

FRONTLIST

DECEMBER 2022

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PragatiE Vichaar

LITERATURE
FESTIVAL 2023

9th-14th Jan

PVLF Author Excellence Awards 2023

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honour their valuable contribution to the Literary World

**EXCLUSIVE
COVERAGE**



GET A GLIMPSE OF THE DISCOURSE AMONG THE WORLD'S PUBLISHERS!



WELCOME MESSAGE



Dear Frontlisters,

Congratulations to all of you! It's time to look back at the success of 2022 and prepare for new year resolutions and celebrations. Amidst all this, do not forget to vote for PVLFF Excellence Awards 2023!

It has been a remarkable journey this year, exploring new things, providing you with endless knowledge, and keeping you well-informed about the ventures in the Publishing Ecosystem. However, the journey hasn't ended here.

The 2nd rendition of PragatiE Vichaar Literature Festival 2023 will be hosted virtually on the PragatiE platform from 9th -13th January 2023 and held physically in New Delhi on January 14. We look forward to bringing you insightful conversations with renowned and debut authors worldwide.

The voting lines are open now for PVLFF Author Excellence Awards 2023 & PVLFF Readers' Choice Book Awards; it will close on January 3, 2023. Vote for your favorite authors and books and make them shine bright for their contribution to the literary world. The winners of PVLFF Excellence Awards 2023 will be announced on January 14 at The Claridges Hotel, New Delhi.

We're pleased to share that our Founder Mr Pranav Gupta is forging new ground and stepping into Authorship. He has penned his debut book - "Handbook on Intellectual Property & Reprographic Rights," published by the Indian Reprographic Rights Organisation.

Along with the PragatiE Vichaar Literature Festival, most other book fairs and literary events are returning physically after the Covid Hiatus. The 26th Edition of the Delhi Book Fair 2022 will take place from Dec 22-26, 2022 and the New Delhi World Book Fair 2023 will be held in the month of February, both at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. Frontlist will be present at both the events with much fanfare.

Greetings for Christmas! We at Frontlist will continue our endeavor to give you the warmth of knowledge along with new surprises. We are very fortunate to our readers for enabling us to develop connections with the publishing world firmly. As long as solidarity remains, we shall give a non-stop dose of the literary realm.

Write to me: navita@frontlist.in

Navita Berry

Business Head

CONTENTS

05

Exclusive Coverage

- 33rd International Publishers Congress 2022
- Handbook on Intellectual Property & Reprographic Rights by our Founder Pranav Gupta

12

- Shortlisted Entries of PVL Excellence Awards 2023

19

- List of PragatiE Vichar Literature Festival 2023 Speakers

26

Media Coverages

- Jashn e Rampur: Celebrating Culinary Culture Oxford Bookstore celebrates centenary in books
- by announcing the first ever "Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize"
- Book Launch: "Life of an Industani: Six Degrees of Separation"
- by Author Shiv Kunal Verma at the Valley of Words International Literature & Arts Festival, Dehradun

31

Author Interviews

- Tabish Khair
- Bhawana Somaaya
- Avinash Agarwal
- Mohona Kanjilal
- Janvee Menghrajani

38

Special Feature

- Delhi Book Fair 2022

40

Frontlist Special

- Spotlight Session: What not to do as an editor?

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INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS CONGRESS 2023



EXCLUSIVE COVERAGE

33rd INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS CONGRESS 2022

Organised by **the International Publishers Association**, the **33rd edition of IPA Congress 2022** has taken place on **10-11 Nov in Jakarta, Indonesia**.

“Reading Matters: Embracing the future” was the theme of this edition.

Every two years, on even years, the IPA organises the International Publishers Congress in collaboration with the IPA member of the host country. The congress provides the unrivalled platform for worldwide networking and discourse among publishers on industry challenges and opportunities.

This time, there were 666 participants, 379 were from Indonesia, and the remaining participants were from other countries.

JOSÉ BORGHINO

Secretary General. IPA

The 33rd International Publishers Congress was a remarkable reunion of publishers from around the world who gathered together to listen to 60 speakers, in 12 sessions, over two days, tackling nearly every major challenge facing global publishing.

Our tireless Programming Committee spent countless hours during two years of lockdowns wondering whether our plans would ever materialize. Then, suddenly, we were in Jakarta, with hot debates unfolding on stage, and it was even better than we had imagined.

The discussions were vibrant and thought-provoking, but I must admit that the highlight for me was when we acknowledged those peers who inspired us all. Our colleagues, Vitor Tavares and Fernanda Garcia from CBL in Brazil, invented an innovative approach for getting books quickly into the hands of readers in local, independent bookshops and won the IPA's Innovation Award. The incredibly brave publisher Thanapol Eawsakul of Same Sky Books risks imprisonment by publishing books that question the power structures in Thailand and was honoured by the IPA's Prix Voltaire. And finally, it made me so happy to see Asoke Ghosh receive the inaugural IPA Champion Award for his decades of support for the IPA.

Our association is unified by our belief in the principles of copyright and freedom to publish — but it is driven by the energy, conviction, and goodwill of individuals like Vitor, Fernanda, Thanapol, and Asoke”

We were all proud to be part of their celebrations.”





ARYS HILMAN NUGRAHA

**President, Indonesian Publishers
Association (Ikapi)**

."On behalf of the Indonesian Publishers Association (Ikapi), let me convey my deepest appreciation to the International Publishers Association (IPA) for giving Jakarta a chance to be the host of the 33rd International Publishers Congress on 10-11 November 2022. It was a very important forum to face challenges, search for doable, possible solutions, and enhance beneficial collaborations among players in the industry.

As we may be well aware, we are now facing a truly unprecedented situation related to Covid-19 and digital disruption. I believe these issues have affected book industries in many countries. Hundreds of millions of people may be unable to afford books anymore due to the mass unemployment caused by the crisis. They tend first to fulfill their basic daily needs or, like in Indonesia, they take shortcuts and buy pirated books that they think are more affordable.

Like the disruption of technology, diversity presents both challenges and opportunities. It is not easy for us to maintain harmony with so many differences. However, it is also easy to explore cultural diversity as the source of the infinite wealth of our books. As IPA in the global scope, we also believe in supporting indigenous language publishing and empowering underrepresented voices.

The IPA and Ikapi share a common ground. We are working on the freedom to publish, digital transformation, literacy and reading, diversity and inclusion, respecting copyright, and combating book piracy. We are in the same boat in reducing cultural blind spots in our reading through translation among languages and trying to look at the world through different eyes.

Jakarta is the country's capital, and we proudly share our gratitude that the city was elected as a City of Literature by UNESCO in 2021.

Indonesia is the most productive country in the region in terms of book production. We published around 159,000 titles last year, increasing from 123,000 titles in 2020, even in these years of the pandemic. The Indonesian Publishers Association, or Ikapi itself, has more than 2000 members across the country and has raised significantly in the last five years.

Long preparation

International Publishers Congress has been well known among publishers worldwide and has become the must-attend Congress for the people in the publishing world. Indonesia, as the host country for the 33rd Congress, prepared for this event seriously. Coupled with the unstable and uncondusive world conditions due to the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. However, this excellent opportunity has encouraged us to prepare for this Congress as well as possible.

The long preparation for this Congress involved serious discussions within the committee and International Publishers Association (IPA). We were trying our best to create programs that would benefit publishers so they could rise and survive in this challenging situation.

We were happy that the Congress was able to run smoothly and benefit all publishing industry players around the world who were present in Jakarta. In her opening remarks, IPA President, Bodour Al Qasimi, underlined the importance of collaboration between sectors to sustain the future of the publishing world.

he theme of the first session on the first day was "Freedom to Publish." The session discussed the challenges faced by publishers to publish with freedom, especially in Iran, Thailand, and Indonesia. In the second session, we discussed how to utilize technology in the field of publishing in a session discussing Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Children's books were also discussed in the third session. The main discussion was about the responsibility of children's book publishers to provide all access to books for children. Then, in the marketing and distribution session, we discussed platforms that could influence the development of physical bookstores. The first day of the Congress was closed with a discussion on the role of the book sector in overcoming the climate crisis through the books they publish and how to publish them.

On the second day, the first session was moderated by the President of IPA, Bodour Al Qasimi, who discussed the role of women in publishing, and closed with a group photo of all the women in the congress room.

The discussion then continued to educational technology, EdTech, which tried to ensure technology does its part in creating better educational outcomes. After lunch, the session discussed accessibility and publication, emphasized that access to publication is everyone's right, then continued with an exciting discussion about the power of translation.

