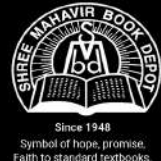


# FRONTLIST

M A Y 2 0 2 2

## Presenting Exclusive BACK TO SCHOOL EDITION



A Virtual extravaganza packed with exciting  
contests and informative sessions



A great opportunity to win prizes worth 15k



# WELCOME MESSAGE

Hi Everyone!

I hope everyone is doing well!

It is super exciting to see the schools opening. After a gap of 2 years, our kids are getting to learn, socialise, explore, play and do more in an environment best suited to prepare them for the future. Hopefully the demons of Corona are behind us.

This month's issue is going to focus on this specific aspect. We are featuring some of the leading K-12 Publishers in this issue where we talk through how the Publishing community has evolved since the pandemic outbreak and brought about a humongous change in the Ed-tech Sector.

Read all the exclusive interviews to explore the key issues like the dynamic swift of Digitalisation that shakes up all the literary bodies and the publishing industry is one of them. Also we have tried to accumulate new perspectives from professionals and practitioners on New Education Policy 2022.

I am immensely grateful to all the Publishers who have collaborated with us for this special edition.

The month of May is very special for all of us, it's Mother's Day. On the occasion of Mother's Day, we are coming up with MOMspiration - a one-day virtual event, organized by Disha Publication, co-organised by Frontlist and supported by Rotary International. The event shall be packed with amazing contests, edifying sessions and exciting prizes. Registration for the competitions has already started. This event will be advantageous for all parents who would like to connect more with their children with tips/tricks and hacks to better their kids' learning and growth trajectory.

Registration is free for the MOMspiration event and will be a great opportunity to win some rewards as well.

I am also very excited to report that our World Book and Copyright Day event went very well. Thank you to all the supporting organizations and the speakers for sharing their knowledge and expertise.

Above all, a big Thank you to all of you for being loyal readers of Frontlist and keep showering your positivity upon us. For daily updates, please visit [www.frontlist.in](http://www.frontlist.in) or join our social handles.

**Write to me:** [navita@frontlist.in](mailto:navita@frontlist.in)

Navita Berry  
**Business Head**

## 02

### Exclusive Edition Back to School:

- Himanshu Gupta
- Monica Malhotra
- Gopal Sharma
- Naresh Jain
- Hem C Gupta
- Avinash Agarwal
- Rajesh Chopra
- Suresh Goyal
- Arnav Gupta

## 15

### Book Launch

- Bhagvad Gita : The Story Way for Students & Parents by Avinash Agarwal

## 19

### Media Coverage:

- INDIA PAVILION in Paris Book Festival 2022: National Book Trust
- 'Crunch Time Book Launch' - Rupa Publications
- 'Impressions Indiennes Book Launch' - Oxford Bookstore
- 'Literary Soiree' - Oxford Bookstore

## 29

### Author's Interviews:

- Sonnet Mondal
- Biman Nath
- Isabelle Moulin
- Pracchi Parihar Saxenna
- Dr Asghar and Sonal Chowdhary
- Devangshree Saini
- Harsh Pamnani & Manish Pandey
- Dr Tarana Husain Khan
- Dr Rashmi

## 25

### Event Coverage:

- World Book & Copyright Day Event by IRRO and FIP
- Mother's Day Event: MOMspiration by Disha Publication

## 41

### Frontlist Special:

- Spotlight Session : Publishing in Post-COVID World
- Facebook Live Session: - Nimai Verma

#### Frontlist

Volume 2, Issue No. 5 - May 2022  
Editorial & Publishers Office: Frontlist Media,  
4259/3, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj  
New Delhi - 110002, India  
Tel: 9711676777  
Email: media@frontlist.in  
Website: www.frontlist.in

Business Head: Navita Berry  
Co-founder: Pranav Gupta & Kapil Gupta  
Designed by: Frontlist Media



Published & Printed by Pranav Gupta on behalf of  
Frontlist Media, Printed at Mohit Enterprises,  
1-2-3, 1st Floor, Bldg. No. 2919, Sir Syed Ahmed  
Road, New Post Office, Darya Ganj,  
New Delhi - 110002

We stand indemnified against any claims arising directly or indirectly from the publication or non- publication of an advertisement. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the prior permission of the publisher. All trademarks and trade names mentioned in this magazine belong to their respective owners.

Frontlist does not take responsibility for returning unsolicited publication material. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Opinion expressed in the articles are of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editors or publishers. While the editors do their utmost to verify information published, they do not accept responsibility for its absolute accuracy.

# EXCLUSIVE EDITION BACK TO SCHOOL







## HIMANSHU GUPTA

Managing Director,  
S. Chand Group

Himanshu Gupta is a well-known name in the Indian Book Publishing Industry. He is the third generation of the 8-decade old S. Chand Group. He finished his schooling at Modern School, Barakhamba, New Delhi, completed his graduation from Delhi University in 1999 in Commerce, and joined the family business in early 2000 after his father's retirement. He was instrumental in transforming a family-run business into a professionally-run group by acquiring the best talents and implementing the modern practices in traditional business. He actively took charge of the family business in 2006 at the age of 27 years, and within seven years, the company became a conglomerate, from being S. Chand to the S. Chand Group of Companies. Himanshu believed that the future was not a place that one stepped into - it was a place that had to be created - first in mind and will, and then in action. He takes his employees as the assets of the company, and believes in teamwork and an open-door policy where his focus is to provide the best facilities to his employees to increase their job satisfaction resulting in the increase in their work efficiency.

An entrepreneur in spirit and attitude who envisions transforming the S. Chand Group into a 'Total Knowledge Corporation', Himanshu Gupta is a trendsetter in the Indian Publishing Industry. He was one of the first adopters of technology in education in India, bringing out CD-ROM-based educational material and launching the first student-teacher portals, and implementing ERP solutions in publishing in India. Under his stewardship, S. Chand became the first ISO-certified publisher.

For his distinguished contribution to the Indian publishing industry, he has been awarded the 'Young Publisher Award' by The Federation of Educational Publishers in India and was the Vice President of The Federation of Indian Publishers. He had also co-chaired the publishing committee of FICCI and is known for his path-breaking ideas and innovations for the publishing industry.

Himanshu was also involved in raising the first private equity capital in the publishing industry from renowned PE Funds like Everstone and International Finance Corporation. These funds have helped the group on a new growth path and created history in the publication world by acquiring Vikas Publication House and their division Madhuban Educational Books, a leader in the Hindi textbook space. The group also acquired New Saraswati House (India) Pvt. Ltd., the leader in the regional languages and supplementary books. With his futuristic vision to make S. Chand Group the largest non-infrastructure educational service provider, S. Chand launched its IPO in 2017.

A true young business leader in spirit and action, he continuously strives to take S. Chand Group to an international knowledge powerhouse and recently being awarded as 'Family Entrepreneur of the Year 2018'.

His mantra to success is 'Explore, Exploit and Expand' and gets inspired by Steve Jobs and sees S. Chand as the world's leading company in coming years. He aspires to buy Bugatti Veyron for himself.

**Frontlist:** How are academic publishers trying to bring new initiatives for effective new learning?

**Himanshu:** Academic Publishers are providing 360 degrees support to schools, teachers, and students in various forms. This could be supplementary content in the form of Videos on concepts to enhance learning, practice tests, assessments, analytics, remedial, and support for students. For Schools and teachers, the publishers provide teacher handbooks, online web support, detailed lesson plans, concept videos, test generators, analytics, and teacher training to enhance the capability of teachers. These may be in the form of Apps accessed through QR Codes, Web Support, online and offline training sessions, or printed material.

**Frontlist:** Please state some of the challenges Publishers face nowadays in terms of changing reading behavior and study materials.

**Himanshu:** The students of today have access to multiple information points apart from the printed books and the classroom teaching. Various education apps, online videos on YouTube and Google searches, etc., have become options to enhance or supplement the text material. There is also more inclination towards videos than text. However, there is also the challenge of choosing what is suitable and what is not suitable at different understanding levels of students, which becomes a challenge in the virtual world. The study material for the next generation has to be a blended one, which is crisp (to the point) and has supplementary material embedded so that the student has access to more in case there is a need for it.

**Frontlist:** Due to the rise in the Ed-Tech sector, the inclination toward printed books among students is waning. What can we do to prevent it?

**Himanshu:** While there has been an impact of COVID-19 causing shortages and supply disruptions for printed books, where Ed-Tech filled in the gap, the present learner cannot do without the other. Total online learning is also becoming exhausting for students, and attention spans have been impacted. However, it does have its merits of anywhere anytime learning. A blended approach is the need for the hours where concepts read and taught from the text can be enhanced and enforced through Ed-Tech.

**Frontlist:** Please share your thoughts on - 'The shift from hard copies to software solutions has opened new possibilities for publishers'.

**Himanshu:** E-books for most publishers in India and globally is still a small percentage of the overall sales. Both print and digital solutions are presently co-existing. This has given publishers an option of enhancing their offering to students, schools, and teachers to make the content provided easier to understand and increased the use of the knowledge in applications.

**Frontlist:** What are the major reasons, other than the Pandemic, for this major shift to online learning?

**Himanshu:** The shift to online learning was accelerated by the Pandemic. Core teacher-student learning continued during the Pandemic through various platforms. Accessibility, affordability (in some cases), and the absence of schools lead to this temporary shift. While some facets of it continue to remain for various reasons, classroom learning is back with the opening of educational institutions. Online learning will continue where there are disruptions due to pandemics, weather, or other such reasons. A blended approach that saves time for teachers and students may also continue in the form of assignments, assessments, analytics, and notifications.

**Frontlist:** Please define the repercussions of the Pandemic in the Publishing Industry on account of your first-hand experience.

**Himanshu:** The Pandemic helped bring the needs of teachers, students, and schools to the fore. Publishers enabled schools with content in the form of eBooks for teachers and students. Teachers were enabled with training for online teaching, teaching tools in the form of videos, lesson plans, and test generators. LMS and apps were provided to students and teachers to ensure that learning continued. The industry learned to evolve in the Pandemic and focus on what matters, which was a learning for students. Publishers also were able to tighten their belts and focus on internal efficiencies and strengths. Managing working capital and ensuring that it was allocated where required helped improve Cash flows. Inventory levels were managed, and the channel was made more efficient.

**Contact us for Event Collaborations**

Email id: [info@frontlist.in](mailto:info@frontlist.in)

**04, Frontlist Magazine – May Edition**



## MONICA MALHOTRA

Managing Director,  
MBD Group

Monica Malhotra Kandhari, a Second Generation entrepreneur, is the Managing Director of MBD Group. She started working at the young age of 16, and today she is recognised as one of the important pillars of the publishing industry for her efforts to promote education across the country. MBD is the only Indian-origin publisher to be included in the National Catalogue of South Africa. More than 100 MBD titles are accredited by the Sri Lankan Ministry of Education. Monica has also worked towards creating synergies with leading international brands like Microsoft and Intel, among others.

She has been elected Vice President (North) for the Federation of Indian Publishers, a key member of CII, and Co-Chair (Publishing) at FICCI.

Monica leads MBD's education business both in print and digital education spaces. She is also involved with the Design & Construction, Hospitality, and Real Estate ventures of MBD Group.

**Frontlist:** Pandemic has been proven a bane as well as a boon to the industry sector. How has MBD Group evolved within the last 2 years?

**Monica:** The pandemic hit at the peak of our sales season. Exams were mostly through. Textbooks and learning peripherals were getting shipped across India for the new session. Suddenly, the world came to a halt. Our operations and supply chain were affected. We took a bad hit as our printed material was stuck in transit in different locations across India. Our distributors and booksellers were affected. Our sales figures dipped. It was unbelievable and unprecedented, but we did not lose our moorings. Amid these challenges, AASOKA - our learning app -

was born. MBD Alchemie – the EdTech arm of MBD Group, is today making strides in taking the classroom to the child and ensuring a seamless teaching-learning experience. We are a close-knit family now. Each one of us is now an accomplished multitasker and a problem solver. We don't wait for solutions to be delivered. Now, when we encounter a problem, we devise solutions. We have been able to identify and promote novel business opportunities during the pandemic. Our services and systems are robust and more prompt, and we are now able to find solutions on our feet.

**Frontlist: How has M-learning turned the tables for MBD Group?**

**Monica:** I would not be exaggerating if I said that M-learning revolutionised the teaching-learning scenario in India and the world over. ALTS - Aasoka Learning and Teaching Solutions, our app for schools with curriculums of CBSE, ICSE, and various State Boards - is a cloud-based platform catering to all academic, administrative, learning, and teaching needs. We managed to go live with this solution during the Pandemic, and we are overwhelmed at the response it received from the teaching-learning community. This year we launched ALTS, and in less than few months, the user base grew from 0 to 50,000. That's no mean feat. Today we are one of the leading players in the M-learning segment for the School Segment.

**Frontlist: 'AASOKA' is a great initiative for K-12 Classes, launched at the time of the Pandemic. How does it amp up the educational spectrum to highlight effective new learning?**

**Monica:** AASOKA – MBD Group's Powering, Adaptive, and Personalised Learning app – launched in response to the need of the hour during the Pandemic. The app helps the students avail high-quality study material in the form of e-books, audio lessons, video lessons, and online assessments and assignments. On the contrary, it supports teachers to create and schedule assessments, identifying learning gaps, creating content, etc. It enables students and teachers to sustain a seamless teaching-learning process and straddles online and offline teaching-learning effortlessly. The app is driven by the latest research in Pedagogy and innovations in Teaching Methodology.

**Frontlist: What are your thoughts on the 'New Education Policy 2022'?**

**Monica:** The New Education Policy aims to transform schools and higher education across India by translating the aspirations of our youth into reality. NEP's emphasis on foundational literacy, numeracy, and multilingualism is laudable. The flexibility this new policy affords to learners will make it much easier to educate every single learner. As a business house and particularly as publishers, we have always been open to innovation and change. Our Founder, Shri Ashok Kumar Malhotra, started as an author who self-published his book. He started with a single book-selling unit and grew MBD Group to its current stature. From him we have inherited the courage to embrace new ideas and things. India is rising, and we need to scale up and boost our efforts to ensure knowledge is integrated with skills and conducive to employment. Flexibility in entry-exit(s) will help in making the youth educated and future-ready. And I think in this, the new policy will act as an enabler.

**Frontlist: According to NEP 2022, Students have the opportunity to choose any particular language. Are you planning to publish the school syllabus in regional languages as well? Please share your thoughts.**

**Monica:** MBD Group started in Jalandhar, Punjab, but today we are a pan-Indian company with a presence across states and curriculum boards. We have been publishing and printing books in more than 13 regional languages in India. Our teaching-

learning assets in regional languages have been appreciated by students, teachers, and parents for more than 40 years now. We will continue to create content in the regional languages of India.

**Frontlist: Being a humongous publisher, how would you like to help other small and medium publishers to recover from the Pandemic loss?**

**Monica:** MBD Group has a repository of a rich animated content library for the K-12 segment. Our able and strong IT and software team is capable of reading the pulse of schools and end-users of our educational assets and resources. Our content can be customised for use by others. We can support small and medium publishers to digitize their content and develop learning platforms to better their reach in the market.



Promote your  
book with  
Frontlist

Contact : [info@frontlist.in](mailto:info@frontlist.in)





## GOPAL SHARMA

Director,  
Souvenir Publishers

After joining Souvenir Publishers in 1987, Gopal Sharma, Director of the Souvenir Group, has been contributing to the Publishing House, as well as the Indian Education Industry and System, for more than 3 decades. The recipient of several Academic Awards and a member of several academic bodies, he has played a key role in forming a structure that aims at providing quality education across the globe.

He received the Young Publishers Award of the Year in 2001 by Mr Vijay Kapoor (Delhi Governor) and Mr Ashok Ganguly (CBSE Chairman). He is currently the General Secretary of The Federation of Educational Publishers in India (FEPI) and the Executive Member of the Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP).

"The Legacy of Souvenir is not only limited to books. Our values and relations mark our legacy more than anything." - Gopal Sharma, Director, Souvenir Publishers.

**Frontlist:** Ever since the Pandemic brought our life into disarray, it has also transformed the education system. What new avenues do the Souvenir Publishers intend to bring forward concerning the students in primary and secondary standards?

**Gopal:** So, when the pandemic hit the country, we took a strategic step to start an initiative called DreamBox Inc, a step to blend education with technology. With DreamBox Inc, we focused on sending education to remote corners of the world through innovative platforms like LMS and SLI. This initiative was to understand the importance of technology in the education sector and also to explain how books can never be replaced. Currently, the company's pedagogic endeavours of online learning

through videobooks, audiobooks, question paper generators, and mnemonic cards are showing great results. We are now more confident than ever to achieve our aim, which is to make education reach every remote corner of the world.

**Frontlist:** Considering the exponential growth in the Ed-tech sector, do you think this can be advantageous for the future of young minds?

**Gopal:** With advanced technology, it has become easier to give the best learning experience to students. LMS aims at providing the best learning and education to students. The purpose of LMS is to provide online courses for students, question paper generators, question banks, etc., through which a teacher can assess students with transparency. According to the latest survey, teachers who teach primary and secondary students are more receptive to LMS as it allows them to assess students and assign them online work for a better learning process. LMS not only provides educational content but also informational content. Learning through these mediums is helping students overcome several problems that a traditional classroom could not cater to. Hence, we believe that it will be very advantageous for the future of young minds.

**Frontlist:** According to NEP 2022, people have the volition to choose any particular language now. To support this, have you given thought to publish books in regional languages?

**Gopal:** At Souvenir, we believe that when it comes to learning, language shouldn't be a barrier! Hence, as the NEP plans on promoting education in regional languages, we are prepared to keep up with the growing demand. Currently, we are planning to produce books in four regional languages to make learning more localized.

