



# Prabha

## प्रभा

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation Chronicle



## JAIPUR

### 4 YEARS 40 SESSIONS

What started as a humble beginning to promote the vast untapped literature in vernacular languages, Hindi in particular, has become a caravan of self-driven literature enthusiasts and their favourite authors in just a span of four years. On a balmy evening in 2015, former army general VK Singh turned up for the first session of **Kalam** in Jaipur. In April this year, **Kalam** series came a full circle with author Uday Prakash who was hosted for its 40th session in city. **Prabha** celebrates the milestone with its associates and patrons in this month's edition.

2015

2019

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WOMAN OF  
THE MONTH**

37



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& STAR REPORTERS**

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PROMOTE HINDI'**

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## Sahyog - lending a helping hand to a cause

The spirit of festive season bears the fragrance of happiness and hope. Team **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** takes this opportunity to wish all its patrons a joyous and prosperous year ahead. The Foundation has always dedicated its resources and believed in lending support and aiding social causes beyond its regular activities. This endeavour, which has a deep social impact, has prompted us to conceive **Sahyog** — a vertical dedicated to chaperoning such efforts.

There are several events, that the Foundation supports if the cause they have taken up gets furthered for the larger good. For instance, we supported the Woman Up! Summit recently held in Jaipur. At the Foundation, we have decided to henceforth support such events, including seminars, conferences, festivals and the like that have a bearing on art, culture, performing arts and literature.

# सहयोग



MANISHA JAIN

Communications & Branding chief,  
Prabha Khaitan Foundation

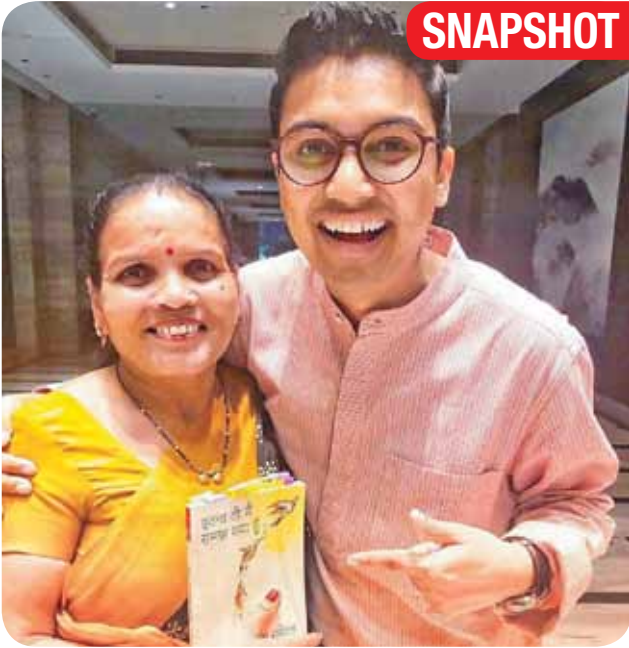
The Foundation has been a great believer in upholding and promoting local cuisine and crafts as well. In keeping with this effort, we choose to serve popular local delicacies to our invitees over tea during sessions, while guests are felicitated with handicrafts from the region. Beginning this edition, you can read more on the local food and handicrafts of different cities.

We are super excited to announce that the following issue of the newsletter will be a special edition celebrating 500 literary boutique events that were held under the aegis of the Foundation. The collector's edition will take you through the memorable moments of our journey and the event held in Kolkata to commemorate it. It will be followed by a combined issue for the months of September and October.

We have always treasured your suggestions and participation. The popularity of the chronicle has been enhanced further by engrossing articles that many of you have shared with us. We look forward to more from you, which you may do by contributing to [newsletter@pkfoundation.org](mailto:newsletter@pkfoundation.org). Do keep writing and enriching us with your thoughts and experiences as it mirrors the soul of our efforts.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the chronicle as much as we cherished putting it together for you. To get more updates you can connect with us on Twitter as well as Instagram.

## SNAPSHOT OF THE MONTH



**deepakramola**   
Faridabad

**deepakramola** Convinced my beautiful mother to finally come and see me perform my poetry. Her favourite poem in the book is the one about motherhood (For obvious reasons). Those who think I am awesome...wait until you meet my Mom. She is the real badass.

A big shout to Kalam & Prabha Khaitan Foundation for curating such insanely inspiring Author evenings. Kalam Faridabad for the warmth. And my soulful publisher Aditi Maheswari for being a heartbeat human

IN OUR  
NEXT ISSUE



**PRABHA CHRONICLES KALAM'S JOURNEY OF HOLDING THE TORCH TO HINDI LITERATURE THROUGH 500 INCREDIBLE SESSIONS IN ITS NEXT ISSUE**

## Happy Birthday

PRABHA WISHES **EHSAAS WOMEN**  
BORN IN SEPTEMBER



2<sup>nd</sup>

Shweta Bansal



2<sup>nd</sup>

Priyanka Kothari



7<sup>th</sup>

Amita Munot



8<sup>th</sup>

Kanika Agarwal



9<sup>th</sup>

Neelam Seolekar



11<sup>th</sup>

Jasmit Nayyar



17<sup>th</sup>

Kirti Kirdatt



19<sup>th</sup>

Tazeen Hussain



23<sup>rd</sup>

Shalu Goel

## SPOTTED



Prabha Khaitan Foundation's Patron, HM Bangur with Sachin Tendulkar at a Bridge tournament held recently in Mumbai



Our associate Anil Kathotia with CEO of Taj Hotels, Puneet Chhatwal; Sr Vice President of Operations, Prabhat Verma, and Area Director Karnataka and GM of Taj WestEnd, Somnath Mukherjee, after **Kitaab** Book Launch in Bengaluru. We're thankful to Taj Group of Hotels for being supportive of our activities and initiatives

# 40

## SESSIONS OF



## JAIPUR

Former army general and then minister in Narendra Modi government, VK Singh, was the first to grace our session in Jaipur four years back, in 2015. Since then **Kalam** series in Jaipur has hosted the stars shining the brightest in the literary sky. From legendary *shayar* Sheen Kaaf Nizam, author and Jaipur Literature Festival co-director Namita Gokhale and Padmashree recipient Narendra Kohli to *Kalam ke Baahubali* Manoj Muntashir, 'Biryani Professor' Pushpesh Pant and India's master of mythology, Amish Tripathi, we have had a brilliant run of luck backed by some exceptional team work to bring together these stars under one roof, talking about their work and, more importantly, lending their weight to storytelling in vernacular languages, especially in Hindi. On April 5, this year, the 40th session of **Kalam** was hosted at Jaipur Marriott where author Uday Prakash interacted with Hindi literature enthusiasts. **Kalam** has been the torchbearer of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** that has believed in cultural promotion to help balance the skewed development indices. It has not only furthered the cause of regional languages, but has also given the much-needed breathing space to authors who write in vernacular languages and present their admirable work before the readers. The journey has only just begun and we at the Foundation will continue striving to be the goodwill ambassadors of our culture.

## 2015



There are issues that are sensitive for a nation. It would be wrong to segregate matters that are in the interest of the nation as belonging to ruling and opposition factions

— General VK Singh (retd)

### PILOT

GENERAL  
VK SINGH  
2015



### 02

NAMITA  
GOKHALE  
October



### 04

LAXMI NARAYAN  
TRIPATHI  
December



Our ancient scriptures are relevant to the lives we are leading now. The literature of era gone by is a treasure trove of knowledge

— Padmashree Recipient  
Narendra Kohli

### 03

NARENDRA  
KOHLI  
November



# 2016



*Zubanein mazhabon ki nahi,  
zubanein tehzeebon ki hoti hain*  
(Language doesn't identify with  
religion, language represents a  
culture)

— Sheen Kaaf Nizam



05

SHEEN KAAF  
NIZAM

January



06

YATINDRA  
MISHRA

February



07

PAVANK  
VARMA

March



08

SALIM  
ARIF

April



09

IRA  
PANDE

May



10

PANKAJ  
DUBEY

June



*Jab tak problems na ho, kahani  
mein maza nahin aata* (until there  
are conflicts in a story, it isn't  
interesting)

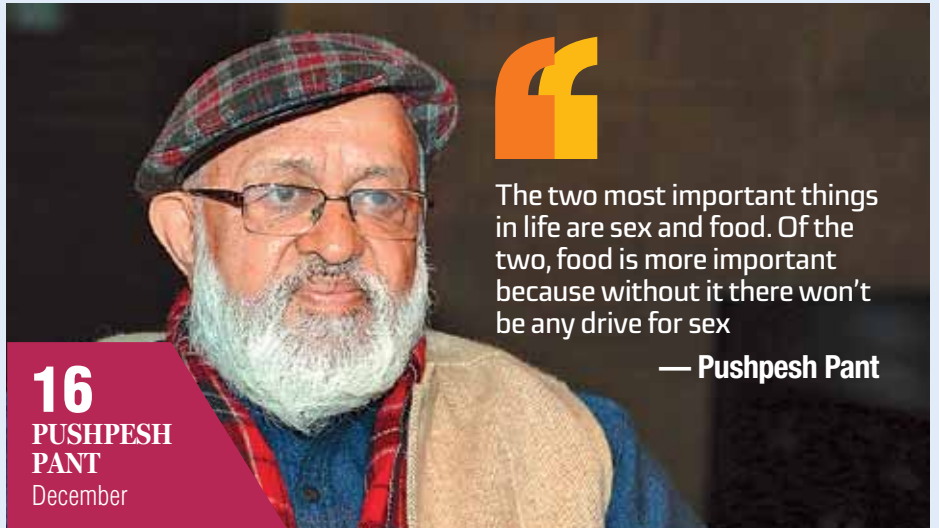
— Nadira Babbar

11

NADIRA  
BABBAR

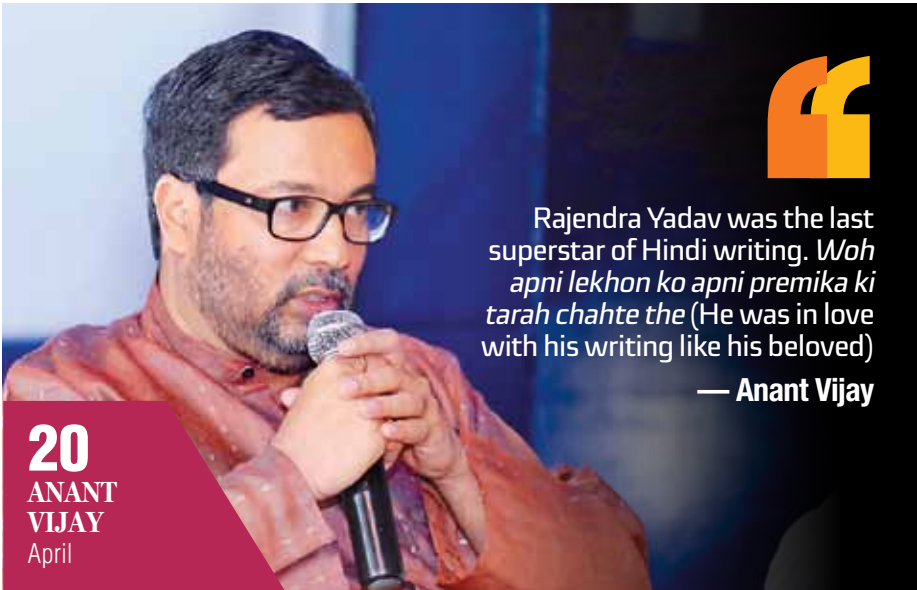
July





# 2017





**20**  
**ANANT VIJAY**  
April

Rajendra Yadav was the last superstar of Hindi writing. *Woh apni lekhn ko apni premika ki tarah chahte the* (He was in love with his writing like his beloved)  
— Anant Vijay



**21**  
**MANGLESH DABRAL**  
May



**22**  
**MANISHA KULSHRESTHA**  
June



**23**  
**CHITRA MUDGAL**  
July



**24**  
**ASHOK VAJPEYI**  
August



**25**  
**ASHWIN SANGHI**  
September



**26**  
**AMISH TRIPATHI**  
October

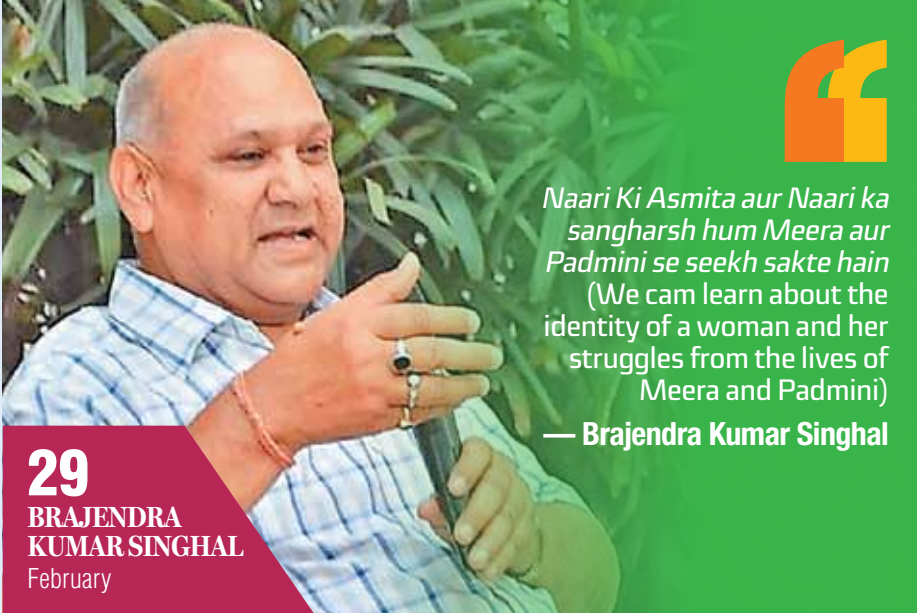


**27**  
**NEELIMA DALMIA ADHAR**  
November



**28**  
**PADMESH GUPTA**  
December

# 2018



“  
Naari Ki Asmita aur Naari ka sangharsh hum Meera aur Padmini se seekh sakte hain  
(We can learn about the identity of a woman and her struggles from the lives of Meera and Padmini)  
— Brajendra Kumar Singhal

**29**  
**BRAJENDRA KUMAR SINGHAL**  
February



**30**  
**ANU SINGH CHOUDHARY**  
March



**31**  
**SATYA VYAS**  
April



**32**  
**NIKHIL SACHAN**  
May



**33**  
**GAGAN GILL**  
June



**34**  
**ANAMIKA**  
July



“  
My whole energy would be spent on constructing a sentence in English. That's when I started writing in Hindi, which enabled me to express myself freely  
— Bhagwant Anmol