The second day closed with a gala dinner and the awarding of the IPA Prix Voltaire 2022 for publisher Same Sky Publishing from Thailand. This award is given to individuals, groups, or organizations who continue to

KARINE PANSA

Vice President, International Publishers Association

"The 33rd International Publishers Congress was exhilarating. Over 600 delegates and speakers from 63 countries were impeccably welcomed by our Jakartan hosts to discuss and celebrate our sector.

Our theme, Reading Matters: Embracing the Future, consistently came through in discussions.

The pandemic reminded us why reading matters. Many turned to reading in those difficult days, but some children, without access to the books in their schools, were deprived and are still catching up. When discussing the freedom to publish, the situations in

Thailand and Iran show how much reading matters to people there. We kept coming back to the need to create that love of reading in children and to compete with other forms of entertainment. The discussions always turned to the future - Where are the opportunities? How can we do things better?

There were wonderful moments that electrified the room, like when all of the women attending took to the stage at the end of the session on women in publishing. In a way, Congress enabled us to come together around specific issues and learn from each other. I can't wait for the next Congress in Guadalajara from 4-6 December 2024."



Some Glimpses of the IPA CONGRESS 2022



A big moment for the Indian Publishing Industry

Shri Asoke K Ghosh, President Emeritus, FIP. Chairman and Managing Director, PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd has become the first-ever recipient of the prestigious honor of the global publishing community-IPA Champion award at the IPA Congress 2022

EXCLUSIVE COVERAGE

“Handbook on Intellectual Property & Reprographic Rights”

A brief guide to learn the varied aspects of Copyright Laws and engage a discourse surrounding IP Law

Our Founder Pranav Gupta is donning yet another hat and stepping into authorship via his debut book “Handbook on Intellectual Property & Reprographic Rights,” published by the Indian Reprographic Rights Organisation. The book was launched internationally during the Frankfurt Book Fair 2022 at the annual FIP Reception Dinner on 19th October.

The book is forwarded by eminent professionals, including Mr Kevin Fitzgerald CMG, Director at World Intellectual Property Organisation, and Mr Ajay Sahni, Renowned IP Lawyer. In addition, special messages from Ramesh Mittal, President, The Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP), and Dr Ashok Gupta, Chairman of the Indian Reprographic Rights Organisation, are included in the book.

This handbook aims to provide a brief overview of copyright and a reference guide to the Indian Reprographic Rights Organisation (IRRO) that highlights the rights holders of copyrighted work, i.e., Authors, Publishers, etc., in the scope of literary works. It is designed to comprehensively assess IP's role in our daily lives and its significance in various industries. It also stresses the status quo concerning the imposition of IP Law in India, hoping to spread awareness about the need to uphold the law in letter and spirit.



Thoughts from Pranav Gupta on his book:

"I believe in India's growth potential, the changing educational dynamics, and the power of digital. By relying on these critical pillars and my global exposure, I intend to foray into the next generation of publishing and education."

It has been a feeling of great pride and delight to step into the world of writing with my 1st book. The Handbook on Intellectual Property & Reprographic Rights is based on a domain close to my heart and something I am truly passionate about, i.e., the protection of copyrights, especially in literary works, and how intellectual property acts like a broad umbrella to protect the rights of all creators.

The aim of the book was to explore how IP is the bedrock for creativity and innovation and how it has enabled the creation of many great works. The book has been written in a very simple format to make it easy for all individuals to understand and explore the horizon of IP & copyrights. The book has been published by the Indian Reprographic Rights Organization and witnessed an international launch during the Frankfurt Book Fair 2022."

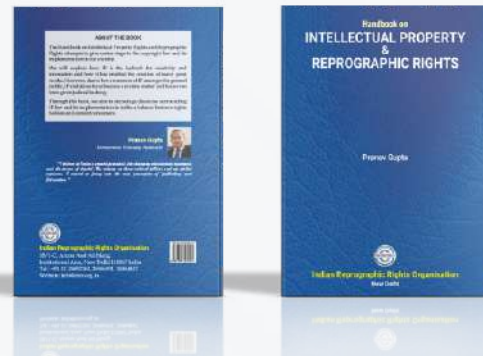


ABOUT THE BOOK

The Handbook on Intellectual Property Rights and Reprographic Rights attempts to give center stage to copyright law and its implementation in our country.

We will explore how IP is the bedrock for creativity and innovation and how it has enabled the creation of many great works. However, due to low awareness of IP amongst the general public, IP violations have become a routine matter and have even been given judicial backing.

Through this book, we aim to encourage discourse surrounding IP law and its implementation to strike a balance between rights holders and content consumers.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In his professional standing of 16 years, Pranav Gupta has conquered the feats of establishing his name in the Indian publishing sphere as the Managing Director of Prints Publications Private Limited. His drive for entrepreneurial success stems from the inter-generational legacy that precedes him and has helped him spearhead pioneering initiatives on the global front. Presently, with a fervour for taking the Indian publication to new heights, he serves as the elected Secretary General for the Indian Reprographic Rights Organisation (IRRO) and the Joint Secretary for The Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP). Through his tireless pursuit of expanding the digital footprint of these organisations, a wave of novel and unique events has curated an underlying current of networking opportunities by promoting individual businesses. To add to his kitty of accolades, Pranav also holds the position of an elected Executive Committee Member of the International Publishers Association (IPA).

He takes pride in being one of the few publishers who harnessed the potential of digitisation and technology and built various brands around it, from stem to stern. Prints Publications, Buy Books India, Advit Toys, OMLogic, Frontlist Media, PragatiE, and Solh Wellness, are the companies he represents. His well-rounded industry exposure and experience have made him a frequent speaker at national and international events. In addition, his essays have appeared in various newspapers, journals, and publications.

ABOUT THE BOOK

ABOUT IRRO

IRRO is a copyright society established in 2000 under Section 33 of the Copyright Act, 1957. It represents the rights of authors and publishers of literary works and has global affiliations with international organisations like IFRRO. Registered by Industries, Government permitted to commence business of literary works" in authority to issue works of its members, collect royalties on behalf of rights owners and distribute them. The Indian Reprographic Rights Organisation (IRRO) issues licences on behalf of rights holders of copyrighted materials for 2 Handbook on Intellectual Property & Reprographic Rights reproduction by photocopying, scanning, etc. of articles and extracts from their works. This includes magazines, books, and journals supplied by a licensed third party. The licences provide a cost-effective way to manage the risk associated with using and reproducing copyright materials.



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PVLF AUTHOR EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2023

&

PVLF READERS' CHOICE BOOK AWARDS 2023

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SHORTLISTED ENTRIES OF PVLF AUTHOR EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2023

LIST OF NOMINEES [ENGLISH]

Best Debut Fiction [NOMINEES]

Author Name	Book Name	Publisher
Avni Doshi	Girl in White Cotton	Harper Collins India
Priya Hajela	Ladies' Tailor	Harper Collins India
Vibhor Kumar Singh	The Billionaire and the Monk: A Simple Story about Finding Extraordinary Happiness	Pan Macmillan India
Anindita Ghose	The Illuminated	HarperCollins India
Bhaswati Ghosh	Victory Colony, 1950	Yoda Press

Best Fiction [NOMINEES]

Author Name	Book Name	Publisher
Malathi Ramachandran	Mandu: The Romance of Roopmati and Baz Bahadur	Niyogi Books Pvt. Ltd.
Saranya Umakanthan	One Day, Life Will Change: A story of love and inspiration to win life when it hits you hard . . .	Fingerprint Publishing
Manreet Sodhi	Hyderabad: Book 2 of The Partition Trilogy	Harper Collins India
Vauhini Vara	The Immortal King Rao: A Novel	Harper Collins India
Anirban Bhattacharyya	The Adventurous 6 : The Sinister Summer Holiday	OM Books International

Best Debut Non Fiction [NOMINEES]

Author Name	Book Name	Publisher
J. Sai deepak	India that is Bharat: Coloniality, Civilisation, Constitution	Bloomsbury India
Saranya Umakanthan	Iridescent Skin: A Multispecies Journey of White Sharks & Caged Humans: A Multispecies Journey of White sharks and Caged Humans	HarperCollins India
Bhaswar Mukherjee	Desperately Seeking Shah Rukh: India's Lonely Young Women and the Search for Intimacy and Independence. . .	OM Books International
Raj Sekhar Aich	The Counterfeiter : Abdul Karim Telgi and the Stamp Scam	Niyogi Books Pvt. Ltd.
Mohua Chinappa	Nautanki Saala and Other Stories	OakBridge Publishing

Best Non Fiction [NOMINEES]

Author Name	Book Name	Publisher
J. Sai deepak	India, Bharat and Pakistan	Bloomsbury India
"Aanchal Malhotra "	In the Language of Remembering . . .	Harper Collins India
Maya Sharma	Footprints of a Queer History: Life-Stories from Gujarat	Yoda Press
Ita Mehrotra	Shaheen Bagh	Yoda Press
Amit Ranjanzz	John Lang: Wanderer of Hindoostan, Slanderer in Hindoostanee, Lawyer for the Ranee	Niyogi Books Pvt. Ltd.