**Frontlist:** The publishing industry is vast, and it entails all segments of the literary world. What new possibilities can you initiate to encourage the young generations to read and write more?

**Gopal:** Some people think that digital technology will hinder a student's inclination towards reading and writing. However, the opposite is true. The visual impact through videobooks and sound impact through audiobooks help students enhance their imagination and add life to the things they read in books. With the help of the audio-visual content they may have consumed before, students are now able to relate better to what they read. Books are no more compilations of boring texts. They are now sources of knowledge that students just cannot get enough of. It is underrated how much the younger generation reads and writes regularly without thinking of it as boring work.

**Frontlist:** Today, most publishers adapt themselves to the digital world that introduces new approaches to the marketing of books. What are your thoughts on that?

**Gopal:** I think when it comes to learning, there is nothing that can replace books. However, as the Pandemic had left educational publishers with no other option, we abided by the situation's demand and focused on Edtech. The way I view it is that Edtech acts as a support system to enhance learning through books. For instance, audiobooks can help children recollect the words, pronunciations, and even the lessons learned as they read along from their books. Nonetheless, an audio file is deficient in providing a complete learning experience, and books play an important role. I believe, most people, especially students, do realize the importance of books, and hence, marketing them is not a hassle. All we need to do is, make the books available to the people who need them.

**Frontlist:** Prolonged school closure has academically put a stop



to children's minds. As one of the K-12 publishers, how can you provide help to restructure the education system?

**Gopal:** The last two years have cruelly tampered with students' education. Most private schools have started online classes and tests. However, their methods and practices of online classes and examinations remain skeptical. These online classes remain half-baked success due to no assessment and authenticity.

Students have faced several problems, the most important of which are lack of accountability and inefficient assessment. However, through the Learning Management System, all their physical content can be turned into digital content for better online teaching practices. With the growing technology, LMS has become a centralised source for education, information, and learning. Educational publishers can get their content developed through LMS and provide high-quality content to their users. The Education System in India is changing, and so will the process for educational publishers. As they say, "Necessity is the mother of all inventions."

**Frontlist:** Pandemic has created hardships for small publishers, and it's very challenging to publish books digitally. What would you like to say in this context?

**Gopal:** The pandemic hit the country in 2020 and surged in March, the peak time for the Publishing Business. Several publishers faced great losses during the month when they usually make maximum profits. On the road to recovery from the previous year's hit on sales, Indian publishers were hoping to do good business in March 2021, when the second wave hit us again.

While the education sector is going digital, the government has not yet announced the plans for publishers. However, with the latest technology, the Digital India Initiative, and the necessity of e-learning post-COVID, educational publishers are shifting to creating digital content.

The Learning Management System will make it easier for publishers to drive their business even with the new changes after NEP 2020. From books to courses, everything can be on the Learning Management System, and publishers will not have to worry about their content or books not getting sold. Despite several challenges we faced, the Pandemic couldn't bring down the spirit of educational publishers. When the time is right, we will be back at making profits like before, with consistent effort and dedication.



*Collaborate with us for*  
**Exclusive Book Launches**

**Connect : [media@frontlist.in](mailto:media@frontlist.in)**

07, Frontlist Magazine – May Edition



## NARESH JAIN

Chairman, Oswaal Books

Naresh Jain is the Managing Director at Oswaal Books and has an experience in publishing that spans over 40 years. His educationist mind is the driving force behind all the successful and popular books that Oswaal launches. His excellent vision and far-sightedness have helped Oswaal Books not just stand ahead of their fellow publishers but also become the most preferred choice for students of the CBSE Board. Being an avid reader himself since a very young age, Naresh Jain's understanding of a student's requirements is par excellence. In his four-decade-old career, he has launched several series of books that have become bestsellers amongst students in India and across the globe.

**Frontlist:** How did Oswaal Books sustain themselves in the Pandemic Crisis?

**Naresh:** The COVID-19 Pandemic plunged the world into innumerable crises in all walks of life, and it can be unequivocally said that the education sector metamorphosed the greatest to combat these changing world dynamics. The demands for digital education began augmenting at an unhesitating speed and have not waned out even now. A large number of book publishers went down due to a crippling decrease in sales and a simultaneous rippling demand for e-books and online subscriptions. Although we at Oswaal Books adopted an initial strategy of going with the flow and avoiding getting sucked in by the changing trends, the digitalisation tide was just too strong to overlook. My expert team and I monitored these happenings closely and tried to chalk a way out.

Turns out, the only way out was to embrace the change. Therefore, I and my team got into developing the utmost level of digitalised work and its integration into the matters of education. The result is obvious today - Oswaal Books boast preparation

resources that can be availed based on subscriptions, with the lowest possible prices ranging from Rs 250 to Rs 600, depending on the course type.

**Frontlist: What are the varied approaches acquired by your company to become equivalent to the other publishers in the race of digitalisation?**

**Naresh:** Oswaal Books is completely at par with the changing world dynamics and embraced it long ago, at the start of the pandemic, believing that it was the only way forward. The world is now undoubtedly in a digitalisation race with every organisation in every sector, no matter its size, grappling to beat its competitors. However, I and my fellows at Oswaal believe that this race is not one of competition but rather of self-improvement. Thus, we focus on augmenting and enhancing our technological capabilities and devote all our energies to doing so instead of wasting it on looking at the successes of our competitors with nervous eyes. This approach has brought us to the brink of technological advancement and escape the age-old tradition of an educational environment shackled to the chains of boards, markers, and chalks. The crux of our digitalisation approach is quite simple - we believe that today's global world necessitates the provision of comprehensible and up-to-date educational resources to students whenever and wherever they want them. This very mindset has metamorphosed Oswaal's position as India's most experienced and trusted education service provider with a motto based on the amalgamation of the two highly trending domains of technological revolutions and educational necessities.

**Frontlist: Now, schools and colleges are paying heed beyond classrooms and inculcating the Ed-tech solutions for the growth of students. As one of the K-12 Publishers, what are you planning to do in this aspect?**

**Naresh:** As per a report published by the RBSA Advisors, it is anticipated that the Indian ed-tech sector would reach a whopping \$30 billion by 2032. However, in the beginning, we at Oswaal Books had a firm belief in our objective of making things easier instead of simply giving in to trends. But, I soon realised a subtle fear of missing out on my team members during a meeting about the matters of technology integration in education modes. This interaction pushed me and my team to adopt inculcated-tech solutions for the growth of our students, but this process took almost a year of meticulous preparation and consideration. We came up with the Oswaal 360 platform, which offers innovative and efficient modes of learning through revision tools, concept videos, mind maps, mock tests, daily and weekly practice papers, and much more. This is what makes our digitalisation approaches top-notch, instead of blindly delving into the idea of technology integration because it was quickly becoming the talk of the town, we took out time and decided to opt for the modes that brought about a considerable ease of learning for students. Our subscription-based preparation resources and low-cost but high-quality education resources are a testament to this. Being a K-12 publisher, we are already publishing help books for students.

**Frontlist: Over the last two years, the education sector has been revamped due to the new effective learning techniques. What are your thoughts in this context as a key academic publisher in the country?**

**Naresh:** The education sector has undergone considerable change over the last few decades, and even the trends of the past two years do not resemble the present educational norms at all. Although the negative implications of the Covid-19 pandemic were immense, it pushed humans to alter their ways of life and turn towards innovative technologies capable of revolutionizing their lives. Thus, a similar trend was adopted in the education sector in India, with various platforms switching to hybrid educational

methods. Even the post-pandemic world shows signs of similar trends; many institutions and educational platforms still use a mix of online and in-person tools. Such trends are successfully pushing the educational future of India into unprecedented dimensions that are bound to bring better results and greater ease and convenience for students.

The areas that still practice the orthodox teaching methods are being rapidly rooted out and are ceasing to exist because of this globalization and technological advancements. The education sector can be seen competing shoulder to shoulder with the advancements in other industries, which is a promising endeavor. Oswaal Books is a significant advocate of these changes and is endeavoring to play its part in this revolution.

**Frontlist: It has been 37 years since Oswaal Books' inception. What dynamic things have to be reformed in the syllabus and textbooks to flourish the young minds?**

**Naresh:** Oswaal Books has been serving India for the past 37 years, and it is evident that it has undergone considerable improvement to retain its position as the most trusted educational source. We at Oswaal Books believe that the 21st century has dawned new purposes for education that do not rest merely on access to material resources. Equitable access to other resources, such as jobs, earnings, wealth, and housing, underpins the major concept of inclusive growth that education is bound to bring about. Thus, education has a significant role in developing skills, values, and attitudes in addition to knowledge because an amalgamation of all these values leads people to contribute to a sustainable and inclusive future. Therefore, it is crucial for educational syllabi and textbooks to broaden their horizons and equip students with the essential values required in the world of work and to become responsible, active, and engaged citizens in the process.

**Frontlist: With the introduction of regional languages, don't you think Oswaal Books should start publishing Competitive Textbooks and Help books in Regional Languages?**

**Naresh:** Inclusive education is one of the primary goals we at Oswaal Books keep in mind when developing student help books and relevant study material. Publishing competitive textbooks and help books in regional languages is crucial in this regard, and we are completely at par with this requirement. We have already taken significant steps towards the development of books in the regional languages of India, and they are expected to come out soon in the coming years. These books would be, without a shadow of a doubt, comparable with the standards Oswaal Books has already set and would endeavour to help students on an even larger and more efficient scale.

**ARE YOU FINDING A GOOD  
DIGITAL PLATFORM  
for Author Promotion?**

Connect with us: [media@frontlist.in](mailto:media@frontlist.in)





## HEM C GUPTA

Owner, Shree Mahavir Book Depot (Publishers)

Hem C Gupta has been in this business for the last 60 years. He joined his father, Late Shri Ram Kanwar Gupta, at the tender age of 12 years. He has been actively participating in Industry Federations and is a known name to Veterans of the Industry as well to new persons.

**Frontlist:** Shree Mahavir Book Depot is a privately-held publishing house founded on 21st January 1948, quite a long time ago. What are some of the drastic changes that you have seen in the industry?

**Hem:** Nowadays, the production process in the publication has become very fast. Earlier, this was not the case. Any given book took at least 10 days to come to godown after its matter was ready. Selling books at that time was easy, but production was very slow and difficult, and now things are totally reversed.

**Frontlist:** Some of the publication houses are not ready to jump into the pool of digitization. What do you want to say to these publication houses to sustain the ever-evolving industry?

**Hem:** Change is the rule of Nature. If they do not adopt digitization, they will become obsolete. He who adapts to the change will definitely get the advantage of it.

**Frontlist:** Pandemic has drastically changed the scenario as well as the future of the entire Publishing industry. Share your experience of working in the last two years.

**Hem:** Last two years were really problematic, especially in the first 2-3 months, everything came to a standstill. Afterward as the schools demanded, we gradually converted some of our best selling titles in e-format, and things began to start.

**Frontlist:** What is your vision for Shree Mahavir Book Depot in the next 5 years?

**Hem:** As things have changed a lot especially after the Pandemic, our focus will be more on digitization.

09, Frontlist Magazine – May Edition



## AVINASH AGARWAL

Director, Disha Publication

Avinash Agarwal is the Director of Disha Publication. A Gen-Z Parent, Study skills & Habit coach for students, and Author of "Toppers' study hacks", "Success blueprint for competitive exams", and "How to raise a topper", Avinash Agarwal has been working in the area of mentoring for over 15 years. Interviews with hundreds of toppers who have cracked different competitive exams have led him to understand the topper mindset. He believes that every child can be a topper, and through his books and online programmes, he aims to impart powerful learning strategies and techniques to students that help them in pursuit of their passions/dreams.

**Frontlist:** Due to New Education Policy 2022, the syllabus of classes 5+3+3+4 will be changed. Do you think these new implementations will prove advantageous for young minds?

**Avinash:** The NEP has not only changed the syllabus but the entire way we look at education as a whole. The NEP has unleashed the creativity in children. Children are taught through various methods and not only through just books. The school will become a happy place for children from the very beginning. In the 'foundation stage', the focus is on making the child comfortable in school by engaging him only in play activities with no examinations at any stage. The 'preparatory stage' is all about activity-based learning. Children are taught respective subjects through various activities and games. In this stage, the child is free to learn in his native language, where he is most receptive. The 'middle stage' is experiential learning. Children experience what they learn. This also involves 10 days of bag-less school. Computer coding and vocational training are introduced to students here. The secondary stage is the best. Children choose subjects according to their interests and not as per stream. Yes, a student can opt for Geography along with Physics. So the child is



most expressive as nothing is forced upon him. In this stage, the focus is on developing critical thinking. One foreign language is also introduced to children here. The same is at the graduation level. The student can choose subjects of his choice rather than a stream, for example, BSc or BCom. Now, if you notice the child is self-expressive in all these 15 years. Our organisation realized this at an earlier stage, and all our books for the school level have incorporated these techniques - activity-based learning experiential learning & critical thinking. We have been NEP ready for a long time.

**Frontlist: NEP 2022 will be more focused on subjects like Social Causes and Mental Health. What are your thoughts on this?**

**Avinash:** This is the need of today. So far, we have looked at education as a means to clear an exam or as a tool to get a job. We seldom looked at developing healthy, creative, self-expressive, and responsible citizens through education. We had earlier put limits on education - pass the exam → get a job → earn money. Social causes and mental health took a back seat. Many of us, despite having a lot of money and good jobs are unhappy, dissatisfied, and frustrated. Today, we are less aware of social causes – we drive on roads as if no rules exist, we are still teaching our youth to respect women and treat them as their equals, no respect for public property, we throw trash anywhere. The list is endless. Most of us are unaware of the importance of good mental health. And once if we face such issues, we do not know how to deal with them or where to turn for help, this pushes us into depression and withdrawal from relationships and society. Such situations need immediate intervention. Through NEP, students will be taught from an early stage to be healthy – mentally & physically, to be self-expressive, happy, and to become responsible citizens. Our books have been imparting moral and social values through every subject we have been teaching.

**Frontlist: The Pandemic has upended every industry sector. How has Disha Publications recovered from this plight?**

**Avinash:** COVID-19 has forced the world into a new reality. Although the crisis is still unfolding, the last two years have seen a lot of companies going out of the market due to the deadly virus. However, at the same time, we have also seen companies converting this threat into an opportunity. The team at Disha Publication realized this opportunity and emerged as the 2nd Top Indian Academic Publisher by working harder during this period to serve the student community. During the Pandemic, when most of the publishers were struggling for survival, Disha led the way and published more than 100 new titles in Test Prep. We collaborated with more than 15 new authors, especially in the UPSC segment. Disha Publication focused on upgrading the quality of content and providing access to conceptual clarity to students via free YouTube lecture videos of different courses. We put the welfare of students and their education ahead of profit and worked towards becoming student-centric. Well, COVID-19 was beyond anyone's control. All across the globe, the world came to a standstill, and the economy suffered across all sectors. Publication houses were the worst off. Only the delivery of essential goods and services was allowed. We were not completely immune to the crumbling effects of COVID on the industry. But we focused on re-purposing our strategy into improving the content of our books and incorporating other textbooks into our list, so that we can make books economically viable for all. There was thankfully no steep decline as Disha is a reliable favorite of toppers and aspirants alike. The books of this publication are trusted by millions for all major competitive exams. We even added around 100 new titles to our list and focused on eliminating errors from our books, if any. Additionally,

we conducted various digital webinars to keep students updated about various competitive exams and conducted free counseling sessions to boost their morale during lockdown preparation time.

**Frontlist: How did Disha Publications manage the decline of printed books during the Pandemic?**

**Avinash:** The physical book industry was on lockdown. Definitely, online/ digital is gaining traction as digital payments gained traction during demonetization. Disha is already live on most of the popular e-book platforms like Kindle and Google Play. Already the internet penetration and bandwidth have improved the use of e-books, and online tests and e-learning are seeing new levels of demand. Further, the Mobile Phones and their usage among our major target segment (15-30 years old) are adding new users at a much higher speed. Webinars have emerged as a new and important way of learning. Keeping this in mind, Disha Publication would be conducting a lot of webinars for students with its authors in the near future. As far as demand for academic study materials is concerned, it is much lesser as compared to trade books where users are mature and requires soft reading. Moreover, a lot of academic content is freely available on the net, which makes it difficult to price Ebooks dearly.

Disha is also aggressively using the digital platform to showcase the samples of its product through its Free download Blog, Google Play Books, Amazon Look Inside, etc. Further, Disha has seen a growth of 100% growth in the sale of its Ebooks with an average product value of Rs. 100.

I can see a definite growth in digital content consumption, but the physical books market will continue its growth as there is increasing demand for Govt. vacancy-based test prep and competitive exams. Apart from this, in our B2B vertical, we are providing customized study packages to coaching institutes in electronic form.

**Frontlist: What were some of the challenges you experienced when everything was turned upside down during the last two years?**

**Avinash:** We faced the same challenges as other publishing houses. There was a cloud of uncertainty looming over us, unsure of what future will unfold. The whole supply chain was disrupted, and B2B sales went down to negligible. The working capital expanded with extended credit lines. Coaching industries are a big market for academic publishers, and they were almost shut down indefinitely. That was a major hit to us. We faced multiple employee-related challenges as we had to do a little cost-cutting at places, but Disha Publication made sure that they were fair to all its employees during the harsh Pandemic times. With lockdown and the COVID timeline being ambiguous, the digital expansion saved us. The books were sold online on various platforms after 50 days of extreme lockdown, and with access to online education, the Disha Publication in the academic world survived.

