgal wows the audience



Shefali Vaidya, Shaina NC, and Suvankar Sen at the Warp and Weft: The Grandeur of Indian Wear session at Arth



Lord Meghnad Desai, Vikram Sampath, Makarand Paranjape and Anuj Dhar, in conversation with Shubhrastha at Arth



Governor of Kerala, Arif Mohammed Khan at Arth



Manipuri dance performance by Sinam Basu Singh

Crossing Borders

The **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** is taking its bouquet of literary events across the world. After initiating events in various cities in the UK, the Foundation is now all set to host events in New York in the USA, Turin in Italy and Oslo in Norway. We bring you glimpses of behind-the-scenes work that has been going on for the last few years from these three cities and the people who are making it all possible.

New York

Sundeep Bhutoria met representatives from different universities, NGOs and the Consulate General of India to discuss and initiate Foundation activities in New York.



Sundeep Bhutoria with poet Anoop Bhargava, Hindi scholar and professor Gabriela Nik Ilieva, Hindi novelist (Late) Dr. Susham Bedi (City College of New York), Dr. Seema Khurana (Yale University) and Rajni Bhargava (New York University) at a get-together in New York in 2017



Sundeep Bhutoria with Riva Ganguly Das in 2017, the then Consul-General of India in New York



Sundeep Bhutoria with Syed Akbaruddin, permanent representative of India in the United Nations, in 2018



Sundeep Bhutoria with Yakub Mathew, advisory board member of the Indo-American Arts Council in New York City and managing director of Citibank - Global India Segment Head, in April 2019



Sundeep Bhutoria with the Hindi and Urdu faculty of New York University at Richard Ettinghausen Library in 2018



Sundeep Bhutoria with author Ashok Singh in New York in 2019

Oslo

Sundee Bhutoria met representatives from various organisations and NGOs like Bengali Association, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Indian Mission during his recent visit to Oslo in December 2019 to initiate the Foundation's activities and the formation of **Ehsaas** Women in the Nordic city.



Sundee Bhutoria with Member of the Norwegian Parliament, Himanshu Gulati, Ravi Gulati and others at a dinner hosted by Himanshu Gulati at his residence. Members of the Indian community, who have been residing in Oslo for over three decades, attended the gathering



Sundee Bhutoria with Ishan Bhawan, Niladri Malakar, Phalguni Pal, Kshitij Bhatnagar, Arundhati Das (Chargé d' Affaires, Indian Mission in Norway) Shishir Kumar Acharjee, Raj Narula, Manoj Misra (President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad of Norway) and Anil Debsharma at a dinner get-together



Sundee Bhutoria with Dr Asim K. Duttaroy



Sundee Bhutoria with Manoj Misra and Kathinka Frøystad of the Department of Cultural Studies and Oriental Language, University of Oslo. The University of Oslo will host the first ever **Kalam** session in Norway.



Sundee Bhutoria at the Vishwa Hindu Parishad premises of Oslo, interacting with core committee members Vijay Sharma, Manoj Misra, Raj Narula, Varinder Jaswal, Chetan Hathi, and Davinder Kumar



Sundee Bhutoria with Arundee Plaha, President of Indian Norwegian Community, and her team, Uma Sharma, Shweta Mendiratta and Jyoti Sharma

Sundeep Bhutoria met members of the Indian diaspora, representatives of various associations and universities, and scholars and poets during his visit to Turin in Italy in 2018. Turin is all set to play host to its first ever **Kalam** session.



Sundeep Bhutoria with Alessandra Consolaro, a professor at the University of Turin, during her visit to Kolkata in early 2018



Sundeep Bhutoria with Chetna, Varsha and Balwinder Kumar, who have been living in Turin for decades and run one of the most prominent Indian restaurants in the Italian city



Sundeep Bhutoria with Avtar Singh Rana, the former deputy mayor of Orbassano, a township under the Metropolitan City of Turin, and other guests from the Indian community at a dinner meeting



Sundeep Bhutoria with prominent Pakistani author Kishwar Naheed and scholars of Hindi literature Monika Browarczyk, Andrea Srocco, Alessandra Consolaro, Mara Matta and Jayandra Soni



Manisha Jain, **Prabha Khaitan Foundation's** branding and communication chief, and Cathy Tongper, the Foundation's executive for overseas activities, with Francesca Leon, the then Municipal Councillor for Culture, Turin

Pledge Against Plastic



Vinnie Kakkar

Spagia Foundation, an initiative of the Shyam Group, joined hands with Education For All to spread an important message — "Carry your Own Bags, Say No to Plastic!"