Best Poetry [NOMINEES]

Author Name	Book Name	Publisher
Sia Gupta	The Mahabharata in Rhyme	OM Books International
Abhay K.	The Six Seasons - Ritusamhara: Kalidasa	Bloomsbury India
Karuna Ezara Parikh	Where Stories Gather	HarperCollins India
Sneha	I am the Moon: Verses of Gloom, Love and Hope	Notion Press
Chitwan Mittal	Kindness with Mahavira	Niyogi Books Pvt. Ltd.

Best Children Author of the Year [NOMINEES]

Author Name	Book Name	Publisher
Neha J Hiranandani	Girl Power: Indian Women Who Broke the Rules	Scholastic India
Shobha Tharoor Srinivasan	Parvati the Elephant's Very Important Day	Harper Collins India
Rajesh Talwar	The Boy who wrote a Constitution	Ponytale Books
Urvashi Warman	The Camel with A Japi	Scholastic India
Vibha Batra	The Secret Life of Debbie G	Harper Collins India

Most Celebrated Author [NOMINEES]

Amish Tripathi	Devdutt Pattanaik	Preeti Shenoy
A.P.J. Abdul Kalam	Gaur Gopal Das	Rujuta Diwekar
Chetan Bhagat	Sadhguru	Ruskin Bond
	Sudha Murty	

PVLF Author Excellence Awards Hindi [NOMINEES]

Author Name	Book Name	Publisher
Jyoti Jha	Aanandi	Booksclinic Publishing
Lavanya Karthik	Gussa Master	Room To Read
Taranbir Singh Sawhney	Meri Aankhein	Room To Read
Meenu Thomas	Peechhe Dadi Aage Ped	Room To Read
Priyamvada Dixit	Ishq out of budget	Rajmangal Prakashan

Author Name	Book Name	Publisher
Manasvi Vohra	Children's Encyclopedia - Scientists, Inventions And Discoveries	V&S Publishers
Raj Kishore Mishra	Shatbhisha	Self Publications
Vicky Kumar Rajak	The Folder	The Write Order Publications
Neeraj Anand Chaudhary	Main Ishq Hoon	Bihaan Music publishers
Vivek Kumar Pandey	Main Gali Hun : Sach Jo Mahsus Kiya	StoryMirror Infotech Pvt. Ltd.
Lovekesh Chandra	गवर्नेस का राइट एंगल : आम आदमी के लिए सुशासन	StoryMirror Infotech Pvt. Ltd.
Astha Anand	Muddat / मुदत	Notion Press
Neha godghate	Parwaz	Chhavi Publications

PVLF READER'S CHOICE BOOK AWARDS 2023

LIST OF NOMINESS [ENGLISH]

PLATINUM [NOMINEES]

Book TITLE	Author Name	Publisher
Ikigai: The Japanese secret to a long and happy life	Francesc Miralles, Hector	Penguin Random House
The Psychology of Money	Morgan Housel	Jaico Publishing House
Atomic Habits	James Clear	Penguin Random House
The Alchemist	Paulo Coelho	HarperCollins Publishers
Attitude is Everything: Change Your Attitude ... Change Your Life!	Jeff Keller	HarperCollins Publishers.

GOLD [NOMINEES]

Book TITLE	Author Name	Publisher
Life's Amazing Secrets:How to Find Balance and Purpose in Your Life	Gaur Gopal Das	Penguin Random House
Think Like a Monk:The Secret of How to Harness the Power of Positivity	Jay Shetty	HarperCollins Publishers
One Arranged Murder	Chetan Bhagat	HarperCollins Publishers
Grandma's Bag Of Stories	Sudha Murty	Penguin Random House
The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*CK	Mark Manson	HarperCollins Publishers
Death; An Inside Story:A book for all those who shall die	Sadhguru	Penguin Random House
The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari	Robin Sharma	Jaico Publishing House
Karma:A Yogi's Guide to Crafting Your Destiny	Sadhguru	Penguin Random House
The 5 AM Club	Robin Sharma	Jaico Publishing House

SILVER [NOMINEES]

Book TITLE	Author Name	Publisher
Great Stories for Children	Ruskin Bond	Rupa Publications
Who Will Cry When You Die?	Robin Sharma	Jaico Publishing House
Sapiens	Yuval Noah Harari	Penguin Random House
Man's Search For Meaning	Viktor E Frankl	Penguin Random House
The Blue Umbrella	Ruskin Bond	Rupa Publications
Do Epic Shit	Ankur Warikoo	Juggernaut Publication
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	J. K. Rowling	Bloomsbury Publishing
Inner Engineering:A Yogi's Guide to Joy	Sadhguru	Penguin Random House
The Girl in Room 105	Chetan Bhagat	HarperCollins Publishers
Theory of Everything,The:The Origin and Fate of the Universe	Stephen Hawking	Jaico Publishing House
400 Days	Chetan Bhagat	HarperCollins Publishers

LIST OF NOMINEES [HINDI]

PLATINUM [NOMINEES]

Book TITLE	Author Name	Publisher
Twelfth Fail	Anurag Pathak	NeoLit Publication
Rashmi Rathi	Ramdhari Singh Dinkar	LokBharti Prakashan
Dark Horse:Ek Ankahi Dastan	Nilotpal Mrinal	Hind Yugm/Westland
Ret Samadhi	Geetanjali Shree	Rajkamal Prakashan
Aughad	Nilotpal Mrinal	Hind Yugm
Naraz	Rahat Indori	Manjul Publishing House

GOLD [NOMINEES]

Book TITLE	Author Name	Publisher
Main Mann Hoon	Deep Trivedi	Aatman Innovations
Koi Deewana Kahta Hai	Kumar Vishwas	Diamond Books
October Junction	Divya Prakash Dubey	Hind Yugm
Banaras Talkies	Satya Vyas	Hind Yugm
Phir Meri Yaad	Kumar Vishwas	Rajkamal Prakashan
Do Kadam Aur Sahi	Rahat Indori	Manjul Publishing House
Meri Fitrat Hai Mastana	Manoj Muntashir	Vani Prakashan
Maun Muskaan Ki Maar	Ashutosh Rana	Prabhat Prakashan
Chaurasi	Satya Vyas	Hind Yugm
Ek Aaghaaz	Nitish Ojha	Notion Press
Kuchh Ishq Kiya Kuchh Kaam Kiya	Piyush Mishra	Rajkamal Prakashan

SILVER [NOMINEES]

Book TITLE	Author Name	Publisher
Tarkash	Deep Trivedi	Aatman Innovations
Theek Tumhare Peechhe	Kumar Vishwas	Diamond Books
Tumhare Baare Mein	Divya Prakash Dubey	Hind Yugm
Musafir Café	Satya Vyas	Hind Yugm
Ibnebatuti	Kumar Vishwas	Rajkamal Prakashan
Bahut Door, Kitna Door Hota Hai	Rahat Indori	Manjul Publishing House
Musafir	Manoj Muntashir	Vani Prakashan
Ishq Mein Shahar Hona	Ashutosh Rana	Prabhat Prakashan
Antima	Satya Vyas	Hind Yugm
Kashmirnama	Nitish Ojha	Notion Press
7 Kirdaar	Piyush Mishra	Rajkamal Prakashan
Baaghi Ballia	Satya Vyas	Hind Yugm

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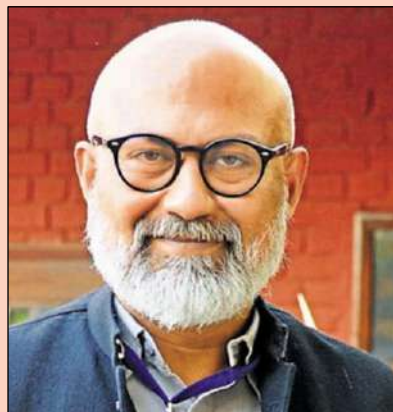


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List of Speakers at PragatiE Vichaar Literature 2023