**35**  
**BHAGWANT ANMOL**  
August





**36**  
ABHAY  
KUMAR DUBEY  
October



**37**  
DEEPAK  
RAMOLA  
December



*Zindagi badi kitab  
hai seekhne ke liye,  
itna toh google bhi  
nahin sikha payega*  
(There is no greater  
book than life itself.  
Even Google cannot  
measure up to its  
teachings)  
— Deepak Ramola

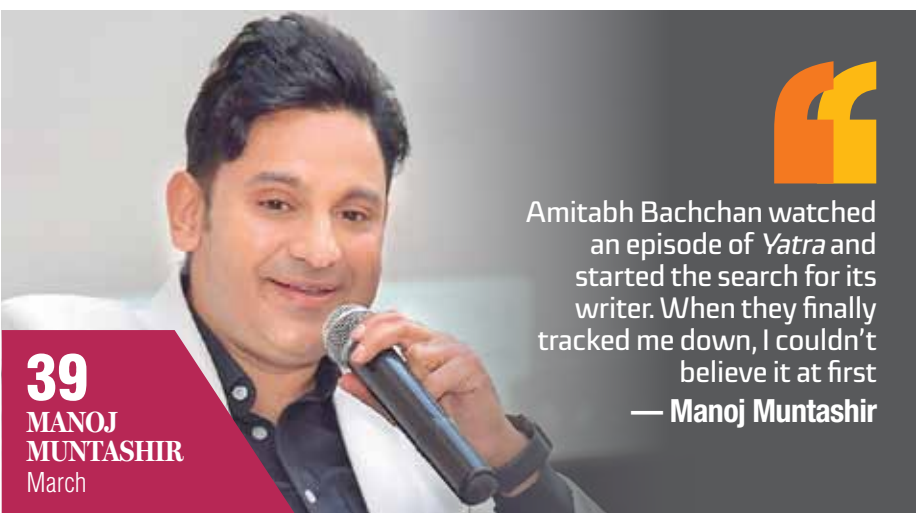
## 2019



**38**  
SOPAN  
JOSHI  
February



**40**  
UDAY  
PRAKASH  
APRIL



**39**  
MANOJ  
MUNTASHIR  
March



Amitabh Bachchan watched  
an episode of *Yatra* and  
started the search for its  
writer. When they finally  
tracked me down, I couldn't  
believe it at first  
— Manoj Muntashir



**41**  
HIMANSHU  
BAJPAI  
JULY

# PLEDGE BY EHSAAAS

**P**rabha Khaitan Foundation hosted a meeting for associates and Ehsaas women of North and Rajasthan region at Hotel Hilton, Jaipur, on August 4. While in the city to participate in the event celebrating 40 sessions of **Kalam** Jaipur, all the participants discussed ideas to bring about change in the society around them. **Ehsaas** women brainstormed to chart out a future course of action in order to create a better future and pledged to make a difference. **Ehsaas** is a conglomeration of women from all walks of life who inspire others for betterment of the society and promote Indian culture.

PRAMOD SHARMA



AAKRITI PERIWAL

Honorary Convener of Prabha Khaitan Foundation Activities Overseas



VINNI  
KAKKAR

National Advisor to  
Prabha Khaitan  
Foundation



## Kalam

# Celebration

**Prabha Khaitan Foundation** celebrated the successful completion of 40 sessions of **Kalam** in Jaipur with poet and lyricist Irshad Kamil and The Ink Band on August 4. After taking the audience through an audio-visual journey of all **Kalam** sessions held in Jaipur, the event saw a soulful performance by Ink Band, as Kamil narrated love poetry at the event held in Hotel Hilton. **Kalam** Jaipur, which began in July 2015, has hosted authors from all segments, who appeal to readers of all age groups.

### CONFERENCE





INK Band



Audience at the event



Shipra Goyal and Nisha Singh



Anil and Kulsum Malik



**APRA KUCHHAL**  
Honorary Convener of  
Prabha Khaitan Foundation  
Activities Rajasthan &  
Central Affairs



**EHSAAS WOMEN OF  
DELHI**



**ANANTMALA  
POTDAR**



**ARCHANA  
DALMIA**



**NEELIMA DALMIA  
ADHAR**



**SHAZIA  
ILMI**



**Digvijay Singh, Jayshree Periwal, Sunita Shekhawat,  
Sundeep Bhutoria, Dilip Singh Shekhawat and Apra Kuchhal**



**Saurabh Kakkar**



**Anant Vijay with wife, Vandana**



**EHSAAS WOMEN OF  
NAGPUR**  
**MONICA BHAGWAGAR  
PRIYANKA KOTHARI**



**Gaurav Sekhri,**  
Director of Operations, Hilton



**Anshu Mehra and Garima Mithal**  
— Ehsaas women of Meerut



**Ehsaas women**



**Shweta Aggarwal,**  
Ehsaas woman of Faridabad



## EHSAAAS WOMEN OF JODHPUR

SUSHMA NIRAJ SETHIA  
SHELJA SINGH  
PREETI MEHTA

**EHSAAS WOMEN OF  
RAIPUR**



**AANCHAL  
GARCHA**



**KIRTI  
KRIDDATT**



**SRISHTI  
TRIVEDI**

**EHSAAS WOMAN OF  
AGRA  
SHWETA BANSAL**



**Mita Kapur**



**Manesha A Agarwal and Vinnie Kakkar**



**Padmashree Recipient Arjun Prajapati, Padmashree Recipient Shakir Ali, Raagini Iyer, Aniket Kar, Irshad Kamil, Agnel Roman, Prajakta Shukre and Padmashree Recipient Tilak Gitai. The Padmashree Recipients felicitated INK Band at the event**



**VINTI  
KATHURIA**



Padmashree Recipient Tilak Gitai, Nandini and Ajay Atal with Narendra Singh



Apnavi, Kunal and Apra Kuchhal



Harsh and Khushboo Singhvi with Ayush Periwai



Ravi Kamra, Ikraam Rajasthani, Sudhir Kasliwal and Vinod Bhardwaj



Irshad Kamil & Sudhir Mathur



Gaurav Girija Shukla

# TRYST WITH TIGER

**DAULAT SINGH SHAKTAWAT**  
SAYS HE VISITS THE TIGER THAT  
HAD ALMOST KILLED HIM AT  
RANTHAMBORE, EVERY YEAR



Daulat Singh Shaktawat



Daulat Singh Shaktawat with Ehsaas women of Jodhpur —  
Sushma Sethia, Preeti Mehta and Shelja Singh

led to several rounds of plastic surgery. “It was an accident. Agitated by the number of humans present, the tiger we had gone to rescue attacked me. I ended up with permanent damage to a side of my face, along with an artificial eye,” he shared. “Even today, I make it a point to visit the tiger. It is in Sariska now,” Shaktawat said, insisting animals tend to find their way and that is why the crowds should be kept away from them.

Asked about the increasing number of animals attacking humans and turning into man-eaters, Shaktawat said, “Forests are shrinking while cities are growing bigger. To find its way, a tiger moves out of the forests and attacks the crowd only in self-defence. Resources should be allocated for forests and corridors created for movement of the cats,” he added.

The welcome address and vote of thanks were delivered by Preeti Mehta, Ehsaas woman of Jodhpur. JS Nathawat and Devendra Singh Ratnawat gave away the mementos.

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



Devendra Ratnawat,  
General Manager of Taj Hari Mahal

**H**olding the audience captive with a riveting narration of his experiences with big cats, Daulat Singh Shaktawat shared stories about human-animal conflict at **The Write Circle** session held in Jodhpur on August 2.

The former Assistant Conservator of Forests at Ranthambore Tiger Reserve was in conversation with Vikram Singh. He opened the session with a slide-show on the national park and its animals. He informed the audience about the forests and the characteristics of wild animals living within, the most interesting being the discipline instilled by the tigress in her cubs that, according to him, is the key to their survival.

Shaktawat also shared the incident that



Vikram Singh





Pankaj Dubey

# LOVE LETTERS ARE PUREST FORM OF WRITING

**P**atna-born bilingual author and screenwriter Pankaj Dubey was in Ranchi to speak about his new book, *Love Curry*, and the inspiration behind his writing at the **Kalam** session held at Chanakya BNR Hotel on August 3.

In conversation with Rashmi Sharma, Dubey admitted to choosing the profession to attain fame and wealth — things that are important to pay bills. “I have not been much of a reader and only chose to read *The Alchemist* since it had the least number of pages. Even when I decided to become a writer, I never set out to change or influence society with my books,” Dubey shared. The plots of his books, however, are inspired by the people around him and hence are simple and relatable. “My earliest memory of writing is writing love letters, which is the purest form of writing, as it comes straight from the heart,” he said.

“A book unveils stories to those who have an acumen for reading but it was my desire to reach out and share my stories with the unlearned too,” he said, explaining why he ventured into movies. It was with this thought that he initiated the *Sadak Chhaap Film Festival*. He was awarded the Youth Icon Award for Social Entrepreneurship for his efforts.

“I applaud imagination and creativity,” the author expressed, going on to state that he believes that knowledge gives way to hollow pride.

**Ehsaas** woman of Patna, Anvita Pradhan, welcomed the author and moderator Rashmi Sharma. Pradhan also gave the vote of thanks, while the author was felicitated by Mohan from Dainik Jagran.

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



Anvita Pradhan, Ehsaas woman of Patna

AUTHOR AND SCREENWRITER **PANKAJ DUBEY** REVEALS THAT HE DID NOT SET OUT TO CHANGE THE WORLD WITH HIS WRITING

“My earliest memory of writing is writing love letters, which is the purest form of writing, as it comes straight from the heart

— Pankaj Dubey



Rashmi Sharma

# HITS & FLOPS NOT A MEASURE

POPULARITY OF A SONG IS NO MEASURE OF ITS MERIT, SAYS **MANOJ MUNTASHIR** AT THE INAUGURAL SESSION OF **KALAM** SERIES IN MEERUT



Deepa Garg, Director of Crystal Palace

Manoj Muntashir in conversation with Sonam Mahajan

**W**hen *Kalam ke Baahubali* met lovers of literature at the **Kalam** Meerut session on August 9, an engaging discussion on poetry and writing followed. Writer and lyricist

Manoj Muntashir, whose words have lent soul to many popular Hindi songs, was in conversation with Sonam Mahajan at Hotel Crystal Palace. Muntashir spoke about his early days.

The lyricist also spoke about the relationship with his parents, his journey in the film industry and the first brush with success that came as a dialogue writer for the blockbuster *Baahubali*. "My mother continued to give me strength despite being hundreds of miles away. I never told her about the condition I was living in, yet she was my backbone," he shared.

Muntashir shared the inspiration behind his work. He recalled songs like *Jaane Kya Dhoondhti Hai Yeh Aankhen Mujhme* (*Shola aur Shabnam*) and *Kahaan Main Ajnabi Hoon* (*Jab Jab Phool Khile*) to highlight the beauty of songs written in the past era.



Many average songs have become very popular, while some exceptional songs could not reach the audience — **Manoj Muntashir**

Speaking about hit songs of the recent Box Office success, *Kabir Singh*, Muntashir said, "I don't worry about hits and flops anymore. Many average songs have become very popular, while some exceptional songs could not reach the audience," he shared.

Muntashir also recalled when his abode was the footpath on the roads of Mumbai. Finally, he started his journey with a call from Amitabh Bachchan, which led to him penning the episodes for *Kaun Bane-ga Crorepati*. Earlier, Crystal Palace director Deepa Garg welcomed the guests.



Ehsaas women of Meerut — Garima Mithal and Anshu Mehra

The author was introduced by Anshu Mehra, **Ehsaas** woman of Meerut and felicitated by Sunil Jindal.

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

It gives me immense pleasure to announce the launch of Kalam series in Meerut. This is the 26th city where the Foundation will explore and promote literary talent in indigenous languages — **Sundeep Bhutoria**



Sundeep Bhutoria, Manjulika Tyagi, Mrinalini Anant and Manoj Muntashir

# RAISING A TOAST TO Kalam SERIES IN MEERUT

A gala dinner-cum-launch bash was hosted after the maiden **Kalam** session to mark the beginning of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation's** activities in Meerut on August 9. Songwriter **Manoj Muntashir** attended the dinner with the Foundation's associates, **Ehsaas** women and who's who of the city

Kalam Meerut and Ehsaas women are committed to poets and poetry. I thank Prabha Khaitan Foundation for its efforts to promote literary works in regional languages through Kalam series

— **Manoj Muntashir**



Sonam Mahajan, Bhavna Badil, Neha Mahajan, Deepa Garg and Shalu Garg



Roopam Raman and Bhavna Badil



Shweta Aggarwal, Ehsaas woman of Faridabad

# बाल विवाह ने तोड़ा सपना 25 साल बाद लिखी 'सेवट'

आखर में छलका  
राजस्थानी साहित्यकार  
बसन्ती पंवार के जीवन  
का असली दर्द



बसन्ती पंवार और कामना राजावत

**लि**खने का शौक बचपन से ही था। जो मैं सुनती थी, उसे दीवारों पर लिख दिया करती थी। इस आदत को सबसे पहले पिताजी ने समझा। उन्होंने मुझे किताब-काँपी लाकर दी। उनका प्रोत्साहन मिला और जब छठी क्लास में थी तो मैंने अपनी पहली कहानी *आ भी जाओ* लिखी।

राजस्थानी भाषा की जानी मानी साहित्यकार बसन्ती पंवार ने अपने जीवन के कुछ ऐसे अनछुए पहलुओं को साझा किया कार्यक्रम **आखर** में। **प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन** द्वारा ग्रासरूट मीडिया फाउंडेशन के सहयोग से **आखर** श्रृंखला का आयोजन होटल आईटीसी राजपुताना में किया गया। श्री सीमेंट द्वारा समर्थित इस आयोजन का उद्देश्य राजस्थानी साहित्य से रूबरू कराना है। इस कार्यक्रम में साहित्यकार कामना राजावत ने बसन्ती पंवार से उनके व्यक्तित्व और कृतित्व को लेकर संवाद किया।

मां सरस्वती के दिन बसन्त पंचमी को पैदा होने के कारण उनका नाम बसन्ती रखा गया। बीकानेर में जन्मी बसन्ती ने बताया कि घर में मारवाड़ी बोली जाती थी। पिताजी तथा परिवार के अन्य सदस्यों ने मुझे लिखने के लिये सदैव प्रोत्साहित किया। उन्होंने बताया कि वह