Children were taught how to stitch their own cotton bags and experiment with various kinds of stitches that can be useful in their daily lives.

"The students were keen learners and pledged to spread awareness amongst their peer groups in school, at home and in the neighbourhood," said Vinnie Kakkar, the chairperson of the Spagia Foundation, and National Advisor, **Prabha Khaitan Foundation.**

Spagia focuses on empowering young minds with various skills that not only build confidence but also help them participate in society as responsible citizens.





Encouraging Education

Prabha Khaitan Foundation, under its Education For All project, joined hands with Bharat Relief Society to hand over textbooks to schoolchildren at the 35th Gyan Yagna Mahotsav in Kolkata. We bring you some glimpses.



Generation Equality: International Women's Day 2020

I am strong

I am invincible

I am woman

— **Helen Reddy (1971)**

These words, written almost 50 years ago, still resonate deeply with women today. International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated on March 8 across the globe. It's a day when women's rights and achievements in political, economic, social and cultural spheres are honoured.

In 1911, the first International Women's Day was marked in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland on March 19. Over a million women and men attended IWD rallies, campaigning for women's right to work, vote, be trained, to hold positions, and to end discrimination. In 1913, International Women's Day was transferred to March 8, which has remained the date for International Women's Day ever since.

2011 was the centenary celebration of International Women's Day. Within the US, President Obama designated March as 'Women's History Month' and in London, celebrity activist Annie Lennox led a march across Millennium Bridge.

The United Nations celebrated International Women's Year in 1975 and in 1996 commenced the adoption of an annual theme. The theme for 2020 is *I am Generation*

Equality: Realizing Women's Rights.

It is aligned with UN Women's new multi-generational campaign, Generation Equality, which marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the foremost progressive road map for the empowerment of women and girls.

Gloria Steinem, world-renowned feminist and journalist, once said, "The story of women's struggle for equality belongs to no single feminist nor to any one organisation but to the collective efforts of all who care about human rights."

Today many global corporations actively support the celebration by organising their own events and

campaigns. Tech giant Google often designs topical Doodles on its global search pages to honour the day. This year's Google Doodle featured a multilayered animated mandala. The layers reflect women's achievements throughout history, from the late 1800-1930s labour movements to the landmark era of the 1950s to 1980s and also the progress

made from the 1990s to the present day.

"As today's women stand on the shoulders of those who have fought and made sacrifices in the generations past, they likewise carry the legacy of the movement forward," read Google's statement.