Akshaya Mukul



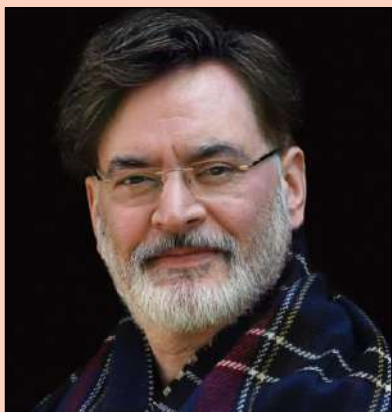
Abhay K



**Air Marshal PV
Iyer**



**Aashisha
Chakraborty**



Alope Lal



**Aman Singh
Maharaj**



Amitabh Satyam



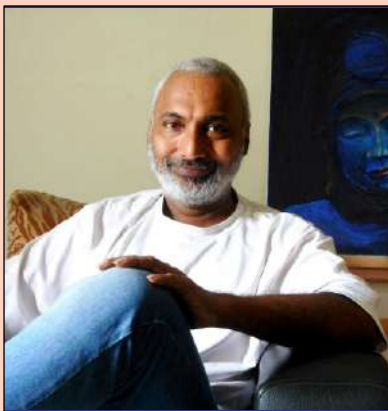
Anand Neelakantan



Anita Krishan
Frontlist Magazine
December Edition



Aruna Chakravarti



Ashok Rajagopalan



Avinash Agarwal



Bhawana Somaaya



Biman Nath



**Binal Gandhi and
Soneera Sanghvi**



Changez Jan



Chitwan Mittal



Deepam Chatterjee



Devapriya Sanyal
Frontlist Magazine
December Edition



Devdutt Pattanaik



Dr. Samir Parikh



Gautam Chintamani



Kanchan Banerjee



Kristenn Einarsson



L. Aruna Dhir



Lom Harsh



Ma Anand Sheela



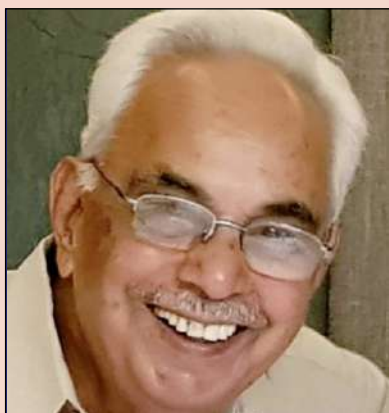
Maria Goretti



Meeti Shroff Shah



Menka Shivdasani



Mohan Gehani



Mohua Chinappa



M.I. Rajasve



Nalin Verma



Nikhil Uprety



Nilutpal Gohain



Prachi Gangwani



Rahman Abbas



Rajesh Talwar -



Rituparna Chatterjee



Rrashima Swaarup Verma



Saksham Garg



Salil Desai
Frontlist Magazine
December Edition



Sampurna Chattarji



Sangeeta Goswami



Shailaja Menon



Sharbani Banerjee



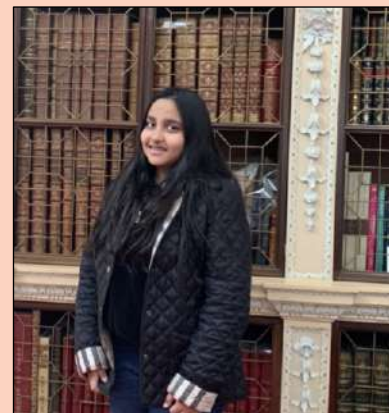
Shefali Tripathi



Shivesh Bhatia



Shubha Vilas



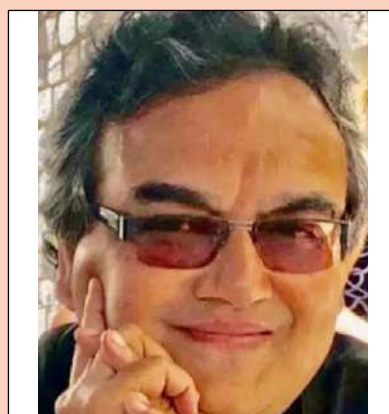
Sia Gupta



Siddharth Tripathi



Som Kamei



Sudeep Sen



Sudipto Das



Sujata Parashar



Sunayam Sharma
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December Edition



Tanushree Ghosh



Tarana Husain Khan



Trasvin Jittidecharak



Vani Kaushal



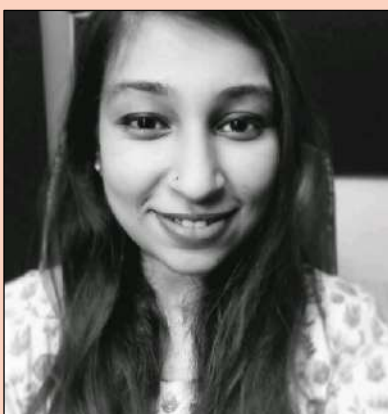
Vijay Balan



Zeynep Atiker



Ishani Chandra



Surabhi Iyer



Bhupender Yadav



Ila Patnaik



Amitava Nag



Dr Tarun Sehgal



Kapil Gupta

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MEDIA COVERAGE

Jashn e Rampur : Celebrating Culinary Culture

The daylong event **Jashn e Rampur** celebrated in the sublime environs and collaboration with India International Centre on 28 October 2022 marked the culmination of the project '**Forgotten Food: Culinary Memory, Local Heritage and Lost Agricultural Varieties in India.**' This research and public engagement project based at the University of Sheffield was a collaboration with Janki Devi Memorial College, the University of Delhi, the Culnaria Research Centre at the University of Toronto, and the University of York. It was funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund through the Arts and Humanities Research Council in the United Kingdom (2019- 23). The one-day Jashn focuses on the culinary heritage of Rampur in interaction with other locations in north India.

In the late nineteenth century, the Rampur court was known for its patronage of an important cultural festival, the Jashn e Benazir, featuring poetry, music, and food at the Nawab of Rampur's Benazir Palace. Bringing this historical model to life in a contemporary context, the **Jashn e Rampur** spotlighted several aspects of Rampuri and north Indian culinary culture rediscovered, researched, and resurrected through the Forgotten Foods project. The event was a great success, with a footfall of about 500 attendees throughout the day, and each session had more than a hundred rapt audience.

The event began with a welcome note from Professor Swati Pal, Principal of Janki Devi Memorial College, University of Delhi.

1. Professor Siobhan Lambert Hurley, the Prime Investigator of the project, succinctly described **the journey of the project** with Dr Tarana Husain Khan, Research Fellow and Project consultant, University of Sheffield, and Dr Saumya Gupta, Project Co-Investigator and Associate Professor, JDM College, University of Delhi.

2. A panel discussion chaired by Writer and Historian Rana Safvi—**Heritage Foods of Rampur: From Translation to Revival**—had Dr Tarana Husain Khan and Sadaf Hussain, Chef, Writer, and Project Collaborator, discussing the translation of Urdu and Persian cookbook manuscripts preserved in the Raza Library. These recipes have been revived through collaboration with local khansamah led by Chef Suroor and Aslam khansamah in Rampur. Mr Birendra Sandhu spoke of **Tilak Chandan**, a near-extinct traditional rice variety revived at his Benazir Farms in Rampur, and other rice varieties being grown at the farm under the project. Professor Jayeeta Sharma, Project Partner Lead, Culnaria Research Centre, University of Toronto, spoke on the sustainability of agriculture and food sovereignty of the farming community.

3. Professor Saumya Gupta and Professor Siobhan Lambert Hurley, in discussion with student researchers, presented the challenges of collecting culinary **oral histories** in Delhi in pandemic circumstances. Oral histories and culinary memories were recorded by Dr Saumya Gupta and Farah Yameen, assisted by student volunteers during the pandemic.

4. Lunch came with a **taste test**. The audience was asked to taste two kinds of urad dal khichdi—one prepared with heritage tilak Chandan rice and the other with hybrid rice—and fill up a questionnaire. This was a study to determine if heritage rice has distinguishable characteristics compared to hybrid rice.

5. Next came a screening of **Dastarkhwan e Rampur**, a documentary highlighting the historical journey of Rampur cuisine from the royal tables to the streets of Rampur prepared by Mr Yousuf Saeed, Filmmaker and Project Collaborator. He discussed the making of the documentary with Mrs Samina Naqvi, Founder of Sanchaari, Allahabad, and Project Collaborator.



Tarana Husain Khan with Dr Pushpesh Pant and editor Shreya Punj at the launch of her book, *Degh to Dastarkhwan*.

6. Dr Tarana Husain Khan's book '**Degh to Dastarkhwan: Qissas and Recipes from Rampur**' (Penguin, India) was released by renowned Food Historian and Writer Professor Pushpesh Pant, followed by a panel discussion moderated by Shreya Punj, Book Publisher and Editor representing Penguin Random House.