जब छठी क्लास में थी तब रेडियो पर *गीतों भरी कहानी* कार्यक्रम प्रसारित होता था। उसको सुनकर उन्होंने अपनी पहली कहानी *आ भी जाओ* लिखी।

उन्होंने बताया कि कुछ साल बाद बाल विवाह होने के साथ ही जीवन में संघर्ष की शुरुआत हो गई। डॉक्टर बनने का सपना टूट गया। सास-ससुर को उनकी लिखने-पढ़ने की आदत पसंद नहीं थी और उन्हें लिखना-पढ़ना रोकना पड़ा। संघर्षों में ढाई दशक बीत गया। 25 साल बाद उन्हें फिर लिखने का मौका मिला और उन्होंने राजस्थानी भाषा में कहानी *सेवट* लिखी।

बसन्ती ने बताया कि *सेवट* उनकी अपनी कहानी है, जिसमें उन्होंने डॉक्टर नहीं बन पाने के दर्द को शब्दों में पिरोया। बसन्ती ने बताया कि, 'लेखक की भावना का असर उसकी रचना पर पड़ता है। यह सही है कि मैंने अलग-अलग विषयों को चुना है जिन्हें विविध सामाजिक समस्याएँ प्रेरित करती हैं। इसके साथ ही मैंने अपनी रचनाओं में मर्यादाओं को सम्मान दिया है क्योंकि मैंने व्यक्तिगत जीवन में भी सदैव मर्यादाओं का सम्मान किया है।'

उन्होंने बताया उनके लेखन में सामाजिक



सरोज बिट्टू, अभिलाषा पारीक और चित्रा पुरोहित

समस्याएँ, प्रेम, अहसास, दुख-दर्द व खुशी आदि देखने को मिलता है। संवेदनाओं और नारी को अपने लेखन में अधिक स्थान दिया है। बसन्ती पंवार का मानना है कि आज लोग मर्यादाएँ भूलते जा रहे हैं और संवेदनाएँ इंसानों में नहीं दिखकर वेंटिलेटर पर दिखती है।

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



देव किशन राजपुरोहित



जब छठी क्लास में थी तो मैंने अपनी पहली कहानी *आ भी जाओ* लिखी। *सेवट* मेरी कहानी है, जिसमें मैंने डॉक्टर नहीं बन पाने के दर्द को शब्दों में पिरोया

— बसन्ती पंवार

# 'LOVE ISN'T LAZY'



Arpit Vageria in conversation with Sunita Katoch

AT **KALAM** CHANDIGARH, **ARPIT VAGERIA** SAID HE WISHED TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF PEACE FOR CROSS-BORDER LOVE

**K**nown for bestselling romantic novels like *Be My Perfect Ending* and *You Are My Reason to Smile*, young author Arpit Vageria shared with **Kalam** audience in Chandigarh the inspiration behind his writing. In conversation with Sunita Katoch at the session held on August 13, Vageria

spoke about his life, his writing, and his dreams.

Opening up about his work, Vageria said writing fiction is an ongoing struggle. Shedding light on his novel, *Love knows no LOC*, which made him a popular name amongst Indian readers, Vageria said he hopes to spread the message of peace and tolerance for cross-border love relationships.

While the novel attracted some hateful messages too, Vageria described young readers of this generation as being more accepting and evolved. "Today's youth inspire me greatly as they are more dedicated and focused toward their goals. They may be the Netflix generation but they are definitely more aware and conscientious," he said. In context of the recurring subject of his books, the young author claimed

“Our youth may be the Netflix generation but they are definitely more aware — Arpit Vageria

love is not so lazy that it will occur only once.

Earlier, the event started with an introductory note by Shalu Goel, **Ehsaas** woman of Chandigarh, followed by a welcome note by Isha Sehgal on behalf of Hyatt Regency. Vageria was felicitated by Radhika and Shyamali Jain from the audience. Manisha Jain, **Ehsaas** woman of Chandigarh gave the vote of thanks.

*Kalam Chandigarh is in association with Hyatt Regency Chandigarh and Ehsaas women of Chandigarh — Manisha Jain and Shalu Goel*



Isha Sehgal, Marketing & Communication Manager, Hyatt Chandigarh



Shalu Goel, Ehsaas woman of Chandigarh



Manisha Jain, Ehsaas woman of Chandigarh



Ratnottama Sengupta

NEWS BREAK

# Access journalism & star reporters

VETERAN JOURNALIST  
**SANDEEP BHUSHAN**  
PLOTS THE TRANSITION  
OF NEWS FROM FIELD  
REPORTING TO  
THE STUDIO DEBATES



Sandeep Bhushan

**V**eteran journalist Sandeep Bhushan looks at the road his profession has taken over the years, from field reportage of the yesteryears, to today's star-driven 'access journalism'.

From the telecast of news within stipulated time-slots on the state-owned *Doordarshan*, to an era where news anchors are gaining star status, media in the country has come a long way. Veteran journalist Sandeep Bhushan reflected upon this journey, along with his own, by taking an unbiased look at the profession at the 71st session of **An Author's Afternoon** in Kolkata. Bhushan was in conversation with fellow journalist Ratnottama Sengupta in the city on August 13.

After recounting the genesis and stranglehold of the state-owned *Doordarshan*, Bhushan spoke about the influx of private news agencies in the post-liberalisation era as also outlined in his book, *The Indian Newsroom*. The author discussed contemporary trends in journalism, and rued the death of field-based reportage and marginalisation of reporters. Talking about access journalism and its adversities, alongside stardom of anchors, he mentioned how technology has established the dominion of studio-game. "Investigative Journalism is out of the window now," he lamented. "Access journalism that primarily engages snuggling up to the rich and influential is harming the profession and ethics," he added.

Bhushan spoke about the changing equations between the high-profile journalists and their sources. "The breaking news and exclusives that you see on the screen are only there because of this access. Some reporter or editor has a fix on the guy who is putting the news in the 24-hour news cycle. That kind of access is only possible if there is a star reporter. While earlier, a reporter cultivated his contacts, now these politicians or public figures are more interested in cultivating these





**There is a kind of multiplier effect if a celebrity comes in and endorses an issue. But at some point, the same stars also start using television and other platforms to further their own interest. It's a tricky situation really**

stars. They would be more interested in an editor instead of a lowly reporter, who does not have that much of a say in how the news plays out," he said.

Bhushan said when it started coming down to the 'bytes,' that's when he realised that continuing with this kind of a job didn't interest him. "I cannot sit in the studio and scream, something that has come to define our television over the last decade. That's also when I decided to write this book," he added.

Bhushan also spoke about the rise of digital media and how the voices of actors and celebrities are growing stronger therein. "There is a kind of multiplier effect if a celebrity comes in and endorses an issue. It does bring in a certain amount of traction — the star value works," he said. "But at some point, the same stars also start using television and other platforms to further their own interests," he said. "In a revenue-starved network, celebs bring in money and grab eyeballs. I remember *Bunty and Babli* (Abhishek Bachchan and Rani Mukherjee) were sitting in the NDTV newsroom and reading out news ahead of the movie's release. I was in the newsroom that day, and thinking 'this is crazy!' But movies in India are a cultural thing; it's almost like opium. You remember Dev Anand because of a certain song that came in his movie. Nobody remembers the movie," the author summed up.

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

**In journalism, much like in print but more so in television, access is important. While earlier, a reporter cultivated his contacts, now these politicians or public figures are more interested in cultivating these stars**

**— Sandeep Bhushan**



The book has many interesting and illuminating chapters, specially the first one. There lies lot of trust deficit due to fake news. Still people are going back to the media. So, I think, it brought out many strands of our relationship with the media. It was interesting to hear this from someone who has domain knowledge in media

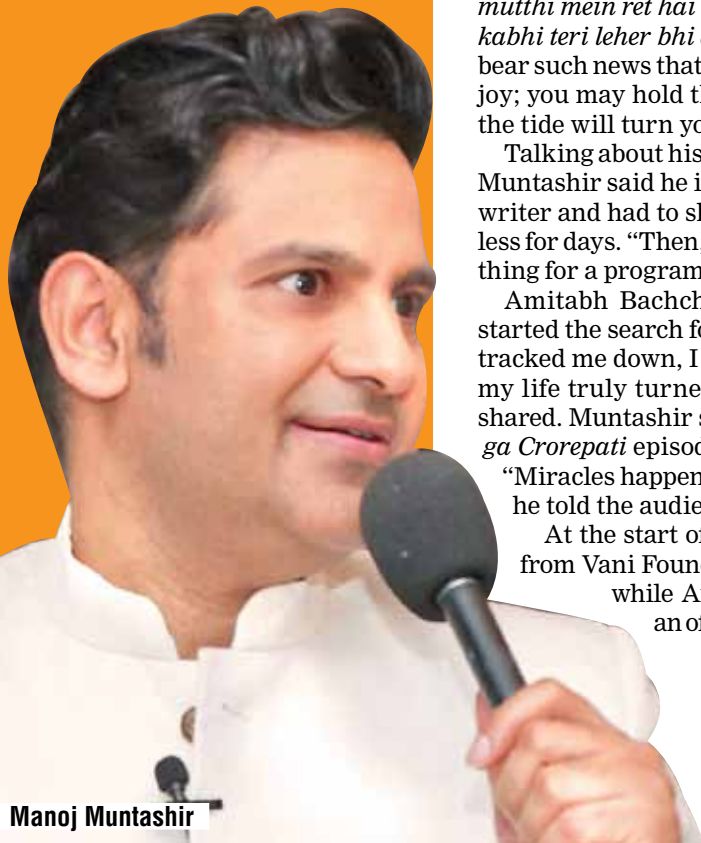
**— Vivek Sahay**

It was very enjoyable because the condition of our journalism is a hot topic today. Somehow, everybody gets the feeling media is biased. On which media do we really rely upon with the advent of fake news making things tougher. Actually, you need to have a discerning mind today to believe the news you read or see

**— Esha Dutta,**  
 Ehsaas woman of Kolkata

**“MIRACLES  
HAPPEN  
to those who  
BELIEVE”**

**Manoj Muntashir,**  
poet and songwriter,  
recounts how mega  
star Amitabh Bachchan  
tracked him down and  
how he got his  
big-ticket break in  
*Kaun Banega Crorepati*



**Manoj Muntashir**



**Ehsaas women of Delhi — Neelima Dalmia Adhar and Archana Dalmia; Mrinali Luthra with Ehsaas woman of Faridabad, Shweta Aggarwal**



**Aditi Maheshwari**

**C**redited for the revival of poetry and *shayari* in Hindi film songs, writer-lyricist Manoj Muntashir credits part of this change to youngsters’ interest in Urdu *shayari*. The lyricist was in conversation with Ehsaas woman of Delhi, Shazia Ilmi, at the **Kalam** Gurugram session held on August 8.

Muntashir said he had to face many challenges at the beginning of his journey, which he will remember throughout his lifetime. “But I was sure of reaching my destination,” he spoke with conviction.

To emphasise his point, he narrated a few lines, “*Wo jisey sunkar khushi se ro padey aankhen teri, aasmaano se kabhi aisi khabar bhi aegi; Aaj teri mutthi mein ret hai toh kya hua, is samandar mein kabhi teri leher bhi aegi.* (The skies will someday bear such news that will make your eyes brim with joy; you may hold the sand in your palm now, but the tide will turn your way one day).

Talking about his phase of hardship in Mumbai, Muntashir said he initially couldn’t find work as a writer and had to share a footpath with the homeless for days. “Then, I got the chance to write something for a programme titled *Yatra*.

Amitabh Bachchan watched the episode and started the search for its writer. When they finally tracked me down, I couldn’t believe it at first. But my life truly turned around after I met him,” he shared. Muntashir started writing for *Kaun Banega Crorepati* episodes and has never looked back. “Miracles happen to those who believe in them,” he told the audience.

At the start of the event, Aditi Maheshwari from Vani Foundation read the welcome note, while Archana Dalmia, Ehsaas woman of Delhi felicitated the author.

*Kalam Gurugram is in association with Dainik Jagran, Andaz Delhi Aerocity, Vani Foundation and Ehsaas women of NCR*



*I got the chance to write something for a programme titled Yatra. Amitabh Bachchan watched the episode and started the search for its writer*

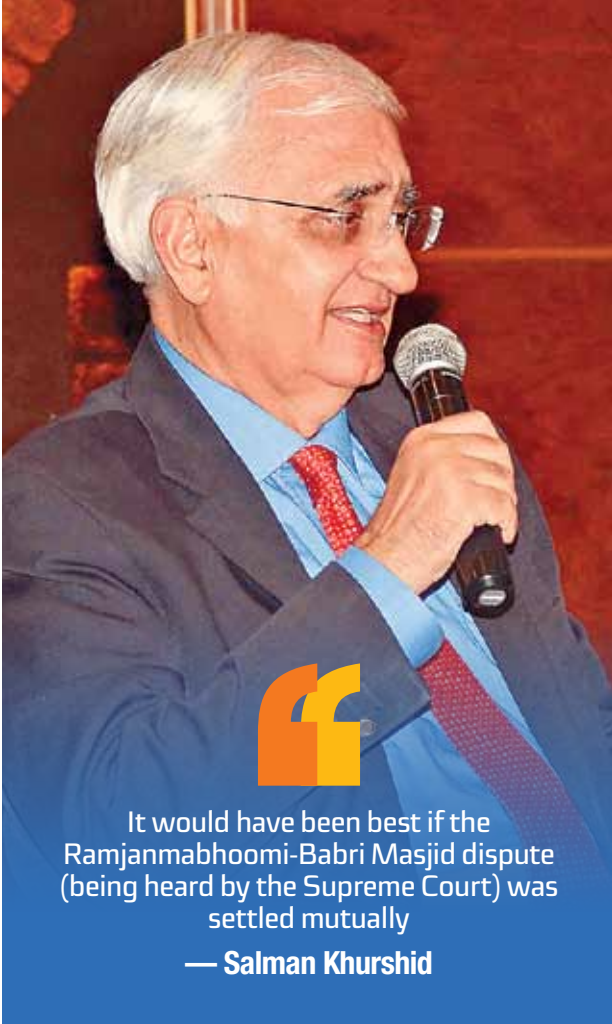
— **Manoj Muntashir**



**Shazia Ilmi, Ehsaas woman of Delhi**

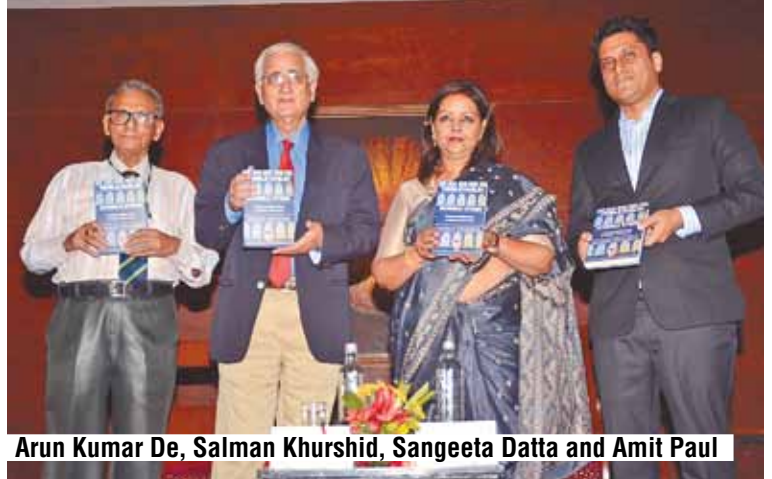


FORMER UNION MINISTER **SALMAN KHURSHID** SPEAKS OF MATTERS PERTINENT TO INDIA AS A DEMOCRACY AT HIS BOOK LAUNCH IN KOLKATA



It would have been best if the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute (being heard by the Supreme Court) was settled mutually

— Salman Khurshid



Arun Kumar De, Salman Khurshid, Sangeeta Datta and Amit Paul

## CITIZEN KHURSHID Understanding India

**F**ormer union minister and author Salman Khurshid touched upon several issues, including the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and the future of Indian National Congress.

