

FRONTLIST

JANUARY 2023

COUNTDOWN BEGINS!



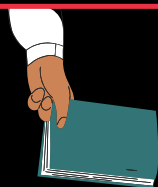
PVLF

PragatiE Vichaar

LITERATURE
FESTIVAL 2023

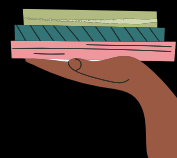
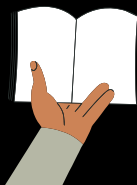
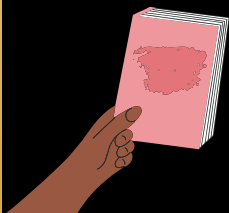
9th-14th Jan

It's time to revel in the spirit of Literature



CELEBRATING THE BIGGEST BOOK BONANZA!

26th DELHI BOOK FAIR 2022





WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Frontlisters,

Here we're closing off the previous pages and writing down new ones; Frontlist Media is unveiling a new chapter as the new year nestles before us. With our past learnings, we will bring originality to our older selves and start journeying. Last year, everyone received the delicacies of virtual events and podcast sessions, and we can show off that we've won readers' hearts with candor and vitality.

A year that started with the grandeur and success of the PragatiE Vichaar Literature Festival is ending with a larger grandeur and bigger success of its next edition. At the time of writing this message, we were already at 180,000+ votes for PVL Excellence Awards, an amazing growth from the 44,000 we received last year. The last date for voting is 3rd Jan 2023. Start counting days as the Literature festival is a few days away. Arriving from 9th - 13th January virtually and a physical day with PVL Excellence Awards in the evening on the 14th Jan 2023 at Hotel Claridges New Delhi, this year's PVL 2023 is going to be a blockbuster! This year's theme of 'Taking Humanity Forward' will ensure captivating discussions with the authors and experts on topics of significance. We invite all of you to attend our physical Literature Festival on 14th January, 2023 from 10am onwards.

In addition to new endeavors, how can we overlook our international Publishing Industry as they also play an essential role in securing the foundation of the Publishing ecosystem? We're thrilled to announce that Karine Pansa is starting her incumbency as the President of the International Publishers Association in January 2023, and Gvansta Jobava is joining as Vice-President. Our own Founder Pranav Gupta was nominated for the Vice President position and very narrowly lost by 2 votes. Indeed a significant moment for the Indian Publishing industry. I am sure you enjoyed the Delhi Book Fair 2022 at PragatiE maidan in December. This edition has a special interview with Lt Col Yuvraj Malik, Director at the National Book Trust, India unveiling and discussing the upcoming New Delhi World Book Fair 2023, which will be held in February this year.

We appreciate each one of you for doing a splendid job and always standing beside us. We've been sharing ebbs and flows, and this sharing ritual will continue and deepen even further.

We hope the new year brings an abundance of positivity and fills your minds with a treasure of knowledge.

Check out our January Edition with a promise of new learnings.

Write to us: Navita@frontlist.in

Navita Berry

Business Head

02

- The 26th Delhi Book Fair 2022

04

Exclusive Coverages

- A new chapter is commencing in the IPA
- Thoughts of Hugo Setzer on the 36th Edition of Guadalajara International Book Fair 2022 and the upcoming IPA Congress 2024

08

- PragatiE Vichar Literature Festival 2023 - Event Schedule

12

Media Coverages

- 14th Edition of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) to commence on 12th January 2023
- Book Launch: "3 Tips" by Author Meera Gandhi, Published by Rupa Publications India
- 21 Book covers make it to the Longlist of the 8th Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize
- Book Launch: life Of An Industani: Six Degrees Of Separation, By Author Shiv Kunal Verma, Organised By BluOne Ink

19

Special Feature

- Interview with Lt Col Yuvraj Malik
- Book Donation Campaign

24

Author Interviews

- Lt Gen Ramesh Kulkarni and Anjali Karpe
- Tanvi Srivastava
- Dr Connie K Chung
- Richa Lakhera
- Kanchan Banerjee

Frontlist

Volume 3, Issue No. 1 January 2023
 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

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FRONT LIST

Published & Printed by Mr. 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

26th DELHI BOOK FAIR 2022

Organised by the Federation of Indian Publishers and Indian Trade Promotion Organisation, an annual book fair known as the Delhi Book Fair 2022 came back in vigor after the Covid Hiatus. Its 26th edition was held from 22nd - 26th December 2022 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

The book fair has demonstrated that the significance of books in our hearts is eternal even though we're adapting ourselves following the Digital era. Exhibitors greatly participated, and visitors were also astonished to attend the book fair after a long time.

We got incredible responses when the Frontlist Team asked visitors about the Delhi Book Fair, as bibliophiles missed the smell of books and the fun of being at such fairs. Everyone wanted to take a break from the virtual world and understand the value of books which can only be found here.

There were several cultural activities held at the premises of the book fair, such as Play, Drama, Song with Props by Bachpan Society, Drawing Competition by School Students, Book Discussion by Spark Igniting Minds, Book release function on the 75 years of Independence followed by Kavisammelan, various seminars on different topics and other programme.

Along with activities, awards for Excellent display were also distributed.



Glimpses of the 26th Delhi Book Fair 2022

Kritika

Young Professional, Publication Division

We are in the 26th edition of the Delhi Book Fair 2022.

After COVID, it's an excellent opportunity for all publishers. Such book fairs are significant to provide a platform where publishers can showcase themselves and reach out to the maximum number of people. I can see a surge of people coming here. Hopefully, more and more people will explore and buy our books.

We are looking forward to many people visiting the Delhi book fair.

Ramesh K Mittal,

President Federation of Indian Publishers

Delhi Book Fair was started in the year 1995. In collaboration with the FIP, ITPO took the responsibility to organize this event every year, which is admired by book lovers, publishers, and everyone interested in the publishing world. The publishing world plays a crucial role in everyone's lives, and that's why books and authors should be celebrated. Such events should transpire frequently, and book reading needs to be encouraged during this digital era. Publishers are also adapting themselves to modern technologies.

The Delhi Book Fair is taking place after a gap of two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are optimistic that a plethora of book lovers will be coming to this event, and it will be a success as it is happening in physical mode.

Dr. Ashok Gupta

General Secretary, Federation of Indian Publishers

Every Year, Delhi holds two book fairs, Delhi Book Fair and Delhi World Book Fair. The National Book Trust, the Government of India and the Education Ministry, organizes the Delhi World Book Fair. It's a large-scale affair, and publishers from all over India and abroad participate in this event. The Government of India fully supports the Delhi World Book Fair, whereas the Federation of Indian Publishers and ITPO organise the Delhi Book fair.

For instance, the Calcutta Book fair is considered one of the biggest book fairs in Asia, and the Bengal government financially supports it. Similarly, the Chennai Book Fair is held every year with the financial assistance of the State Government. Likewise, Delhi Book Fairs also need financial aid from the government, with which it would be easier to sustain two book fairs in Delhi every year, but it is not happening right now.

I request the government to take over this affair or support it

Shobhit

Marketing Head at Oswaal Books

We are back at the Delhi Book fair after three years, and it's finally happening after the pandemic. It's smaller compared to previous years; however, we expect good footfall along with the stationary phase combined. Since we are a publisher of school books, competitive books, and sample books for classes K-12, we aim to provide very good reach to our books in our prospective audience along with learning about the industry and different veterans of the publishing industry who are coming there.

Pranav Gupta

Managing Director, Prints Publications

The 26th Delhi Book Fair 2022 was a remarkable success for Prints Publications and Advit Toys. We launched our new range of trade books, 51 Titles, and a complete range of Advit Toys were also on display and for sale during the book fair. All our products were well received and appreciated by customers. Especially for Advit Toys, Kids enjoyed the illustrations' quality, and we had outstanding sales during the 5-days event, and we're also looking forward to next year's edition.

Exclusive Coverages

Publishing Coverage across the world

A new chapter is commencing in the IPA

Karine Pansa will begin as the President of International Publishers Association from January 2023

“It is an honour for me to become the President of the International Publishers Association. I take on this role with every respect for our history of over 125 years and the remarkable figures from the world of publishing who brought the association to where we are today.

During the last two difficult years, our immediate Past President, Bodour Al Qasimi, helped us and the broader book sector to come closer together and to recognize where our shared challenges lie. I look forward to working with Gvantsa Jobava, our new Vice President, and IPA's extraordinary Secretariat team to build on that work and take IPA forward.