7. Next was a panel discussion chaired by Professor Claire Chambers, Project Co-Investigator and Professor of Global Literature, University of York, UK, with readings from *Desi Delicacies* (Pan Macmillan, India), an anthology of food writing by South Asian authors commissioned by the project and edited by Professor Chambers. Food writer and Columnist Anoothi Vishal, Rana Safvi, and Professor Hurley joined the insightful discussion on South Asian cuisine.

8. The Jashn culminated with an innovatively scripted **Rekhtigoi performance** evoking the historic **Jashn e Benazir of Rampur** based on the 1867-68 text *Musaddas e Tahniyat e Jashn e Benazir* written by Mir Yar Ali 'Jan Sahib' (1818- 1886). Dr Razak Khan, the Research Associate of the project and a Research Fellow at the Centre for Modern Indian Studies, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, collaborated with Scriptwriter Danish Iqbal and Dastango Fouzia and Saneya in Delhi, and librarians and archivists Abusad Islahi, Sanam Khan, Syed Tareq Azhar in Rampur's Raza Library to create this performance in a digital format.

9. The dinner by invitation in the Rose Garden of IIC featured 17 dishes from Rampuri cuisine translated from historical texts and reimagined by the Rampur Khansamas led by Aslam Khansama and his team. Some of the dishes were

Do-gosht Pulao has two kinds of meat—chicken meatballs and mutton pieces. Mutton is used for yakhni stock.

Seekh Kebab Nargisi requires skillful kebabi. It has a twisting of boiled eggs threaded onto the skewers with the mincemeat.

Kundan Qaliya is a light golden-hued curry.

Pineapple Pulao—Sweet pulaos with garnishing of



Speakers at the event:

1. Ms Anoothi Vishal, Food Writer, and Columnist
2. Mr Birendra Sandhu, Benazir Farms, Rampur
3. Prof Claire Chambers, Project Co-Investigator and Professor of Global Literature, University of York, UK
4. Dastango Fouzia
5. Dastango Saneya
6. Prof Jayeeta Sharma, Project Partner Lead, Culinarium Research Centre, University of Toronto
7. Prof Pushpesh Pant, Food Historian and Writer
8. Mrs Rana Safvi, Writer and Project Collaborator
9. Mr Sadaf Hussain, Writer and Project Collaborator
10. Mrs Samina Naqvi, Founder of Sanchaari, Allahabad, and Project Collaborator
11. Dr Saumya Gupta, Project Co-Investigator and Associate Professor, JDM College, University of Delhi
12. Prof Siobhan Lambert Hurley, Project Principal Investigator and Professor of Global History, University of Sheffield, UK
13. Ms Shreya Punj, book publisher and editor representing Penguin Random House
14. Prof Swati Pal, Principal, Janki Devi Memorial College, University of Delhi
15. Dr Tarana Husain Khan, Project Consultant and Research Fellow,



MEDIA COVERAGE

Oxford Bookstore celebrates centenary in books by announcing the first ever Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize

Under the aegis of Oxford Bookstore's centenary celebration, the iconic Oxford Bookstore proudly announces the first edition of the Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize in collaboration with the Visual Arts Gallery.

Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize is India's only prize that recognises the value of art in all genres under the umbrella of the art publication. Significantly, the Art Book Prize actively acknowledges the book's contribution to the extensive discourse on art and culture. The Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize is an open invitation for publishers, academics who research art and culture, collectives, and independent artists based in India who are involved from the conceptualization stage through the production stage of various forms of art publications. An illustrious panel of experts would be looking for original concepts, critical thinking, and novel approaches for identifying and recognising talents contributing to the popularisation of art publishing in India and beyond.

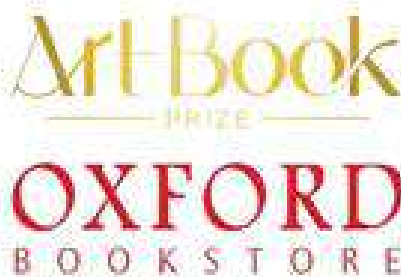
- **The special jury commissioned for the Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize include:**
- **The Ambassador of Brazil to India, H E André Corrêa do Lago**
- **Renowned architect and artist Gautam Bhatia**
- **Renowned painter Sanjay Bhattacharya**
- **Director, Apeejay Surrendra Group and the creative force behind Oxford Bookstores, Priti Paul**
- **Author, academic, museum curator, art historian, and curator of Visual Arts Gallery, Dr Alka Pande**



The illustrious panel of jurors would be looking for original concepts, critical thinking, and novel approaches for identifying and recognising talents contributing to the popularisation of art publishing in India and beyond.

With prize money of 1 Lakh INR, the Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize will holistically assess the variety of genres flourishing under the umbrella of art publications. The aim of the Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize would be to identify the experiments with the narratives and material, critical approach to the subject, and innovative formats performed by the artists. The new prize would move beyond its conventional definition and include Art Publications like Graphic Novels, Books on Artists, Pop-Up Art, Photo-Book, Coffee-Table Books, Zines, and Accordion Books. Significantly, the Oxford Bookstore Art Book Prize would acknowledge the book's role in disseminating knowledge of art and culture while recognising the balance between print production, content, pictures, graphic illustration, and overall design appeal.

Entries are open from 10th November to 10th December 2022.



Book Launch: “Life of an Industani: Six Degrees of Separation” by Author Shiv Kunal Verma at the Valley of Words International Literature & Arts Festival, Dehradun

Celebrated historian and filmmaker Shiv Kunal Verma's latest book, *Life of an Industani: Six Degrees of Separation*, published by BluOne Ink, was recently launched at the Valley of Words International Literature & Arts Festival in Dehradun. Not only were avid readers and many of the author's batchmates present at the launch, but many dignitaries also graced the occasion, and each one showed a keen interest in his work. The 500-odd page action-packed thriller-like read was unanimously regarded as less autobiography and more a contemporary look at Indian history through the eyes of one who had lived life to the hilt.

The effervescent Sana Durrani, who coordinates the Welham Boys' School Military Seminar, moderated the book's spectacular launch. The little flashes of humour she brought to the table made her the perfect host throughout the 40-minute discussion. The launch began with Mr Rajinder Pal Devgan, a well-known and respected academician who taught Shiv Kunal Verma at the Doon School, unveiling the first copy of the book, which the author then inscribed for him. Sana Durrani said right from the moment the launch was planned, Kunal was adamant that the book would be launched by him, even if General V K Singh, who could not make it at the last minute, had been present. It was the same with the other panellist, Anoop Seth, who had known Kunal for the past 50 years – even before they were in Doon School together – and who had been both his fierce critic and staunch supporter of his childhood buddy!

The discussion began with Sana Durrani asking the author what had made him give the book this catchy title and what the subtitle 'Six Degrees of Separation' meant. Kunal replied that the subtitle had been the original title because when he began writing the book, he found that everything in his life was correlated. However, when the work was nearing completion, the *Industani* title came up because this new word was apolitical and very Indian. He attributed it to another master who had taught him at the Doon School, Mr Krishna Kumar (KK) Candeth, whose own book, *All Street Dogs Go To Heaven*, is also being published by BluOne Ink.

During the talk, Sana Durrani smilingly 'allowed' Anoop Seth to be frank and say 'nasty' things about Kunal. The camaraderie between Kunal and Seth was palpable. He commented on the variety of experiences the author had seen, adding that in most of them, 'Fauji' (as he was named in school) had chased opportunities down himself, as was the case with the Air Force films and books like the *Northeast Trilogy*! He said that after reading the book, he realised that despite knowing Kunal for so many years, he still knew so little about him. Humorously, he also added that he was curious to know how the author felt now that his entire life was in the public domain. The author was frank in saying that he had not been keen on writing the book initially as he believed that usually, all autobiographies are 'ego trips' or, as Bernard Shaw once said, 'Autobiographies are all lies.' This book, he said, was the brainchild of Pankaj Singh, the Head of Publishing at BluOne Ink. Singh had been adamant about getting this book done because Verma's stories reflect much of India's modern-day historical incidents.

Dharmesh Mehta, in charge of marketing and defining the policies for One Heritage Media and BluOne Ink, added that the author is the 'Hemingway of India.' He also said that as more things happened in India, an *Industani 2.0* would likely come in. This was met with a lot of laughter by the author and the other panellists. Dharmesh said the biggest challenge was which genre to place the book *Industani* in, for it was a remarkable piece of work that had no precedence, nor was it likely to share space with any others of its kind. Almost every critic who had read the book till now was unanimous in the view that the book would find a place at the high table of Indian literature's all-time classics.