**Frontlist: How has the scope of the educational system been revamped, and how does it affect you as a leading academic publisher?**

**Avinash:** Disha Publication fully supports and wholeheartedly welcomes the NEP and will carefully and strategically restructure the books around it to help students achieve maximum gains out of the books. We don't believe that the revamp of the educational system would affect us more than others. Disha already believes in the holistic development of a child, and thus, we have already, from the get-go, designed our books keeping in mind to help the child develop all its senses properly and learn by various methods. NEP has made education more fun, and less of a burden for the



child, and Disha has firmly believed in this very policy since the day of its inception.

**Frontlist:** Are you planning to bring new digital initiatives to enhance the learning process for students?

**Avinash:** Disha Publication, during the Pandemic, launched My Disha Academy to enhance the reach of education to maximum students digitally. With the Government of India's vision to turn India into a Digital World Visionary, it was more than logical to step into Ed-tech shoes and help students study and revise the competitive exam topics from the comfort and safety of their own homes. During the troublesome Pandemic times, the educators at My Disha Academy worked hard relentlessly to bring new and improvised content to transform education in the digital arena. Now, after successfully helping students consistently for a year, My Disha Academy has now launched new and advanced Crash Courses on UPSC CSE, UPSC CDS, UPSC CDS OTA, UPSC CAPF AC, AFCAT, and many more. All of our educators are from strong academic backgrounds who themselves have cleared UPSC CSE and other national level exams multiple times. They have a passion and zeal to help students overcome hurdles they have faced firsthand during their preparation phase. Apart from providing 150+ hours of video lectures, subject books, national level exam pattern test series, and PDF notes, the major USP of our courses is the Live Sessions that give a chance to the aspirants to directly ask their academic doubts and other doubts to the Educators. Disha Publication has pledged to transform academic education in every sphere, and after conquering the publishing world, Disha is carving an edge in Ed-tech in full force and is ready to help students in every way possible.

## Hustling through the publishing ecosystem

### We bring to you:

- The Latest News
- Event Coverage
- Virtual Book Launch
- Magazine Feature
- Website Promotion



11, Frontlist Magazine – May Edition



## RAJESH CHOPRA

Director, Evergreen Publications (India) Ltd.

Rajesh Chopra has been involved in the business since his school/college times on a part-time basis. He joined the organisation immediately after his graduation from DAV College Jalandhar in 1989 as a Third Generation Entrepreneur. He has gained experience in Prepress, Editorial, and Marketing Exports & Digital Technology, etc. He learned a lot of things like capacity building, cultivating skills in people, Partnering with different ventures, people-to-people interaction, and building dealers network.

Rajesh started a stationery unit with a full range of products i.e. Notebooks, Register, Softbound, Hardbound, Lab Manuals, Diaries, etc., at par with industry status. He is also involved in the Digitisation of content and introduced eBook in India and Evergreen eBook Tab. Evergreen was the first publication house to get MnF. eBook Tabs in their own name.

During the Pandemic, our Evergreen eLearning App was the most successful platform for both teachers & students in classes K-12. Now, he is looking after overall management under the guidance of Mr Sunil Kumar Chopra and Mr Nirmal Kumar Chopra (Second Generation Entrepreneur).

Evergreen won various awards from different Federations for best content and textbook publications under his supervision. His vision and technique fetch us various export orders all over the world. He is a bright young man taking quick decisions and expanding the organisation to the highest level.

**Frontlist:** Evergreen Publications has some of the paramount features, including interactive Study Material for all subjects and classes in the form of 2D/3D Animation, Live-Teaching Videos, and many more. What are some of the other features as an initiative for effective new learning?

**Rajesh:** Evergreen Publications India Ltd. got its roots from M/S Ved Prakash & Sons, Jalandhar (Punjab), established in 1939. Watered by hard work along with manure of knowledge expertise, and commitment to excellence nurtured the organisation, along with its sister concerns, namely Nova Publications, Nova Publications & Printers Pvt Ltd.

The successful journey from a small city - Jalandhar, Punjab, India, to different parts of the world has been endorsed by many awards and recognitions. Going through a long span of 80 years, tracing the changing patterns of education by different Boards, and catering to the needs of students, teachers, and parents has been a wonderful experience.

In printing and publication, we are proud to be techno-savvy, and we use cutting-edge technology for better performance. By using high-end machines, we are known to deliver quality and creativity. We are an ISO 9001: 2015 certified company, and most recently, in July 2019, we got certified by BSI, as we comply with the requirements of the Social Accountability standard, SA 8000 – 2014.

By keeping the eagle's eye on our goal to provide a strong, firm, and authentic knowledge base to the children, we have learned the changing minds, educational policies, changing teaching methodology, and thereby made necessary changes in books by keeping pace with times. From Black & White to colouring pages, supporting illustrations, Summative/Formative Assessment & multimedia support has given us a new direction. Today, in the techno world, we support our textbooks with multimedia audio-visual CDs with 2D/3D animations, a unique interactive programme of exercises, and a learning by fun approach. To facilitate education 24x7 within your reach, web support and Evergreen e-Learning (an android and iOS application) have also been provided.

We have study material based on NCF 2005, having an interactive approach and New Trends approach for all subjects and classes, Practical material supported with eBooks, animations in 2D/3D, as well as Real-time videos for easy understanding for young learners.

We also introduced our web support through our website, as well as Evergreen eLearning App, based on Android & iOS, free of cost, having features of eBook, Audio Book, and Multimedia Video integrated for better understanding and also have access to Online, MCQ Based Practise Tests, and Revision Tests. If students or teachers have a query, a feature of 'Ask An Expert' is there, where we revert within 24 hours on receipt of any query.

**Frontlist:** National Curriculum Framework 2022, NCF 2022, has been delayed due to the issues faced by several states regarding network, budget, and missing deadlines from May 2022 to August 2022. What will be the challenges faced by the Publishing Industry due to this?

**Rajesh:** Govt. has announced the NEP – 2020, to be implemented from 1st April 2023, for classes Nursery to 5th, and follow on 6th in 2024, 7th in 2025, up to 12th in 2030.

All are eagerly waiting for NCF 2022 so that one should know what exactly is to be taught in different subjects.

If NCF is delayed, that means the time gap will be very less for writing the material as per NCF. When anything is written in a

hurry, quality is compromised - the situation is the same for both NCERT & Private Publishers.

In the interest of the public at large, in case NCF is delayed, it is our humble request to the Govt. that the implementation should also be delayed, from 1st April 2023 to 1st April 2024.

**Frontlist:** NEP 2020 proposes the revision and renovation of all aspects of the structure of education, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system aligned with the ambitious goals of 21st-Century education. What are your thoughts on it?

**Rajesh:** NEP 2020 proposes the revision & renovation of all aspects of education. It is the need of the hour.

We should plan our education system with a vision to see future requirements. We should make changes in our educational curriculum every five years. As technology is changing very fast & we should prepare our young learner at par with the world.

Our current NCF came in 2005. From the last 17 years, we have not seen many changes in our education system, which resulted in unemployment when our students get graduated because our education system is not at par with employability. This is the main reason which Brain Drain is there.

**Frontlist:** What is Evergreen Publication's vision for the next 5 years for the betterment of new learning?

**Rajesh:** 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world'. The name of the organisation itself speaks about the mission of our forefathers, which is to make education evergreen. We believe in strengthening the nation and society by empowering authentic education as per the needs of children and society, as well as for the challenging/demanding world. Providing excellence in knowledge, along with inculcating moral values to prepare the enlightened citizens, is the commitment for which we have been working.

We believe in 'Making Excellence a Habit', and for this, we always innovate to become better and better. At Evergreen Publications, it is our commitment to give you the best.

Our vision for the next 5 years is to improve the content writing at par with NCF 2022, with the use of current technology and multimedia support with a futuristic approach to provide them better opportunities through online education and online test, and would like to export the same to our neighbouring countries.

**Frontlist:** How does Evergreen Publications plan on changing its functioning according to the changing structure of education?

**Rajesh:** We are always ready to improve ourselves as well as adopt the new technology, which can match the current trends in Education Structure. To meet new trends/challenges, participation in research activities is the first & foremost requirement. Evergreen is planning massive changes in our structure to meet the requirement of changing the Educational Sector.

For any publisher, the biggest challenge is to control the piracy, which is digging the bread and butter of Authors and Labour associated with the printing of books, as well as other staff who puts in their hard work to make the book a success. We are also keeping an eagle eye on the network and have filed many FIRs to control the piracy with the support of our Federation.



## SURESH GOYAL

Director,  
Goyal Brothers Prakashan

Suresh Goyal is a dynamic and versatile educationist, speaker, and one of the foremost figures in the education industry. Over 30 years of experience in the education sector (K-12); currently designated as Editorial and Marketing Director. He is a diploma-holder from IIM Ahmedabad and completed his graduation from Hindu College, Delhi University.

**Frontlist:** Being a Director of Goyal Brothers Prakashan, what are the Pivotal Steps you are taking in your organisation to bring change in the publishing industry due to the emergence of digital technology?

**Suresh:** We appreciate the decision to include technology in teaching. Since 2003, we've been working with digital content. We came up with the notion of including a CD-ROM with each textbook. We now offer digital content through a web portal and an app. Bright Tutee, our e-learning software, is the largest platform available to school-aged students, allowing them to follow the syllabus, be it CBSE, ICSE, or state board, through structures of professionally prepared video lectures and digital content.

All digital content has been created by a group of renowned and experienced subject experts. Teachers, too, benefit from Bright Tutee's platform, which offers a variety of professionally planned lesson plans, Model Test Papers, and pedagogy advice. We give online Vernacular Content for the entire country so that the largest number of students can benefit from our App.

**Frontlist:** NCF 2022 will be bringing a lot of changes to the education system. What are your expectations from the same?

**Suresh:** We are looking forward to the changes in education positively. The New Education Policy, which provides further

momentum to vocational education by integrating vocational subjects and training at school levels, will receive more attention in 2022. We shall see lots of changes in the coming year.

First, there is a shift in learning, i.e., from rote learning to application-based learning, in which critical thinking and problem-solving skills will be at centre stage. Secondly, there is a shift in assessment, i.e., from knowledge-based assessment to competency-based assessment.

Our government has put a lot of emphasis on Foundational Stage learning. We are the first to produce digital and print-based resources on the new advances as soon as the MoE, GOI, with the support of NCERT, released the documents of NIPUN Bharat. We are also the first to take on a variety of new Skills-based subjects that have been added to the CBSE curriculum at various stages of implementation.

**Frontlist:** What are some of the initiatives that you have taken to prevent any obstacles that came due to the ultimate digitalization?

**Suresh:** We don't take this step as an obstacle. Instead, we welcome this initiative. We are dedicated to the effective implementation of the system of digital education in India. Throughout the pandemic period, we remained involved in organizing teacher training seminars on the methods of hybrid learning and online learning. We provided e-books to all the schools enabling them to make effective use of the same in their individual system of online learning.

**Frontlist:** What challenges have you faced as a publication house due to the lockdown during the pandemic, and how did you overcome those challenges?

**Suresh:** The challenges were enormous and exhausting. Our main lines of business include textbook publishing, notebook manufacturing, and school uniform manufacturing. Because schools were nearly closed for two years, there were fewer sales, purchases, and supplies during this time. However, we strove hard and sustained ourselves in the industry using our personal resources. Now, we are looking forward to constructively regaining things.

**Frontlist:** What are your projections as a company for this financial year?

**Suresh:** As the market is opening up now, we feel positive that we should attain more than the sales level of 2019-20. I have already told you that we welcome the integration of technology into education, so we are sure that we will outperform in the market this financial year.

**Frontlist:** Schools have opened after two years. What has changed in the education sector in this period?

**Suresh:** After the schools have opened, there are noticeable changes in India's education system. Some are good, while others are not. The digital learning mode has become an essential component of the system, which is positive, and its relevance has been recognised by teachers, students, and parents.

You can now sell books utilising technology, as well as digital content as a stand-alone product.



## ARNAV GUPTA

Director, Arya Publishing Company

Mr Arnav Gupta is the CEO of Arya Publishing Company (publishing premium educational books, from academic to medical and even competitive exam books). He is also the Co-Founder of Alter-India, the first sustainable baby care brand. A Third-Generation Entrepreneur, Arnav, holds expertise in data-driven operations and sales. He has catapulted a legacy organisation into the 21st century by bringing tech to the fore. He also developed India's first e-learning app for medical students - EduMed.

**Frontlist:** Due to the rise in e-learning, Arya Publishing Company can consider expanding digitally in the sector of academic publishing (Classes 1 to 5). What are your thoughts on it?

**Arnav:** Technology-enabled education is not the future of learning but a phenomenon happening here and now. At Arya, we are fully cognizant of this massive shift in the way learning is happening all across and working on several products that will combine our world-class content with the state-of-the-art tech to meet the learning needs of the new age student.

**Frontlist:** Prolonged school closure prevents students from physical learning and drives the education system digitally. Being a K-12 Publisher, do you think digital education is the best way to educate students?

**Arnav:** Gone are the days where there could be a one shoe fits all approach to education, be it relying solely on physical books or e-modes of learning. What works best, in my opinion, is augmenting books with digital content. It definitely enhances the learning experience and allows educators to cater to the needs of every type of student.

**Frontlist:** Even the publishing industry hasn't been spared from the Pandemic. In your opinion, what were the major setbacks faced by the publishing industry?

**Arnav:** It has indeed been a tough 2 years for the publishing industry. Especially for academic publishers, schools being shut has been a massive issue that has hurt the business. Consequently even when schools did reopen, students were taught using digital material rather than textbooks, further worsening the situation. The learning mindset of younger students has been impacted, and they are now more inclined towards digital device-based learning, a habit that will take some time to be reversed.

**Frontlist:** How did Arya Publishing Company cope with the decline in Publishing printed books while there was an increase in the production of digital study materials?

**Arnav:** In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity, and that has what has happened in our case, as well. With the teaching and learning pattern permanently altered, it was up to us to take it as a challenge to develop solutions that met students' new age needs. Tech-enabled solutions are being developed that will not replace our books but rather supplement them to provide holistic learning.

**Frontlist:** How will the 'New Education Policy 2022' affect the working of the Publishing industry?

**Arnav:** New Education Policy 2022, very simply, defines a new way of teaching and learning methodology. It is not so much about the syllabus but about how that syllabus is being taught and consumed in a way that makes education more practical. As publishers, we must adapt our content to reflect these ideologies and develop our books with an integrated experiential learning-based approach.

**Frontlist:** With the emergence of fast technology, most students do not have sufficient time to read books and prefer audiobooks. Consequently, all competitive and medical books should be available in audio formats. What are your opinions in this context?

**Arnav:** Audio has indeed emerged as a preferred format for people who are not heavy readers but would still like to consume meaningful content. I believe, as publishers, we are no longer in the 'book trade' in the conventional sense of the term, but rather, we are here to provide content to students in the most meaningful way possible across channels and platforms preferred by them.

Prints Publications

Scan to visit website

**CONNECT WITH**

**INDIA'S MOST Trusted Books Publisher & Distributor, Prints Publications Pvt. Ltd.**

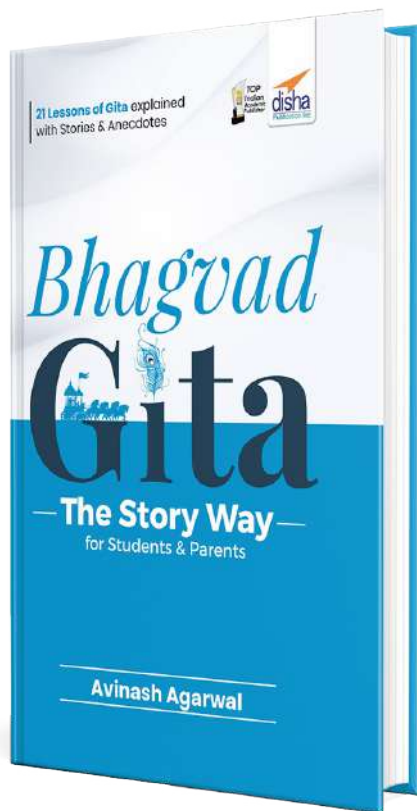
To visit: [www.printspublications.com](http://www.printspublications.com)



# BOOK LAUNCH

## Bhagvad Gita : The Story Way for Students & Parents

BOOK LAUNCH



This book is the re-telling of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the world's best-selling book. Bhagvad Gita has shown the way of life to generations since time immemorial. It is said to hold the essence of the meaning of major philosophical questions that have troubled humans. This book is a humble attempt on the part of the author to make it accessible in a simplified form to everyone who wishes to learn the essence of the book but is afraid of its mammoth size.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Avinash Agarwal**

Avinash Agarwal is the director at Disha Publication. A Gen-Z Parent, Study skills & Habit coach for students, and Author of "Toppers' study hacks", "Success blueprint for competitive exams", and "How to raise a topper", Avinash Agarwal has been working in the area of mentoring for over 15 years. Interviews with hundreds of toppers who have cracked different competitive exams have led him to understand the topper mindset. He believes that every child can be a topper, and through his books and online programmes, he aims to impart powerful learning strategies and techniques to students that help them in pursuit of their passions/dreams.

## Explore the Book:

Bhagvad Gita: The Story Way', in a nutshell, is India's Biggest Bestseller, Retold in a Fun Way with the help of stories and anecdotes!

Bhagvad Gita, the essence of all spiritual knowledge, offers an unbiased perspective of major truths of life as well as of the universe. But most of the readers are quite apprehensive about picking up the Gita, as it encompasses a mammoth reading with meanings hard to grasp and even more difficult to implement.

This book is a humble attempt at simplifying the profound knowledge contained in it. The book explains the key lessons of the Bhagvad Gita with the help of stories, anecdotes, and real-life experiences. To make it further relevant and easy to implement for students, each lesson is followed by 'Student Takeaways' and 'Points To Ponder'.