Khurshid was in conversation with **Ehsaas** woman of London, Sangeeta Datta, at the launch of his latest book, *Visible Muslim, Invisible Citizen — Understanding Islam in Indian Democracy*, at the **Kitaab** book launch in Kolkata on August 17.

Speaking about Kashmir, Khurshid warned Pakistan against interfering in sovereign matter of India. He said, “the government must win the trust of Kashmiris.” On the Supreme Court hearing of the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case, he added, “It would have been best if the matter were settled mutually.”

Malika Varma, **Ehsaas** woman of Kolkata, gave the welcome address. Amit Paul, Hyatt Regency Kolkata thanked the participants, while the guests were felicitated by Sheetal Khanna, **Ehsaas** woman of Amritsar.

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



Malika Varma, Ehsaas woman of Kolkata

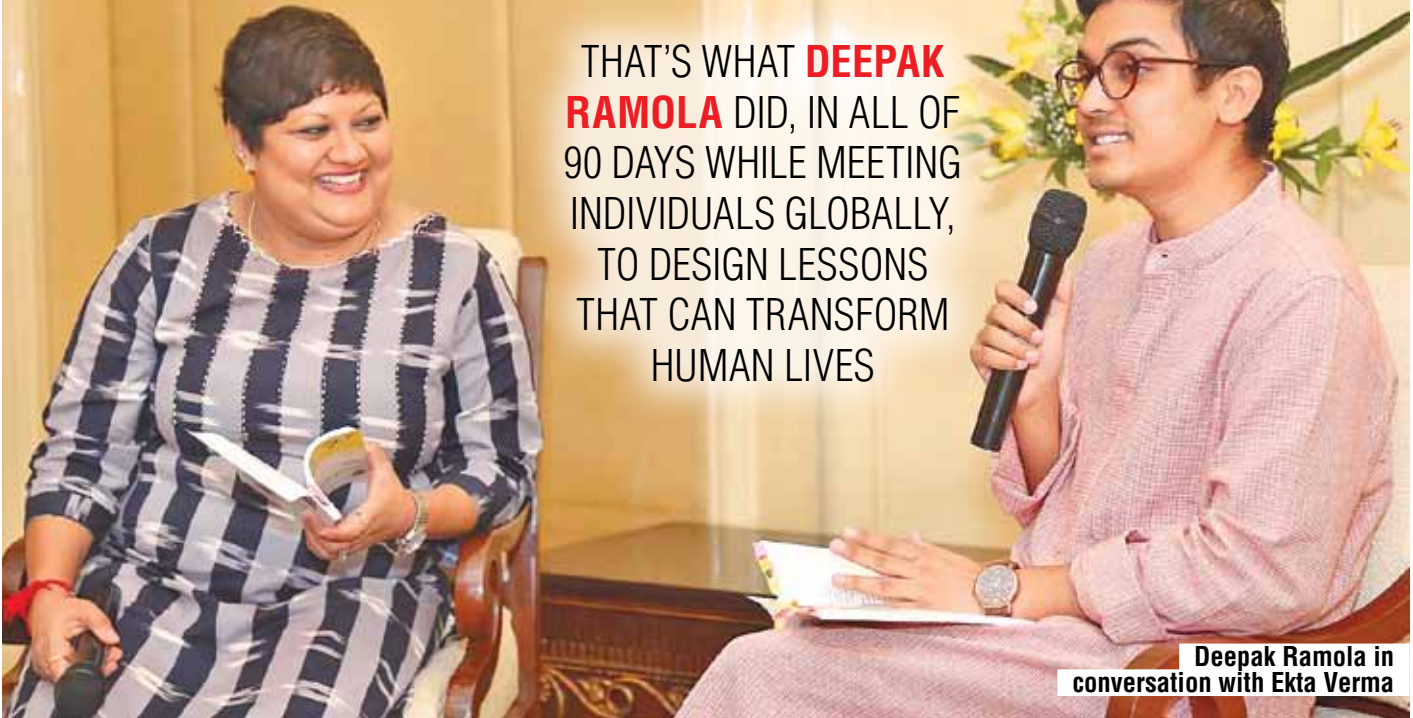


Sheetal Khanna, Ehsaas woman of Amritsar



Sangeeta Datta, Ehsaas woman of London

# AROUND THE WORLD TO GATHER LIFE LESSONS



Deepak Ramola in conversation with Ekta Verma

THAT'S WHAT **DEEPAK RAMOLA** DID, IN ALL OF 90 DAYS WHILE MEETING INDIVIDUALS GLOBALLY, TO DESIGN LESSONS THAT CAN TRANSFORM HUMAN LIVES

**D**eepak Ramola, a popular lyricist, actor and life-skills educator, was in conversation with Ekta Verma, the Founder of Invisible Scar, at the **Kalam** session in Hyderabad on August 17.

Ramola said his most precious life lesson came from his father, who had advised him not to share a meal with a person whose energy one isn't sure of. "Meals, my father explained, were one of the most intimate moments one shares with anybody. It is here that you are absorbed in the most engaging thoughts or in a heartfelt conversation," Ramola said. He confided that his school life was not as pleasant as his life at home. "I was bullied ruthlessly because of my physical attrib-

utes and lean tone, but this did not deter me nor cause any complexes. In fact, this just egged me to strive harder to excel in academics as well as co-curricular activities," he added.

At the age of 14, a conversation with his mother steered him to ponder on the fact that life was the ultimate institution. Armed with this notion, he set out to educate and transform human lives by designing lessons gathered from life experiences of various individuals from around the world. He travelled around Europe for 90 days collecting life lessons from refugees and while doing this, he found that learning a song in the local language made initiating a conversation easier.

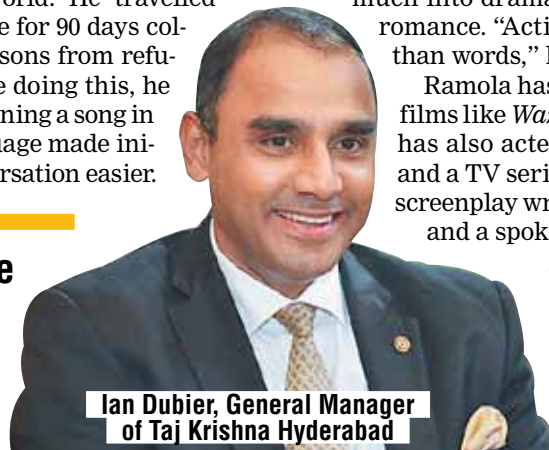
He has picked up life skills from sex workers of Sonagachi and Kamatipura, re-modified and designed it into modules that he has shared in business schools across the world.

The young educator even learnt a lesson from a 5-year-old, who told him, "when you are done using the jar, remember to close the lid." The young poet has refrained from using strong love words in his poetry because he believes that this generation was not much into dramatic expression of romance. "Actions speak greater than words," he said.

Ramola has written songs for films like *Wazir* and *Manjhi*. He has also acted in a few movies and a TV serial, besides being a screenplay writer, script analyst and a spoken word poet.

*Kalam Hyderabad is in association with Taj Krishna Hyderabad and Ehsaas women of Hyderabad*

**Meals, my father explained, are one of the most intimate moments. It is here that you are absorbed in the most engaging thoughts or in a heartfelt conversation**



Ian Dubier, General Manager of Taj Krishna Hyderabad



Seema Goswami in conversation with Anita Hada



Sudhir Mathur and Apra Kuchhal

AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST **SEEMA GOSWAMI** TALKS ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS AND MEDIA AT THE LAUNCH OF HER BOOK IN JAIPUR

# A peek into Delhi's POWER-PLAY

**T**he roles handed out to women in politics, as well as in the media, were in the spotlight at the **Kitaab** book launch held in Jaipur on August 19. Journalist, columnist and author, Seema Goswami, who has been in close contact with people in both the fields, was in the Pink City to launch her latest book, *Race Course Road*.

“Despite the fact that women hold some very senior positions in politics, the representation of women in the Parliament is way too low, Goswami said. “Political parties are still reluctant to offer seats to women,” she added. She said, in journalism too, women get to do only “soft reporting”. “Instead of important beats like finance and politics, women are made to cover areas like health and women’s rights. However, the increased presence of women in television and print has brought in some changes over the past decade,” she said.

In conversation with Anita Hada, the



Despite the fact that women hold very senior positions in politics, their representation in the Parliament is way too low. In journalism too, women get to do only soft reporting though things have changed over last decade

— Seema Goswami

author revealed, her book that turned out to be a political narrative, had in fact, started out as a spy novel. While some events in her books bear similarity to real life, the author said there’s a fine line between fiction and reality.

She revealed, she has had to change some parts of the book she is currently writing due to their uncanny similarity



Vir Sanghvi

with real-life events unfolding in the country. “While it may seem that I am becoming stereotypical, but politics kind of follows the same paths and events,” Goswami explained. The author said she chose to write about politics, since as a journalist, she could only discuss topics that were devoid of any emotions or biases. *Race Course Road* is a political thriller, which offers an insider’s view of Delhi’s political world based on her years of experience as a journalist.

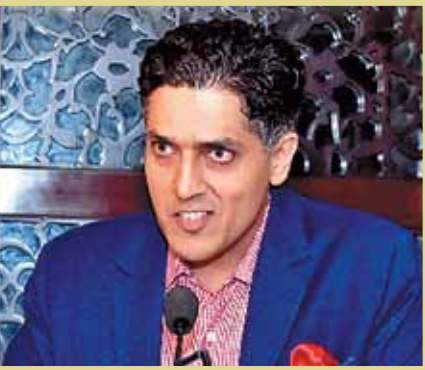
*Kitaab Jaipur is presented by Shree Cement, in association with We Care and Raghu Sinha Mala Mathur Charity Trust*



Shweta Bansal,  
Ehsaas woman of Agra



Poonam Sachdeva



Rajat Sethi, General  
Manager of ITC Mughal



Vinti Kathuria, Ehsaas  
woman of Agra

**PRATYAKSHA SINHA** TALKS ABOUT EXPLORING  
COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH WRITING

# OF SOCIETY, FAMILY AND HUMANE TIES



Pratyaksha Sinha in conversation  
with Aparna Poddar

**T**he complicated nature of human relationships and the loneliness experienced by an individual despite being surrounded by family were some of the topics that came up for discussion at the **Kalam Agra** session held on August 19.

In conversation with Aparna Poddar, author Pratyaksha Sinha spoke about the complexity of social and family ties and shared her journey as a writer exploring these aspects through different characters.

Sinha said she is particularly impressed by multilingual personalities. “For the very same reason, I have made use of a mix of Urdu, Hindi and English in my novel, *Barishghar*,” she said. Sinha added that out of these languages, Urdu happens to be her favourite. Some characters in her writing take inspiration from real-life

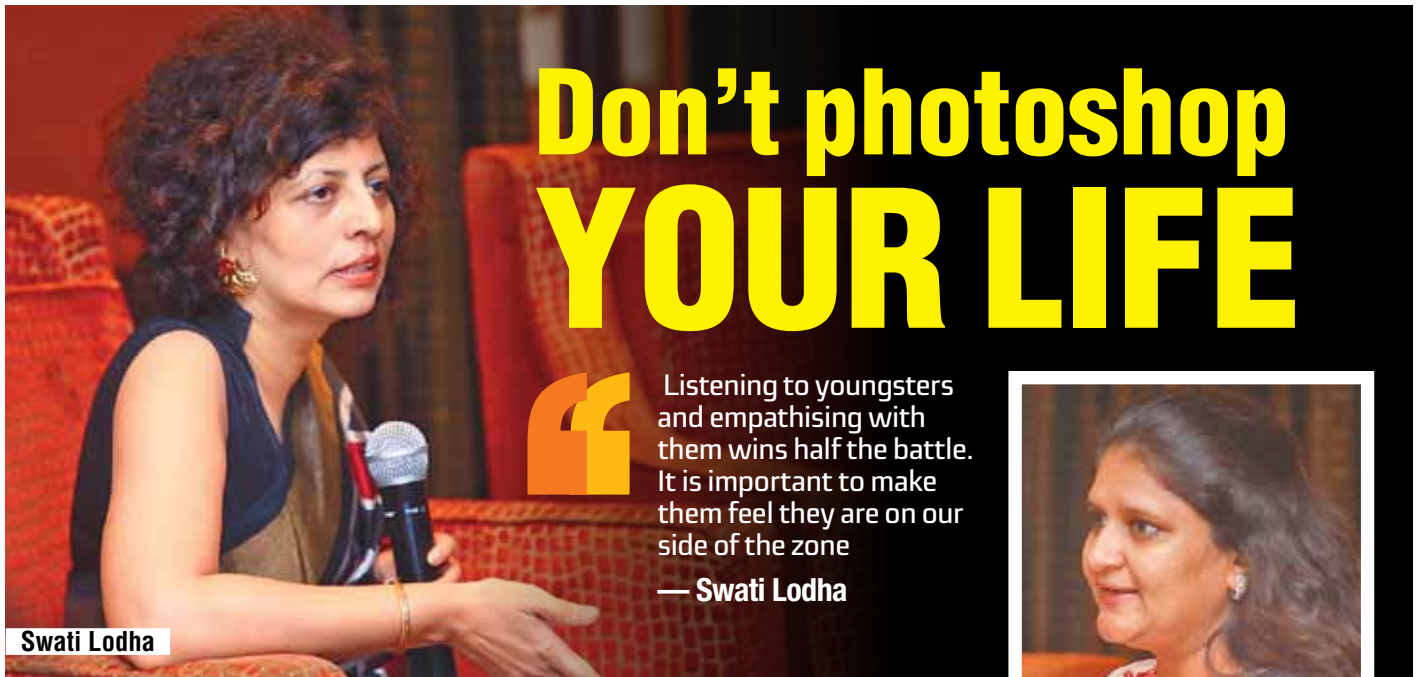
individuals, while others are purely a figment of the imagination. The book *Barishghar*, Sinha added, is a reflection of today’s society and its effects on families.