Sana Durrani then asked the writer why the author had decided to write an autobiography at the 'young age' of 60. Verma said that though his father had retired from the Army at 56, at 62, he was 'old' enough to write his 'autobiography.' He said that the 'inertia' would 'kill him' if he did not do anything. This was because his idea of relaxation was to stop working on a book when he needed a break and start working on another, then another, and they could be completely different genres. Apart from the *Northeast* books, Verma has authored *The Long Road to Siachen*, *1962: The War That Wasn't*, and *1965: A Western Sunrise*. Critics rate each book as being the most definitive work on the subject.

Throughout the event, the author remained very open about his life. When asked about Project Tiger, he didn't hide the fact that it had 'just happened.' His approach to filmmaking was more subject-oriented, and when he got a chance, he could also develop technical skills. Chances, indeed, can appear – just like that. Or you can create them. With hundreds of sorties on frontline fighters with the IAF and the Navy and having filmed real combat scenarios, the author is perhaps one of the most experienced 'hands-on' military specialists today.



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AUTHOR INTERVIEWS



TABISH KHAIR

Author of “The Body By The Shore”

Tabish Khair was born in 1966 and educated in Gaya, a small town in Bihar, India. He is the acclaimed author of 6 novels, of which Interlink published two: *Just Another Jihadi Jane* and *How to Fight Islamist Terror from the Missionary Position*, and 2 poetry collections. Winner of the All India Poetry Prize, his novels have been shortlisted for more than a dozen major prizes, including the Man Asian, the DSC Prize, and the Encore Prize. An Associate Professor at Aarhus University, Denmark, he has been a Leverhulme Guest Professor at Leeds University, UK. He has also been awarded guest professorships or honorary fellowships at Delhi University (India), York University (UK), Cambridge University (UK), and others.

Frontlist: Your book ranges over different timelines, deals with various issues, and addresses social conventions. How did you decide on the theme of this book?

Tabish: There is always a central germ, and then there are so many other influences, which grow and wither in the writing process. The germ, in this case, was the idea that the mitochondria, which is essential to all multicellular life on earth, was a once-in-evolution event. This happened when a single-celled organism (a microbe) swallowed another single-celled organism but did not fully digest it – leading to a wonderful symbiosis. From there, I moved on to the essential fiction undergirding my novel: What if ‘abstract reason,’ supposed to be distinctive about the Homo sapiens, is itself a similar event? What if abstract reason itself is the result of symbiosis, of the effect of a microbe (or something similar, perhaps from outer space) on the human brain? This was fun to develop, given the contentious discourses around reason, it’s supposed opposition to emotion, etc. The rest grew out of it. But of course, *The Body By the Shore* is, looking back, also very much a pandemic novel. Not just because it features microbes and viruses as actual agents of change and is narrated from the perspective of the year 2030-31. More interestingly, I was confined to my house, and inevitably the novel ranges far more widely across the world than any of my previous works! I suppose that is also one of the ways in which the human mind and literature work

Frontlist: Besides social prejudices, your book has touched upon the subject of ‘Climate Change.’ Do you think it ultimately boils down to the political will to take necessary action to combat climate change, or is there an individual part we can all play?

Tabish: I think it boils down to the deep and essentially criminal imbrication of politics with capital in every country of the world. Until and unless this changes, nothing significant will happen. You cannot really engage with climate change if your first priority is to increase capital – which has a deathly numerical logic that, left unquestioned and unchecked, can and does destroy lives. But yes, no change can happen without individuals: it is finally dependent on individual actions too. The problem is that many of our received categories of change – development, progress, affluence, happiness, etc. – are structured by the logic of capital and are essentially destructive of the environment, life, plants, animals, and individuals. We need to think of such categories in other terms, but there is a lot of pressure on us – cultural, political, legal, and educational – not to do so.

Frontlist: Racism is a prevalent problem even in the modern era of the twenty-first century. What part can education play in this to improve the situation?

Tabish: Racism is an easier matter to resolve than climate change. It might never disappear, but you can see that its forms are less virulent today than they were during the slavery years of the nineteenth century. The reason why it may never disappear is that racism, as we came to know it by the end of the nineteenth century, was essentially a warped logic to enable deep and permanent economic exploitation. That logic has remained.

Frontlist: What do you think are the main reasons for the popularity of science fiction? To what extent has the film industry helped popularize the genre? Will sci-fi movies substitute science fiction novels one day?

Tabish: I play with different genres. That is why my novels tend to be different, something critics and prize committees have failed to notice. In my case, SciFi offers some options to think and make others think. But so does gothic fiction, detective fiction, or any other genre. As I keep saying, for me, literature is primarily a thinking device: entertainment can be part of it, for you need to grab someone’s attention before you can make them engage. But finally, literature qua literature is a complex and distinctive thinking device



Frontlist: How do you see the future of science fiction literature? Will science fiction maintain its independence or intertwine with other literary genres?

Tabish: I cannot answer for others and do not claim to foresee the future. But a genre that gets straight-jacketed ends up being sheer entertainment; it loses its capacity to be a thinking device. So I think the best works of SciFi – like the best ones in other areas, including so-called 'literary novels' – will also draw upon and play with other genres in the future.

Frontlist: What part of the book did you struggle writing?

Tabish: The oil rig. I have never been on one. But it was fun to struggle to enter a totally unknown space. After all, that is also what fiction can do.



Author of "Stop Being a Maggu"

Avinash Agarwal is a Gen-Z parent, a Study Skill and Habit Coach for students, and the author of five best-selling books. He has been working in the field of mentoring for over 15 years, with the intent to understand a topper's mindset and what it takes to crack prestigious competitive exams. He firmly believes every child can be a topper. Through my books and online programs, he endeavors to impart the right learning strategies, techniques, and mindset to students to convert their potential into performance.

Frontlist: What inspired you to compose a book about students' apprehensions while preparing for competitive examinations?

Avinash: As an economy of 1.4 billion people, clearing any competitive exam in India comes with a mountain of pressure, which the students have to deal with. It is less about their understanding of the subjects and more about their ability to handle the pressure—those who succeed in having a focused approach get half their work done. My interactions with thousands of students in the last 15 years taught me this. Once I understood what truly is required for a student to crack any competitive exam, I felt driven to write this book.

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Frontlist: The theme of this book slightly resembles the popular show 'Kota Factory.' Did you draw inspiration from it to devise plots and characters in your book?

Avinash: I have not seen Kota Factory, but I know it covers similar grounds. Many people, including my son, have seen and told me about it. But no, it did not influence me when I was devising the story.

The place is a coaching hub for aspiring IITians. Being an engineer myself and my younger brother an IITian, I share a prolonged connection with it anyways. I felt it was best to establish my characters in Kota to connect with the target audience of my novel, which are the aspirants, who leave no stone unturned in their preparation, yet flunk in the exams due to the lack of a proper mindset and study techniques

Frontlist: You have named the main character of your book 'Abhyas,' which translates to 'practice.' What was your intention behind naming him that?

Avinash: Good question. Naming your characters is one of the most parts of writing a story that can connect with the readers. 'Abhyas' was the very first name I thought of. It instantly defined my protagonist's broad personality as a hard-working student, which I believe most aspirants in our country are. However, they lack the ability to convert their potential into performance, which requires clarity of mind and appropriate study practices

I intended for the readers to understand that a hard-working characteristic is undoubtedly essential. Though it is not everything, your 'Abhyas' (your practice) lacks the right approach to a given competitive exam, which I have tried to tell through the story.



Frontlist: 'Abhyas' has often been subjected to bullying even before being admitted to 'Genius Coaching Centre.' What policies should educational institutions adopt to prevent bullying?

Avinash: Though some actions, such as the anti-bullying helpline, have been taken off late, I feel a lot remains to be done, beginning with a dedicated team of student counselors in every educational institution to ensure all the students are made aware of what bullying comprehensively stands for and to take care of the grievances pro-actively.

There can be routine communication between the student counselors, the teachers, and the parents to address the concerns of every student.

Moreover, I have noticed the IT division is not always the best, which comprises proper monitoring of CCTV cameras installed in an establishment. Institutions should also have a backup to deal with unfortunate incidents, shall they happen, having police and hospitals nearby.

Frontlist: 'Abhyas' is often reluctant to express himself and struggles with anxiety and low self-esteem. How can we cooperate with such individuals so they feel at ease around us and speak their minds without fear?

Avinash: It is pretty common for students to feel discouraged or deal with low self-esteem. Students usually compare themselves with others, feel dissatisfied with themselves, and undergo a variety of emotions that they cannot express with their loved ones. Parents and mentors also, at times, burden students with insurmountable expectations which obstruct their capacity to give their best.