Additionally, the book aims at instilling the spirit of courage, determination, and hard work in readers, so that they can take on the challenges of life head-on and be thankful to the mentors who helped them on their way to success.

## Author's Message

The greatest asset to save our world would be the young generation who is curious to read and unmask the mysteries of nature.

## Favorite Chapter:

### 1. 'When the Warrior Became the Worrier'

The chapter encompasses the moments when the 'Greatest Archer in the world' drops his precious bow Gandiva, as he is conflicted within his heart and mind about the war, the purpose behind it, and the devastating result of this warfare. This chapter contains the smooth transition of Lord Krishna from a friend of Arjuna to being his mentor.

### 2. 'What happened after the war?'

The chapter encompasses the moments when the 'Greatest Archer in the world' drops his precious bow Gandiva, as he is conflicted within his heart and mind about the war, the purpose behind it, and the devastating result of this warfare. This chapter contains the smooth transition of Lord Krishna from a friend of Arjuna to being his mentor.

## Interview with Author:

**Frontlist:** At what age were you connected with the Bhagvad Gita learnings? How did the teachings from Bhagvad Gita influence you and help you to become true to yourself?

**Avinash:** That's a very difficult question. In fact, I would say that the lessons of the Bhagvad Gita were always there inside me. They are there inside all of us. What is important is when they start expressing themselves or coming out. You know, I remember, when I was writing this book, an incident came to my mind. I think I was in Class 11 or 12, and at that time, the serials - Mahabharata and Ramayana were coming on the TV channels, and they were very popular. I was not a regular watcher, as they had hundreds of episodes. So, I somehow thought they were a waste of time. But one day, I asked my father while we were having dinner, "What is the difference between Ramayana and Mahabharata? And why should we watch these serials because, to me, they do not look anything different from the fight?" My father gave me an interesting reply that itched my mind. He said, "Whenever you are ready to sacrifice whatever you have, Ramayana happens, and wherever you pick up arms to start fighting for your right, whether right or wrong, Mahabharata happens." So that is what struck me so hard that within the next whole week, I asked my mother if we had a copy of the Bhagvad Gita. She gave me one, but I could not make any head or tail out of it. I purchased lots of comics around Bhagvad Gita, so that was probably the first time it touched me and really created an impact on me. When I got into the business and started speaking to students, as you are aware, in the last 15 years, I interviewed thousands and thousands of students and closely studied the behavioural and study patterns of hundreds of toppers. While I was interviewing these toppers, a thought was always there in my mind, why is it that somebody succeeds and not only succeeds, they top the examinations almost effortlessly. On the contrary, there are probably millions of students who despite giving their best, despite burning their midnight oil, forget about topping but are not even able to clear the examination. So, for the last 15 years, I have been trying to find an answer to this question. I definitely believe that there is something or the other that the topper knows and other students do not know. There is something that toppers are doing that other students are not doing, even if it is done unconsciously. While I was searching for this, I came out with a lot of lessons, a lot of powerful learning, but I could connect the dots backwards with the morals or the lessons which we can learn from the Bhagvad Gita. That is when I thought I should write a book that will help us learn from the Bhagvad Gita, specifically for students and parents.

**Frontlist:** When did you get the idea that Bhagvad Gita might become the absolute mentor book for school-going children and their parents, as this book is, especially for their interest?

**Avinash:** The Bhagvad Gita, if you see it from a broader perspective, is all about the conversation that happens between Arjuna and Lord Krishna. Now, who is Arjuna? Arjuna is a warrior who is preparing and is ready to face the battle of Mahabharata. If you compare, or if you replace Arjuna with any student, and he is preparing for any kind of competitive examination, or with any parent who is preparing for any kind of challenge, then learnings are the same, just the context is different. If you see, the problems most of these students face in their journey is that they always worry about their results and do not enjoy the process. Even before beginning the preparation process, students worry about whether they will get selected or not. Most students have to go through the phase of anxiety, stress and depression, which is all mind management. That is what Bhagvad Gita talks about.

Most of the students are confused about the meaning of 'true yogi'. Bhagvad Gita says, 'A 'true yogi' is a person who is 100 per cent devoted to his or her cause.' So, as a student, if you are 100% devoted to your goals, about your dharma, which is about nothing but giving 100% to your studies, you are a 'true yogi' yourself. If most of the students blame my luck as bad and God is not with me, that is not what the Bhagvad Gita says. It says that God is everywhere, and God is always with you. Like Arjuna, all of us must be ready to start the battle of Mahabharata. All of us, whether students or parents, give excuses on the battlefield of life and the battlefield of exams.

Bhagvad Gita says there is a difference between knowing things, knowledge and action. So, one is Karma yoga, and the other is action yoga. So, there is a difference between knowledge and action. Knowledge without action is of no use. All of us know that too much social media is bad and that we should exercise. We know that junk food is bad. Similarly, we know that our immediate goal is to get good marks. But knowing all these things does not help unless and until we start working in that direction. What I am trying to share with you all is that 100% the Bhagvad Gita is the solution manual for all parents and all students. We have to just understand it from a different context, and that is what I have done in this book.

**Frontlist:** Bhagvad Gita is incomprehensible to interpret. The deeper you go, the more it becomes complex. How did you select 21 lessons from the abundance of shlokas?

**Avinash:** Bhagvad Gita, as you rightly said, is the essence of all spiritual knowledge, and it offers an unbiased perspective of all major truths of life, as well as the universe. But the problem is that most of us find it hard to understand and even more difficult to implement. We are unable to understand it, and we are unable to correlate it with our lives. It is said that facts tell, and stories sell. One thing which I have done specifically in this book is that not only I have tried to make it as easy as possible for even a 10-year-old student to understand it, I have done so by giving a lot of stories, and that is where the title of the book originates, 'Bhagvad Gita: The Story Way for Students and Parents'. Each lesson is followed by a few stories and anecdotes. As you rightly said, it was challenging to choose out of 700 Shlokas. But the lens with which I was scanning the Bhagvad Gita helped me to draw out the juice of the entire manuscript. I had one goal, that I had to make it easy, and I had to present the lessons with which the students' and parents' community can relate, understand, and appreciate. So, whatever 21 lessons I have shared in my book, 'Bhagvad Gita: The Story Way for Students and Parents', have been selected keeping the perspective of students and parents in mind.

**Frontlist:** You mentioned 'Student Takeaways' at the end of each lesson. How did you reflect the true meaning of shlokas within the Student Takeaways?

**Avinash:** That was an easy part because for the last 15 years, as I have been speaking to students, problems like concentration, unorganised, and improper eating habits are common among all students. These kinds of problems are always there in my mind, and I was aware that this is what students are seeking answers for. For example, if you talk about concentration, most students think that they have weak concentration power, but the problem is they are not able to concentrate on a specific subject, whereas they can concentrate on watching an IPL match. So, the core issue is not concentration. The core issue is the interest, and interest revolves around mind management. That is what the Bhagvad Gita talks about. So, as I said, 'My job was to extract the juice out of this most powerful document and to select the lessons which were most relevant to the students' and parents'

community to a larger extent.' The third thing was to present those Shlokas or lessons in a manner that is easy to understand, and thus the lesson is supplemented by a few stories and real-life anecdotes. With the help of stories, you understand. But when you move one step forward, you get the Student Takeaways and Points on how to implement them in your day to day real life. That was the sole objective of giving the Students Takeaways and Points.

**Frontlist:** There are several things we read and learn. However, we often fail to implement those teachings in our lives. Why do you think the book can be proven transformative for students? Please share your answer on a factual basis.

**Avinash:** I will answer this question with the help of a small story that I have shared in the book. There was a student who came to me and said, "Sir, my Class 10th board exams are close, and I have to study long hours and I feel very stressed about it." I asked him what is bothering him? Is it long hours of studying that are causing the stress? He said, "Yes, obviously sir. Since I have to study 8 hours, it is the basic reason, leading to stress." I told him that it is not the long hours which is causing him stress. 'What is causing you stress is that you are worried about the outcome. You are thinking about marks and percentages.' I asked him, "If instead of the board examination, it was a regular school examination, do you think tension would be less?" And he said yes. I think, instead of a board examination, if this would have been an internal examination where marks were not important and not going to be counted, then would the stress level be the same? He said that probably there would be no stress.

In today's world, we are living in a distracted, complex world wherein the attention span of our kids - forget about 10-15 minutes - is not even 10-15 seconds. We want a dopamine dose after 10-15 seconds, and preparing for any battle or any exam is an emotional battle more than an academic battle. The Bhagvad Gita teaches you all the lessons, like how to keep yourself emotionally balanced; it teaches you the lesson of attachment and I have shared a lot of real-life stories, a lot of anecdotes with which students would not only be able to understand it but relate it with not only studies but with their lives as well.

I'll share another interesting incident. My younger son is very fond of ice cream, and by God's grace, we are very well to do, and he gets whatever he wants in life. But one behaviour which I have observed is that whenever we go to any outing or any marriage function, he would put up at least 3-4 scopes of ice cream in the first go and most of the time, he would not be able to eat it. I used to think that why is it that the boy who gets ice cream whenever he wants to have, always puts 3-4 scopes because he was worried that it will get finished. I was thinking that if it is greed, where will it lead? In the book, we talk about the concept of desire, anger and greed, and how do you handle them? I call it by the acronym - DAG. How do you handle desire, anger and greed? Desire, if fulfilled, leads to greed, and desire, if unfulfilled, leads to anger. Essentially, success and failure are not only about knowledge, it is also about your emotional balance, but it is also about mind management, your stress level, and as I said that the students, while they are preparing for any kind of exam or any kind of challenge, they become sad, stressed, anxious and depressed. The Bhagvad Gita teaches you how to manage yourself emotionally in this lonely battle.

**Frontlist:** You discussed multiple characters from Mahabharata along with their idiosyncrasies. What was your thought process behind mentioning it in this book?

**Avinash:** My sole objective when I was writing this book was to extract as much as possible. It is not a religious book. It was

written with that intention. My sole objective was to extract as much as possible, wherever knowledge is available and give it to students. So I thought that I have shared the Bhagvad Gita, the conversations that happened between Arjuna and Lord Krishna before the battle actually started. But still, there were lots of facets of this entire epic Mahabharata, which I wanted to share with students. Let's take the example of Arjuna. Now, from the life of Arjuna, you can learn a lot of lessons. For example, you learn the lesson of focus. Focus means when everyone else was seeing trees, leaves, roots, and the bird; Arjuna was only seeing the eye of the bird, the target. The lesson of clarity - One day, when Dronacharya was bathing, suddenly a crocodile attacked him. While everybody else was thinking about what to do, within a moment, Arjuna took out his bow and arrow and killed the crocodile. Clarity means lesser thoughts in the mind which means a call to action. That is what we learn from Arjuna.

From Arjuna, we learn the lesson of commitment, and there is a very minute difference between commitment and insanity. When Arjuna said that he will kill Jayadratha before tomorrow's sunset, to everybody else, it looked like insanity because they had an entire army defending him, and nobody thought that he would be able to kill him, and Arjuna said if he is not able to do so, he will sacrifice himself in the burning pyre. That shows commitment. When you are committed to something, the entire universe conspires and comes along with you. These stories of Arjuna also tell us the power of a mentor. Lord Krishna does not compliment Arjuna; Lord Krishna completes Arjuna. Without Lord Krishna, Arjuna is nothing. From the story of Arjuna, we also learn that even the best archer in the world, i.e. Arjuna, who was taught by the best teacher in the world, Dronacharya, required a mentor in the form of Lord Krishna, to win the battle of Mahabharata. My objective was to give as much as possible, and I have done it interestingly and subtly, without preaching and asking to learn any Shlokas.

From the life of Abhimanyu, you learn that half baked knowledge or half-knowledge is zero-knowledge. Abhimanyu knew how to get into the Chakravyuh, but he did not know how to get out of the Chakravyuh. That was half knowledge. I wanted to tell the students that half knowledge does not give you half results, half-knowledge gives you zero results. That is what we learn from the character of Abhimanyu. In fact, everybody, be it Draupadi, Duryodhana, etc. There are a lot of things that we can learn. And I wanted to present them in an easy and interesting, story way so that students are not only able to enjoy but are also able to appreciate and somehow these lessons sink into them. That was my main objective.

## Question:

Which is the quickest and probably the best books marketplace in India?

## Answer:

It's Buy Books India.

**BuyBooks**  
India.com



Scan to visit website



# Media Coverage

## INDIA PAVILION in Paris Book Festival 2022: National Book Trust



Indian presence at Paris Book Festival saw a broad and diverse range of literary and cultural activities being organised at the India Pavilion.

**Day 1** started with a cultural programme, 'Morning Ragas - Melodies of India', performed by classical vocalist Ms Aparna Shreedhar, whereas the first literary event at the India Pavilion was a discourse on Cultural Communication to Children through Translation. The discussion revolved around the French translation of ten Indian books for children published by NBT-India. The first day was packed with enlightening sessions done by authors and esteemed personalities.

The two epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, are the two pillars of Indian civilisation and have always given the audience a new insight and understanding of human life. In the session Interpreting Indian Epics for the Contemporary Readers/Audience, Shri Anand Neelakanthan, Shri Vikram Sampath, and Acharya Balkrishnan discussed the various characters of these epics and their intrinsic values and their relevance today. Shri Jitendra Kumar Soni moderated the session.

The next session, 'Mahatma Gandhi and Romain Rolland: A 21st Century Perspective', with two distinguished panellists, Shri Vijay Singh and Ms Christine Jordis, who have spent their life in being the cultural and literary bridges between India and France, took up some of the ideas exchanged between Gandhi and Rolland, and how they impinge upon the contemporary reader. It was moderated by Shri Birad Yajnik, a noted Gandhi scholar and curator of Gandhi Museums in India and abroad.

The day ended with two cultural programs, namely, 'Ethereal to Eternal', a Mohiniyattam performance by Ms Brigitte Chatiginer, and From the Pages of Natyashastra, a Bharatanatyam solo by Ms Mallika Thalak.

**Day 2** for the India Pavilion at the Paris Book Festival 2022 started with a cultural programme, 'Morning Ragas - Journey to Divine', performed by the Carnatic singer, Ms Bhavana Pradyumna, whereas the first literary event at the India Pavilion was a discussion on Reflection of COVID Pandemic in Art and Design, with panellists, Shri Suddhasattwa Basu, Shri Jonak Das, Shri Hanif Kureshi, and Ms Martine le Coz. Celebrating 75 glorious years of India's Independence, one of the sessions, India@75 and Vision of New India, talked about the achievements of India as a modern independent nation and the vision of New India. The day ended with three cultural programmes, namely, 'The Temple footsteps', an Odissi dance performance by Ms Mahina Khanum; 'Once Upon a Time', a Puppet show by Ms Sabrina Arusam; and a Bharatanatyam classical dance concert.

In the session, 'Beyond Guest Country: Institutionalising India-France Publishing Ties', Prof Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, National Book Trust, in-Chair and panellists, Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT, Shri E N Nandakumar, Mr Vincent Montagne, and Ms Annie Montaut, discussed the takeaways of India's participation in the Paris Book Festival 2022 as the Guest of Honour Country.



**Day 3** began with a Kathak dance performance by Ms. Sharmila Sharma. It was followed by a session on Sri Aurobindo and his philosophy in contemporary times with panellists Shri Anand Neelakanthan, Shri Kiran Vyas, and Mr Olivier Pironneau. Various other sessions were held, and the last day too was packed with events.

The next session, Literary Diversity: India and France Perspectives, discussed how literature from the two cultures shares common perspectives and also appreciates social diversity. The session has Shri Rajesh Kumar Vyas, Shri Jitendra Kumar Soni, Shri Sudeep Nagarkar, and Ms Gaelle Benacchio with Ms Kumud Sharma as moderator. Next was a talk on Science and Ayurveda wherein Acharya Balkrishna discussed the integration of traditional knowledge systems like Ayurveda and modern scientific evidence-based medicine, followed by a panel discussion on 'Indian Knowledge System: What it Offers to the World' with panellists Prof Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, NBT, Acharya Balkrishnan, Shri Chamu Shastri, and Shri Yuvraj Malik, Director, NBT. The French edition of the book, 'Science of Ayurveda', authored by Acharya Balakrishna, was also launched at the India Pavilion by Prof Govind Prasad Sharma, Chairman, NBT, India. Shri Yuvraj Malik, Shri Chamu Shashtri & Shri Shailendra (Hindi- French interpreter) were also present on this occasion. In a discussion on Rivers as Carriers of Cultures, panellists Acharya Balkrishnan and Mr Olivier Germain Thomas discussed the role of Ganga as an important agent of culture.

The India Pavilion during the Paris Book Festival 2022 was set up at the Grand Palais Éphémère, Paris, France, from Thursday, April 21 to Sunday, April 24, 2022, from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm.



# Media Coverage

## Physical Book Launch: Crunch Time by Dr Sreeram Chaulia - Rupa Publications



A new book authored by Dr Sreeram Chaulia, the Dean of the Jindal School of International Affairs of O P Jindal Global University, titled *Crunch Time: Narendra Modi's National Security Crises* (Rupa Publications), was released at the India International Centre in New Delhi on March 31 by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Ms Meenakshi Lekhi.

Speaking on this occasion, Minister Lekhi remarked, "This book emphasises the much-required public faith in the state to protect the country from security threats posed by India's external adversaries. The strategic decisions made by PM Modi make the public trust his leadership more." She added, "At the end of the day, foreign policy should be based on core national interests. PM Modi's approach to national security threats posed by external foes is to reassure the people of India that they will be protected and that Indian territory is safe. By taking firm strategic decisions during crises such as the Pathankot, Uri, and Pulwama attacks by Pakistan and the Doklam and Ladakh standoffs with China, the Prime Minister has shown a commitment to 'India First' and has placed national security above all other considerations and pressures."