During my Presidency, I will uphold our two pillars – Copyright and Freedom to Publish. These two issues unite our membership and are vital to a thriving publishing sector. They are both constantly under threat, and we must always remain vigilant. When it comes to copyright, this means supporting work on enforcement but also resisting attempts to introduce overbroad exceptions for educational and other uses.

I will also dedicate my Presidency to tackling the lack of data available about many publishing markets around the world. We need to convince policymakers of the great value our global sector has, and we need the data to back us up. I must commend the work of FIP in this regard, and I will count on Pranav Gupta as the Chair of our new Data and Statistics Committee.

I will continue to support the IPAAcademy and the opportunity it gives our members, for free, to develop their existing skills and add new ones. We will also continue our work on accessibility, working with WIPO and others. European Accessibility Act comes into force in 2025 and will affect publishers around the world.

The future of our sector and also our societies depend on us engaging actively and urgently on issues like sustainability, diversity, and inclusion. These will also be important areas of IPA work during the next two years. Our second sustainability summit in Frankfurt was packed. There is no single solution, but there is an urgent need for action to try new things.

The discussions at the 33rd International Publishers Congress in Jakarta frequently underlined the opportunities available to our sector. IPA is uniquely positioned to drive international discussions around publishing and convene the broader book value chain to make some of those opportunities a reality.

As a final remark, we need to show the world, especially the policymakers, the great value our global sector has, and that's what we will do

”

Karine Pansa
President, IPA

Elated to announce Gvantsa Jobava as the Vice president of the International Publishers Association (IPA)



Gvantsa Jobava
Vice president (IPA), erstwhile president
of Georgian Publishers and Book sellers Association

I am honored to be the first Georgian Vice President of the International Publishers Association. I will put all my expertise and energy into helping the IPA strengthen its main pillars, freedom to publish and copyright, which are so crucial for the resilience of the modern publishing industry.

Being the representative of one of the smallest countries in the world testifies to IPA's equal appreciation of its members regardless of size. I want to encourage our small members to join their voices in the world publishing industry and become ambassadors of their local literature to ensure that their own 'stories' will become familiar, clear, and understandable to the rest of the world.

During my vice presidency, I will support our new president, Karine Pansa, and I will be happy to stand next to her as she achieves all her brilliant goals. Working closely with her and IPA's fantastic team in Geneva will help me shape my priorities based on the needs of our members. Areas like promoting reading, spreading literacy, and ensuring the freedom and independence of publishers are important from my experience in IPA's Freedom to Publish and Inclusive Publishing and Literacy committees. However, besides this, I have dedicated my last few years in IPA to working in the copyright committee, with the

Educational Publishers Forum, and in many other directions. I will be glad to be involved broadly in IPA's essential activities crucial to developing the world publishing industry.

We should keep thinking about every publisher or writer, whose freedom to publish and freedom of expression have been affected in the past or could be affected in the future, and also deprive readers of even one published book or one printed word, which could make readers' lives better. We should keep thinking about our role in such difficult circumstances and how we can be helpful.

Publishers worldwide seek and publish good books, spreading diverse voices, free ideas, and freedom. What can be a more incredible honor than serving this fascinating community!

Her thoughts or ideas on how the Indian and Georgian publishing industries can work together in the near future:

Firstly, I would like to mention that IPA has a very strong member from India, the Federation of Indian Publishers, represented by Pranav Gupta, who is in the Executive Committee and is the newly elected chair of the IPA's Data & Statistics Committee. Thus, I will be working closely with the Federation of Indian Publishers during my term as the IPA's Vice President. Secondly, I'm pleased to announce that in January, I will have my very first official visit to India in my new role. What an honor! I was kindly invited by the Chennai International Book Fair to represent both the International Publishers Association and the Georgian publishing industry. It will be a fantastic opportunity for me to meet dozens of Indian publishers, learn about their successes and challenges, and how we can help the Indian book market. I will be able to represent Georgian literature at the book fair and discover Indian writers. I hope that in the near future, Georgian and Indian literature will find more links and reasons for closer cooperation. I will be delighted to encourage this process.

36th Edition of Guadalajara International Book Fair 2023

Guadalajara International Book Fair had a great comeback in 2022, reaching the levels of 2019. It is a fair of 800,000 visitors, over 2,000 imprints from 49 countries, and over 14,000 professional visitors.

This year there were over 600 book launches and over 100 professional activities. One of them was a very successful seminar about accessible publishing, where the ABC Excellence Awards for Accessible Publishing were announced.

Sharjah was a guest of honour, with an impressive presence and a vast array of activities.

Besides the figures that show a good turnout, it was a moment of reuniting the Spanish-speaking publishing industry. After two years of the pandemic, the spirits were high to reconnect with colleagues and friends from different countries.

With great enthusiasm, Mexican Publishers Association looks forward to welcoming colleagues from around the world to the 2024 IPA Congress.

Thoughts on Upcoming IPA Congress 2024

The handing over of the IPA flag during the recent IPA Congress in Jakarta marked the start of the countdown for the next congress, to be held in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 2024. It will be hosted by the Mexican Publishers Association (CANIEM) at the time of the Guadalajara International Book Fair in November.

The Book Fair always opens on the last Saturday of November 30th, 2024. Then, from Monday to Wednesday, the fair is dedicated to trade visitors. IPA Congress will take place on Wednesday, December 4th, and Thursday, December 5th, with a cultural program on Friday, December 6th.

This way, publishers from all around the world will be able to attend the most important book fair in the Spanish language, the gateway to all of Latin America, and then participate in the International Publishers Congress, to hear top speakers and panels and to network with colleagues from more than 50 countries.

IPA Congress will also be a unique opportunity for the Mexican publishing industry to show the world what is being done in Mexico and urge policymakers to support books and reading with adequate public policies.

Mexican publishing is a vibrant and dynamic industry, with over 230 members of the Mexican Publishers Association covering a wide range of sectors, from educational and children's books to science and trade.



Hugo Setzer

CEO, Manual Moderno

Presidente, CANIEM

Past President, International Publishers Association

Only Few Days Left!



PVLF

PragatiE Vichaar

LITERATURE
FESTIVAL 2023

9th-14th Jan

Theme: Taking Humanity Forward

Catch us Live from 9-14 January 2023

Virtual Event: Live on <Website: frontlist.in>

*Physical Awards Night:
“The Claridges, New Delhi” on 14th January*

— See you on 14th January, 2023 for —

Physical Literature Festival

Time: 9am onwards

PragatiE Vichaar Literature Festival 2023

Event Schedule

Day 1 - 9th Jan

Time	Session Theme	Session Name	Panelists
11:00 AM - 11:45 AM	Children & Storytelling	Raising Curious Minds	1. Binal Gandhi and Soneera Sanghvi 2. Chitwan Mittal"
11:50 AM - 12:35PM	Mythology	Learn Indian Mythology	Devdutt Pattanaik
12:40PM - 1:15PM	Mental Health & Wellness	Its never too late to start	1. Air Marshal PV Iyer 2. Shailaja Menon"
1:20 pm - 2:05PM	Poetry	Quest, Search, Pursuit	Bhawana Somaaya
2:10 PM - 2:45 PM	History and Mythology	Complexities of Historical Origins	1. Anand Neelakantan 2. Changez Jan 3. Dr. Tarana Husain Khan
2:45PM - 3:30PM	Children & Wellness	Relevance of Indigenous Games	Amitabh Satyam & Sangeeta Goswami

Day 2 - 10th Jan

Time	Session Theme	Session Name	Panelists
11:00 AM - 11:45 AM	Nationalism & Patriotism	Is self-limitation necessary for freedom?	1. Som Kamei 2. Rajesh Talwar
11:50 AM - 12:35PM	Mental Health & Wellness	Finding hidden answers	1. Sharbani Banerjee 2. Siddharth Tripathi
12:40PM - 1:15PM	Storytelling	It's all within you	1. Avinash Agarwal 2. Deepam Chatterjee
1:20PM - 2:00PM	Women Empowerment	An ode to fearless women	1. Ma Anand Sheela 2. Sujata Parashar
2:05PM - 2:40PM	Copyright & IP	Freedom to Publish	1. Trasvin Jittidecharak, Thailand 2. Zeynep Atiker, Turkey 3. Kristenn Einarsson, Norway
2:45 PM - 3:30PM	Storytelling	Journey from Illusion to Reality	1. Saksham Garg 2. Aman Singh Maharaj