On the popularity of social media, Sinha said it is only a make-believe world, where people project their lives to be better than real life. “People show only the good part of their lives on social media; it’s actually a fake world out there,” she added.

ITC Mughal general manager Rajat Sethi delivered the welcome note, while **Ehsaas** woman of Agra Vinti Kathuria gave away the vote of thanks. The session was presided over by Poonam Sachdeva.

*Kalam Agra is presented by Shree Cement Ltd, in association with Dainik Jagran, ITC Mughal and Ehsaas women of Agra — Shweta Bansal and Vinti Kathuria*

“  
People show only  
the good part of their  
lives on social media;  
it’s actually a fake  
world out there  
— Pratyaksha Sinha



# Don't photoshop YOUR LIFE



Listening to youngsters and empathising with them wins half the battle. It is important to make them feel they are on our side of the zone

— Swati Lodha



**Shruti Mittal, Ehsaas woman of Bengaluru**

## SWATI LODHA BUSTS SOME PARENTING MYTHS AND ADVISES ADULTS TO BE FRIENDS TO THEIR CHILDREN, NOT BENCHMARKS OF ACHIEVEMENT

**W**hile it may not sound a palatable title in the context of children, parents reading the book *54 Reasons Why Parents Suck* don't seem to be able to put it down. Swati Lodha's book pens the thoughts of her teenage daughter Swara on a teenager's expectation from parents.

At the session of **Write Circle** Bengaluru held at Taj West End on August 20, the author was in conversation with Smita Pradhan, a counsellor and prolific speaker. Lodha very aptly calls parenthood the most 'daunting and challenging phase' in one's life. "Parenthood

is one designation that comes with no internship, no prior preparation, no exchange, payback or guarantee. Listening to the youngsters and empathising with them wins half the battle. It is important to make them feel they are on our side of the zone," she said. She suggested beginning by not photo-shopping our life experiences and presenting to them. "This might help parents to become more approachable instead of being seen as benchmarks of achievement. Listen to them as a friend," she encouraged the audience.

Earlier, at the start of the session, **Ehsaas** woman of Bengaluru, Shruti

Mittal gave the welcome speech. **Ehsaas** woman of Bengaluru, Surekha Prahlad concluded the session. Babita Kathotia, also an **Ehsaas** woman, felicitated Lodha while Manjari handed over a memento to Smita Pradhan.

*The Write Circle Bengaluru is in association with Taj West End Bengaluru and Ehsaas women of Bengaluru — Babita Kathotia, Shruti Mittal and Surekha Prahlad*



**Ehsaas women of Bengaluru — Surekha Prahlad and Babita Kathotia, with guests Hema Makhija and Sheetal**



**Smita Pradhan**



Himanshu Bajpai

**HIMANSHU BAJPAI**, A PROPONENT OF *DASTANGOI* STYLE OF STORYTELLING, CLAIMS LANGUAGE IS NOT BOUND BY RELIGION

Archana Dalmia,  
Ehsaas woman of Delhi

FROM A POET'S  
**KALAM** COMES

# Qissa Qissa Lucknowaa

**P**oet and author Himanshu Bajpai, who comes from the historical city of Lucknow, took the Delhi audience through an eloquent session of prose and poetry on August 20. Bajpai was in conversation with social activist, columnist and **Ehsaas** woman of Delhi, Archana Dalmia, at the sixth session of **Kalam** in the capital city.

Each chapter of Bajpai's book *Qissa Qissa Lucknowaa* begins with poetry. He is a strong supporter of the *Daastangoi* movement and promotes the art of Urdu storytelling, which has been an integral part of Lucknow's culture and heritage. The author feels the practice of storytelling is fading in current times, given the absence of good storytellers. "In order to revive the urge to listen to good prose, it is important to recreate that aura and essence," said the young author, whose plots revolve around *awami* people and their *qissees*.

Explaining that Urdu is not a Muslim language, Bajpai reflected, "Language has never been conceived based

on religion; language reflects regions."

One of the chapters in his book deals with a woman who creates *chikankari*, a craft famously associated with Lucknow. Bajpai shared the woes of such women, who put in long hours to create *chikankari* fabrics, but are deprived of their rightful remuneration.

Bajpai, who writes extensively about the culture of Lucknow, also deconstructed why readers today are not open to conversation. "The absence of *nukkad* culture in our social life has also influenced the mindset of readers;



Language has never been conceived based on religion; language reflects regions... To revive the urge to listen to good prose, it is important to recreate that aura and essence

— Himanshu Bajpai

subsequently, an environment that allows unconditioned conversation is also absent," he added.

Bajpai mesmerised the audience with his creativity and approachable disposition. He recited poetry that had echoes of the *Lucknowaa tehzeeb*. Bajpai holds a PhD in Lucknow's historical Nawal Kishore Press from the Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, Wardha. He is known for his narration of *Lucknowi* anecdotes and giving a tour of its culture to outsiders through a native's eyes. **Ehsaas** woman of Delhi, Neelima Dalmia Adhar, welcomed guests to the session held at the India International Centre. Sunil Mehra was called upon to present the author with a memento, which was followed by signing of his book.

*Kalam Delhi is in association with Dainik Jagran, Dineshbandini Ramkrishna Dalmia Foundation and Ehsaas women of Delhi — Anantmal Potdar, Archana Dalmia, Karuna Goenka, Neelima Dalmia Adhar and Shazia Ilmi*

BIOGRAPHER **VIKRAM SAMPATH** ASKS WHAT DO PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT THE POLARISING FREEDOM FIGHTER TO SET THE TONE FOR AN INFORMED DEBATE

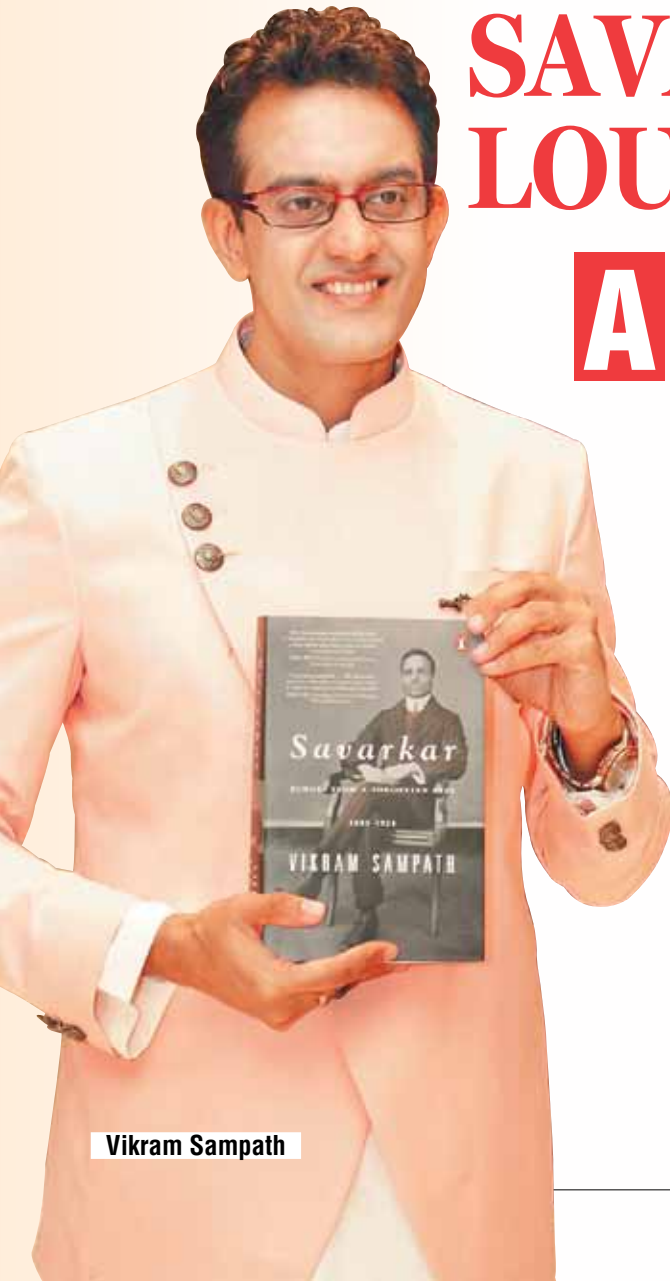


TV Mohandas Pai, Vasanthi Hariprakash, Vikram Sampath and Aditya Sondhi



Sanjoy K Roy

# SAVARKAR ECHOES LOUD AND CLEAR



Vikram Sampath

**A** lot has been spoken of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar but author and biographer Vikram Sampath says it's not enough and people discussing him are largely not informed. Participating at the **Kitaab** book launch in Bengaluru on August 30, Sampath insisted the intellectual fountainhead of Hindutva has not got his due. He was in conversation with Vasanthi Hariprakash and in the company of stalwarts like TV Mohandas Pai and Dr Aditya Sondhi who were present at the unveiling of his latest book as guests of honour.

"As a student," he said, "I never came across any reference of Savarkar in my textbooks." He is a critical part of the Indian freedom struggle and cannot be selectively sidelined in the discourse, Sampath said, adding, the book, *Savarkar: Echoes from a Forgotten Past*, which comes after three years of research, is an independent account of one of the most contentious political thinkers of 20th century.

He was put in the Cellular Jail for 50 years where he motivated the other prisoners to continue with their fight for freedom than rotting in their captivity. He said much as he is looked up to as the poster-boy of Hindutva, he was vociferously dismissive of caste-system. After his release from the prison, he championed inter-caste dining, inter-regional marriages and entry for all castes at the temples, Sampath said.

*Kitaab Bengaluru is in association with Taj West End Bengaluru and Ehsaas women of Bengaluru — Babita Kathotia, Shruti Mittal and Surekha Prahlad*



Shruti Mittal, Ehsaas woman of Bengaluru



Shinnie Antony



Surekha Prahlad, Ehsaas woman of Bengaluru



Manoj Muntashir with Sonam Mahajan

**GOD IS JOBLESS...**

# ...after creating mother

**MANOJ MUNTASHIR**  
RECOUNTS THE PAINS  
HIS MOM WOULD GO TO  
SEE HE WAS SCHOOLED  
AND WELL-FED

**B**orn in Uttar Pradesh near Amethi, Manoj Muntashir comes from a humble family background. After his father lost his job while Muntashir was still a young child, his mother ran the house with a mere Rs 200. She worked as a primary school teacher and would spend Rs 300 from her salary of Rs 500 on her son's education. Recalling her contribution in his life, the *Baahubali* writer and now-famous lyricist shared anecdotes from his life with the **Kalam** Patna audience on August 10.

"Someone said at an event I was attending that god created mother since he cannot be everywhere. I took it forward saying god was disheartened af-



Anvita Pradhan,  
Ehsaas woman of Patna

ter he created mother because he turned jobless after that!" Muntashir said. "However much a person may love you, but they would be lagging behind by nine months, in comparison to your mother," he added.

In conversation with Ratna Purkayastha, Muntashir shared how he had to think twice before buying a book costing as less as Rs 18, given the financial constraints of his family. Muntashir trained himself to be fluent in Hindi as well as Urdu. "At the age of seven, I read my first book, *Diwan-e-*

**“** I believe god was disheartened after he created mother because he turned jobless after that. However much a person may love you, but they would be lagging behind by nine months, in comparison to your mother  
**— Manoj Muntashir**

*Ghalib* that I found in my father's trunk. I couldn't understand the first *shayari* but developed a curiosity about understanding and learning Urdu. I thought of becoming a writer after I picked up a book by Sahir Ludhiyanvi from a railway station in the year 1997," Muntashir shared. Thereon, the pursuit of the language stayed with Muntashir.

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



# Our ancient scriptures hold the KEY TO MODERN LIFE

**NARENDRA KOHLI**  
ENLIGHTENS  
PARTICIPANTS WITH  
HIS INSIGHTS ON  
TECHNOLOGY,  
SCIENCE AND  
OTHER STREAMS OF  
KNOWLEDGE FROM  
THE ANCIENT TEXTS  
LIKE *PURANAS*



Padmashree Recipient Narendra Kohli in conversation with Sudhakar Adeb

Lucknow, the historic city, which has many a tale to tell to the keen listener, hosted Padmashree Recipient, Narendra Kohli, who happens to be one of the most prolific and renowned authors of contemporary India. He shared the stage with author and former bureaucrat, Sudhakar Adeb, at **Kalam** session held under the aegis of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** in the city on August 20. Kohli who is credited with pioneering modern prose from the ancient texts of *Puranas* is convinced that the sheer knowledge held by the scriptures and literary works holds its relevance even to this day.

He admits to being a Hindu writer and minces no words to point out that while he has dedicated several works to the social events and prevalences, his work drawn on the ancient Hindu texts dominate the literary discourse. "My father was not very pleased when he got to know I was writing a *Ram Katha*. It was, in essence, a satire against the system, the government," Kohli said.

The audience at Hyatt Lucknow was left spellbound by the wisdom of his

**A GURU CAN HELP BRING  
OUT YOUR LATENT  
QUALITIES AND GUIDE YOU  
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ONE HAS TO FIND HIS OWN  
PATH AND WALK IT**



Ehsaas women of Lucknow — Dimple Trivedi and Kanak Rekha Chauhan

interpretation of events from the ancient scriptures. "Sanskrit texts, scriptures and other materials of the era gone by are a treasure trove of knowledge," he said. He enlightened the participants with insights on science, technology and other streams of knowledge from the ancient scriptures, and revealed how they are totally relatable to our present-day lifestyle.