The book launch was also graced by former diplomat and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ambassador Lakshmi Puri. Ambassador Puri said, "Sreeram Chaulia's trailblazing book *Crunch Time* analyses PM Modi's series of decision-making moves during crises with China and Pakistan as part of a bigger transformative path to reinvigorate the glory of India's ancient self Bharat.

Under PM Modi, India has moved away from being a soft state prone to taking defensive stances to an aggressive response when India's land and citizens are attacked." Ambassador Puri added, "Governments before PM Modi took office, would hesitate to respond to aggression by India's two foreign adversaries with the mindset of 'Duniya kya sochegi?' (what will the world think?). Now, as Sreeram Chaulia's book *Crunch Time* has shown, the Modi approach to national security threats is about "Duniya ko kya sochna chahiye?" (what should the world be made to think?)

The author of the book, Dr Sreeram Chaulia, remarked at the launch event that "India never properly documented national security crisis management by its political leaders. 'Crunch Time' provides an analytical discourse record of four crisis management case studies of India in the Modi era. The book explains the doctrines that mark 'new India' under PM Modi and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval—'Security First', 'Offensive Defence' and mobilisation of India's masses to support the state as it took on China and Pakistan in repeated episodes of confrontation since 2016 to present. The central claim of the book is that India ceased being a 'soft state' since Modi came to the helm and that India has found a middle path between passivity and all-out war in its quest to secure Indian territory and people from foreign attackers.



The Vice-Chancellor of O P Jindal Global University, Dr C Raj Kumar, praised the author of *Crunch Time* as “a brilliant mind, prolific writer, and inspiring teacher who doesn’t stop at academic writings, but engages in public discourse through the popular news media.” He called Dr Sreeram Chaulia “an inspiring teacher as well who has shaped the minds of hundreds of students at the Jindal School of International Affairs and thousands of young people in India and around the world through his discourses and writings on world politics.” There was also a lively panel discussion anchored by Ms Sakal Bhatt, Consulting Editor and Senior Anchor of Doordarshan, at the Book Launch function. Lieutenant General Syed Ata Hasnain, who wrote the Foreword of *Crunch Time*, said, “This book is an important scholarly record of the major national security crises India has faced in recent times. They are all related to military strategy, but Chaulia has brought high-quality academic rigour to understand those very tense moments of contemporary Indian history.”

The book has shone a light on the important events that define the new strategic culture of India. Following PM Modi’s tough decisions like the surgical strikes in 2016 and the Balakot airstrikes in 2019, the last nail in the coffin of strategic passivity was his decision to abrogate Article 370 and integrate Kashmir. The crises that *Crunch Time* describes have successively built up the strategic confidence of the Indian establishment. This book helps to rediscover the growing strength of India.”

Air Marshal Anil Chopra congratulated the “nationalistic fervour of *Crunch Time*” and recalled that “after the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai, the Indian Air Force Chief made an offer to the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to carry out strikes and neutralise training camps of Pakistan-based terror groups. But such bold decisions were taken only under the leadership of Modi. With a leader like Modi at the helm, we from the armed forces feel very proud that there is a top-level civilian political backing for us to execute our plans and deter our enemies.”

Another panellist, Shehzad Poonawalla of the Bharatiya Janata Party, commented, “This book should be catalogued under the category of leadership management apart from IR and politics. It shows the centrality of PM Modi’s political leadership in changing India’s strategic culture from defensive to assertive. There has unfortunately been a concerted campaign by some political forces in India to generate opposing narratives and destroy public confidence in the state during national security crises with foreign opponents. This book by Dr. Sreeram Chaulia provides the much-needed discourse that can instil confidence in the public about PM Modi’s steadfast commitment to national security.”

The fourth panellist, the Executive Editor of TV9 Aditya Raj Kaul, observed, “The Modi government does not believe in the status quo. It focuses on shifting the paradigm. Such paradigm shifts have been brought about by decisions like the surgical strikes and the abrogation of article 370 in Kashmir. How Modi handled challenges from China and Pakistan must be studied in-depth, and I urge everyone to read this book to understand the importance of the crisis situations and the decisions made.”





# Media Coverage

## 'Impressions Indiennes' by Ms Isabelle Moulin launched at the century-old Oxford Bookstore



Celebrated French textile artist and Author Ms Isabelle Moulin launched 'Impressions Indiennes' at the iconic 100-year-old Oxford Bookstore in Kolkata today. Her latest book is dedicated to Indo-French relations through the Prism of Silk. The event was presented by the Oxford Bookstore, Alliance française du Bengale, and Institut Français de New Delhi and was supported by the Crafts Council of West Bengal (CCWB). Noted author and journalist Sandip Roy hosted the engaging conversation.

The motive of her visit is to work on bilateral cooperation between India and France around design and textile, with emphasis on Silk in India.

Isabelle has been establishing a dialogue between the Silky Cities Network, the Lyon Metropolis, and the Bangalore Municipality for the past three years to support and launch the City's bid, and therefore India's bid, in the Silk Cities Network, the international network of cities, and the Silk Metropolises born in 2019 in Lyon, France.

Isabelle is taking it a step further by collaborating with the Crafts Council of West Bengal to help Murshidabad Silk and bristles from West Bengal better position themselves in the global market. "Silk is a living material, and West Bengal has a rich silk tradition that includes varieties like mulberry, tasar, eri, and muga. The Silk Industry in West Bengal is primarily concentrated in Murshidabad, and I am eager to learn more about Murshidabad Silk", said Ms Moulin at the launch of her book 'Impressions Indiennes' at the Oxford Bookstore on Park Street in Kolkata.

To celebrate the occasion, Oxford Bookstore, Kolkata, offered 'Silk me Back' an opportunity to present its exclusive collection of Jacquard-printed Silk Scarves, specially created and made in France, and vibrant Bengal Silks, courtesy Crafts Council of West Bengal, and had a specially designed 'Silk-themed Menu' presented by Cha Bar.

In 2011, Isabelle created the Silk Me Back, an approach that closely combines heritage and contemporary expressions, combining scientific, technical, and artistic perspectives on the theme of Silk and Textiles. Her project is supported by the local government in Lyon, France.

Since 2015, Silk Me Back has been publishing a "Silky Collection" combining artistic, scientific, and technical perspectives on the theme of Silk. Books on Silk in Japan and China have already been published. No. 3-I as 'Impressions Indiennes' was designed following a Silk Mission organised by the French Institute of New Delhi and Jaipur in November 2019.

New Delhi, Lucknow, Varanasi, Jaipur, and Punjab were the main stages of this mission which made it possible to carry out the photographic mission illustrating the work, meet the contributors, bringing their views and their expertise on the mutual Silky French-Indian inspirations to initiate a program of exchanges of skills between universities and schools of Fashion and Design between the two countries.

The book based on an exchange between French and Indian designers was produced in record time, barely three months, to be able to be present in March 2020 at the Salon du Livre Paris, reserved as the primeur of the diffusion, in accordance with the agreement signed between the Silk me Back and the Institut Français de New Delhi.

# Media Coverage

“Philosophy of Longevity”, a ‘Literary Soiree’, hosted by Oxford Bookstore

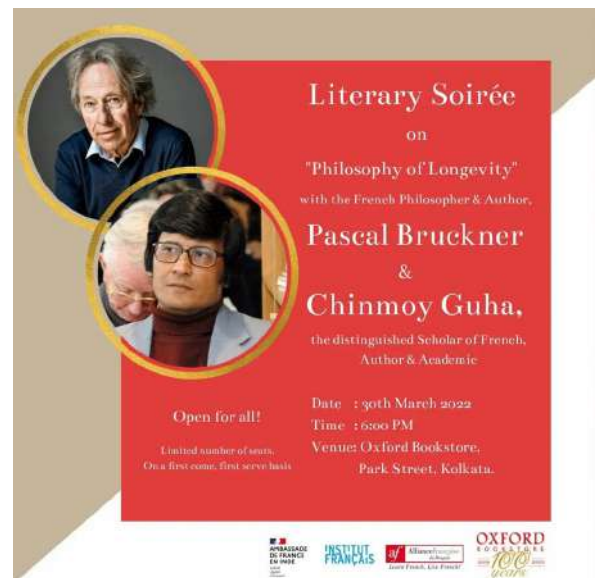


Oxford Bookstore, in association with The Embassy of France/ The French Institute in India and the Alliance Française du Bengale, hosted a literary soirée on “Philosophy of Longevity” with renowned French Author, Mr Pascal Bruckner. The author was in conversation with a distinguished Scholar of French, Author, and Academics, Dr Chinmoy Guha. The event was held on 30th March 2022 at 6 pm at the Oxford Bookstore, Park Street, Kolkata.

The literary evening commenced with the opening address by Mr Nicolas Facino, Director of Alliance Française du Bengale, who spoke about the collaboration between the iconic Oxford Bookstore and The Embassy of France/ The French Institute in India and the Alliance Française du Bengale, nurtured over the years through various cultural and literary partnerships.

‘We are very lucky at Alliance Française to welcome such a personality like Pascal Bruckner. I would like to thank Oxford Bookstore, a strong partner of Alliance Française and promoter of French culture for years’ said Mr Nicolas Facino.

Born in Paris in 1948, the 73-year-old French author Pascal Bruckner began writing in the vein of the nouveaux philosophes or New Philosophers. He came to prominence in the 1970s, and He published *Parias* (*Parias*), *Lunes de fiel* (*Evil Angels*) (adapted as a film by Roman Polanski), and *Les voleurs de beauté* (*The Beauty Stealers*) (Prix Renaudot in 1997). Among his essays are *La tentation de l'innocence* (*The Temptation of Innocence*, Prix Médicis in 1995) and, famously, *Le Sanglot de l'Homme blanc* (*The Tears of the White Man*), an attack on narcissistic and destructive policies intended to benefit the Third World, and more recently *La tyrannie de la pénitence* (2006), a book on the West's endless self-criticism, translated as *The Tyranny of Guilt* (2010). Some of his key literary work includes *Perpetual Euphoria: On the Duty to Be Happy*, *The Paradox of Love*, and *Philosophy of Longevity*.



# Event Coverage

## World Book & Copyright Day Event by IRRO and FIP

World Book and Copyright Day is a celebration to promote the enjoyment of books and reading. Each year, on 23 April, celebrations take place all over the world to recognize the scope of books - a link between the past and the future, a bridge between generations and across cultures....

The virtual event was organised by India Reprographic Rights Organization (IRRO) and the Federation of Indian Publishers.

Frontlist was the Proud Exclusive Media Partner for the World Book and Copyright Day Event, supported by IFRRO, IPA, Authors Guild of India, and Afro Asian Book Council with knowledge partner Ajay Sahni & Associates, hosted by PragatiE

The event was organised to celebrate World Book and Copyright Day, focusing paramountly to raise awareness about the Values and Principles of Copyright on a global level.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Eminent Speakers
- 4 Intellectual Sessions
- 5+ Hours of Networking

### KEY FOCUS AREAS OF THE EVENT

- Intellectual Property Laws & Publishing
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Tech, AI, and Innovation
- Copyright Societies Globally
- Monetizing Intellectual Assets

SESSION	CHAIR	SPEAKERS
1) Transforming role of IP in the era of technology	<b>Dr Arul George Scaria</b> <b>Designation:</b> Co-Director, Centre for Innovation, IP & Competition, and Associate Professor, National Law University, Delhi	<b>Mr Ravi Shankar Jha</b> <b>Designation:</b> Lead Counsel (Legal and Regulatory Affairs), WinZO Games  <b>Mr Manan Bhatt</b> <b>Designation:</b> Senior Associate - Partnerships, Atal Incubation Centre Gujarat University Startup And Entrepreneurship Council (AIC GUSEC)  <b>Mr Kapil Gupta</b> <b>Designation:</b> Founder, Frontlist and PragatiE  <b>Mr Christoffer Rosenholm</b> <b>Designation:</b> Sales and Marketing, iDefendo.com

SESSION	CHAIR	SPEAKERS
2) Copyright and Artificial Intelligence	<b>Mr Rishabh Sinha</b> <b>Designation:</b> General Counsel, FloBiz	<b>Mr James Mimikos</b> <b>Designation:</b> Board of Directors - Greek Indian Business Association (GIBA), Author and Film Producer  <b>Mr Utpal Chakraborty</b> <b>Designation:</b> Chief Digital Officer, Allied Digital Services, and Former Head of Artificial Intelligence, Yes Bank  <b>Mr Shrey Gupta</b> <b>Designation:</b> Associate, Ajay Sahni Associates LLP  <b>Mr Ankit Sahni</b> <b>Designation:</b> Partner, Ajay Sahni Associates LLP
3) Copyright and Education Sector	<b>Mr Girish Srivastava</b> <b>Designation:</b> Former Secretary -General, Indian Broadcasting Foundation, and Founder - DPAG Consulting	<b>Mr Jagdish Swaroop</b> <b>Designation:</b> Former Deputy Registrar of Copyrights, Government of India  <b>Ms Caroline Morgan</b> <b>Designation:</b> Chief Executive & Secretary -General, IFRRO  <b>Mr Vikrant Mathur</b> <b>Designation:</b> Executive Director : India & GCC Countries Nielsen BookData  <b>Mr Pranav Gupta</b> <b>Designation:</b> Secretary-General, IRRO, and Joint Secretary, FIP
4) Monetisation of Intellectual Assets into a sustaining Business	<b>Mr B P Singh</b> <b>Designation:</b> Former Chairman In-charge & Technical Member (Patents), IPAB	<b>Ms Pragya Chaturvedi</b> <b>Designation:</b> IP Attaché, UK High Commission, New Delhi  <b>Ms Anvesha Kumar</b> <b>Designation:</b> Manager - Legal, Tata Medical & Diagnostics Pvt Ltd  <b>Mr Andre Breedt</b> <b>Designation:</b> Managing Director, Nielsen BookData  <b>Mr Rahul Goel</b> <b>Designation:</b> Partner, AnantLaw



# Event Coverage

## Mother's Day Event: MOMspiration by Disha Publication



MOMspiration is an inspiring and insightful event organised by Disha Publication, co-organised by Frontlist, supported by Rotary International and hosted on PragatiE. This virtual event aims to commemorate Mothers and their unending support in developing a successful future for their children.

The event will be crammed with exciting contests and enlightening sessions based on specific themes.

### EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Picture Competition
- Show Your Talent Competition
- Quiz Competition
- Wheel of Fortune
- Selfie Booth
- Sessions

### LIST OF THEMES

- Parenting
- Skills for life - Beyond academics
- Learning X Factor
- How to be a Topper
- Mental Health
- Child Development

Session Theme	Session Speakers
Parenting	Riddhi Deorah Mimansa Singh Tanwar Sneha
Skills for life - Beyond academics	Dr Samir Parikh
Learning x Factor	Ankith Gupta Avinash Agarwal Mitali Jakatdar
How to be a topper	Avinash Agarwal Parikshit Bhardwaj Snehlata Jain
Mental Health	Ritu Solanki Arouba Kabir
Child Development	Ketki Agarwal Dr Praveen Suman Swati Gupta



Scan to visit website



Imagine  
Play  
Learn  
Grow

Advit Toys is one of the leading manufacturers of  
**'Educational Toys', like Board Games, Jigsaw Puzzles, Activity Toys,**  
and much more. It's a great way to let your child learn and grow while having fun.  
It's fun all day as your child learns all the way!

AVAILABLE ON

BuyBooks  
India.com

amazon

firststory  
Big store for little ones

Flipkart

meesho



www.advitoys.com



4259/3, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj,  
New Delhi - 110002



contact@advitoys.com



+91 9953788888

# AUTHOR INTERVIEWS



## **"An Afternoon in My Mind"**

Sonnet Mondal

Sonnet Mondal is an Indian Poet, Editor, and Author of *An Afternoon in My Mind* (Copper Coin, 2022), *Karmic Chanting* (Copper Coin, 2018), and *Ink & Line* (Dhauli Books, 2018). Founder director of Chair Poetry Evenings - Kolkata's International Poetry Festival, Mondal serves as the Managing Editor of *Verseville*. His recent works have appeared in the *Harper's Bazaar*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Words Without Borders*, *Singing in the Dark* (Penguin Random House), *Luvina* magazine (University of Guadalajara, Mexico), *La Otra* (University of Mexico), *Indian Literature* (Sahitya Akademi), *Short Edition*-Michigan State University Libraries, *Kyoto Journal*, *Potomac Review*, *Poetry Salzburg Review* (University of Salzburg), *Mascara Literary Review*, and *Honest Ulsterman* among others. Editor of the Indian section of *Lyrikline*, *Haus Fur Poesie*, Berlin, Mondal has been a guest editor of *Words Without Borders*, *Poetry at Sangam* and *Radar Magazine*. His works have been translated into Hindi, Bengali, Italian, Chinese, Turkish, Slovak, Macedonian, French, Russian, Slovenian, Hungarian, and Arabic.

**Frontlist:** 'An Afternoon in My Mind' has several poems. Which poem has touched you more, and how's that poem important to you?

**Sonnet:** The poems in this book are all about different stages of my life. I believe I am made up of memories and remnants from my past. Every episode and moment has enriched my experience, and I have tried to capture some of these remarkable moments in this book. As a result, I hold all of the poems in this collection in high regard. Even still, if I had to pick one, it would be the title poem from the book 'An Afternoon in My Mind'. On a hot summer afternoon, I, along with my cousin-brother and maternal uncle, went to watch Grandpa catch fish in the local village pond, known as 'Jaruli'. It has been roughly 30 years. My grandfather and uncle are no longer with us, but that particular day came to mind while looking at an old photo album in which my father most likely

captured four of us in a frame by the pond on that particular day. That night, I couldn't sleep because of the photo. I yearned to return to those days and meet individuals who were no longer with me. I wrote the poem while looking at the photo, and now that it's in my book, I am at peace with my nostalgia.