Day 3- 11th Jan

Time	Session Theme	Session Name	Panelists
11:00 AM 11:45 AM	Children & Storytelling	Where does science become fiction, and fiction becomes fantasy?	1. Biman Nath 2. Ashok Rajagopalan
11:50 AM - 12:35PM	Women Empowerment	The Era of the Empowered Women: Do we know what it means?	1. Tanushree Ghosh 2. Mohua Chinappa
12:40PM - 1:15PM	Nationalism & Patriotism/ Equality & Racism	Power, Passion, Murder and Beliefs	1. Nilutpal Gohain 2. Alope Lal
1:20PM - 2:00PM	Storytelling	If you've got it, haunt it	Anita Krishan
2:05PM - 2:40PM	Poetry	Will Poetry Survive the 21st Century?	1. Sudeep Sen 2. Menka Shivdasani and Mohan Gehani
2:45PM - 3:30PM	Historical Fiction	Extraordinary story of unsung hero	Vijay Balan
3:35PM - 4:35PM	Mental Health and Wellness	Embracing Individuality	1. Rituparna Chatterjee 2. Prachi Gangwani

Day 4- 12th Jan

Time	Session Theme	Session Name	Panelists
11:00 AM 11:45 AM	Women Empowerment	Feminism Beyond Me Too	1. Shefali Tripathi Mehta 2. Vani Kaushal
11:50 AM - 12:35PM	Copyright	An Author's guide to copyright	1. Ishani Chandra 2. Surabhi Iyer
12:40PM - 1:15PM	Storytelling	Crime Pays: The Murder Mystery	1. Sudipto Das 2. Salil Desai 3. Tanushree Poddar
1:20PM - 2:00PM	Lifestyle & Wellness	A creative palate: Passionate Journey	Maria Goretti
2:05PM - 2:40PM	Nationalism & Patriotism	Historic Moments of the Modi's Government	Gautam Chintamani

2:45PM - 3:20PM	Children & Storytelling	Retelling of Ancient Indian Epics from different generations	1. Sia Gupta 2. Shubha Vilas
3:25PM - 4:10PM	Mental Health & Wellness	Normalizing mental wellness beyond depression and suicide prevention	1. Dr Samir Parikh 2. Kapil Gupta 3. Dr Tarun Sehgal

Day 5- 13th Jan

Time	Session Theme	Session Name	Panelists
11:00 AM - 11:45 AM	History and Mythology	Learnings from History: True Tales or Fiction	1. Nalin Verma 2. Kanchan Banerjee 3. MI Rajasve
11:50 AM - 12:35PM	Wildlife	Save the tiger, Save the wildlife	Sunayan Sharma
12:40PM - 1:15PM	Biography	Reminiscing on the beauty of life	1. Lom Harsh 2. L. Aruna Dhir 3. Amitava Nag
1:20PM - 2:00PM	Poetry	Let emotions speak to you!	1. Abhay K 2. Mohua Sen 3. Mitali Chakravarty
2:05PM - 2:40PM	Biography	Who is the biggest Khan?	1.Devapriya Sanyal 2. Kaveree Bamzai
2:45PM - 3:30PM	History and Mythology	Journey from Illusion to Reality	1. Saksham Garg 2. Aman Singh Maharaj

Day 6- 14th Jan (Physical Event)

- Join the PVLf team for the physical event on January 14, 2023, starting at 9 am.
- The event will be inaugurated by Mr. Bhupender Yadav, following literary discourses with renowned personalities.
- The PVLf 2023 awards ceremony will commence at 7:00 pm.
- Venue for the Physical Event: The Hotel Claridges, New Delhi.





SOLH WELLNESS - YOUR MINDFUL BUDDY

Today we live in a world full of a new slew of challenges. The challenges of the new world bring with them their own set of mental health-related concerns. However, the stigma surrounding mental health, along with a lack of awareness and limited access to professional help, leads to some problems going unnoticed.

Stigma, discrimination, and human rights violations against people with mental health conditions are widespread and present worldwide. There are 20 countries in the world where attempted suicide is still a criminal offence. People across the globe are still afraid to talk out loud about their problems because they fear being judged.

What does this lead to? Increased cases of serious mental disorders among the general population and worsening of mental health lead to further increases in rates of suicide, deterioration of people's physical health, and a shorter life span.

In a country like India, where a person going to a therapist to seek help for their mental health is rare, the situation is dire. The country is home to over 1.4 billion people. The World Health Organization, in a 2015 study, showed that one in five Indians might suffer from depression in their lifetime, which is equivalent to roughly 200 million people. Couple this with the resource crunch and lack of knowledge of the population, and imagine the extent of the problem!

While there have been positive developments surrounding the situation in recent years, the problem still needs to be solved.

Solh Wellness: A Comprehensive Solution

Solh is a preventive mental health platform that helps increase the psychological capital of every individual. It is the world's first mental health marketplace with a vision to ensure everyone is empowered with tools, solutions, and access to mental health support by normalising the need for therapy. It provides affordable, 24x7 accessible, personalised, and accepted access to resources through an AI-driven, non-judgmental, safe space.

By reducing the amount of people falling into a clinically diagnosed disorder by intervening in the early stages of the problem and providing each individual with a comprehensive support system, Solh Wellness aims to decrease depression and anxiety in youth, replacing it with resilience, perseverance and determination to act by allowing them to express themselves and seek support to prevent clinically diagnosed mental disorders. The app provides users features such as Support groups, Goal setting, Mood Meter, Journaling, and therapy access, allowing them to create their own personalised regime for bettering their mental health.

**Scan the QR code
to download the app**



Media Coverages

14th Edition of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) to commence on 12th January 2023

- **100 Years of Oxford Bookstore is the festival theme for 2023**
- **The Indian Museum in Kolkata, the oldest such museum in Asia, is partnering with the 3-day literary festival, which will be held on the majestic museum grounds and the heritage Oxford Bookstore.**
- **The Pulitzer Prize-winning iconic writer Alice Walker will be among over 100 speakers at AKLF, which will be held in its original onsite format with some hybrid sessions.**

HIGHLIGHTS:

Ø **Festival Dates** - January 12 to January 15, 2023

Ø **Inauguration** – January 12, 2023 - with leading Kolkata authors, scholars, and artists to celebrate 100 Years of Oxford Bookstore, an iconic landmark of Kolkata.

Ø **Heritage Venue** – Festival Partner, The Indian Museum, Kolkata, will host AKLF on the majestic museum grounds.

Ø **Inclusiveness** – Sessions focusing on Women, Dalit, LGBTQ++ writing; Translation; Children's and Young Adult Writing.

Ø **Tributes** – Birthday tribute to Nabaneeta Dev Sen, Centennial tribute to Mrinal Sen.

Ø **Wide Range** – From historical fiction to biography, memoir to food and nutrition, wellness to mental health, cinema to poetry, there is something for everyone.

Ø **Shortlist Announcement** - Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize will announce the Shortlist.

Apeejay Surrendra Group and Oxford Bookstores announced on December 13, 2022, that the 14th edition of the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) will be hosted in partnership with the Indian Museum on its grounds from January 12 to January 15, 2023.

After going online for two consecutive editions because of COVID, the 14th edition of AKLF reverts to its physical format. The first international literary festival in Kolkata and Eastern India, AKLF, a non-profit initiative, free for everyone, is the only Literary Festival organised by a bookstore, the 100-year-old Oxford Bookstore. This edition of AKLF has 100 Years of Oxford Bookstore as its theme. Alice Walker, in the company of renowned international, national and diasporic authors, will participate in AKLF 2023.

Priti Paul, Director, Apeejay Surrendra Group, said, "We look forward to celebrating the centenary of the Oxford Bookstore at AKLF 2023 with several special events plus our signature Oxford Junior Literary Festival for younger readers – who, as the book lovers of tomorrow, are the future of Oxford Bookstore. I am delighted that after two years of virtual editions, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival is returning to the physical format in partnership with the magnificent heritage institution, the Indian Museum. This resonates perfectly with our celebration of 100 Years of the Oxford Bookstore - a heritage property and real Kolkata institution."

Arijit Dutta Choudhury, Director, Indian Museum, Kolkata, said, "It gives us immense pleasure to share that on the momentous occasion of the celebration of 75 years of India's Independence, Indian Museum in collaboration with the Oxford Bookstore and the Apeejay Kolkata

Literary Festival (AKLF) is organising the 14th edition of this literary festival on January 2023 at the Indian Museum, Kolkata. The Indian Museum is the oldest and largest museum in our country. This multipurpose institution with multidisciplinary activities is the pride of the nation. The primary focus of organising this event is to encourage and strengthen the mental and cultural spirit of our visitors and to promote Indian culture through our devotion to upholding the tangible and intangible heritage of our country."