Hence, it becomes necessary for teachers or parents to ensure they give them the right space to speak their minds, ask them about their quotidian activities, avoid being authoritative, and, most importantly, spend time with them outside of asking about their academic progress.

Frontlist: You have a background in Engineering and have won some prestigious awards for your contributions to the field. What influenced your transition toward writing?

Avinash: As the Director of Disha Publication, my wonderful team and I have been in constant pursuit of providing our youth with the best exam preparation material to ensure their success. It has been one way of making a valuable contribution to creating an impact in their lives. Though, I realized there is excellent potential in writing books that highlight the internal conflicts students face, such as self-doubt, meeting the expectations of their parents, lacking clarity of what they want, stepping out of their comfort zone, avoiding distraction, and so many other things that restrict their growth.

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BHAWANA SOMAAYA

Author of "Letters To God"

Bhawana Somaaya has been a film critic for more than 40 years and has contributed columns to various publications like The Hindu, The Hindustan Times, Pioneer, BBC, and many more.

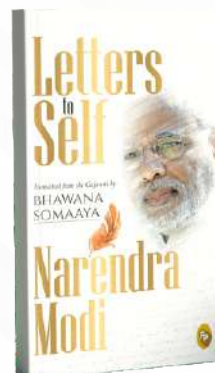
She is the former editor of Screen and has authored several cinema books, including biographies of Hema Malini and Amitabh Bachchan.

Her books are a point of reference for students studying cinema at Whistling Woods, Manipal University, and now JNU, Delhi.

She has served on the Advisory Panel of CBFC India and the Governing Council FTII, Pune.

She is the Entertainment Editor at 92.7 BigFM Radio Channel. She published Letters to Mother English translation of the Prime Minister's Gujarati book Saakshi Bhaav in 2020. Her latest offering, Letters to Self, is a translation of Shri Narendra Modi's book Aankh Aa Dhanya Chhe.

Somaaya was conferred with Padma Shri in 2017 and with an honorary Doctorate by Jagran Lake City University in 2021.



Frontlist Magazine
December Edition

31

Frontlist: What inspired you to translate this book from Gujarati to English, and what was the most enjoyable aspect of the project?

Bhawana: I translated one book by the Prime Minister, Sakshi Bhaav/Letters to Mother, in 2020. The covid nightmare was not yet over, and even though I was working on a film book, I felt I needed to be consumed with more creative work. One day I found Prime Minister's second book Aankh Aa Dhanya Chhe, on my bookshelf and decided to translate it since I was already familiar with his style and flow of words.

The most enjoyable aspect of the project was that I did not get lost but discovered my subject in the translation process.

Frontlist: Which letter in the book struck a particular chord with you more than the others?

Bhawana: The poems/prose/letters, however you wish to describe them, are a collection of passages written over a period of time. These are poems of progress, despair, quest, courage, and compassion. The cosmos is a recurrent motif in his poetry, and I like that the author creates powerful images with his rich vocabulary. I like that he expresses without filters, without reticence, and his intensity is infectious. So, it is not a specific poem/letter that strikes a chord; it is the tone of the book that awakens an old wound.

Frontlist: Topic names in the book are extremely simple. Rather than letters, it appears to be a person conveying a message. Were they the same in Gujarati, or were they twisted?

Bhawana: I think you are taking the title of the book literally. The writings are not letters but poems written by the Prime Minister over the years. The title of the book is an extension of my earlier book on him, which was called Letters to Mother, and this is Letters to Self – both are about self-expression. I agree that the poem titles are simplistic, but that's how it is in the original, and my book is a transcreation, not a literal translation.

Frontlist: Did the original author, Narendra Modi, read this book? If so, what did he think of it?

Bhawana: Yes, he has read the book and liked it.

Frontlist: Before writing, how much time and research do you put into a book?

Bhawana: I didn't need to do any research because I am only translating what was written by him. Yes, I had to research the language and the interpretation of the words and the emotions, so it was a long and arduous process involving many drafts and readings. Still, finally, I accomplished the manuscript to the best of my ability.



MOHONA KANJILAL

Author of "A Taste Of Time: A Food History of Calcutta"

Mohona Kanjilal was born in Kolkata and spent most of her childhood in Bengaluru. She began her career in Kolkata as a freelance journalist. During her stint with the newspapers, she got bitten by the writing bug and ventured into full-time writing. A Taste of Time is her third book and first work of non-fiction. Prior to this book, she authored two short-story collections. She is an alumnus of Loreto College, Kolkata.

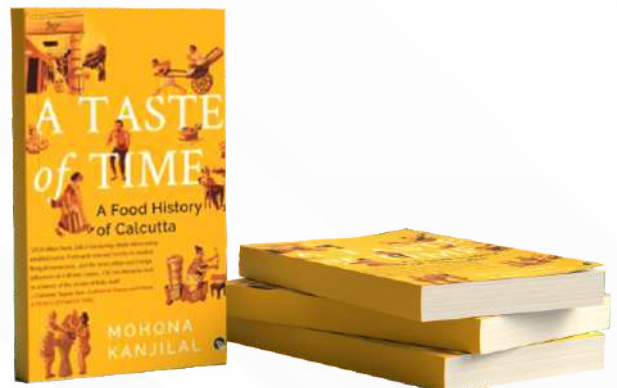
Frontlist: Your book weaves scholarly accounts of historians and food writers with the everyday fables you hear from normal people living life. What inspired you to do so?

Mohona: This book has been a journey for me. I started with a rough idea, a bare outline. During my exploration, I came across myriad nuggets of information, including scholarly accounts and everyday fables, which vividly brought alive Kolkata's food history.

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I stitched these together into a comprehensive whole. I wanted this book to have depth as well as be an enjoyable read – almost like history narrated in the form of storytelling.

Frontlist: Food history and the evolution of the city showcased in this book is a jackpot for historians, but is it a similar delight for new readers?

Mohona: As an author, and especially as a chronicler, as in this case, my job is to put forth the truth. And the truth is that as the city of Kolkata evolved, so did its culinary story. The British not only formed the city of Kolkata but also developed it and made it the capital of Bengal and then of British India. As a result, Kolkata became a thriving centre of trade and commerce. This induced many communities from outside the country as well as from within to leave their homelands and settle in the city with the intention of securing better livelihoods for themselves. Some communities arrived in the city to escape religious persecution carried out against them in their homelands. So, Kolkata became a cosmopolitan melting pot of Europeans, Armenians, Jews, Parsis, Chinese, Sindhis, Marwaris, Punjabis, South Indians, Biharis, Oriyas, and Gujaratis. The Anglo-Indians, of course, were also there. When these communities settled in Kolkata, they brought along with them their different cultures and lifestyle habits, which included their unique culinary cultures, leading to strong influences on the local culinary scene and giving rise to Kolkata's cosmopolitan food culture. Today, Kolkatans are great foodies. They have an open mind when it comes to food and are not afraid of experimenting. The reason behind this is that they have been exposed, for centuries, to cosmopolitan food culture. This made it essential to put forth in this book the story of the evolution of the city, which is strongly linked to the stories of the various communities that made it their home, as well as its food history, because the two are not independent of each other.

Frontlist: Talking about many delicious foods and their history, which one remains your favourite?

Mohona: I will definitely single out the contribution that the British made towards the introduction of tea in the country. Tea cultivation had been the domain of China for a long time, and it was Chinese tea that was imported to Britain and other European countries. In contrast, China was not interested in buying anything from Britain and accepted only silver in trade. But, by the late eighteenth century, Britain was unable to afford this silver because of the Anglo-Dutch Wars. So, the British thought of an alternative strategy of counter-trading opium against Chinese tea. They grew opium in India, mainly in Bengal, and exported it to China. With the profits earned, they bought Chinese tea. But opium addiction became so severe in China that the ruling Qing Dynasty declared its trade to be illegal in the country. The British reacted by smuggling opium into China. This antagonized the Chinese authorities. A series of events followed, ultimately leading to the Opium Wars, in which the Qing Dynasty suffered a humiliating defeat. Although the outcome of the war was in favour of the British, they now wanted to grow their own tea. Their quest led them to Assam, where an indigenous variety of tea grew wild in its jungles, thus, beginning the journey of the popular beverage known today as Assam Tea (the tea produced

was initially meant for European consumption and export). They also focused their energies on a place closer to home, which was Darjeeling, and what came about as a result of this was an exclusive variety of beverages renowned

throughout the world today as Darjeeling Tea. The evolution of the tea industry in India, which began in the east, is a subject covered in this book that I enjoyed working on

Frontlist: You've talked about foreign cultures' influence on the evolution of Bengali food. What would you say to the food puritans who refuse to change the recipes even a little today?