**Frontlist:** What kind of poems have you written in this book?

**Sonnet:** Mostly emotive. However, as I previously indicated, the poems are a mirror of my life thus far, and many of them address a variety of social issues and thoughts that we frequently tuck away in random pages of our life's book, which sometimes get misplaced.

**Frontlist:** When did you discover that you can be a poet?

**Sonnet:** I don't recollect a certain time when I was able to assert myself as a poet. Every day, I continue to discover something new, and so with each passing poem that I read or write, I discover a new poet within.

**Frontlist:** What is the meaning behind the title, 'An Afternoon in My Mind'?

**Sonnet:** The title relates to one of the poems in the book, as I mentioned in the first question of the interview. I chose this title to complement the gone time that I have sought to maintain via poetry because this collection contains poems that journey to my past. The title has a more personal edge to it. During my summer vacations, I used to go to my mother's house and stand by the house's boundary gate to watch the cows return home from the fields. It was one of my favourite times of the day to witness villagers coming back from work and animals returning from their pastures. This title, I believe, subtly reawakens those feelings.

**Frontlist:** What kind of target audience was in your mind while writing these intense poems?

**Sonnet:** Not any in particular, but those for whom memories are as valuable as life itself. After all, what is life without our past!

**Frontlist:** What do you want your readers to get out of your poems?

**Sonnet:** Thoughts, delicate incidents such as meeting unique people on a bus, train, or aircraft, a few chats that resurface like echoes, and a few experiences that cling to us like shadows get suppressed, and images overlap in today's fast-paced environment. People often tend to lose sight of places and people they love once they go out of sight. I believe the poems in this book can give them space, or at least a reason to revisit those places and people. Nothing is ever lost in the world. They've been saved in some form or another. However, we frequently overlook the path that leads to them. I'm hoping that this book can assist readers in locating that path.





### **"Homi J Bhabha: A Renaissance Man Among Scientists"**

Biman Nath

Biman Nath is an Astrophysicist at the Raman Research Institute, Bangalore, India. He was born in Assam, and after initial schooling there, he studied at Delhi University and then pursued his PhD at the University of Maryland, USA.

His research interests include the evolution of galaxies and the interaction of galaxies with diffuse gas in the universe. He is interested in the popularisation of science and has published several books and articles in Bengali and English.

**Frontlist:** Homi J Bhabha, a pioneer of modern India, founded the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR). Was it fruitful to establish this institute at that time? Please share some interesting details about Dr Bhabha's journey.

**Biman:** TIFR did fulfil many aspects of Bhabha's vision, even after his death. It not only provided the foundations for nuclear research, which was needed to harness nuclear energy but also became the centre of excellence in other fields of science in later years.

**Frontlist:** What are the exceptional achievements of Dr Homi Jehangir Bhabha?

**Biman:** In brief, his theoretical work on nuclear physics to begin with, and then his building the foundations of Nuclear Research in India, in addition to building institutions that had the academic environment to foster fundamental research in a variety of fields. He was not only an excellent scientist and an organiser, but his vision also helped chart the growth of India's nuclear capabilities, and he negotiated with other countries to firmly voice India's stand on international platforms.

**Frontlist:** What is the current scenario in 'Nuclear Energy'? Please answer concerning Bhabha's vision of bringing high-quality facilities to pursue research on nuclear energy in India.

**Biman:** The situation of nuclear energy is, admittedly, not very

rosy in any part of the world. There is a growing concern about radioactive waste and the overall competitiveness against other natural (and renewable) resources, like wind and solar power. It was different in Bhabha's time, and we should look at it from that perspective. He felt he had to get the designs and crucial parts from abroad to move fast on this frontier, but to a large extent, the efforts were indigenous. At that time, our manufacturing industry was not strong, and the research and development sector was in its initial stages. We should also remember that Bhabha did whatever he did within the first 15 years of India as an independent country. By all standards, his was a heroic effort.

**Frontlist:** One of the most prominent works by Homi J Bhabha highlights cosmic rays and his life-long obsession with them. What are the fundamental traits which Bhabha showcased during this one-of-a-kind project?

**Biman:** Bhabha's research on cosmic rays air-shower was pioneering. His calculations (in collaboration with others, such as Heitler) were among the first in the world. These results helped later scientists to interpret cosmic rays, design detectors, and study nuclear physics with cosmic rays. His theoretical work was outstanding because of his mathematical skill, but he proved his mettle even in experimental work as well—this was the most impressive trait of Bhabha as a full-fledged scientist. He built the first cloud chamber in India and helped develop an indigenous effort in balloon experiments, to push the frontiers in cosmic rays. For many decades after Bhabha's demise, TIFR remained one of the centres of excellence in cosmic ray research in the world.

**Frontlist:** The book showcases the conflict of interest between Homi Bhabha and his father related to the choice of subject for the former. How were you so sure about this piece of information? What are some of your authentic sources to confirm significant incidents in his story?

**Biman:** The sources are basically letters written between them, which have been published and are available for anyone to study, so their authenticity is beyond any doubt.







### "Impressions Indiennes"

Isabelle Moulin

Isabelle Moulin's 'The Silk me Back' has been supported since its inception by the Hermès Foundation (Paris), the Textile and Silky consortia of the Auvergne Rhône-Alpes Unitex and Intersoie Région, the DRAC, the Auvergne Rhône-Alpes Region, the Lyon Metropolis, the City of Lyon. In 2011, she created The Silk me Back, an approach that closely combines heritage and contemporary expressions, combining scientific, technical and artistic perspectives on the theme of Silk and Textiles. Arts Asiatiques Guimet in Paris and the Musée des Confluences in Lyon earned her the title of Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters in 2017. She is also a stage designer at the ENSATT in Lyon, the Nantes-Atlantique School of Design and the Martinière-Diderot School of Textile Design. She is a lecturer and contributor to the Académie des savoir-faire de the Hermès Foundation. She is also an honorary Fashion and Design Expert at Lovely Professional University in Punjab. Since 2015, The Silk me Back has been publishing a «Silky Collection» combining artistic, scientific and technical perspectives on the theme of Silk. The N°1- J as Japan was published under the aegis of the Musée des Arts Asiatiques Guimet in Paris, where its release gave rise to a day of studies in 2016. The N°2-R as Routes was published in partnership with the Musée des Confluences de Lyon where its release gave rise to a conference/debate and concert day in 2017. No. 3-I as Impressions Indiennes was designed following a Silky Mission organised by the French Institute of New Delhi and Jaipur in November 2019.

**Frontlist:** Would you like to share something about the book 'Impressions Indiennes'?

**Isabelle:** The No. 3 of our Silky Collection delivers the first Indian Impressions captured on the return of a silky mission, carried out in Autumn 2019, under the aegis of the French Institute in India. Still, on the principle of a Primer, this No. 3 offers ten themes common to India and France, as well as to its capital of silk, Lyon,

its Metropolis and its Region: Contemporary Art, Cinema, Colors, Education, Cuisine and silky delicacies, Reciprocal inspirations, Festival of Lights, Museums, Digital... These common themes will be linked and re-visited under a Silky filter by cross-views between artistic, scientific or technical specialists.

**Frontlist:** What is the meaning behind the organisation's name, 'The Silk Me Back'?

**Isabelle:** It is a kind of pun that expresses the need for a return to the very essence of silk, to its qualities and especially to the values it conveys: excellence, and the sophistication, of course, but silk is above all a vector between transversal themes that allow us to travel between issues of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

**Frontlist:** How does this book assist to establish the alliance between India and France to understand silk and textiles?

**Isabelle:** By highlighting the themes that are common to us, this book shows that our French-Indian relations, our mutual inspirations if they have forged before all things thanks to the vector of silk and textile, today cover many other contemporary and projective fields.

**Frontlist:** Books on Silk published in Japan and China have already been published. How did those books play a significant role to understand scientific, technical, and artistic opinions on the theme of silk and textiles?

**Isabelle:** In the same way, these first two books of our Silky Collection have demonstrated the existence of relations, mutual inspirations and affirm once again that, in the image of the Silk Road, the silky and textile language is a universal language that conveys skills, know-how, the expertise of course in this field but also other more global notions referring to questions, geo-strategic, social, economic, philosophical, and ecological.

**Frontlist:** How does Artificial intelligence give a new magnitude to Silky Mission?

**Isabelle:** So are we only at the beginnings of artificial intelligence, or are we already completely there? I certainly would not have the presumption to answer this question.

But it is interesting to remember that if we are gathered today around this question of artificial intelligence, it is because it is based on a process considered as the trigger of the first industrial revolution: the Jacquard business line developed in Lyon to improve the technology of the textile industry. With these famous punched cards, initially created and perfected successively by Bouchon, Falcon, Vaucanson, and Jacquard, we are indeed dealing here with the second application of the Leipzig Binary Theory, the encoding of a complex textile design in perforated cards, in 1.0, which thus have a central memory distinct from the executing bodies, etc.

This famous 1.0 could not have existed without this notion of 0, established by Indian mathematicians. This notion, so distressing for Westerners, appeared very late even though it was present in Hindu philosophy, where emptiness and infinity are in the very essence of the cosmos.

This Jacquard process, this «program», is in a way «intelligent» compared to the mechanical systems it controls since it is enough to change sets of cards to produce other things without modifying the tool mechanically. Charles Babbage and Ada Lovelace will then resume the process to develop what is considered the first computer in 1834. Hollerith will use it to create what became IBM.

I thought its important to pay tribute to this filiation to these

precursors, to these “makers” before the hour, to these curious minds, ingenious, tinkers, who have brought us together today, and of which we are all descendants in some way. For example, Google was not mistaken in simply naming its program on connected textiles - Jacquard!!

This projective dimension has always been at the heart of The Silk Me Back's concerns: closely combining heritage and contemporary technologies.

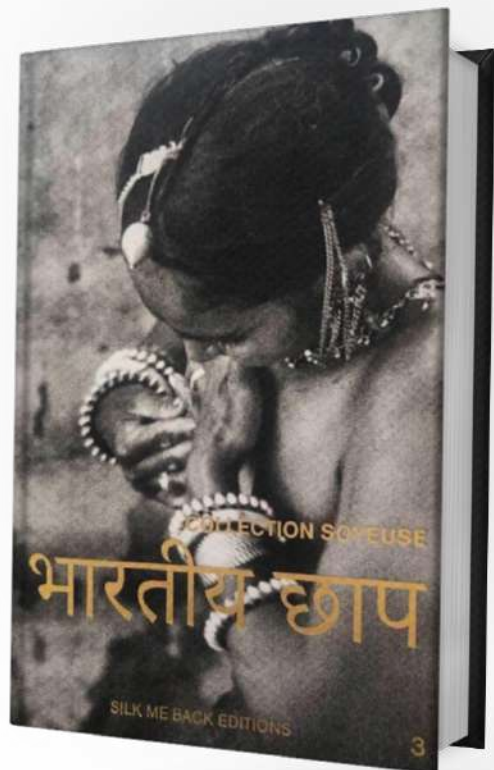
**Frontlist:** What new opportunities do we see through this Silky Mission to show the links between Indian and French designers?

**Isabelle:** With our first mission two years ago, a lot of opportunities had been put in place, and unfortunately, the Pandemic has suspended all these beautiful dynamic exchanges.

Today, we are taking over these programs, more particularly with the universities of Fashion and Design, by proposing a Silky Summer School, which we hope, will allow sharing of skills and know-how between French and Indian students.

**Frontlist:** How do you see this second Silky Mission in India? How will it be fruitful for both the countries (India and France)?

**Isabelle:** This second mission is unavoidably impacted by the questions raised by the Pandemic and the global situation. These necessarily have an impact on how we envisage how silk is produced and disseminated in a global sense, of course, but also at the scientific level, because of the ecological problems we are increasingly confronted with inviting us to cooperate and urgently share our expertise. This mission, the meetings that she knew how to initiate, show that these desires for sharing and projective cooperation are reciprocal, and we have all the cards in hand to imagine together a beautiful Silky Franco-Indian tomorrow!!!



### **“Happy Soul Work”**

Pracchi Parihar Saxenna

Pracchi Parihar Saxenna has a management degree from IIM Tiruchirappalli and a gold medal for her Master's in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmaceutical Biotechnology) from India's topmost Pharmaceutical University in New Delhi. However, she firmly believes that true intelligence does not lie in how many degrees you hold but in how you handle life situations. To understand her spiritual journey more, she is currently pursuing a yearlong Bhakti Shastri course at the Mayapur University, where she is studying various spiritual textbooks, including the Bhagvad Gita, under the guidance of her spiritual masters. Pracchi resides with her family in Chennai and, at the same time, heads the portfolio of one of the topmost Dermatology companies in India. She is very happy to contribute through her work to society by bringing new innovative treatment molecules for the health of patients.

She loves writing, reading, travelling, gardening, meditating, reading scriptures, and practising mindfulness.

**Frontlist:** There are many books available in the market that claim to guide us to reach the path of happiness. How does 'Happy Soul Work' distinguish it from other books?

**Pracchi:** Happy Soul Work is not just a book but a guidebook for the path to unlimited happiness. Many books are available in the market to help us explore the path to happiness. But the path to happiness discovery is not limited to a few days of reading or working on some mental & spiritual considerations. We need to maintain our physical health by investing daily in nutritious eating & exercising. Similarly, we need to invest daily in our spiritual health and well-being. This book gives us a step-by-step plan to free us from our mental baggage, heal us, and accept ourselves as unique, beautiful, and individual souls. Powerful, modern, life-changing tips and techniques given at the end of each chapter lead one to find their inner connection. The book contains personal experiences, which will help the readers to become a

miracle magnet in their lives. Also, this book focuses not only on mental health but also on physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

**Frontlist:** Why is seeking forgiveness from others crucial to move on in our life from past incidents?

**Pracchi:** Forgiveness connects us back to love, and love is the basic nature of the soul. Not forgiving a person is like keeping the venom of the snake bite inside your body. Nobody dies of a snake bite, but one dies because of that venom that goes inside the body. Similarly, if you don't forgive, you carry the venom of that incident inside your body, which will harm you ultimately. Forgiveness also releases you of all the negative energy you carry within yourself related to that incident. It sets you free. Any incident that happens in our lives is a lesson for us to learn and grow. It is a universal assignment for us. Instead of lamenting or wishing that the incident or the person should be otherwise, we should pay attention to what universal teaching that incident/person has given us. It will help us become a better version of ourselves and help us live a joyful life without any mental baggage.

**Frontlist:** In everyone's life, a certain point comes along when you seek mental peace and happiness. How did you start your spiritual journey?

**Pracchi:** I still remember the day, 14th January 2020, very clearly. Externally, all the events in my life were normal and as good as they can be, but internally, nothing gave me long-lasting happiness. I had all the material opulence that one can think of in terms of job, promotion, friends, and family, but they all were happy experiences that were just fleeting and flickering. I felt that I am not able to experience the real happiness that I really yearned for.

14th January 2020 was a Makar Sankranti holiday (an Indian festival), and suddenly, while writing my journal that late afternoon, sitting in my living room when all were asleep, a soft and loving voice inside me asked, "What gives you real happiness? What gives you true joy?" and an answer from inside automatically came: 'This journaling into my exploration to the path of spirituality and soul work gives me unbounded joy and happiness'. And here I was, blessed with my IKIGAI that I had been looking for so many years! As the sun starts its journey northward, I started my journey INWARDS toward finding meaning and joy.

And with this incident came the birth of my book, Happy Soul Work. In this book, I wanted to share my personal journey of travelling WITHIN with all the readers.

**Frontlist:** How can we prevent other people's thoughts about ourselves from subjugating our minds?

**Pracchi:** We need to first understand who we are. Too many times, we have attached our personality to other people's opinions. We are not what our parents or our friends or our bosses think about us. But somehow, we have made a mental projection of ourselves, and we try and fit that mental projection into the environment in which we live. Other people's thought about us is just a thought. Till the time we are not very clear about ourselves, we will identify ourselves with whatever thoughts the other person is throwing at us. Therefore, we need to know ourselves, our true selves. Now going on a little higher level of consciousness, we need to understand that we are not this physical body with which we identify ourselves, but a spiritual body. We are a human body having a spiritual experience. Too much identification with the physical body gives us a false identity or an ego-based identity. The nature of the EGO is to always feel offended. Therefore,

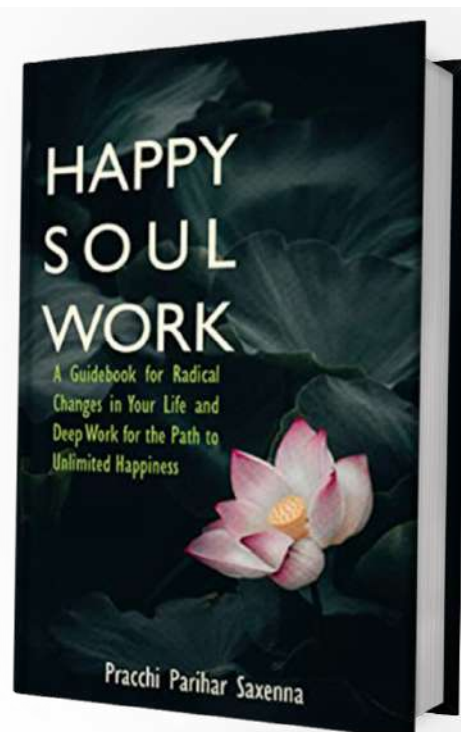
we should not take other people's thoughts seriously and work towards letting them Let GO!