Maina Bhagat, Director of Oxford Bookstore and AKLF, said, "The 14th edition of AKLF unfolds a year-long celebration of the Heritage Oxford Bookstore's centenary - a journey which reflects the life, times, and rich history of our great city. Oxford Bookstore has enriched generations of book lovers to bring the world closer through books, to express their vision of the future at the bookstore's various platforms, and to celebrate the diversity and richness of the human experience. It has enabled our stories, culture, and history to be passed on to future generations. As Neil Gaiman said, 'Bookstores are dreams built of wood and paper. They are time travel and escape, knowledge and power. They are, simply put, the best of places. As it steps into the future, Oxford Bookstore continues to strive for excellence and to be, simply put, the best of places.'"

Anjum Katyal, Director of AKLF, said, "In celebrating 100 Years of Oxford Bookstore, AKLF celebrates the infinite and inclusive world of a true bookstore, which makes space on its shelves and in its heart for debate, dissent, and contrasting points of view; and which welcomes writers of every race, caste, and creed. No subject is too heavy or to

too obscure or too popular for the bookstore, and AKLF reflects this wide range of interests in its programming. We cover everything from Historical Fiction to Mental Health to Gender, Street Food to Lifestyle, and Mystery to Cinema. Come and savour the variety on offer.”

For its 14th edition, the festival will feature a prestigious list of speakers, authors, and humanitarians from diverse fields of non-fiction, fiction, history, wellness to, mental health, mythology, food, dance, history, art, and culture, translations, poetry, and music, language, on the grounds of Indian Museum. The Pulitzer Prize-winning iconic Writer **Alice Walker** will be among over 100 speakers at AKLF. The illustrious list of speakers also includes Filmmakers Onir and **Muzaffar Ali**; Poet Jerry Pinto, Poet Jeet Thayil; Journalist, Author, and Columnist **Vir Sanghvi**; Author **Shobhaa De**; Author, Academician, and Museum Curator **Dr Alka Pande**; Poet **Janice Pariat**; Dancer **Mallika Sarabhai**; Author **Shobha Tharoor Srinivasan**; Actor **Arunoday Singh**; Author **Durjoy Datta**; Journalist and Columnist **Bachi Karkaria**; Translator **Arunava Sinha**; Author **Anuja Chauhan**; Filmmaker and Author **Vandana Kohli**; Social Activist and Writer **Syeda Hameed**; Actor **Divya Dutta**; Chef and Author Karen Anand; French Dancer and Choreographer Annette **Leday**; Writer Christopher **Kloeble**; Author John **Zubrzycki**; Singer **Usha Uthup**, Author **Shalini Modi**; Translator **Arshia Sattar**; Journalist and Author **Shrabani Basu**; Publisher and Writer **Urvashi Butalia**.

Along with the Festival Partner **The Indian Museum** the other partners include **The Park Hotels**, **The Glenburn Penthouse**, **Cha Bar**, **Goethe Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan**, **French Embassy in India / Ambassade de France en Inde**, **Institut français India**, **Alliance Française du Bengale**, **Prakriti Foundation**, and **Seagull Books**.

About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, India's only literary festival created by a bookstore and Kolkata's first literary festival, reflects our city's vibrancy of thought, its engagement with the literary world at large, and explores literature as part of our tangible and intangible heritage. Celebrate books, music, art, film, and more with the finest creative minds in the nation and globally as events unfold at the city's magnificent heritage sites. Please visit www.aklf.in to know more.



Book Launch: "3 Tips" by Author Meera Gandhi, Published by Rupa Publications India

Meera Gandhi is a **Humanitarian** and **Founder of The Giving Back Foundation**, where education and mental wellness are the cornerstones of the foundation's global efforts. Surrounded by friends and family, co-hosts Sunita and Nauhar Rana, Shalini Arora Kochhar, Ramola Bachchan, and Suhel Seth celebrated the unveiling of Meera's new book "**3 Tips**."

3 TIPS: The Essentials for Peace, Joy and Success by **Meera Gandhi** covers several topics related to mental health and wellness. This book is published by Rupa Publications India.

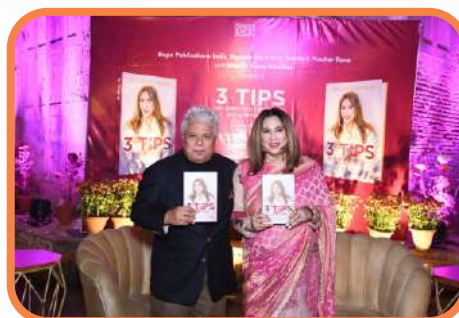
The book breaks down complex issues into 3 simple tips for each subject, which anyone can pick up and implement into their own lives. Anyone feeling lost or in need of guidance can easily dive into the many subjects covered and find themselves gently nudged into a direction that brings them a greater awareness and clarity of their present situation in the context of a greater spiritual perspective.

Some eminent guests attended the event, like **Actor Suhel Seth, Ramola Bachchan, Mr Aman Nath** - Founder & **Chairperson Neemrana Hotels, Lifestyle Guru Shalini Arora Kochhar, Philanthropist Neelam Pratap Rudy, Ontologist Aashmeen Munjaal, Reshma Punj** to name a few.

On occasion, **Meera Gandhi** said, "We are to the Universe only as much as we give back to it. This book is a guide to becoming our best selves. It covers mental health and wellness topics and breaks down complex issues into simple tips that anyone can pick up and implement into their lives."

This book continues Meera's focus on creating highly accessible and practical resources in the mental health, wellness, and spirituality space. In fact, supporting mental wellness initiatives is the third pillar of The Giving Back Foundation.

3 Tips originally appeared as a segment on Meera's B4U TV Network show - **The Meera Gandhi Show**. It then continued on Instagram to a large following of over 2.4 million. This candid book not only mirrors the content of the show, but it covers 52 topics related to wellness with short, practical advice on how to navigate them, but also expands upon each of the Tips with a deeper insight into each topic and reveals the thought process, experiences, successes, and mistakes that led to gaining the wisdom behind the insight of each Tip.



About Meera Gandhi

Meera Teresa Gandhi is the daughter of an Irish mother and an Indian father. At the age of 16, she volunteered to teach at Ashadaan, a shelter for abandoned and differently-abled children run by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity which proved to be the turning point in Meera's life. She had the opportunity to work and interact closely with Mother Teresa. This is when she truly understood the great joy of doing things beyond and outside the self.

Meera has lived many roles in her life as a philanthropist, a mother, a businesswoman, a television show host, an author, and a spiritual yogi who believes that we are very much a part of the universal spirit. We all must live in the flow of the ether that guides and propels us through our life journey!

Meera is also a sponsor of the Woodstock Film Festival, where she presents the Meera Gandhi Giving Back Award to a director, producer, or actor who best delivers a message of social change and who has a strong compassion for philanthropy. Awardees have included Mark Ruffalo and Mira Nair.



21 BOOK COVERS MAKE IT TO THE LONGLIST OF THE 8th OXFORD BOOKSTORE BOOK COVER PRIZE

The much-anticipated longlist for the eighth edition of the Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize was announced on 19th December 2023 at The Park, New Delhi, by esteemed jurors of this distinguished prize. Dr Alka Pande, Author, Academician, and well-known Museum Curator, announced and unveiled the 21 longlisted book covers at the occasion in a divergent mix of publishers, designers, authors, and literary enthusiasts from across India. Jury member, well-known Indian Politician, Writer, and Member of Parliament, Dr Shashi Tharoor, congratulated the designers and publishers through a video message.

The wide-ranging interests of eminent jurors Priti Paul, Shobhaa De, Dr Kunal Basu, Dr Shashi Tharoor, and Dr Alka Pande helped create a rich and diverse perspective for the selection of the longlist from amongst 600 plus eligible entries received for the eighth Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize. 21 titles across distinct genres and themes have been recognised for their cover design and illustration by the jury panel.

Over the last seven editions, the Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize has evolved and gained success and enormous popularity as the most prestigious book cover design award in the publishing industry. The longlist announcement of the eighth edition was aligned with the celebration of the 100 glorious years of Oxford Bookstore. This remarkable evening witnessed a delightful dance performance by renowned Kathak Dancer Leena Malakar and her disciple Swarnali Nag.