The author was candid that early in his life he had realised he had no inclination towards poetry and hence refrained from pursuing it. Being an educator he shared, "A guru can help bring out your latent qualities and guide you in honing them but he cannot instill any qualities in a person." Kohli added, "One needs to realise his or her own path and walk it." The author was felicitated by **Ehsaas** woman of Lucknow, Kanak Rekha Chauhan, while Sudhakar Adeb was acknowledged by **Ehsaas** woman of Lucknow, Dimple Trivedi, who also welcomed the guests.

*Kalam Lucknow is in association with Dainik Jagran, Hyatt Lucknow, Lucknow Expressions and Ehsaas women of Lucknow-Dimple Trivedi, Kanak Rekha Chauhan and Tazeen Husain*



Laxmi Prasad Pant in conversation with Rashmi Dhawan

## UNRAVELLING NATURE'S WRATH

### LAXMI PRASAD PANT ON KEDARNATH, AND THE EFFECT OF HUMAN ACTIVITIES ON THE ENVIRONMENT

**T**he session of **Kalam** Bhubaneswar held on August 20 revolved around the most talked-about subject of today's times, environment. Environmental issues and the effect of human activities, specifically in the Himalayan region, were discussed in the session where journalist and writer Laxmi Prasad Pant was in conversation with Rashmi Dhawan.

Pant's book, *Himalay ka Kabristan* talks about the 2013 cloudburst over

Kedarnath that killed thousands. "I had reported in 2004 that something catastrophic was going to happen to Kedarnath in future, based on a scientific report but the authorities paid no heed. After a few years, the tragedy occurred," said Pant, who has spent years covering environmental issues, especially the changing climate in the Himalayan region.

As per Hindu mythology, Lord Shiva lives in a *shamashan* (graveyard). The session touched upon the similarity of the Kedarnath disaster with this Shiva legend— during the Himalayan tsunami, when the abode of Lord Shiva on

earth also turned into a real graveyard as hundreds of lives were lost. Pant answered questions related to the environment and also spoke about the state of journalism in the country.

"Nature treats us like children. But when we try to take advantage of it and show our insensitivity towards it, there comes a time when nature also crosses its tolerance limit. When nature tries to teach us a lesson, it becomes deadly for us," said Vedula Ramalakshmi, **Ehsaas** woman of Bhubaneswar.

Ramakshmi welcomed guests at the beginning of the session. Gayatri Saraf felicitated the author, while Namrata Chadha presented a memento to Dhawan. At the end of the session, guests also received a copy of Pant's book.

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



I had reported in 2004 that something catastrophic was going to happen to Kedarnath in future, but the authorities paid no heed

— Laxmi Prasad Pant

AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST **NAMITA DEVIDAYAL** CONSTRUCTS THE LIFE OF SITAR MAESTRO RETAINING THE NUANCES THAT GO INTO MAKING OF MUSIC

# RETELLING A maestro's journey



Priyanka Beniwal



Shankar Jha

**A**uthor-journalist Namita Devidayal, who was in conversation with scientist Shankar Jha at the **Write Circle** Ahmedabad session on August 10, spoke about the life and journey of *sitar* maestro Vilayat Khan as profiled in her latest book. Devidayal calls the book, *The Sixth String of Vilayat Khan*, an understanding of the *sitar* maestro instead of labelling it an autobiography.

As readers and book lovers in the audience asked questions on the nuances of constructing someone's life through words, the session turned into an interesting interaction on the challenges, musical and writing experiences of the author and the maestro. Devidayal added that writing about Ustad Vilayat Khan in a simple and lucid way has helped reach more readers. She read out excerpts from the book to share anecdotes about his life.

Devidayal, who is the author of three books, is also a trained Indian classical singer. She revealed her next book, which is in its early stages, is a musical travelogue comprising science, philosophy, spirituality and music. The author added that visiting the city has inspired her



Parthvi Modi

with its beauty of the landscape and historic monuments.

At the end of the session, Devidayal was presented a memento by Priyanka Beniwal, the Banquet Manager of The House of MG, while the conversation-artist was presented a memento by Madhvi Pandya. The welcome note and vote of thanks were presented by Parthvi Modi. Later, the author signed copies of her latest book.

*The Write Circle Ahmedabad is in association with The House of MG, Karma Foundation and Ehsaas woman of Ahmedabad, Priyanshi Patel*



*The Sixth String of Vilayat Khan is an understanding of the sitar maestro. I chose to write about Ustad Vilayat Khan in a simple and lucid way. It has helped me take his story to more readers*

— Namita Devidayal



Namita Devidayal



Ehsaas women of Pune —  
Neelam Seolekar and Sujata Sabnis



I started writing to  
impress my girlfriend

The biggest difference  
in writing a novel and writing  
a script is *aazadi*

— Arpit Vageria

# WRITING, NO HOLDS BARRED

**ARPIT VAGERIA** TALKS  
ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN WRITING FOR  
NOVELS AND SCRIPTING  
FOR SHOWS AND SERIALS

**A** name synonymous in contemporary Indian writing with romantic fiction, young author Arpit Vageria was in conversation with Amita Munot, **Ehsaas** woman of Pune at the **Kalam** session held in the city on August 31.

Vageria, who uses a realistic outlook for his storyline and characters, made the revelation that he was a typical 'confused kid'. He also spoke about his professional journey that had a lot of trials and errors. "I entered the world of words to write a novel in order to impress my girlfriend," he shared with the audience. Vageria was unabashed in disclosing to the audience that though he is a qualified marketing man, the sales targets and figures would hound him even as he slept, which drove him to take up a career in writing.

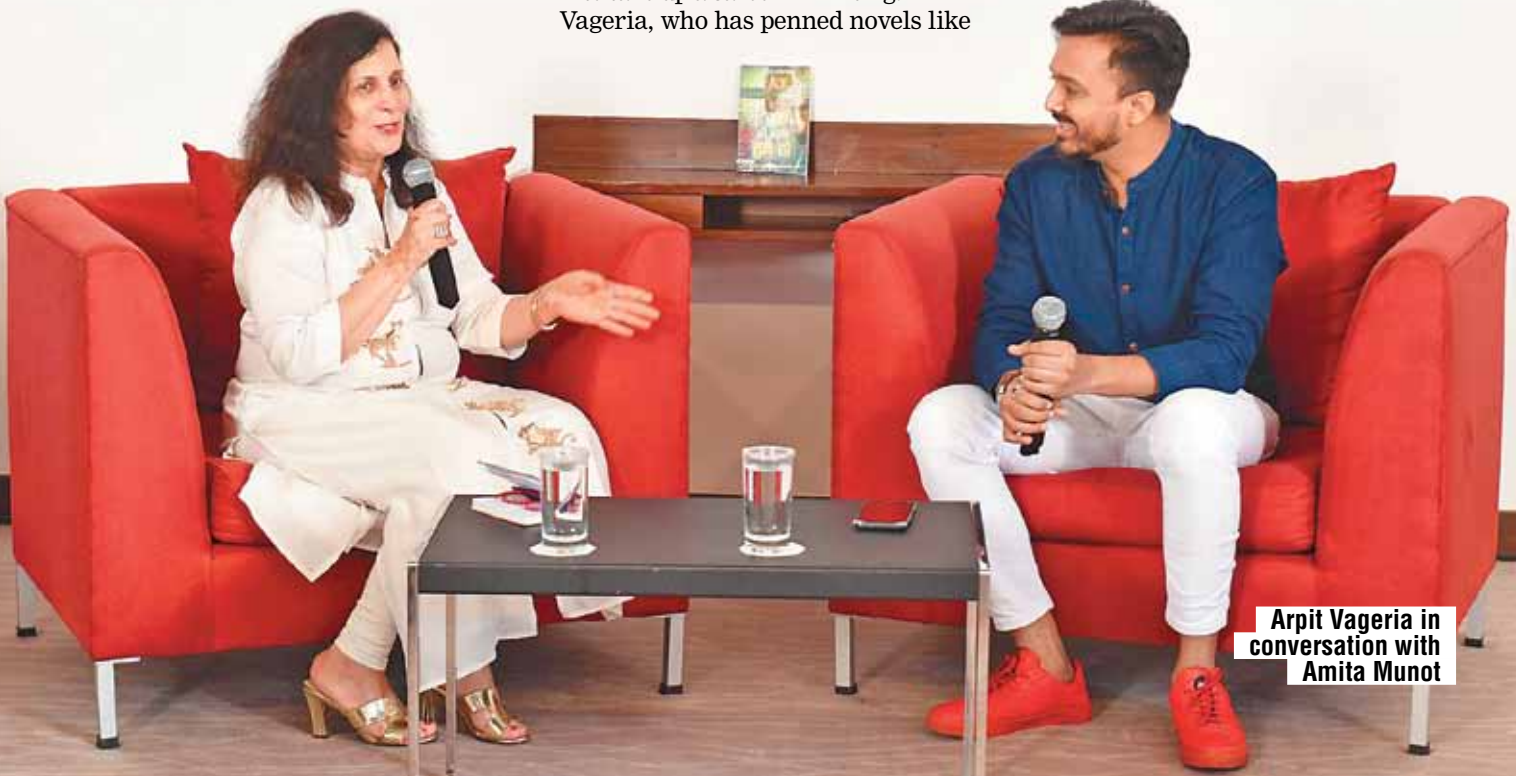
Vageria, who has penned novels like

*Love Knows No LoC, Be My Perfect Ending* and *You Are My Reason to Smile*, also spoke about his inspiration, life and dreams. Having scripted for popular shows like *The Great Indian Laughter Challenge, India's Best Dramebaaz* and others, Vageria also wrote the script for the coveted IIFA awards.

"There is a very thin line between making people laugh and humiliating them," voiced the author, admitting he makes the sincerest efforts to keep his script witty and humorous. "The biggest difference in writing a novel and writing a script is *aazadi* (freedom). While writing a novel there are no boundaries or limitations on your creativity and expression, but when one writes for a show or serial, we are bound by the storyline, demand of the audience sensitivity, producer's sensibility and more. Each comes with its own challenges," he added.

Earlier, Sujata Sabnis, **Ehsaas** woman of Pune welcomed the scriptwriter and author.

*Kalam Pune is in association with The O Hotel, Lokmat and Ehsaas women of Pune- Amita Munot, Neelam Seolekar and Sujata Sabnis*



Arpit Vageria in  
conversation with  
Amita Munot

**PRABHA** SHARES THE STORY OF **EHSAAS** WOMAN OF BHUBANESWAR, **VEDULA RAMALAKSHMI**, AN ACTIVE PROPONENT OF HINDI LANGUAGE

# Hindi is her passion, oratory her love

**F**rom being a skilled orator to sharing with young students the nuances of the language, **Ehsaas** woman of Bhubaneswar, Vedula Ramalakshmi, has been a crusader of Hindi language and literature in Odisha. She has been working toward the same as part of various activities of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**. She has contributed to popularising the language in the predominantly Odia-speaking state in many ways — from anchoring various national and state events, to translating several literary works in Hindi.

In her career spanning over 26 years, Ramalakshmi has devoted herself to teaching the Hindi language and literature at all levels. Currently an associate professor at the Kamala Nehru Women's College in Bhubaneswar, Ramalakshmi did her post-graduation in Hindi literature from Andhra University in 1992, and earned her doctorate from Utkal University in 2001. She is also the recipient of the 'Gundra Sundarareddy Gold Medal' for overall merit. In addition to her academic duties, Ramalakshmi

In her career spanning 26 years, Ramalakshmi has devoted herself to teaching Hindi literature. She has collaborated with Doordarshan for state and national level cultural events, both in and outside Odisha and has been part of the live commentary team for the famous Jagannath Rath Yatra for DD

keeps herself busy with several endeavours, spreading her love for the language.

She is a qualified JCI presenter, national trainer and an avid translator of Odia language into Hindi. She has trained over 15,000 participants in communication skills, effective public speaking, human relations, motivation, leadership, team building and the power of subconscious mind. Her former students include teachers, students, professors, parents, bankers, managers, housewives, businessmen, chartered accountants and entrepreneurs from Odisha, Gujarat, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Assam, Telangana, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh.

She has collaborated with *Doordarshan* for various state and national level cultural events, both in and outside Odisha and has been part of the live commentary team for the famous *Jagannath Rath Yatra* for DD National, DD Bharati and DD India since 2013. She has been anchoring for the International Sand Art Festival live since 2013.



# Movies didn't trivialise Hindi, **THEY HELPED PROMOTE IT**

MEMBER OF THE CBFC,  
**VANI TRIPATHI  
TIKOO**, WHO WAS  
PART OF THE **KALAM**  
SPECIAL SESSION IN  
MOUNTAIN ECHOES,  
CLAIMS HINDI FILMS  
PROMOTED THE  
LANGUAGE IN INDIA



**VANI TRIPATHI  
TIKOO**  
Member of the Central Board of  
Film Certification



**Kalam session with Pavan Varma,  
Vani Tripathi Tikoo and Rahul Mahajan**

**I**t was indeed a pleasure and privilege to be invited to speak at the Mountain Echoes Festival in Bhutan. The Festival is in its 10th year and enjoys the royal patronage of the Queen Mother, Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck. Whenever I sat down with Mita Kapur or Namita for a discussion on cinema, they would always say that Hindi cinema's popularity in Bhutan stands unparalleled. Truly, seeing the youth turning up in such a large num-

ber for a session in Hindi was very encouraging.

I chose to speak on a topic that has not been delved upon often. Bollywood is a term I strongly detest as it makes our industry seem like a poor cousin to Hollywood. I feel it should rightfully be cited as *Bharatiya* cinema or Hindi cinema since it showcases the diverse languages of our country. Another major aspect of discontent for me has been that a lot of puritans of Hindi literature have expressed that the Hindi spoken in Indian

cinema is very pedestrian. This is an absolutely flawed argument.

The tremendous contribution of Hindi cinema in promoting and popularising the language, besides creating more respect for the language, is irrevocable. Despite being a diverse country harbouring over 35 mainstream languages, Hindi remains the most commonly spoken and comprehended language. This is enhanced further by the Indian people's affinity towards Hindi cinema.