**Frontlist:** How can someone who doesn't have strong beliefs in God seek solace from chanting deities' mantras?

**Pracchi:** Chanting or mantra meditation is a process of quieting and reverberating the mind with specific energies or sound vibrations. Every mantra has a specific energy pattern. It releases stress and makes the body relaxed too for any activity, not only for this mantra chanting exercise if one desires any result, but they also need to put faith and efforts in doing that activity. If a doctor at the start of the operation feels that this operation is not going to be successful, then there are chances the operation might have some errors. Similarly, a student initiating a project needs to have a proper belief that the project will be successful, even before initiating that project. So, to begin with, one needs to have some amount of faith in chanting any mantra. But having said that, I would say that even if you do not have a strong belief in chanting, start with at least one round of chanting or 5 minutes of chanting and slowly give it more time. I'm sure after some time, the person will experience benefits, and will start practising more, and for longer durations.

**Frontlist:** Here is a well-known adage - If you've intense convictions, then you can find God in the rock as well. Do you agree with this statement?

**Pracchi:** Of course, God, HIM, Universal Power, Higher Consciousness, whoever you like to address, is everywhere. God and His energy are all-pervading, and even matter represents HIS energy. It's not the material that we make the idol of but the bhava or the state with which we look at the idol that matters. The idol can be made of rock, paper, metal, or any form, but it's the consciousness with which you do the activity and not the rules or the way with which you do the activity. So, if you have God's consciousness, then the object in front of you does not matter, but only your consciousness does.







### "The Ayurvedic Kitchen"

Dr Asghar and Sonal Chowdhary

Sonal Chowdhary is a holistic nutrition consultant with a specialisation in weight management, sports, and clinical nutrition. She is a certified Ayurvedic nutrition consultant and a medical yoga therapist. She is also a certified holistic cancer coach from the Centre for Advancement in Cancer Education, Richboro, PA, US. She is an exercise prescription from the American College of Sports Medicine-approved Exercise Science Academy. She has also authored a book—Traditional Recipes for Pregnancy and Motherhood.

Dr Asghar is the Founder-Director of Greens Ayurveda in Azhiyur, Kerala. Greens Ayurveda is a renowned Centre for Ayurveda Treatment and study programs ([www.greensayurveda.com](http://www.greensayurveda.com)). Dr Asghar is a graduate in Ayurvedic Medicine and a postgraduate in Yoga Therapy. Patients/students from all continents flock to the centre for treatment and education in Ayurveda. He is also the author of two books on Ayurveda.

**Frontlist: How did the two of you decide to write a book together on Ayurveda?**

**Dr Asghar & Sonal:** The idea behind writing this book was to present Ayurveda in a very simplified, contemporary, and relatable manner to the reader so that they can easily incorporate the Ayurvedic principles in their daily cooking and food habits to achieve optimum health.

**Frontlist: Please briefly explain the factors on which customisation of diet is carried out.**

**Dr Asghar & Sonal:** Ayurveda believes that every person has a unique constitution and no one fixed rule or diet is fit for everyone. It says even medicine should be individualised. The customisation of diet is carried out based on many factors, among which the important ones are Prakriti (individual constitution), Guna (attributes), Samskara (processing), and Sathmya (homogeneity), Vaya (age), Desa (habitat) and Kala (season). Ayurveda also emphasises that the diet should be customised for each individual

according to Shaareerika and Maanasika Prakriti (physical and mental constitution), Agnibala (digestive power), season, current health status and daily changes, and other natural environmental factors surrounding an individual.

**Frontlist: How much is the accuracy of Doshas Quiz in the book?**

**Dr Asghar & Sonal:** The dosha quiz is fairly accurate. However, to get confirmation, one should consult an Ayurvedic doctor. This book will guide the reader to have an individualised approach as per their constitution and genotype, which they can know using the Dosha Quiz in the book and help them understand ways to include foods in their diet that are best suited for them.

**Frontlist: Taste also has an impact on mental health. How does Rasa affect our emotions and consciousness?**

**Dr Asghar & Sonal:** According to Ayurveda, taste or Rasa has a deep impact on mental faculties. It states that the rasa of any food (that is, the initial effect in the mouth) often relates to its effect on our emotions and consciousness (mental effect). For example, spicy foods raise the emotional temperature, and sweet foods/desserts make one feel mellow.

According to it, the purity of food influences the purity of mind. The different tastes and textures of food can induce three different states of mind, known as the Triguna-

- a) Sattva, which is a happy, contented state
- b) Rajas, the excited yet agonising state
- c) Tamas relates to a lethargic, delusional, arrogant, and ignorant disposition.

Conversely, the state of mind also influences the desire to consume certain types of food.

**Frontlist: Please share one of the recipes that help in gaining weight.**

**Dr Asghar & Sonal:** Ayurveda offers several effective strategies for building and nourishing the body that encourages a balanced approach to gaining weight. It teaches you to eat a deeply nourishing diet while balancing Agni (the digestive fire) to ensure that your body can actually absorb the nutrition you are eating. To gain weight, a Vata pacifying diet that includes foods that are generally grounding, warm, oily, smooth, stabilising, and substantive should be incorporated into daily meals. Below is a recipe that is easy to prepare and mitigates Vata. It cures emaciation, supports muscle tissue, and is rich in potassium, Vitamin B-6, fibre, and antioxidants.

**Frontlist: What is that one element that many of us consume but is extremely bad for our health?**

**Dr Asghar & Sonal:** Fried potato chips are one food that is widely consumed by all age groups. But according to Ayurveda, it is toxic for the bodily systems and hampers tissue metabolism. Deep frying of potatoes can develop toxic substances, such as acrylamide, which can prove to be carcinogenic.

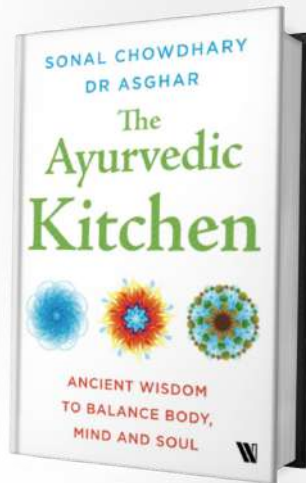
Ayurveda gives a lot of importance to the processing of food. According to the Charaka Samhita, the processing of a food substance leads to an alteration in the inherent properties of the food; it is known as Samskara. For example, just like frying potatoes, even heating honey is totally contraindicated as it blocks the subtle channels of our body.

**Frontlist: What are some of the tips and tricks that can be used to create energy and mind-body balance?**

**Dr Asghar & Sonal:** Ayurveda talks about various ways in which one can attain mind-body balance and harmony. The book Ayurvedic Kitchen talks about some of the various important aspects of it. A few of the rules of consumption of food are:



- 1) Eat only when hungry and should include all the six tastes.
- 2) Practice mindful eating in a relaxed environment.
- 3) Eat fresh and seasonal foods and should include healthy fats.
- 4) Take care of your portions of food - should not be too little or too much.
- 5) Eat foods that are compatible with each other and nourish your constitution.
- 6) Include foods that maintain your digestive fire.



**Frontlist: Is the Poet's life different from normal human life?**

**Devangshree:** Yes, indeed! How a normal human describes or defines love, emotions, pain, rage, and how a poet describes the same is altogether different. You may not know how to express what you feel, but a poet can certainly picture not only his/her thoughts and pain but of others too. Moreover, normal people may at some point lie or be afraid of telling the truth, but a poet is always true. Even I, as a human, do lie many a time, but my pen never does.

**Frontlist: Does poetry naturally come to people, or does something have to happen in their life?**

**Devangshree:** I would like to answer this via one of my poems, "A Poet".

They asked me  
How to become a poet?

I said - the way leaders are born,  
Not made.  
Similarly, everyone's born a poet,  
Not made.

You just need to find  
What stardust your soul has?

Before coming to the earth, we were all embedded with various specialities by the universe, and the moment life entered this mortal body, we forgot what we were embedded with. And so there's a need to find what charisma you were sent within this world to recognize who you are?

Poetry is an art, and without art, this world has no existence. Therefore, for me, everyone who's in love with 'art' is a poet, but in their own different ways.

**Frontlist: What are some of your experiences that led you to write poetry?**

**Devangshree:** I started my 'journey to poetry' in 2019, and at that time, I wrote to release my angst towards some people. I realised that whatever they made me feel through their deeds has been felt by many people. So, I started writing and releasing it out, consoling and encouraging other people to fight or embrace the pain as I did through poetry and writing. This journey has now become my 'journey to life'. Now, whatever I absorb from life, I need to write.

**Frontlist: According to you, what are the elements that make poetry great?**

**Devangshree:** According to me, I don't think elements are necessary. Only one element, i.e., pain is enough to make poetry great. I'm not talking about any kind of physical pain. I'm talking about the emotional pain that is much more capable of piercing a human heart terribly than any kind of physical pain. Here, not only poetry but any kind of writing needs only one element, i.e., pain.

**Frontlist: Which poem in this book will always be close to your heart?**

**Devangshree:** There's a poem "Holding Wrinkled Hands" in the "Family" section of the book, written after my grandpa passed away. Being the eldest child in our house, I have experienced everyone's love in the family. However, the one who loved me the most was my grandpa (though, as a kid, my favourite was my uncle). Doesn't matter what I have done and what I haven't - he used to favour only me. Even when there was any quarrel between me and grandma, or between me and my father, he used to scold them and pamper me. To express the love of both of my grandparents, I wrote this poem, and I think this one will always remain close and will always have a special place in my heart.



### "An Amalgamation"

Devangshree Saini

A budding poetess and author from Jaipur, Rajasthan - Devangshree Saini is pursuing BA Honours in English Literature. Literature is her love, writing is her passion, and she writes stories too. She dreams that what she feels, what her thoughts are, and what she experience should reach the people who have also lost themselves in this broken world.

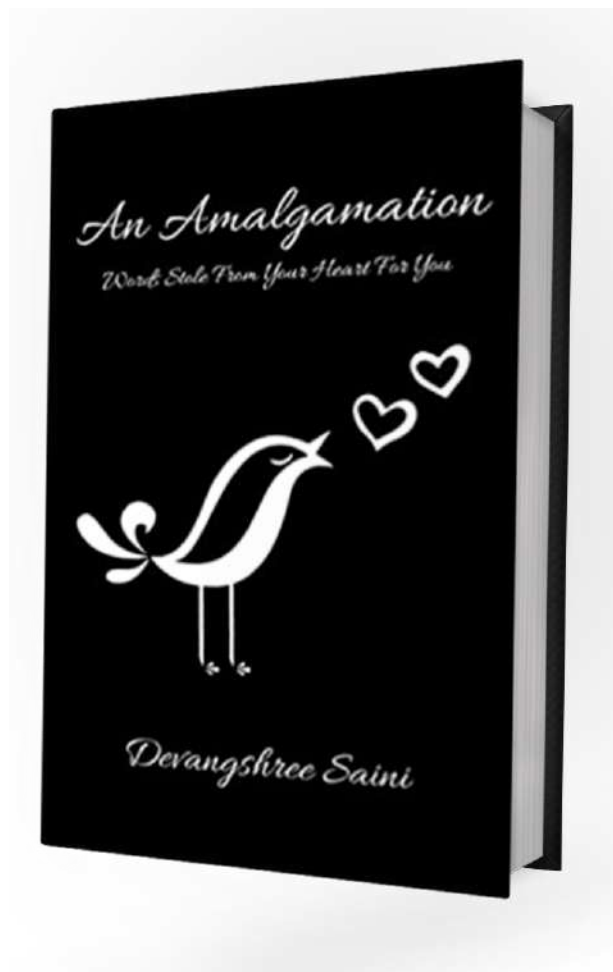
**Frontlist:** How did you start writing poetry altogether? Are you also planning to write in different genres?

**Devangshree:** As I have mentioned before - I started writing in 2019. Before that, I was fond of music (although I still am). I feel every emotion to its depth - whether it is anger, love, sadness, joy, or any other emotion. I immerse myself in it completely, and I don't know whether it's a boon or a curse to me. For instance, if I am in anger, I feel like burning everything into ashes. And because we are to control our bad tempers and are not able to fully express our good ones - I started writing and expressing my buried emotions in that way.

Anyhow, I am working next towards writing fiction, and my plan for the future projects is to give a trial to both fiction and poetry altogether, i.e., after a poetry book, fiction will be there, and then again poetry, and so on. But, I don't have any plans at present for other genres except these two.

**Frontlist:** As you are a budding poetess and an author, what are some of the best bits of advice you have received? And also, what advice would you give to all the budding poets?

**Devangshree:** My first advice was from my mother. She always tells me to have patience. She says patience and hope are the keys to success. The same advice I would like to give other budding poets. If any work, whether it is difficult or easy to go, is done with precipitance it will go bad. Therefore, it is necessary to have patience and remember that where there is life - there is hope.



### **“Booming Digital Stars”**

Harsh Pamnani & Manish Pandey

Harsh is a storyteller by passion and a brand expert by profession. He earned his BE in Computer Engineering from IET-DAVV, Indore, and his MBA from XLRI, Jamshedpur. His bestselling book series Booming Brands was widely acclaimed by eminent academicians, Indian government leaders, entrepreneurs and venture capitalists. Harsh also writes for various business publications, including Forbes. He has worked variously with think-tanks like the World Bank, corporates like Deloitte, and start-ups like FirstCry. He also teaches Branding at MBA colleges, like MICA in Ahmedabad and is a popular speaker at fora such as TEDx, Google Business Group, Josh Talks, IIT, and IIM.

Manish is a sought-after brand consultant, social media evangelist, and mentor to new-age digital brands and influencers. He is currently a part of the leadership team at Josh Talks, one of India's largest and fastest-growing impact platforms.

**Frontlist:** You've been writing books on Brands. However, 'Booming Digital Stars' emphasises the exponential growth of the Creator Economy, a must-read for any digital creator. Why did you decide to collaborate with Manish Pandey on this concept?

**Harsh & Manish:** Harsh started the Booming Series a few years back, in which he covers the inspiring journeys of new-age Indian brands. In the past, he has written Booming Brands Volume 1 and Volume 2. Manish suggested that the way Harsh writes on start-up brands, he should also think about writing on single-person brands or personal brands, especially from the context of Creator Economy. So, Harsh extended the scope of the Booming series and came up with Booming Digital Stars.

We've found many benefits to writing as a duo. Both of us have complementary skills and different spheres of influence. So in a way, coming together helped us share the load and doubled our

abilities and reach. Everything worked in our favour because we both had a shared dream and were equally passionate about it.

**Frontlist:** How did you get the idea of penning down on the 'India's Creator Economy' subject?

**Harsh & Manish:** The Creator Economy features small businesses centred around independent content creators such as video bloggers, writers, comedians, musicians, etc., who monetize themselves, their skills, and their creations on the Internet. Today, youngsters are being drawn to become content creators the way they were once attracted to becoming engineers, doctors, and lawyers.

There have been many books written about becoming the CEO of a large corporation or creating a fast-growing start-up, and business schools teach how to analyse and manage large businesses. But it is hard to find a book or business school course on creating and managing a single-person brand in an emerging Creator Economy. Hence, to fill the void, we wrote this book.

**Frontlist:** Most enticing factor of this book is that every inspiring story ends with steps on how to create a personal brand and different perspectives from each creator. Which key factors did you consider in writing all digital creator stories?

**Harsh & Manish:** Many people would know these famous content creators and what they have achieved. But people would not know why these creators started this journey when it was not a proven career and how did these creators achieve growth when a blueprint didn't exist. We wanted to bring out these hidden aspects.

In this book, you will find 11 stories of leading Indian creators and gain insights on:

1. How had they started from scratch?
2. How had they achieved popularity in a highly crowded and competitive market?
3. How did they identify new ideas for content creation and brand collaboration?

**Frontlist:** How exactly do readers resonate with this book? What were your thoughts while writing 'Booming Digital Stars'?

**Harsh & Manish:** The size of the Creator Economy is humongous, and the available opportunities immense. However, the chances of creators getting lost in the crowd are higher than getting noticed. Though the market is crowded, India has seen the rise of an entirely new breed of first-generation creators who have established powerful personal brands. The lessons captured in these stories will help aspiring and emerging creators build their brands in their chosen niche. To give our readers a portfolio of learnings, we focused on creating a mix of journeys in different creative spaces (dance, music, comedy, cooking, etc.). We have received a lot of affection from our readers. We are thankful to our readers for their praises through Amazon reviews and social media posts. In terms of sales, the book has remained the number 1 bestseller on Amazon in multiple categories and has become a National Bestseller.

**Frontlist:** The competition in the Creator Economy has become increasingly competitive since the Pandemic Outbreak. What suggestions do you have for newbies in this field?

**Harsh & Manish:** The first wave of creators focused on English, followed by Hindi and Hinglish. But now, a huge opportunity exists in regional languages. Brands prefer to work not only with top creators but also with emerging creators who have

their geographic niches. To cater to the demand of small towns, you can think of creating videos in regional languages such as Marathi, Tamil, Malayalam, and others.

When you start, don't focus on numbers. Just focus on content. Content is King. If you figure that out, everything else will fall into place.

**Frontlist:** You both are branding enthusiasts. What advice would you give to someone who wants to create a personal brand?

**Harsh & Manish:** Don't try to become everything for everyone. Try to become something for someone. When followers consider a creator an expert in a particular field, they take that creator's recommendations seriously. Moreover, brands prefer to work not only with established creators with a mass following but also with emerging creators who own a niche. So try to achieve mastery in some areas and become a go-to person for a particular field.