Celebrating the announcement of the longlist of Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize 2023, Priti Paul, Prize Jury member and Director of Apeejay Surrendra Group, said, "Resilience, Innovation, and Creativity in the recent times of turmoil and lockdown, are strikingly apparent in this year's longlist of excellent book covers reiterating that artistic expression constantly evolves in times of crises. It has been very exciting, indeed, to encounter and encourage the art of Book Cover Design., and help take it to the next level."



Chair of Jury, Dr Alka Pande, said, "As we move into our 8th edition of the Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize it is a pleasure to see the added diversity of the book covers and the increasing energy and creativity going into the making of book covers. It has been quite exhilarating, indeed, to encounter so much style, aesthetics, and substance in the outstanding entries received this year. Each book jacket that has made it to the longlist celebrates originality and creativity and reflects reality."

The shortlist for the award will be unveiled at Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) in January 2023, while the winner will be announced in Delhi a few weeks later.



Dr. Shashi Tharoor, congratulating the Designers and their Publishers of the Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize Longlist through a video message



Performance by renowned Kathak dancer, Leena Malakar and her disciple Swarnali Nag

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Frontlist Magazine
January Edition

15

LOGLIST – EIGHTH OXFORD BOOKSTORE BOOK COVER PRIZE

Nominated Book	Name of the Publisher	Name of the Designer	Name of the Author
Birdwatching: A Novel	Aleph Book Company	Bena Sareen	Stephen Alter
Memory Police	DC Books	Leeza John	Yoko Ogawa
Shakti, An exploration of the Divine Feminine	Dorling Kindersley India	Priyanka Thakur	Nilima Chitgopekar
Boys Don't Cry	Ebury Publishing	Akangksha Sarmah	Meghna Pant
The Lesbian Cow and Other Stories	Eka	Bhavya/Saurabh Garge	Indu Menon
The Illuminated: A Novel	FourthEstate	Bonita Vaz-Shimray	Anindita Ghose
Gods, Giants and Geography of India	Hachette India Children's Books	Sharanya Kunnath	Nalini Ramachandran
Onam in a Nightie	HarperCollins	Anujath Sindhu Vinaylal	Anjana Menon
Who's Not Afraid of Z? Not Me!	HarperCollins Children's Books	Allen Shaw	Lubaina Bandukwala
Onyoder Jiban	Jadavpur University Press	Trinankur Banerjee	Neel Mukherjee
Pebble Monkey	Jadavpur University Press	Paramita Brahmachari	Manindra Gupta
Kankabati Kalpabigyan Lekheni	Kalpabiswa Publications	Ujjwal Ghosh	Various Authors, Edited by Yashodhora Raychaudhuri, Ankita and Dip Ghosh
Metronama: Scenes from the Delhi Metro	Lotus	Shikhar Gaur	Rashmi Sadana
India: A Story Through 100 Objects	Lustre	Sneha Pamneja	Vidya Dehejia
Motherland: Pushpamala N's Woman and Nation	Lustre	Advaita Vats	Monica Juneja & Sumathi Ramaswamy
Growing up Jewish: Synagogues, Customs, and Communities from the Bene Israel to the Art of Siona Benjamin	Niyogi Books	Misha Oberoi	Ori Z. Soltes
How the Earth got its Beauty	Puffin	Cover design by Akangksha Sarmah & Devangana Dash / Cover illustration by Priyanka Pachpande	Sudha Murty

Nominated Book	Name of the Publisher	Name of the Designer	Name of the Author
Tirahe Par Teen	Rajpal & Sons	Archana Jain	Rajni Gupt
A Paradox of Dreams	Readomania Publishing	Sourish Mitra	Harshali Singh
Invisible Empire	Viking	Ahlawat Gunjan	Pranay Lal
The Muslim Vanishes	Vintage	Antra	Saeed Naqvi

About Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize

The Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize is the first-of-its-kind honour for splendour in book design and an endeavour by an iconic bookstore to perceive and empower the phenomenal work of artists, designers, and distributors crosswise over India. The new prize acknowledges the significance of the adjustment of illustrations and story, especially in our undeniably visual age, and trusts that a book cover translates and interprets the resulting content in critical ways that add to its definitive achievement. Under the guidance of Ms Priti Paul, Director, Apeejay Surrendra Group, Oxford Bookstores has been pushing all boundaries to encourage the publishing industry and celebrate the business of books. Standout cover design is an integral part of the success of a book; designers and illustrators play a vital role in helping a book become emblematic and create recall.

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Book Launch: Life of an Industani: Six Degrees of Separation, by author Shiv Kunal Verma, organised by BluOne Ink

New Delhi: An army historian, filmmaker, and author Shiv Kunal Verma whose new book *Life of an Industani: Six Degrees of Separation*, was in a fireside chat with Gen. (Retd) VK Singh and Lt. Gen. (Retd) Rakesh Loomba on the incidents of the recent history of India that have huge ramifications on the present of the country including Operation Blue Star, Siachen tradeoff and militancy in Kashmir.

Shiv Kunal Verma's *Life of an Industani: Six Degrees of Separation*, recently published by BluOne Ink, is a roller-coaster ride with a contemporary look at Indian history through the eyes of one who has had a ring-side view of the critical events in the 80s and 90s. It has received some fantastic endorsements from K. V. K. Murthy, General (Dr.) Vijay Kumar Singh and Atul Dev.

The event occurred at IIC Annexe, New Delhi, where an Indian economist, serving as the chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Bibek Debroy, was the chief guest. Dr. Debroy mentioned that the book is a candid autobiography, and Shiv Kunal Verma's life has taken interesting turns. It is different from the kind of book that you can read on a flight since it's a book that deserves to be read seriously.

During the chat, General VK Singh's views on the conflict of Siachen and Operation Blue Star of 1984, which left the country in a sheer jolt, were revelations that the current generation, too, needs to know of.

Shiv Kunal Verma, the author of this book, stated that the book was an attempt to tell the story from the point of view of all events that happened. He has closely experienced war and life that included protecting a beleaguered family from a murderous mob during the anti-Sikh riots in 1984 with a Beretta 9mm, filming on the Siachen Glacier, surviving an ambush by Nagas in the northeastern jungles, interviewing armed Kashmiri militants, and much more.



About the Author

Born into an army family - more precisely 2 Rajput which was his father's battalion - the author's early childhood was tempered by the fact that most soldiers were then mostly away from home posted in field areas. Brought up under the watchful eye of a remarkable mother, after his initial schooling at St Joseph's Academy and a year at Fort Benning in the United States, he was sent to the Doon School, an institution that would shape his entire outlook towards life. Having then graduated from Madras Christian College in Tambaram, his initial years were spent working with Tiger Tops Mountain Travel in Ladakh and Nepal.

Subsequently a journalist, a filmmaker and a writer, he has worked briefly with India Today, the Associated Press and with Sanctuary Films before he teamed up with his associate Dipti Bhalla and formed KaleidoIndia, under which banner some classic films like *Salt of the Earth* and *the Standard Bearers* were shot and produced. In 1999 he filmed the Kargil War and in the last decade and a half, has authored some exceptional books that include the *Northeast Trilogy*, *1962: The War That Wasn't* and *1965: A Western Sunrise*. He is now working on the seminal *Value Education Program* for schools that aims at bringing India to Indians especially at the school and college levels.



Special Feature

New Delhi World Book Fair 2023

Frontlist: What are the publishing industry and exhibitors looking forward to from New Delhi World Book Fair 2023?

Shri Yuvraj: Since the pandemic stalled in-person events for the last two years across the whole country and the world, the NDWBF 2023 edition will present an opportune platform for the publishing industry to be back in its form.

The NDWBF is Afro-Asia's largest book fair regarding sales, visibility, promotions, international exhibitors, copyright exchanges, trade visitors, and business sessions. We are anticipating a footfall of 14 to 15 lakh people.

NDWBF 2023 will bring together not just publishers and readers but also authors, illustrators, and educationists, in meaningful dialogue through various book promotional activities and programs.

Frontlist: As we all know, NDWBF will complete its 50 years since 1972. Is there anything special planned for this year by the National Book Trust India?

Shri Yuvraj: The New Delhi World Book Fair is back in its in-person format from 25th February to 5th March 2023 at ITPO's new International Exhibition Centre at Pragati Maidan.

Celebrating its 50 years journey, this edition is themed Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsava. It will showcase the G20 pavilion, Award-winning books, Yuva authors, India@75, Sri Aurobindo, various photo exhibitions, Army band, Open-mic events at the Amphitheatre, and much more.