The Hindi film industry is often im-



Hinglish has become the spoken narrative of today's generation and reflects on contemporary literature, theatre as well as films. I feel it is best to go with the flow of change

— Vani Tripathi Tikoo

## HINDINAMA MAKES WAVES AT MOUNTAIN ECHOES

A special session of **Kalam** — *Hindinama* — was organised at the Mountain Echoes Literary Festival in Thimphu, Bhutan, on August 23, at Taj Tashi. The stellar panel included Pavan K Varma, a writer-diplomat who has written over a dozen bestselling books, including the highly successful *Krishna: The Playful Divine*. He was accompanied on stage by Vani Tripathi Tikoo, an actor and producer by profession who is one of the youngest ever members of the Central Board of Film Certification, India. Rahul Mahajan, who has been a journalist for 23 years, and is the editor-in-chief of the Rajya Sabha channel anchored the jam-packed event. Mountain Echoes is festival dedicated to promoting literature and is organised by Siyahi in Thimphu. The festival, which is in its 10th year, enjoys the royal patronage of the Queen Mother, Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck. This year, **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** presented *Hindinama - A Kalam* special session at the festival.

licated of using Hindi commonly referred to as *Bambaiya Hindi*. But this kind of language reflects the flavour of the masses, as different communities speak Hindi differently. For example, the Marathis speak it in a different way, the Gujaratis and Parsis speak it in a different way, and Muslims speak Hindi laced with Urdu, which is known as Hindustani. The diversity of states within the Hindi paradigm and Hindi literature gets reflected in Indian cinema. We should celebrate this diversity of Hindi.

This is one universal language that has managed to bind people from different walks of life together and has not lost its impact or respect because of its different renderings. Instead, we should celebrate the fact that the language has been embraced by different communities as a medium that allows them a common platform for communication.

While I uphold the belief that Hindi cinema has not shorn the language of its lustre, I also acknowledge the fact that present scriptwriters are not using the conventional Hindi derived from the Devnagri or Sanskrit script. That definitely has changed the flavour of the words in our cinema.

Another very important aspect that we should laud about Hindi cinema is the characterisation of the language. A gangster is meant to deliver his dialogues in a manner and language expected of his character. We cannot expect him to speak like Swami Vivekananda, while playing a mobster. As the brilliant Hindi poetess, Mahadevi Verma, had expressed that language is like a flowing stream. It will take pebbles and stones along with its flow and never cease to stop. The flow of Hindi language too has had its fair share of pollution but has never ceased to flow.

When I sit down to certify a film, I look at the intention of the film. Similarly, language has an intention too. It has to promote and reflect the intention of the character and this should not be curbed or forgotten. This is all the more pertinent now, as the scripts nowadays are more realistic narratives and revolve around real-life issues like sexual violence, women empowerment, etc.

It is one of the key ingredients for many Box-Office hits and sustainability of the industry. If we take into account recent super hits like *Dirty Picture*, *NH 10*, *Toilet-Ek Premkatha*, *Shubh Mangal Savdhan*, we see that the narrative is so real and so is the language used in the dialogues. I choose to call the language real, because as the script revolves around real-life issues

and people, the dialogues too need to reflect an essence of realism. There are expressions we use in our everyday communication which do not find place within the written words, quite often. On the other hand, cinema recognises and upholds all genres of language through its dialogues.

With the advent of social media in our lives and Facebook, Twitter, Instagram becoming an integral part of our communication system, the Hindi practised by the youth has become Hinglish. This has become the spoken narrative of today's generation and reflects on contemporary literature, theatre as well as films. I feel it is best to go with the flow of change and gracefully embrace the interpretations of today's youth.

I come from a very puritanical Hindi family, where both my parents were strong Hindi and Sanskrit scholars and belonged to the Chhayawad period. I have therefore been exposed to the pu-

**Bollywood is a term I strongly detest as it makes our industry seem like a poor cousin to Hollywood. I feel it should rightfully be cited as *Bharatiya* cinema or Hindi cinema. Also, the argument that Hindi spoken in Indian cinema is very pedestrian, is absolutely flawed**

richness of the language and completely respect and adhere to it. However, I personally acknowledge the nuanced change in the usage of the language in the country today, and feel that others too should accept this new trend in the language.

I came back from the invigorating session humbled and ecstatic by the young Bhutanese girls' and boys' understanding of Hindi. Their love for Hindi cinema has played a key role in this. I look forward to more such sessions from the Foundation and congratulate them for their endeavour to promote regional languages along with English.

# लताः सुर-बाधा के बहाने

लता मंगेशकर की उपस्थिति के नब्बे साल का चित्रण करते हुए **यतीन्द्र मिश्र** कहते हैं कि 1947 से शुरु हुई इस सांगीतिक परिघटना ने भारतीय सन्दर्भों में एक स्त्री आवाज़ का जिस तरह अनुसरण और सम्मान किया है, वह अपने आप में विलक्षण है

**न**ब्बे साल की उम्रदराज सीढ़ी पर सुरों से भरी हुई लता दीनानाथ मंगेशकर की आमद! एक ऐसा 'रेड कार्पेट ऑनर' जिसके शानदार गलीचे पर चलकर वे उसी तरह दुनिया के सामने आती हैं, जिस तरह 1949 में महल के गीत के शुरुआती मुखड़े में उनका प्रवेश है।

**'खामोश है जमाना, चुपचाप हैं सितारे  
आराम से  
है दुनिया, बेकल हैं दिल के मारे'**

...उनके हर एक प्रशंसक के मन में आज यही कामना होगी कि वे शताब्दियों के आर-पार उजाला फैलाने वाली अपनी आवाज़ की तरह ही इस दुनिया में भी वैसे ही शतक की पारी खेलें, जैसा कि उनके प्रिय क्रिकेटर सचिन तेन्दुलकर खेलकर उन्हें आनन्द से भरते रहे हैं।

लता जी के सांगीतिक जीवन की तरह ही उनका व्यक्तिगत जीवन भी उतना ही गरिमापूर्ण और सामान्य जीवन के उतार-चढ़ावों से भरा रहा है, जिसे उन्होंने अपनी कठिन कला-साधना से पिछले पिचहतर सालों में रचा, सँवारा और निखारा है।

उनके जीवन में पिछले अस्सी बरस पहले जाकर झाँकें, तो हम पायेंगे कि कैसे लता मंगेशकर का बचपन,

वैभव और सम्पन्नता के साथ बीता, जबकि कैशोर्य की दहलीज पर आकर उन्हें गरीबी की मार झेलते हुए संघर्ष करना पड़ा। उनके बाबा पण्डित दीनानाथ मंगेशकर लता को इस कदर प्रेम करते थे कि उन्हें अकसर चिढ़ाते हुए बड़े लाड़ से *तता बाबा* कहते थे।

वे बचपन में गिल्ली-डण्डा खेलती थीं और कई बार पिता के नाटकों की नकल पर घर के भीतर ही भाई-बहनों और सगे-सम्बन्धियों के साथ नाटक का खेल खेलती थीं। उनकी अभिनय प्रतिभा से रीझकर पिता ने उस दौर के मशहूर नाटककार कोठीवाले से लता के लिए एक बाल नाटिका कृष्ण-सुदामा के जीवन पर *गुरुकुल* लिखवाई थी, जिसमें नन्हें लता ने कृष्ण का किरदार अभिनीत किया था।

अपने पिता से ही शास्त्रीय संगीत भी उन्होंने कम उम्र में सीखना शुरु किया था, जो बाद में उनके सांगीतिक जीवन की थाती ही बन गया। पिता पण्डित दीनानाथ मंगेशकर से सीखी हुई अनगिनत बन्दिशों, जो आज भी लता जी को याद रह गयी हैं, उनमें राग मालकौंस, हिंडोल, जयजयवन्ती और पूरिया धनाश्री को विशेष लगाव से याद करती हैं।

उन्हें स्मरण है कि जयजयवन्ती सिखाते हुए पिता ने कैसे *तन जहाज मन सागर* को गाते हुए तान लेना बताया था। पिता ने यह सीख भी दी थी - 'जिस तरह कविता में शब्दों का अर्थ होता है, वैसे ही गीत में सुरों

का अर्थ होता है, गाते समय दोनों अर्थ उभरने चाहिए।' इस बात से आज कौन इंकार करेगा कि लता जी ने अपने पिता जी द्वारा दी गयी सीख पर पूरी निष्ठा से चलने का जतन किया और देखते ही देखते वे संगीत की एक जीवित किंवदन्ती बन गयीं।

आज नब्बे बरस बीत जाने के बाद लता जी के जीवन का यह संस्मरण लिखते हुए मन भीग जाता है कि कैसे मृत्यु से पूर्व उनके पिता ने अपनी बेटी को अपने नोटेशन की कॉपी और तानपुरा सौंपा था। वे चाहते थे कि लता इन्हें संभाल कर रखें और अपने पिता की दी हुई सौगात और धरोहर के आशय को गहराई से समझ सकें। इस महान पात्रवगायिका के जीवन का यह शायद सबसे महत्वपूर्ण प्रस्थान-बिन्दु भी रहा है कि वह नोटेशन की कॉपी और पिता के अभ्यास का तानपुरा जैसे उनके जीवन का मंगल रचने वाला प्रतीक ही बन गया।

संगीत की तमाम विधाओं ने भी उनके सम्मोहन को रचने में बड़ा योगदान किया है। भजन, भाव-गीत, मराठी नाट्य संगीत, अभंग, पदावली, स्तोत्र पाठ, मंत्र गायन और लोकगीतों के कुछ विशिष्ट प्रकारों से लेकर नातें, क्रव्वाली, गजल सभी में सिद्धहस्त लता मंगेशकर ने संगीत के नैसर्गिक संसार में अपना एक अलग ही सुर-साम्राज्य बनाया हुआ है। इस अनुभव पगी उम्र में आकर जब उन्हें संगीत का एक पर्याय ही मान लिया गया है, यह कितने गौरव की बात है कि उनके नाम से मध्य प्रदेश और महाराष्ट्र सरकार राष्ट्रीय स्तर का एक संगीत पुरस्कार हर वर्ष प्रदान करती है।

....और एक वह भी समय रहा है, जब लता जी बारह वर्ष की उम्र में पूना की एक संगीत प्रतियोगिता में पहला पुरस्कार जीतकर घर आयी थीं। उनके पिता के हाथ से ईनाम में मिला हुआ वाद्य दिलरुबा का गज गलती से टूट गया था। उनके दुःखी होने पर पिता ने प्यार से भरकर समझाया - 'मेरी तता बाबा इतना क्यों रोती है? जीवन में अभी तुम्हें इतने पुरस्कार मिलने हैं,



जिसका कोई हिसाब भी नहीं रख पाओगी।’

उस दिन पिता ने जो अपनी मेधावी पुत्री को सराहा, वह बात भविष्य में जाकर एक बड़ा सत्य बनने की राह पर आगे बढ़ गयी। यही हुआ भी, बरस दर बरस लता मंगेशकर कामयाबी और कीर्तिमान रचते हुए उस शिखर पर जा बैठीं, जहाँ उन्हें बचपन में मिले हुए पहले ईनाम दिलरुबा के गज के टूट जाने का मान, संगीत की दुनिया ने उनकी झोली में दोनों हाथों से भर-भर कर दिया।

लता जी की असाधारण सफलता में जिन शुभचिन्तकों और आत्मीय जनों का आशीष शामिल रहा है, उन्हें आज भी वे आदर से भरकर याद करती हैं। इसमें उनके शास्त्रीय संगीत के गुरुओं उस्ताद अमान अली ख़ाँ, भण्डी बाजार वाले, और अमानत ख़ाँ, देवास वाले, के अलावा निर्माता निर्देशक मास्टर विनायक, मराठी फ़िल्मों के भालजी पेण्डारकर, संगीतकार मास्टर गुलाम हैदर, अनिल विश्वास और खेमचन्द प्रकाश के साथ कवि गीतकार पण्डित नरेन्द्र शर्मा के नाम शामिल हैं।

लता जी की जिन्दगी के सुनहरे पन्नों में ढेरों अफसाने दर्ज हैं, कई मार्मिक और प्रेरक कहानियाँ उनके सफेद साड़ी के पल्लू के साथ उतनी ही सादगी से बँधी हुई हैं, जितना कि खुद उनका शानदार व्यक्तित्व रहा है। अपने जमाने की मशहूर तवायफ और संगीतकार जद्दनबाई की एक सीख गुँथी हुई है कि ‘जिस तलफ़ुज के साथ तुम गा रही हो बेटा, एक दिन निश्चित ही बड़ा नाम करोगी।’ इसी तरह जोहराबाई अम्बालेवाली की यह आशीष - ‘बेटा! तुम्हारी आवाज में अल्ला की बरकत है, उसके लिए हमेशा शुक्रिया अदा करती रहना और उसे संभालकर रखना।’

अनिल विश्वास का गज़रे के लिए ‘कब आओगे बालमा, बरस-बरस बदली भी बिखर गयी’ गीत रेकॉर्ड करते हुए, इस बात के लिए जद्दाजे हद करना कि इसी समय स्टूडियो में आकर किसी तरह राज कपूर यह गाना सुन लें, जिससे लता की रेंज के बारे में उन्हें अन्दाज़ा हो और उनकी महत्वाकांक्षी फ़िल्म बरसात के लिए लता को काम मिल सके।

उस्ताद बड़े गुलाम अली ख़ाँ का संगीत सम्मेलन में यह इसरार करना - ‘आओ लता! तुम मेरी बगल में बैठकर मेरे साथ गाओ।’ कमलादेवी चट्टोपाध्याय का कलकत्ता के एक संगीत समारोह में लता मंगेशकर को सुनकर ग्रीन रूम में आकर यह कहना - ‘ऐ मेरे वतन के लोगों आपने पूरे दिल से गाया है। ऐसे गीतों को सुनकर मन भर आता है। मैं आपसे यही गुज़ारिश करना चाहती हूँ कि समाज को प्रेरणा देने वाले ऐसे एक-दो गीत आप अपने कार्यक्रम में अवश्य ही गाया कीजिए। आपको लगभग पूरा देश ही फॉलो करता है। मैं आपकी प्रशंसक हूँ, इसलिए कह रही हूँ कि आपके गाने से एक सार्थक सन्देश देश भर में जायेगा।’

1947 से शुरू हुई इस सांगीतिक परिघटना ने भारतीय सन्दर्भों में एक स्त्री आवाज का जिस तरह अनुसरण और सम्मान किया है, वह अपने आप में विलक्षण है। लता जी का वर्धमान यश ऐसे ही सौ वर्षों तक शरद-ऋतु की कोमलता और मधुरता की तरह ही हर एक संगीत-प्रेमी के मन को भिगोता रहे। यह हम सभी के लिए अपार खुशी की बात है कि हम उसी हवा में साँस लेते हैं, जिसमें हमारी लता मंगेशकर की साँसे भी बसी हुई हैं।



उन्होंने फ़िल्म गायन के बहाने सुगम संगीत जैसे हल्के समझे जाने वाले क्षेत्र को अपनी उपस्थिति से ऐसा भरा कि उनके होने से तमाम इज्जतदार घरों की लड़कियों ने संगीत सीखने में दिलचस्पी दिखाई



लता मंगेशकर और यतीन्द्र मिश्र



The Bar



Cafe Oriza



Terrace

# LUXURY, WITH A VIEW OF THE CITY

THIS MONTH'S  
HOSPITALITY  
PARTNER IS **HYATT  
RAIPUR**, WHICH  
HOSTS KALAM  
AND THE  
WRITE CIRCLE

**H**yatt Raipur, the first branded hotel of the city, has also been its landmark. Located close to the airport and the central business district, Hyatt lies within the complex of the city's best mall – Magneto.