### "The Begum and the Dastan"

Dr Tarana Husain Khan

Dr Tarana Husain Khan is a writer and cultural historian. Her writings on the oral history, culture, and the famed cuisine of the erstwhile princely state of Rampur have appeared in prominent publications such as scroll.in, Eaten Magazine, The Wire, and in the anthologies *Desi Delicacies* (Pan Macmillan, India) and *Dastarkhwan: Food Writing from South Asia and Diaspora* (Beacon Books, UK). She hosts and curates a website on Rampur culture and oral history. She lives between Rampur and Nainital with her husband.



**Frontlist:** As the synopsis of the book says, 'The Begum and the Dastan' is a haunting tale of a grand city and its women. What are your thoughts on this?

**Dr. Tarana:** Women fall off the pages of history. They are rarely written about in cisgender histories and sometimes survive in oral histories. Feroza Begum, the protagonist of *The Begum and the Dastan*, was mentioned briefly in official history only because she had birthed a daughter. A one-line reference to a life barely lived. My work attempts to amplify the voices of women -- historical and contemporary-- still faintly echoing on the lips of people, some inspired by real-life characters, and some based on my experiences with my young students in Rampur. I wanted a historical narrative that would have a place for these voices, and 'The Begum and the Dastan' was born. It draws from my research on gender, culture, and the dastan tradition of Rampur and is located in a fictional place.

**Frontlist:** It is a story of love, loss & tragedy. Why did you choose to highlight these issues in your book?

**Dr. Tarana:** Love is the 'root of the root' because it is the reason we feel loss, suffer tragedies, and we still hope in the fate written in the stars. I fell in love with Feroza Begum (name changed), who loved, dealt with excruciating circumstances with great dignity, and had the generosity of spirit to empathise with others in the same predicament as hers. Feroza's life was a cautionary tale narrated to young girls in courtyards and at family gatherings. That she was related to my family created proximity and immediacy to her experiences.

In the patriarchal narrative, this young girl was blamed for her defiance and everything that happened to her was justified. Feroza decided to attend the sawani party, a celebration of monsoons at the Nawab's Palace, in defiance of her father's wishes. It was her fault that she was restrained by the debauched Nawab in his harem. Her subsequent abandonment by her husband and her family was validated. Feroza expected her family or her husband's family to rescue her or plead her case. She believed that things like abduction happen to women belonging to vulnerable sections of society and that she was protected by her lineage and the men of her family. As a young person, I felt claustrophobic thinking of Feroza Begum's life in the harem. I was told that the Nawab really loved her, which confused me. What stood out for me from the disjointed oral histories I gathered in my pursuit of unearthing Feroza's tale was her courageous spirit--which was translated as her rebellious temper--and her sense of dignity. She loved passionately. She suffered. She resurrected herself to serve revenge and saved the essence of her love.

**Frontlist:** The gist of the book displays that it is inspired by real-life characters and events. Where did you get authentic facts about such characters, and how did you curate the story?

**Dr. Tarana:** I was haunted by Feroza. I met her family members and old-timers who had heard about her. I wanted to know so much-- Where did she live? What were her days like? What happened to her? I started researching the cultural history of Rampur and walking the narrow lanes of the old city. Then other stories came up - a diary, reliable and unreliable narrators. There were glimpses of the fiery, lively Feroza Begum in family lore; incidents of her generosity, her earth-shaking tantrums all filtering down through oral history.

There were horrifying whispers of forced abortion and maybe murder. Intrigued, I sifted through the Regional Archives at Allahabad, looking for clues. My quest took me to the Sanatorium at Bhowali in search of old records. At one point, I found myself in a family graveyard looking for her tombstone in vain. Ironically, the graveyard was called Murshid, the guide. Generations of

men and women, who are deemed unimportant, lie in unmarked graves. Feroza's grave was somewhere among them. It was a long journey--about four years-- till I was able to unearth the realities that framed her life and ultimately destroyed her.

**Frontlist:** A woman of the 19th century was always "JUST A WOMAN" - irrespective of her professional or royal status. Do you see much of a difference now in the 21st century? How far have we come as a society?

**Dr. Tarana:** The great difference is, of course, education - at least for most women - and the freedom of movement. We are no longer confined to harem walls and zenanas. But, what of the confinement of attitudes and the veil we have drawn around our thoughts? As a teacher, I had experienced taboo around discussing incidents like cyberbullying and even sexual assault in school, which was hushed up. Often, the girl child was victimised and made to leave school. There is a character of Diwani Begum inspired by a Nawab's wife in my story. She was a highly educated tawaif who had defied the Nawab and pretended madness to escape his wrath. She possibly had mental health issues. It brings forth the question of how mental health was perceived then and now. My interactions with my students in my earlier career as a teacher brought me face to face with attitudes about mental health in Rampur. I had these young girl students who had mental health issues, some really serious ones, ignored by parents.

Ameera, a young person living in the 21st century, listens to the story of Feroza Begum and translates it through filters of 'modernity', her struggles, and her predicament. The life of the Begums, their limited choices, and how they negotiated patriarchy has a counterpoint in Ameera's life. Patriarchy is a reality in Indian homes today, and young girls live with constraints, both mental and physical. Ameera's father is more worried about his land acquisition case than her fees, and he doesn't allow her to go for tuition. So Ameera, the great-granddaughter of Feroza Begum, puts forth the question which lies at the core of my novel--has anything changed for the women of small towns in contemporary India.

**Frontlist:** According to you, what degree of heinous activities happened behind the purdah in the 19th century? What were the key elements about the life of 19th Century begum that one must not miss out on?

**Dr. Tarana:** The story of Feroza Begum is not a stereotype. We know from groundbreaking research and writings on the lives of Mughal women by Ira Mukhoty and Ruby Lal that the women in the harems were self-actualized, educated, and financially independent individuals. Moreover, harems or zenanas were not confined to one religion. In fact, they emerged out of the political insecurities of the time and the desire to keep women secure. So the harems were peopled with women of all ages--aunts, mothers, sisters, daughters, and wives. They were also repositories of cultural practices--music, art, customs, and culinary traditions. It was a richly textured and nuanced space. That being said, we cannot romanticise the lives of women inside harems. Yes, there did exist exploitation and cruelty, but there were also powerful women, even in Rampur, who had a voice in the running of the state. The tawaifs in the harem were more educated and accomplished than the begums from genteel families. Writing poetry and dastans was an acceptable pastime for all begums. Few of these ghazals were also published. The begums of Rampur came out of the purdah after 1930 - as did women of several royal families like Jaipur, Cooch Behar, Baroda, Hyderabad-- and lived full lives. Unfortunately, our concept and the mental image of a harem remains coloured by colonial narratives.



### "Ramkrishan Paramhans Ke 101 Prerak Prasang"

Dr Rashmi

डॉ. रश्मि ने हिंदी में 10 से अधिक पुस्तकें प्रकाशित की हैं जिनमें आत्मकथाएँ, उपन्यास और स्वयं सहायता शामिल हैं। डॉ. कलाम और अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी पर उनके आत्मकथात्मक उपन्यास बहुत लोकप्रिय हैं।

अंग्रेजी में यह उनकी पहली किताब है।

वह एक लेखिका और शिक्षिका हैं। उन्होंने विभिन्न समाचार पत्रों, पत्रिकाओं में लेख, कविताएँ और कहानियाँ प्रकाशित कीं। नवभारत टाइम्स और आज समाज में नियमित कॉलम, ट्रिब्यून के लिए पुस्तक समीक्षा। दूरदर्शन और अन्य चैनलों और ऑल इंडिया रेडियो पर प्रस्तुतियाँ। विभिन्न वरणों में काव्य पाठ।

**Frontlist:** हम भगवान से परम् आशीर्वाद कैसे प्राप्त कर सकते हैं?

**Dr Rashmi:** आपने कभी सोचा कि हम अपने माता-पिता, बुजुर्गों, रिश्तेदारों, मित्रों या किसी भवित्तक का स्नेह और आशीर्वाद कैसे प्राप्त करते हैं? उनकी निस्वार्थ भाव से सेवा करके। उनसे एक प्रेमपूर्ण रिश्ता स्थापित करके। ऐसे ही जब हम भगवान से एक रिश्ता जोड़ लेते हैं तो उनका परम् आशीर्वाद हमें स्वतः ही मिलने लगता है। अर्जुन, तबरी, सुदामा, मीरा, गोपियां आदि इसका साक्षात् उदाहरण हैं। इन सबने ईश्वर के साथ अटूट संबंध बनाया और जीवन भर उन्हीं के परम् आशीर्वाद से ओतप्रोत रहे।

**Frontlist:** स्वामी रामकृष्ण परमहंस हमेशा मानते थे कि "प्रेम की एक बूंद भी अगर किसी को मिल जाए वही सच्चा अनुराग है, ऐसे अनुरागी को संसार पागल कहता है।" आज के समाज में हम वास्तव में ऐसे लोगों से नहीं मिलते हैं। इस पर आप क्या कहना चाहेंगी?

**Dr Rashmi:** प्रेम तो बस प्रेम है, उसमें चौतन्त्रता या पागलपन कहाँ? दरअसल जिनके हृदय में प्रेम नहीं बल्कि व्यापार है वे इस पागलपन को समझ ही नहीं सकते। या कहिए कि इसे पागलपन कहते हैं। प्रेम तो आज भी सभी को चाहिए लेकिन देना कोई नहीं चाहता। यदि हमने प्रेम के लेन-देन में भी गणित लगाई तो हम प्रेम का आनंद कभी नहीं पा सकते। जो ऊँचे स्तर का स्वाद चख लेता है उसे फिर निचले स्तर का स्वाद भाता ही नहीं लेकिन ऊँचे स्तर का स्वाद पाने वाले हजारों में कोई एक होता है। ऐसे लोगों को पहचानना बहुत मुश्किल है। और महत्वपूर्ण बात यह भी है कि ऐसे लोग अपने स्वाद का आनंद किसी

को बता नहीं पाते। यदि बताना भी चाहें तो संसारी लोग उनके मनोभाव समझ नहीं पाते और उन्हें पागल कहने लगते हैं। दरअसल उनका यह पागलपन ही उनका परमानंद है। पागल वे नहीं बल्कि संसारी लोग हैं जो उसके आनंद रूपी पागलपन को समझ नहीं पाते इसलिए स्वीकार भी नहीं कर पाते। और आनंद की मस्ती में जूबा व्यक्ति या तो अपने आनंद को समझा नहीं पाता या फिर समझाना ही छोड़ देता है। यही कारण है कि ऐसे लोग हमारे इर्द गिर्द ही होते हैं लेकिन हम उन्हें नहीं पहचान पाते।

**Frontlist:** ज्ञान और अज्ञान, इसी के बीच उलझा हुआ मनुष्य इस दुनिया में भटकता रहता है। हम इस दौर से कैसे उबर सकते हैं?

**Dr Rashmi:** जब तक मनुष्य अपने जीवन का उद्देश्य नहीं समझ पाता तब तक वह ज्ञान और अज्ञान के बीच ही उलझा रहता है। जिस दिन वह अपने उद्देश्य से परिचित हो जाता है फिर उसके लिए सुख-दुख, लाभ हानि, अपना-पराया कुछ मायने नहीं रखता। स्व का भान होते ही अज्ञान समाप्त हो जाता है। संसार में सारी जीवात्माएँ भगवान की ही तटस्थ शक्तियाँ हैं। वे भगवान की बाहरी शक्ति महामाया और अंतरंग शक्ति योगमाया के बीच झूलती रहती हैं इसीलिए विद्या और अविद्या के बीच इस संसार के सारे प्रपंचों में उलझी रहती हैं। गुरु, साधु और शास्त्रों के अनुसार यदि संसारी कार्यों को भगवान की आज्ञा और उनकी सेवा मानकर किया जाए तो अविद्या नष्ट हो जाती है। यही असली विद्या है और वही वेद का सार भी है। संसार के सारे कर्म करते हुए भी अपने शास्त्रों का अध्ययन करें, ईश्वर के साथ एक प्रेम-भक्ति का संबंध बना के रखें। इस प्रकार से ज्ञान और अज्ञान से दूर निकल कर अपने जीवन को सार्थक बनाया जा सकता है।

**Frontlist:** इस किताब में रखने के लिए आपको सभी प्रासंगिक जानकारी कहाँ से मिली?

**Dr Rashmi:** मैंने स्वामी रामकृष्ण परमहंस एवं स्वामी विवेकानंद के जीवन पर आधारित अनेक पुस्तकों का अध्ययन किया। रामकृष्ण मिशन के विद्वज्जनों का साथ प्राप्त हुआ। रामकृष्ण मिशन द्वारा मुझे स्वामी जी के जीवन से जुड़ी गहन व सटीक जानकारीयाँ उपलब्ध हुईं। मेरा परम् सौभाग्य है कि मेरी इस पुस्तक में आशीर्वाचन रामकृष्ण मिशन के सचिव पूज्य संतात्मानंद जी ने लिखा है एवं इसका लोकार्पण भी उन्हीं के कर कमलों से संपन्न हुआ था।

**Frontlist:** 'बेहतर जीवन के लिए आपको भगवान से कोई भौतिकवादी चीजें नहीं मांगनी चाहिए। वह आपको एक निश्चित समय में वह सब कुछ देगा जिसके आप हकदार हैं। इसके बारे में जागरूकता कैसे फैलाएँ?

**Dr Rashmi:** अपने जीवन के उदाहरण से ही देखिए, आज के समय में सभी के पास भरपूर भौतिक सामग्री है लेकिन क्या उनके जीवन में सुख है? शांति है? सांसारिक वस्तुएँ तृष्णा हैं, और तृष्णा कभी संतुष्ट नहीं होती। क्या कभी ऐसा होता है कि एक चीज लेने के बाद आपकी इच्छा शांत हो जाती है? नहीं, क्योंकि मनुष्य हमेशा और अधिक पाने की लालसा में उलझा रहता है और अतृप्ति के साथ इस संसार से विदा हो जाता है। उदाहरण के लिए यदि किसी पिता की दो बेटे हैं। एक जिद्दी है लेकिन दूसरा शांत है। शांत बच्चा मिलने वाली हर वस्तु का आनंद उठाता है लेकिन जिद्दी बच्चा हर बात हठ से मनवाता है। कभी-कभी वह अपनी जिद में ऐसी चीजें भी मांगता है जो उसके लिए उचित नहीं हैं। जबकि पिता उचित और अनुचित के भेद को बखूबी जानता है। वह उनकी आयु और आवश्यकता के अनुसार हर चीज लाकर देता है। भेद बस इतना है कि शांत बच्चे को हर चीज प्रेम से प्राप्त होती है जबकि जिद्दी बच्चे को उतना स्नेह नहीं मिलता। इसीलिए ईश्वर से भी भौतिक चीजें नहीं मांगनी चाहिए। यदि उन्होंने हमें इस भौतिक संसार में भेजा है तो वह हमारी योग्यता, हमारी कर्मठता के अनुसार हमें हर चीज समय आने पर अवश्य देते हैं।

**Frontlist:** एक लेखक के रूप में अब तक का आपका सफर कैसा रहा?

**Dr Rashmi:** मेरा अब तक का सफर बहुत अच्छा रहा लेकिन इस सफर को अभी मुझे बहुत दूर तक लेकर जाना है। इस पुस्तक को मिलाकर अब तक मेरी कुल चौदह पुस्तकें प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं और तीन प्रकाशनाधीन हैं। किंतु मेरे जीवन का उद्देश्य किताबों की गिनती से नहीं बल्कि उनकी उत्कृष्टता से पूर्ण होता है। मैं समाज को कुछ ऐसा दे जाना चाहती हूँ जो उन्हें सालों-साल राह दिखाए।





Presents

# A One-Day Virtual Event

On the occasion of

happy  
Father's  
Day



Co-organised by ► **FRONT LIST**

Stay Tuned with us for more information!

# FRONTLIST SPECIAL



This month's Spotlight Session was organised, especially for Publishing Industry professionals. The Spotlight theme was 'Publishing in Post-COVID World'.

## We featured:

- Trisha De Niyogi, COO & Director at Niyogi Books
- Sahil Gupta, Director at V&S Publishers
- Lipika Bhushan, Founder of MarketMyBook

They shared their perspectives on how publishers went through dynamic changes over the past two years and the present status quo.

## Here are some key pointers that were discussed in the Spotlight Session:

- The panelists expressed the difficulties that were faced by them during COVID and how they adopted the new change to become equivalent to the Publishing Fraternity.
- They shared their advice with other publishing houses to sustaining themselves in the digital world.
- They discussed the nuances of Book Marketing and the distribution process.
- The major changes that happened in the last two years other than the technological advancement in the Publishing Ecosystem.

## FACEBOOK LIVE



We conducted Facebook Live on 14th April 2022 at 6 PM with Author Nimai Verma. He is an exceptionally talented young author who recently released his book 'From Wulf to Woolf'.

Nimai Verma has found solace in tales since the foremost days of his consciousness and has been critically reading Literature since Middle School. Claiming to have inherited this admiration for Arts from his mother, he deliberately aims to work for the appreciation of Arts centred on Philology and Literary Criticism. Intrigued by politics and the writings of Oscar Wilde and J R R Tolkien, the author believes in the poet's self-contained ability to create sublime, "l'art pour l'art". Deliberately aims to work on Classical Literary Antiquity and South Asian Literature.

He talked about ultimate facts about British Literature and revealed some of the unknown facts about himself.



# INDIA'S #1 News E-portal For The Publishing Industry



## OUR SERVICES



Author Promotion  
Book Promotion  
Publisher Promotion

FOR ADVERTISING WITH US CONTACT AT:

## FRONTLIST MEDIA

One Stop Destination to get insights from The Publishing World

Address - Frontlist Media, 4259/3, 3rd floor,

Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002

Email - [media@frontlist.in](mailto:media@frontlist.in)



[www.frontlist.in](http://www.frontlist.in)



9711676777



Scan to visit website



frontlistIN