With France as the Guest of Honour Country, the specially designed Guest Pavilion will have a delegation of about 60 authors, publishers, illustrators, dignitaries, etc. In addition, there will be B2B conferences – the New Delhi Rights Table (in a new format), the re-launch of the translation grants assistance scheme, CEOSpeak, and the regular Author's Corners, Children's Pavilion, cultural performances – all in all, a treat for book lovers!

Frontlist: How many Exhibitors and Trade Visitors from around the world are we expecting to attend the NDWBF 2023?

Shri Yuvraj: There will be a large number of exhibitors, participants, and visitors from not only India but across the globe. The exhibition area is spread out to approx. 40,000 sq.m. and can house about 2000 stalls and an exhibition area.



Shri Yuvraj Malik

Director, National Book Trust, India

The halls are classified and categorized as trade publishers, foreign publishers, Indian language publishers, children's publishers, distributors, science & technology publishers, humanities and social sciences, and so on. We expect at least 1400 exhibitors across 2500 stalls.

Frontlist: What special activities can visitors expect from this Edition?

Shri Yuvraj: In addition to its regular features, the event will include, Author's Corners, Lekhak Manch, International Events Corner, Children's Pavilion, Theme Pavilion, the YUVA corner (where interactions with the young PM-YUVA authors will take place), the Child Author Corner (where published child authors will interact with the audience), the G20 Pavilion, and Amphitheatre (where in addition to Folk and Cultural performances in the evening will take place).

There will be regular activities in the morning, such as open mic, army and police bands, talk shows, etc.)

Moreover, the two-day New Delhi Rights Table (B2B platform for publishers interested in copyright and translation agreements and other business arrangements) will be held on the sidelines of the book fair, and the translation grant will be re-launched at this event.

Frontlist: What new experiences await attendees under the theme Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav?

Shri Yuvraj: The NDWBF 2023 will have a centrally-placed, specially designed Theme Pavilion on Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, commemorating 75 years of Indian Independence and the glorious history of its people, culture, and achievements put up across 1000 sq.m. with special exhibits.

Moreover, the event will feature an exhibition of more than 750 titles on Freedom Fighters, the National Movement of India, etc., in all major Indian languages and English, and works of 100+ publishers on Digital Exhibition of India's achievements during the last 75 years, an Events Corner for hosting panel discussions, books and photo exhibitions, book releases, cultural events, workshops, etc.

The aesthetically-built Theme Pavilion is being designed by the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad – the Design Partner of NDWBF.

Frontlist: With France as the Guest of Honour country, how many French authors and publishers can we anticipate joining and expanding international collaboration with the Indian publishing industry?

Shri Yuvraj: France is the Guest of Honour Country at ND.WBF 2023 (as a follow-up of the PM-President Joint Statement signed in March 2018), and book lovers will get a unique opportunity to enjoy French literature and culture at the Foreign Pavilion along with a variety of literary activities at the International Events Corner.

France is putting up a special Guest of Honour Pavilion and is bringing about 60 delegates from France. Visitors to the fair will be able to meet many French publishers, illustrators, and authors and will be able to browse through several French books and translated works as well

Frontlist: How important are such book fairs for the Indian publishing industry?

Shri Yuvraj: Contradictory to the endless discussions on physical books becoming obsolete, we ardently believe that Book Fairs like these are essential in bringing awareness to the fact that this is not the case at all.

The purpose of a book fair is to encourage reading culture, promote local publishing houses and booksellers, and foster a love for books.

Learning is a never-ending process; books are the best medium to increase our knowledge and awareness and become a well-educated and well-aware society.

Despite the so-called technological and digital impact, the printed word is still popular among readers. The rising footfall in NDWBF every year proves this. I always say and do believe that one book can change your life.



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Christmas and New Year Special

Spreading Smiles through Books

Book Donation Campaign by Frontlist Media

Frontlist Media collaborated with Ashhwika Foundation and Solh Wellness to organise a book donation campaign to bring smiles to the faces of younglings. In this thoughtful initiative, we all collected books from Publishers and distributed them among underprivileged kids aged 3+ until 17 years (K-12) during the period of Christmas and New year.

Books can add value to everyone's lives and allow them to dream bigger as they want. Every child should have the quench for knowledge. As part of the publishing ecosystem, it's our duty to take care of their literary needs. The idea behind the initiative was that books are the source of new ideas, facts, and information which helps the children to develop their power of imagination and creativity. This activity allowed us to bring them out of their loneliness and stress and enrich them with good values, ethics, and life lessons.

To support this noble cause, many publishers have actively participated in this drive, and we'd like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of them.



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A Special thanks to Solh Wellness and Ashhwika Foundation for distributing books at the Mahatma Anand Swami Arya Primary School and Surjit Wasu Memorial School and spread the joy of reading.



**Solh Wellness Team at the Mahatma Anand Swami Arya
Primary School**



Team at the Surjit Wasu Memorial School



AUTHOR INTERVIEWS



Lt Gen Ramesh Kulkarni and Anjali Karpe

Lt Gen Ramesh Kulkarni was commissioned in the Garhwal Rifles Infantry in June 1956. He commanded a battalion of the Garhwal Rifles in high-altitude areas of Arunachal Pradesh in 1971-73 and was the Commandant of the Garhwal Rifles Regimental Centre from 1979-81. Then, he commanded an Infantry Brigade in the northern areas of Nagaland during the counterinsurgency from 1981-83 and commanded an Infantry Division from 1987-89.

During his tenure, Gen Kulkarni was the recipient of the Param Vishisht Seva Medal, the Uttam Yudh Seva Medal, and the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal.

Anjali Karpe is the Deputy Head and Head of Student Life at Bombay International School, Mumbai. She teaches English Literature and History to secondary and high school students.

Frontlist: Do you regret any decision that you made during the operation? In what instances do you believe better decisions could have helped the operation?

Lt Gen Kulkarni & Anjali: I have no regrets whatsoever for any of the decisions taken by me during the tenure, and this is not a sweeping, dramatic statement. In fact, appropriate and timely decision-making is crucial to the success of any mission. My sense of achievement is in being able to think on my feet and navigate challenges thrown at me, forcing me to make tough decisions. I would go so far as to say that if there is regret for any decision, it is invariably because of a mission failing. That is something that did not happen during the tenure of my command of the division.

Frontlist: "It's the man behind the weapon, not the weapon itself." Your battalion must have performed gracefully, considering the terrain. Please provide some background on the types of artillery used back then and how they have evolved.

Lt Gen Kulkarni & Anjali: Success in battle is ensured by men capable of employing every possible weapon system available in the sector. In this case, the men of my division who faced the brunt of an enemy attack used their personal and automatic weapons like machine guns. They were supported by artillery guns that were available on call. The artillery support on the glacier was provided by the tried and tested 130 mm artillery guns, which would prove invaluable to us in every engagement with the enemy. The credit for providing this intimate artillery support largely goes to the gunners manning these guns. They had to fire incessantly day after day, night after night, to support the forward troops, and we knew we could depend on them.

Over a period of time, newer weapon systems have certainly come into use, but even today, the 130 mm artillery guns continue to be in use in the Indian Army.

Frontlist: What were the most critical moments of Operation Rajiv and Operation Vajra Shakti? What factors contributed to the missions' success?

Lt Gen Kulkarni & Anjali: Operation Rajiv and Operation Vajra Shakti were very different - the first was offensive, and the latter was defensive. For Operation Rajiv, we undertook detailed planning to the best possible extent, catering to various eventualities before the mission was undertaken. But for Operation Vajra Shakti, we were taken by surprise in terms of the timing as well as the force levels that the Pakistanis employed. While we had foreseen the possibility of a threat emerging on the main glacier and planned for it by pre-positioning reserves appropriate for reinforcement, the actual attack when it came our way was sudden and intense.

For Operation Rajiv, the most critical moments came up as a result of deciding to launch an attack in broad daylight. This was the highest risk on the glacier because the troops were fully exposed without the cover of darkness to camouflage movements. But we also had no choice, given that our troops had been unsuccessful in dislodging the Pakistani forces for two nights.

For Operation Vajra Shakti, the decisive moment was when we were reeling after three successive waves of attack by the Pakistanis. Radio intercepts had come in during the dead of the night that one of our forward posts had been compromised and captured by the Pakistanis. There was no way of responding to this. By the next morning, the more sinister news revealed by the intercepts was an additional battalion being inducted since the earlier battalion had run out of steam. It was also a rough realisation that we had run out of artillery ammunition, and there was no way of getting replenishments immediately.