The United Nations Observance of International



Google's International Women's Day doodle for 2020

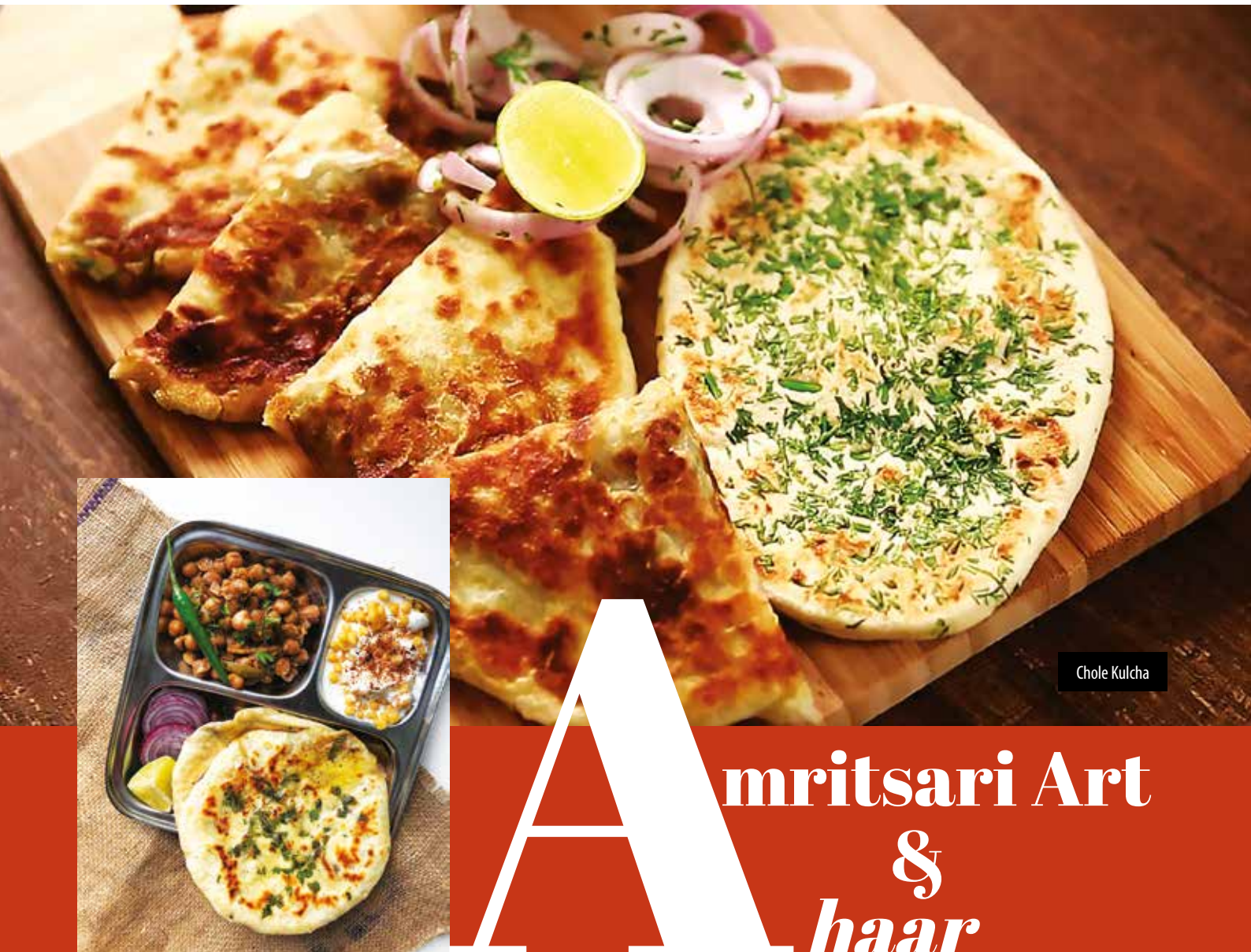
ARTWORK BY **SUDIPTA KUNDU**

Women's Day 2020 took place at the United Nations Secretariat in New York on March 6. It included addresses by senior representatives of the United Nations system, an inter-generational dialogue with gender equality activists, and musical performances. It was broadcast live on unwomen.org (UN Women's official website).

The year 2020 marks the five-year milestone towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council

Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and the 10th anniversary of UN Women's establishment. Thus, it's a pivotal year for advancing gender equality worldwide.

Imagine a world where all people have equal rights and opportunities. Women and girls aren't afraid to walk alone, and men and boys aren't suppressed by toxic masculinity. In this world, gender equality is normal. This world will be ours, if every one of us takes the initiative to promote equality for all today.



Chole Kulcha

A mritsari Art & haar

Amritsar, historically known as Ramadaspur and colloquially as Ambarsar, is a vibrant city in Punjab most well-known for the Golden Temple, which is Sikhism's holiest gurdwara. But there are two more things it is famous for — the mouthwatering Chole Kulcha and the exquisite Phulkari embroidery. Throughout its journey **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** has always endeavoured to support and endorse local crafts and cuisines and it celebrated the Golden City by highlighting its culinary and artistic heritage.