Mohona: I would like to tell them to open their minds. Bengali food puritans will be surprised when they know that many of the recipes have actually evolved out of foreign influences. For example, sweets like rasogolla, rasomalai, and sandesh would not have existed if the Portuguese had not taught us the technique of making chhana (as Bengalis call chhena or casein). No matter how good the traditional sweets of Bengal were, it was difficult for them to match up to the quality of the later chhana-based ones. Patoler dolma, a stuffed pointed gourd gravy dish that Bengalis eat with steamed rice or pulaos, is an adaptation of the Armenian dish dolma made with grapevine leaves. When the Armenians made Kolkata their home, they found it difficult to find grape leaves over here. So, they adjusted by stuffing patol (pointed gourd) with the seasoned minced meat mixture instead. Bengalis found this appealing and learned the technique.

Contrary to popular belief, the potato-filled fried pastry, 'samosa' ('shingara' in Bengali), is not indigenous to Indian cuisine but has its roots in the Middle-Eastern, meat-filled 'sambusak.' Even with some of the ingredients, there have been foreign influences. Posto, or poppy seeds, were discovered accidentally by the farmer's wife in the poppy fields of Bengal. The British took away the opium produced, leaving the dry and tiny white poppy seeds in the fields as waste. The impoverished farmer's wife made a paste of these seeds and realized it went very well with a frugal meal of fermented cooked rice called Panta bhaat. Thus, began the journey of posto in Bengal's culinary art. So, whether food puritans like it or not, change is inevitable with time and the evolution of society.

Frontlist: Would you be covering the culinary history of any other city or period anytime soon? If yes, then please tell us about your top choices.

Mohona: As an author, I like to explore different topics each time. So, my next book is going to be on some other subject.



Author of "Trust Your Instincts"

Janvee Menghrajani is an electrical engineer by education and a writer by profession. She has been writing for more than two years and got a chance to work at growing startups and esteemed organizations. She is a self-published debut author and wrote her first book, *Trust Your Instincts*. She was always inclined to write when she was 18, and she finally began her writing journey when she was 22. Writing is her hobby as well as a passion. She loves reading autobiographies and sketching in her free time.

Frontlist: The book "*Trust Your Instincts*" delineates your life learnings. What precisely might this book offer to its readers?

Janvee: This book is a blend of my life's learnings that'll be a self-reflection and mirror to the reader. The reader might not relate to the entire book, but they'll be able to relate to different parts of it. It'll make them feel heard whenever they feel they are going through something alone. It will be by their side every time they feel no one gets them. It's been a heartwarming conversation that will help them realise smaller things in life and the importance of being grateful for them.

Frontlist: Since it's your debut first book, you must've received many critiques. What would you tell yourself if criticism began to overwhelm you?

Janvee: I would say that it is ok to have critiques, which shows people take everything you wrote seriously. Also, criticism is a part of life, it happens to every author, so I am not someone whose facing it alone or dealing with it for the first time. I may find a different way of dealing with it. I'll make it through this feeling of being overwhelmed.

Frontlist: People alter themselves dynamically once they step into their adulting phase. What new changes have you acquired now after undergoing the phase of adulthood?

Janvee: There changes that I have acquired after undergoing the phase of adulthood are:

I believe in figuring out life the way it comes to me.

I am no more attached to my goal but to the process of attaining that goal.

I am okay with being vulnerable because I have realized that I need to start treating people around me as humans and myself.

I have started living life in moments than in memories.

I have become more grateful for life and appreciate the smaller things in life.

Frontlist: All the learnings mentioned in the book seem sermonic, like any other motivational book. How does this book distinguish itself from others in this genre?

Janvee: It represents my unfiltered view of life and expresses how it came to me and did not sugarcoat any part of life. I made an effort to compose it so readers wouldn't feel alone in dealing with their emotions and would find a friend in the book. Any age person can easily comprehend the language because it is easier to read and very lucid. There are a lot of life lessons for every reader, and I hope it adds a new perspective to their life.

Frontlist: Do you think being sensitive is detrimental to our personal growth? Please elaborate on it.

Janvee: No, I believe being sensitive is not detrimental to our personal growth. In my view, anyone can have a weak moment, but our sensitivity ensures that we don't repeat the mistakes we did before. Our sensitivity makes us an empath and better person who strives to make this world a better place to live.

Frontlist: Would you like to share any adversities you encountered while starting your career as a writer?

Janvee: I was fortunate enough that I didn't face any adversities that I encountered at the start of my writing career. It was an unconventional path, but I guess I just got the right opportunities and mentors on the way who helped me make my way to where I am today.



SPOTLIGHT OF



Frontlist brought something different to its readers and exclusively featured the **Editors** in November's Spotlight Session.

Theme: **What not to do as an editor?**

As we are all aware, the role of an editor is integral to evaluating the manuscript, and they act as hidden faces of any book that comes to life and are considered the backbone of Publishing Houses. Hence, keeping this in mind, here we're addressing some of the difficulties of being an editor and providing a glimpse of the editor's role and responsibilities.

List of Panelists:



Sushant Jha

Commissioning Editor, Hind Pocketbooks, Penguin Random



Tripti Nainwal

Associate Editor, Amar Chitra Katha



Menka Shivdasani

Mumbai-based Writer & Editor

Frontlist: Procrastination is one the major characteristics as a writer, but not as an editor. How do you oscillate between these two views?

Tripti: The most significant difference between a writer and an editor is that when you're a writer, a blank sheet of paper is in front of you; it's nothing lonelier than anything. Sometimes you don't get the first sentence to pen down, the words don't come right, and you end up doing everything else than writing the right piece. That's how procrastination

However, as an editor, you already have the words in front of you and know a manuscript, so only a poorly written manuscript might be a key reason for procrastination.

Menka: I would not use the word procrastination, but rather, it's allowing an idea to grow and mature in your subconscious before you can commit it to the page. Because when a poem is ready to be written, it will find its way outside. As the editor of my poetry, I would procrastinate, put aside the poem and forget

about it for a few days, and then I would go back with a fresh eye to see what requires changing. This only works with poetry. You don't have that luxury of time when you're doing journalistic editing and writing. So you have to get on with it, whether you're writing or editing. Since I've done both, I can manage them quite well.

Sushant: When I write originally, I procrastinate because I have to put my views, which gets delayed. However, editing is more manageable when I fully know the words and the manuscript. Therefore, there's no room for procrastination.

But sometimes, when manuscripts are poorly written, I procrastinate while editing. I procrastinate 20% of the time, but only occasionally. In my opinion, a writer and an editor face procrastination at some point in their work.

Frontlist: "Edit while you read." Do not read the copy too many times. Does this statement ring true to you? Do you have any insight into how re-reading affects editing?

Sushant: It depends on different books. Some books are so well written, and then I get the sense from the synopsis and manuscript or contain part also, I already know the author, and the storyline, so I don't reread it.

However, some books are very different and complicated, and I have to make them a glowing thing for readers or common people. Sometimes I edit while reading, but most of the time, I read it in full; I read it once and then mark the problematic parts.

Translations are very complicated subjects, and the content differs between the translator and the author. I do the reading first and then read the original book's translation. Sometimes I edit while reading, but many times, I edit after the reading.

Menka: I have this terrible habit of editing while reading because it is glaringly apparent. One needs to read the works several times. And in my experience, every reading will yield new errors or a new way to title the text. While editing a book, I would read it at least twice, if not more, just before it goes to the printer. After it goes to the printer and you come back with the proofs, you find other errors.

here are times when, after the book has been published, I've read it so many times that it has become a blind spot. There is no end to editing at some point.

There are additional external factors that also affect our reading time. And finding out the errors, what I believe in being an editor, meeting the deadlines, and many other things, we must follow the process.

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36

26th DELHI BOOK FAIR



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The Federation of
Indian Publishers

Co-organiser

The much-awaited Delhi Book Fair 2022 is coming back after three years hiatus in its 26th Edition!

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Ramesh K Mittal

President of The Federation of Indian Publishers

“Delhi Book Fair 2022, jointly organized annually since 1995 by the India Trade Promotion Organization and the Federation of Indian Publishers, is coming back in its physical shape after a gap of 3 years. Publishers, Librarians, Booklovers, Students, and Children in and around the capital are likely to throng this mega-book event post-pandemic. The dates of this book fair include holiday-cum-festival season, which will be best utilized by the readers to come and choose books of their interest. A Librarians' seminar during the fair will attract librarians to be at Pragati Maidan and look around for the choicest books. Various other seminars, book releases, authors' presentations, and children's programs are surely going to add to this book celebration event, which publishers have been desperately craving for all these 3 years.



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