Having said this, one significant aspect guarantees any mission's success - loyalty and commitment. And I don't mean loyalty to the country or the flag because that is almost assumed in the armed forces when you swear that oath. I am talking about loyalty to the mission that is given and loyalty to your troops. Loyalty to the mission indicates that its success becomes your *raison-d'être*. For this, a commander must ensure that he is loyal to his troops by providing them with every possible support.

Both Operation Rajiv and Operation Vajra Shakti were successful because my troops were assured of my support - material and emotional - to see through the mission of safeguarding the country.

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS

Frontlist: Military life has its hurdles, but it also has its rewards. Looking back, what key moments in your life shaped you?

Lt Gen Kulkarni & Anjali: I believe that rewards far outweigh perceived hurdles, and what remains is an enduring and abiding emotional connection with this service. At every stage, individuals and experiences defined my growth, and I matured as an individual, capable of handling a range of responsibilities that grew in their scope and expanse. My military life took me to places that were unheard of; we made friends who shared our home and heart, we strengthened bonds with troops in peacetime as well as periods of conflict, and we truly placed our duty above the self. In a service that spanned nearly 37 years, it is impossible to put down names of individuals who impacted me in myriad ways - some of them came to life in 'Siachen 1987', but countless others came and touched our lives and left us with lasting memories.

The decision to join the army was momentous, but so were key postings of command and learning. Over and above the Siachen tenure, my time in the north-east as Brigade Commander, the Director General of the Assam Rifles, and finally, as the Chairman of the Ceasefire Monitoring group remain strong and lasting.

Frontlist: What are your thoughts on India's current military strength? What are some related threats looming over us, and how can we prevent or protect ourselves from them?

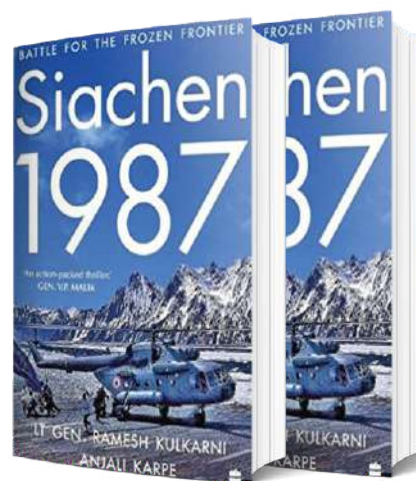
Lt Gen Kulkarni & Anjali: India's military strength comes from the values embedded in soldiery. These seeds are encapsulated in a few keywords - Naam, Nishaan, Namak, and Izzat. These values are hard to translate into single words; in fact, they represent "a matter of honour" that drives the Indian troops to achieve against all odds. Continuing to hold on to these values will ensure India's military strength. I have personally experienced this and elaborated on this at length in several missions during my tenure on the glacier, like Operation Rajiv and Operation Vajra Shakti, described in 'Siachen 1987: Battle for the Frozen Frontier.'

The threats to national security are multidimensional and not necessarily restricted to the security of the border areas. These continue to evolve and require constant review. Some of these are historical, and some of these take new dimensions. Geo-political situations have a direct influence on the security environment, and this is what we need to be vigilant about on an ongoing basis. The army has adequate structures and systems in place to assess these threats regularly and continually, and appropriate measures are taken to deal with them.

Frontlist: Would you like to relive your military career if given a chance? Are there any specific memories you would like to share that you could not include in the book?

Lt Gen Kulkarni & Anjali: The book - 'Siachen 1987: Battle for the Frozen Frontier' is a brief 22-month tenure in my army career that spanned nearly 37 years. And given all the choices possible, I would unquestionably relive my army career. Why? Because I have had a chance to see other careers alongside my journey, and I have interacted with many who follow other vocations. And there is no other service that inspires or drives you to place your life on the line for a cause or a person. The fact that you are ready to give up something so precious because it keeps another safe and protected says a lot about the values that define this service. Without sounding immodest, I think it elevates you to a selfless level of living and makes you a better human being in many ways.

'Siachen 1987' is just the beginning. I hope to go on to write and share more because the world needs to take a closer look at all that makes the military so special. There are life lessons to be shared here, and I hope that my next piece of writing opens the doors to my experiences in high insurgency Nagaland and the period of the ceasefire that enabled peace in the region.



Tanvi Srivastava translator of, "The War Diary of Asha-san" by Lt Bharati 'Asha' Sahay Choudhry

Lt Bharati 'Asha' Sahay Choudhry was born in Kobe, Japan, in 1928 and joined the Rani of the Jhansi Regiment of the Indian National Army at 17. Her father, Anand Mohan Sahay, was a Minister in the Cabinet of the Azad Hind Government and a political adviser to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. Asha is currently 94 years old and lives in Patna with her son, Sanjay Choudhry, and her daughter-in-law, Ratna.

Tanvi Srivastava is a fiction writer and has published short stories online and in print. She is also a travel entrepreneur specialising in African expeditions. Tanvi is married to Asha's grandson and lives in Bangalore with her children.

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS

Frontlist: What were the most significant cultural shocks you encountered while translating this book from Japanese to English?

Tanvi: I wouldn't say I encountered cultural shocks while translating *The War Diary of Asha-san*, but there were definite cultural surprises. Japanese society in the 1940s was fiercely nationalistic, and Asha-san was a product of such a society. And so, for someone like her—born in Japan with no memory of India—to feel genuine loyalty and patriotism for India came as a surprise to me. I am still in awe of the sacrifices she was willing to endure at such a young age.

The most significant cultural shock Asha-san experienced was upon her return to India. From a modernized and relatively liberal Japan, she returned to rural Bihar, India, steeped in patriarchy, casteism, and social stigmas. I can't imagine how she must have felt.

Frontlist: What, in your opinion, are the most important aspects of writing good fiction?

Tanvi: I wish I could say it was one thing—unique characters or a great plot arch—but it's never one. Writing good fiction needs dedication—creating an authentic world with compelling characters and having them interact with one another while progressing along an engrossing plotline. You need to have the audacity to write this world with confidence, and you need to have the humility to know that the story is not working and needs editing. Writing great fiction is difficult because it is such a solitary activity, and it's so easy to get lost; having a cohort of writers who give you feedback and guide you is most critical, in my opinion.

Frontlist: Many freedom fighters exist, but what drove Asha san to stand out?

Tanvi: I'm going to throw the question back at you. What were you doing when you were 17 years old? I, for example, was in my final year of school, wrapped up in my friends, thinking of the next party and how to get to the next party without my parents knowing about it. I was not saying farewell to my friends and family for perhaps the last time; I was not traveling across Asia in the throes of WW2, surviving machine gun fire and carpet bombing. I was not willing to sacrifice everything to live, fight, and die as a soldier of Azad Hind. It is the context that makes Asha-san's story special. To be so young. To be a woman. To sacrifice everything for the notion of India.

A few women were permitted to join the freedom movement—and the credit for this goes to Asha-san's parents—Sati & Anand Mohan Sahay—and Netaji for permitting the daughters of India to contribute equally.

Frontlist: How did you find the writing process and the overall experience translating this book?

Tanvi: I find translation one of the most immersive ways of engaging in literature. When translating, you delve into two languages, wrestling for meaning. You are transported into another world—much like when you read—but because you linger around the words for much longer, the experience is much deeper and more transformative.

When I began this translation, I did not imagine the book would be published; I did it as an experiment. I did not realise what a mesmerising experience it would be. I worked non-stop for several months, exiting my room only when my young ones demanded it!

Writer and Translator Jenny Bhatt calls translation an act of love and recovery. I agree completely, and I felt like an archaeologist recovering this astounding story lost in another language. Having said that, translation is much more than the literal conversion of words from one language to another. In fact, I spent more time researching and restructuring the book than translating it.

Frontlist: What is the difference between a translator and a writer? Please express your thoughts.

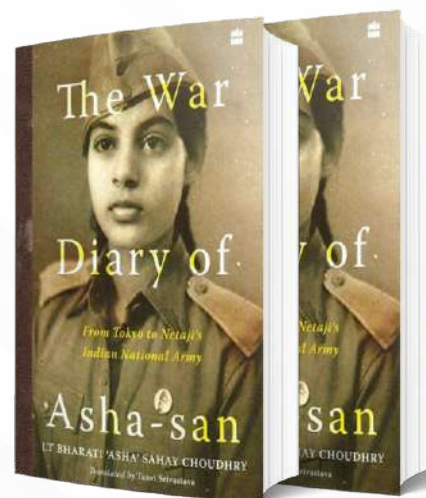
Tanvi: A translator has an end in sight, while a writer never does! On a serious note, I use a different part of my brain when translating, and I am focused wholly on language and do not get frustrated or lost. I can proceed with certainty because I have a final manuscript. Fiction writers are perpetually doubtful about the world they've created, the characters, the plotlines, and their own craft.