With 105 rooms, Hyatt Raipur also boasts a state-of-the-art fitness centre along with three food and beverage outlets. The hotel has great event spaces along with an open terrace with a view of the cityscape. All public areas are located on the fourth

floor. Hyatt Raipur is also LEED-certified and thus is an environment-friendly hotel. Atal Nagar, the erstwhile Naya Raipur that is the Raipur Smart City project, is just a 20-minute drive from the hotel.

Hyatt Raipur ensures that every guest is cared for and extended heartfelt service. Known for its food and beverage offerings, Hyatt Raipur surprises guests with food creativity and customisable menus. Café

Oriza, the world-cuisine restaurant is a hot favourite, especially for their Sunday brunch served under the banner 'Roll over it's noon'! The BAR is an intimate space with a rustic appeal and English décor.

Harkaran Singh, General Manager adds, "At Hyatt, we believe in CARE and the purpose of our company is to CARE for People for that they can be their best. We love the partnership with **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** as it helps keep literature alive through the lens of talented authors who can make a difference in the society we live in."



Harkaran Singh,  
General Manager



# Potochitra with a side of ghugni



AS PART OF **PRABHA KHAITAN FOUNDATION'S** EFFORTS TO BOOST LOCAL CRAFTS AND FOOD, GUESTS IN BHUBANESWAR ARE TREATED TO LOCAL SPECIALITIES

**C**ultural ambassadors and historians around the world would agree that the terms heritage and culture are not limited to literary and artistic traditions of a place. These would also encompass local food and artisanal treasures. **Prabha Khaitan Foundation's** association with heritage and culture also goes beyond exclusively curated interactive sessions. The key to its endeavours has been to connect with our roots through activities that help revive fading conventional usages.

Speakers and moderators are felicitated with handicrafts or artefacts associated with the host city. The Foundation has always tried to support and promote local craft and craftsmen through various channels. Great thought goes into selection of handicrafts that are handed over to guests in each session.

Creating awareness for the traditional art form of Odisha – *Potochitra*, or paintings on cloth, has been one such endeavour. The birth of *Potochitra* is traced back to 5th century BC via murals found in Puri, Konark and Bhubaneswar. The painters, traditionally called *chitrakars*, prepare the cloth canvas by coating it with a mixture of chalk and gum made from tamarind seeds. Mostly vegetable, earth or stone colours are used in this form of painting.

The theme of painting revolves around the activities of Lord Jagan-

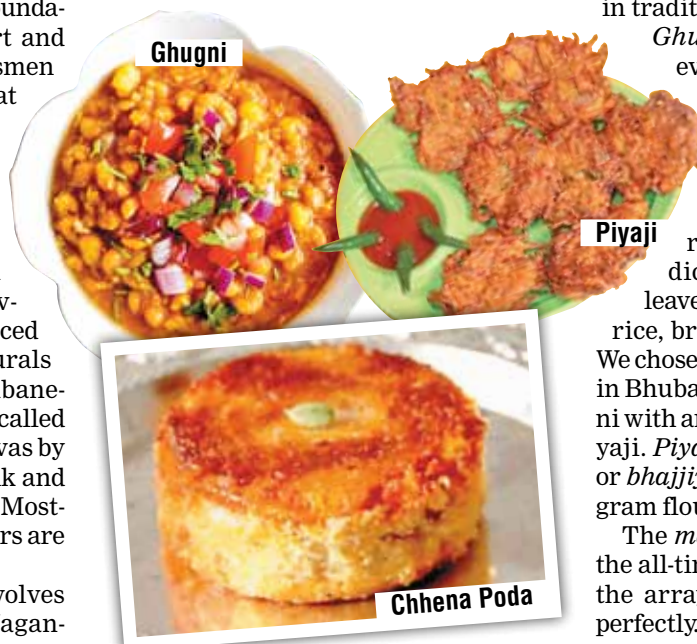
nath and the Vaishnava sect. Various activities of Lord Krishna too, can be found in these paintings as Lord Jagannath is considered to be an incarnation of Krishna. The vivid details in the paintings follow a very rustic and basic style of painting. A coat of lacquer is applied on the paintings to safeguard them from weathering.

The Foundation hosts **Aakhar, Ek Mulakat** and **Kalam** in Odisha. In the sessions held at Bhubaneswar, our guests were treated to the best from the world of words along with a taste of local fare that included the traditional *Chhena Poda*, *Ghugni* with *Piyaji*,

*Dahi Vada*, *Mini Samosa* and, of course, tea. While the *Dahi Vada* and *mini samosa* are a familiar item on the snack table all over India, *Ghugni* is a popular evening snack amongst the people of Eastern India. *Chhena Poda* is typically Odissi and traces its origin to the town of Nayagarh in the early twentieth century. Confectionery owner, Sudarshan Sahoo added some sugar and seasoning to well-kneaded cottage cheese and left it overnight on an oven warm from earlier use. The next morning, he was pleasantly surprised to find his cottage cheese transformed into a delectable sweet dish that finds place in traditional Odiya fare.

*Ghugni* is mostly enjoyed as an evening snack in Bengal, Odisha, Bihar and Assam. It comes with different accompaniments. Cooked with white peas, it is often served with a dash of tamarind chutney and sprinkle of diced onion and coriander leaves. It is accompanied by puffed rice, bread, *roti*, *pav* or even patties. We chose to serve it with a twist. Guests in Bhubaneswar were treated to *Ghugni* with another popular street food – *Piyaji*. *Piyaji* is basically onion *pakoras* or *bhajjiyas* made from onions fried in gram flour or *besan* batter.

The *masala chai* served along with the all-time local favourites completed the array on the refreshment menu perfectly.



# LITERACY NOT A MEASURE of learned & WISE

IS LITERACY ONLY A PERSON'S ABILITY TO READ AND WRITE WITH UNDERSTANDING? **SUJATA SEN**, DIRECTOR OF KOLKATA LITERATURE FESTIVAL FOR WHICH **PRABHA KHAITAN FOUNDATION** IS A PARTNER, WRITES FOR US AS WE DEDICATE THIS EDITION TO INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY, CELEBRATED ON SEPTEMBER 8

**O** have never understood what literacy means. It means various things to various people. When a Bengali *bhadralok* points at someone and says he's illiterate, he probably means the person does not have manners even though he may have a post-graduate degree. When a city bred student of an

English medium school says the villager is illiterate, he probably means the villager cannot speak fluently in English.

Although UNESCO has a definition — the “ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts” — it has outlived

current thought and practice.

There was a time when we calculated literacy rate by a person's ability to read and write with understanding, and we probably still do. The Kerala State Literacy Programme, very commendable

for the work they do especially in tribal areas, has the slogan “Education for all and Education forever”.

Recently, 85-year-old Kembi from Wayanad, Kerala, cleared the KSLM literacy examination. Having never studied in a school, this was her chance to prove she could write with meaning using her own pen. The exam was set for 100 marks with three components: Reading (30 marks), Writing (40 marks), and Arithmetic (30 marks). The candidates had to score 30 marks to pass. The exam is set at class 4 level.

Kembi can probably now put her signature on documents and calculate the price of daily commodities in her local market. However, I am not sure what higher level of understanding she would have acquired with this recent exam. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) over the years has shown that students, especially in elementary school Classes I-VIII, are not learning enough. The ASER 2018 report, published in January 2019 by education non-profit *Pratham*, shows that only half (50.3%) of all students in Class V can read texts meant for Class II students. This is learning assessed through a test, and certainly ASER's test would be a very well de-



**SUJATA SEN**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Future Hope



ARTWORK BY  
SUDIPTA KUNDU

signed scientific system of assessing literacy and learning. But I am still trying to understand what literacy does for people.

In the village of Katatala in South 24 Parganas there was a recent scramble in a photocopying stall provoked by the news of an impending National Register of Citizens (NRC) in West Bengal. A young man who had acquired the photocopying machine to do business was the centre of attention. He was photocopying the various documents of the villagers and authenticating them by signing them himself. The villagers felt this would be adequate to get them into the citizens' register. Many of them would have gone to school and acquired some level of literacy yet it did not give them the insight to discriminate between authentic and false.

I was at a police station recently to file a case against a rapist who had violated a child. It took me several hours through the night to convince the family of the victim to get on with the case. Some of the family members had school and even college education. This still did not equip them to fight for justice.

This, and many other experiences, have always made me think what is literacy and its functional use in getting on with life. I was overhearing a conversation recently in a very posh members' club where an obviously educated old man was talking about Karnataka having a Congress government, long after Bharatiya Janta Party's BS Yediyurappa, was sworn in as Chief Minister.

It reminded me of the book *Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World – and Why Things Are Better Than You Think*, by Swedish statistician Hans Rosling, who writes that the book is his last battle in his lifelong mission to fight devastating global ignorance. People make systematically wrong guesses by out-of-date knowledge. Rosling is a health statistician and his experiences reveal how even top heads of states, who have access to all the latest data, are getting the basic facts about the world wrong.

What is it that equips us to distinguish between right and wrong? Good and evil? Genuineness and pretence? Wisdom and knowledge? Certainly not a school or college degree. I am still trying to think.



Aadil Raza Mansoori

URDU POET  
**ATEEQULLAH**  
SPOKE ABOUT THE  
COMMERCIALISATION  
OF LITERATURE AT  
THE **LAZF** SESSION  
IN JAIPUR



Ateequllah



Ateequllah with Sunita Shekhawat,  
Ehsaas woman of Jaipur



Apra Kuchhal, Ehsaas  
woman of Jaipur

## THE BUSINESS OF WORDS

**T**he journey of the written word, its beauty and how it is now being commercially used was the subject of discussion at the **Lafz** Jaipur session held on August 31. In conversation with Aadil Raza Mansoori, Urdu poet and writer Ateequllah spoke at length about his love for literature and how he was inclined towards writing from a tender age. He also expressed his concern over the commercialisation of literature that has adversely affected the art of writing. “*Lafz* or word has become a thing of selling and buying for many these days,” he said.

“I don’t recall how I began writing, but I would like to say that a writer comes to be known for his passion, his madness and his extraordinary style of writing,” the author shared about his literary journey. Ateequllah started to translate English books into Urdu as an undergraduate student. While teaching at the university, he realised his passion for words and started to write. “I started the concept of writing about feminism in Urdu for the very first time,” he added.

The session began with opening remarks by Apra Kuchhal, **Ehsaas** woman of Jaipur. Welcome address was



Sudhir Mathur



Gaurav Sekhri

delivered by Gaurav Sekhri, Director Operations, Hotel Hilton. Sudhir Mathur delivered the vote of thanks. Sunita Shekhawat, **Ehsaas** woman of Jaipur, gave away the mementos.

*Lafz Jaipur is in association with Hilton Hotel, Rekhta, Sudhir Mathur Sansthan and Ehsaas women of Jaipur — Apra Kuchhal, Kulsum Malik and Sunita Shekhawat*



I would like to say that a writer comes to be known for his passion, his madness and his extraordinary style of writing

— Ateequllah



Swagatalakshmi Dasgupta and Snehashis Chatterjee



# When Lata Mangeshkar was honoured with rare memorabilia

**O**n a sultry September evening in 2013, residents of Kolkata were treated to a rare collection of living legend Lata Mangeshkar's memorabilia painstakingly collected from across the world over a period of over two decades. The three-day exhibition on the *Bharat Ratna* was put together by Snehashis Chatterjee and was jointly organised by the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Kolkata.

As the iconic singer, known for her soulful rendition of some of the most memorable songs of our lifetime, turns 90, the Foundation looks back at this exhibition as a tribute to the Nightingale of India.

Keeping with its motto of promoting growth and harmony through cultural development, the Foundation supported the praiseworthy endeavour that was opened to fans of the singer and art patrons at the Jamini Roy Gallery in the ICCR. A preview of the exhibition was also held in the presence of Swagatalakshmi Dasgupta, a leading singer from Bengal, who was also the special guest on the occasion.

The exhibition was formally inaugurated on September 28, 2013, by Jawhar Sircar, the then CEO of *Prasar Bharati*. The three-day festival that drew both footfalls and applause for its innovative theme concluded on September 30, 2013.

The exhibition was the brainchild of Snehashis Chatterjee, an ardent Mangeshkar fan, who has been collecting the famed singer's memorabilia for the



Snehashis Chatterjee, Swagatalakshmi Dasgupta, Sundeep Bhutoria and Rajasree Behera of ICCR

**On Lata Mangeshkar's 90th birthday, Prabha Khaitan Foundation looks back at the 2013 exhibition in Kolkata, held jointly with ICCR, that featured rare collection of the living legend's memorabilia**

past 23 years. Snehashis managed to collect very rare items related to Mangeshkar from across the world. This includes among other things, booklets, photographs, gramophone records, cassettes, audio CDs and VCDs, which have now gone out of cir-

ulation and have, therefore, become more precious than ever.

"The Exhibition was a humble tribute to the living legend and the Nightingale of India who celebrated her 84th birthday that year. It was an honour to associate with Snehashis Chatterjee and his excellent work which has great archival value. We have always supported individuals like Snehashis who excel in their field," said Sundeep Bhutoria.

A music teacher by profession, Snehashis had started his conservation work on Lata Mangeshkar in 1990 when he found there wasn't enough information available on the legendary singer. The different items related to Lata Mangeshkar give us a glimpse of little known facts of her life. The Limca Book of Records had already acknowledged his unparalleled feat in 2001.



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