Amritsar is known as the food capital of Punjab for a reason. The moment one steps into the streets of Amritsar, one is greeted with the enticing, rich aroma of hot, butter-laden Amritsari Kulchas of different varieties and piping hot Chole cooked in freshly ground masalas.

A pocket-friendly treat, a plate of Chole served with two Kulchas will cost as little as Rs 30 and is a popular meal with office-goers and college students. The

popularity and love for Chole Kulcha in Amritsar comes second only to the food served at the Golden Temple or other gurdwaras as Langar Ka Prasad.

The Kulcha, a soft dough of self-raising flour kneaded with milk, yoghurt, oil, baking powder or soda, a pinch of salt and a little sugar, is said to have found a pride of place in the royal spreads of the Nizams and Mughals too. Khansamas during Shah Jahan's time used to stuff Kulchas with vegetables and they made it popular in the darbar.

The best Amritsari Kulcha is crispy on the outside and moist on the inside. The dough can be stuffed with simple mixture of onion and coriander leaves or paneer or potatoes or even seasonal vegetables. A huge dollop of freshly melted desi ghee or butter makes this experience all the more satisfying. The Kulcha is most popularly accompanied by Chole, a chickpea curry that is prepared using the rich spices that Punjab is known for.



Phulkari embroidery

The Foundation serves this tasty treat at its curated events, much to the delight of the guests, to highlight the rich culinary heritage of the city.

Amritsar is also popular for its Phulkari embroidery. As the name suggests *Phul* means flower and *Kari* means work. Phulkari is not just a beautiful style of embroidery but an age-old tradition as well, where the grandmother of a newborn baby boy starts weaving a fabric of love, spinning dreams of his wedded future with a beautiful girl, which is then bequeathed to the bride.

Traditionally stitched on *khadder*, now chiffon, georgette and cotton are also being used as the base fabric for this craft. The traditional darning stitch was the most commonly used technique to make Phulkari and the quality of a piece was measured according to the width of this stitch. The most divine Phulkaris are the ones with the narrowest stitches, resulting in the conclusion that the narrower the stitch, the finer the Phulkari.

Phulkaris are filled with symmetrical motifs that are evenly distributed throughout the handloom and have elegant panel borders embroidered onto the fabric. Inspiration for the designs or motifs most often come from the most prosaic elements found in our surroundings. Different Phulkari designs are reserved for different occasions. *Chope*, a gift from the maternal uncle to the bride, and the *Vari da Bagh*, which represents happiness, are a couple of examples amongst many. *Chamba*, *Suber* and *Ghunghat Bagh* all have specific traditional values attached to it. Phulkaris look stunning because of the use of various vibrant colours like yellow, green and blue. Red, the most common colour used, is considered auspicious. *Pachranga* and *Satranga* Phulkari entail use of five or seven different colours of threads used for the needlework while making the most elegant Phulkari. The invitees at the various sessions organised by the Foundation in Amritsar are felicitated with Phulkari handloom.



Geetanjali Shree



Neelima Dalmia Adhar



Aparna Jain



Vishwas Patil

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Guest	Event
Geetanjali Shree	Kalam Amritsar
Aparna Jain	The Write Circle Raipur
Vishwas Patil	Kalam Pune
Amandeep Sandhu	The Write Circle Jaipur
Pradip Bihari	Aakhar Patna
Sanjeev Paliwal	Kalam Bhubaneswar
Meenakshi Natarajan	Kalam Patna
Madhav Nagda	Aakhar Jaipur
Deepak Ramola	Kalam Oslo
The Ink Band	Book Rack Function in Udaipur
Staging of the play - Devika Rani	Jaipur
Neelima Dalmia Adhar	Kalam Turin
Machhli Award with WWF	Jaipur
Amritsar Literature Festival-Basant 2020	Amritsar



Amandeep Sandhu



Pradip Bihari



Sanjeev Paliwal



Meenakshi Natarajan



Madhav Nagda



Deepak Ramola



Devika Rani



The Ink Band

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