Then there's research—while a writer has to research for their imaginary world, a translator has to research a world created by someone else. There is a lot more responsibility on the translator's shoulders at each step.

Frontlist: This book profoundly traces India's struggle for liberation. What values and inspirations can today's generation draw from this manuscript?

Tanvi: When we think of India's struggle for freedom, we think of faded history books and dusty sepia photographs. We are looking back into history from an enormous distance. And when you distance yourself from a story, it is difficult to relate. However, what if I tell you that Asha-san is sitting in the next room and willing to talk about her experiences? History will come alive for you. That's the beauty of Asha-san's diary—it brings to life the day-to-day struggle of the freedom movement.

Asha-san was staying with us in Bangalore till a few months ago. My children were fortunate to interact with her and to witness her fighting spirit. Despite her age and physical infirmity, Asha-san treats all obstacles with humour and optimism. This is something I adore about her. She learned it at a very young age, living through extraordinary circumstances. I hope those who read Asha-san's diary learn to believe everyone is capable of the extraordinary. You need to find a cause to put above yourself.



AUTHOR INTERVIEWS



Dr Connie K Chung, Author of “When We Thrive, Our World Thrives : Stories of Young People Growing Up With Adversity”

Dr Connie K Chung is a Foster America Fellow. She works with innovators, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers so that young people can thrive in a rapidly changing world. She is a former foster parent, former high school teacher, former lecturer, and former Associate Director of the Global Education Innovation Initiative at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Dr Chung received her BA, EdM, and EdD from Harvard University.

Frontlist: What is your opinion of the book's impact on young people's mindsets?

Dr Connie: We wanted to inspire young people that they can thrive despite their backgrounds of adversity.

Frontlist: How did you enlist the "young people" you wrote about?

Dr Connie: We selected graduates of “Dream a Dream,” so they represented young men and young women from different backgrounds and different ambitions but who all nevertheless had found ways to pursue the lives they wanted to live and thrive

Frontlist: Can you recall and elaborate upon your overall childhood experience and the adversities you faced?

Dr Connie: I prefer not to share as the book is not about me.

Frontlist: How can the younger generation improve their lives by adopting certain attitudes and beliefs?

Dr Connie: The book is not so much about what the younger generation can do but about what we can do to help the younger generation thrive. As supporters of the younger generation, we can withhold judgment, create safe spaces where young people can voice their questions, concerns, cares, and dreams, and come alongside them to support them. We can help them explore their strengths and interests and pursue careers and studies that allow them to contribute to their communities in ways they find worthwhile.

Frontlist: How did "Dream a Dream" become a reality, as outlined in the book?

Dr Connie: “Dream a Dream” is an organization that helps young people develop and achieve their dreams. Each young person profiled in the book found ways to thrive despite their backgrounds of adversity. “Dream a Dream” became a globally recognized and respected organization because of its willingness to listen to young people and change their practices accordingly.

Frontlist: What is the most helpful writing advice you have received?

Dr Connie: Write, even if you feel your first draft is not good at all.

Frontlist: Why should someone read this book?

Dr Connie: The book is inspiring and unique in the way that it tells the stories of young people who are thriving despite their backgrounds of adversity. It weaves in research and best practices with compelling stories of young people.

A few Amazon reviews:

1. “No matter how strong our resolve is, there comes a point in every individual's life when they might get frustrated with all the things that are happening and would like nothing more than to give up. And there is nothing better uplifting that we can receive than knowing and reading about the influential positive stories of others who defied inadequate or unpleasant circumstances with their sheer will and came out stronger.”

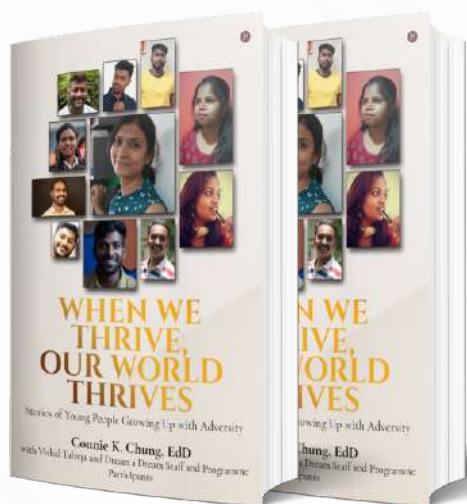
This is a book that, without a doubt, shows us how we can persevere and adapt to our circumstances rather than succumb to our situation.

Narrating a tale of young individuals who had seemingly no hope for any brighter future, the book shows us how with the right help and support from the correct people, they not only succeeded but resulted in being an inspiration for others.

Reading the book certainly gives hope that there are still good people willing to help those in need without wanting or demanding anything in return or exchange, those who want to purely help and do their part in the good deed.”

2. “I like a book with proper research work, and this book has done an exceptional job in that area. Students between the ages of 8 and 22 are given the opportunity to heal, grow, and develop the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly rapidly changing world. Written by an expert, it outlines the action needed to be done and also states the journey of twenty exceptional people. This book is equal to reading 20 people's autobiographies. It is easy to read with simple, small, and manageable lasting changes. These are very touching & inspiring stories of youth. It completely changes how we should engage with children and what it means to support them. The stories are warm and emotional. It offers readers a variety of perspectives on [the] dreams and life of Young People. It's like a notebook for everyone who wants to know how young people can thrive and succeed despite adversity. It gives readers a lot of perspectives on dreams and the existence of Young People—very touching and inspiring testimonies of children. It completely changes the mindset of how we must engage with children and what it [means] to assist them. A must-buy and a must-read book. It is recommended to pick up this book if you're looking for an easy read that will help broaden your perspective on life.”

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS



Richa Lakhera, Author of "Contamination"

Richa Lakhera is an Award-winning TV Journalist and Author of six novels. Her diverse experience in storytelling and communications has taken shape in various platforms. Her novels encompass myriad cultural sub-sets in multiple genres, including crime thrillers, revenge dramas, supernatural adventure, and young adult coming-of-age stories. Four of her English novels have been adapted into Hindi, and several titles have been picked up for film adaptation and OTT. Her books are available on AUDIBLE.

Richa has worked as Deputy Editor & Senior Correspondent at NDTV 24x7 and NDTV India for over a decade. She is the recipient of the Excellence in Entertainment Journalism Award 2016 from the Indian Council for UN Relations (ICUNR) and the recipient of the 1000 Women of Excellence in Asia, Womenovator Awards 2021. She completed her Master's in Chemistry from Miranda House (DU).

Frontlist: The concept, setting, and fantasy behind this story are unique. What drove you to combine military fiction and horror?

Richa: Grenades, Guns, and Ghosts. Contamination is a story of people traumatized by war and greed, and then come the Ghouls. The bullets begin to fly, the grenades

the beginning, so a frantic pace is set. It combines military fiction and horror sub-genres with a female hero. I think Military Horror as a subgenre is quite under-utilized. The military featured in stories across the length and breadth of the horror genre has always attracted me. When we have seen the military, even in films, they are mostly in supporting roles at best or glimpsed in the background as disposable shirts for various monsters to tear apart. Still, in Contamination, the soldiers are center-stage.

My story begins with a small team of the tribal militia headed by our hero Amba—a female combat fighter with dark unnerving powers—searching for the missing men of her unit. I have tried to merge the very human frustrations of the small militia unit borne from a brutal psychopathic jailor Colonel Rosie Madbull's interference with local customs and greed to acquire their land with mythological horror. It's a constant attempt to survive and deal with the fear and paranoia of a never-war situation—so there's a lot of action, bullets, and grenades flying about. In the mystery-laced story, wounded soldiers, low on ammunition and supplies, are hunted, and sometimes their hunters become prey to bizarre creatures.

Films influenced me a lot. I'm thinking something along the lines of James Cameron's Aliens or the Trench 11 genre, action-focused with elements of horror mixed in. I've read quite a bit of sci-fi horror, and Aliens is an excellent example of what the Military Horror subgenre can offer. Still, the horror there is 'unearthly' not 'otherworldly,' and that's different here. The soldier Amba and her nemesis Colonel Rosie Madbull are pitted against each other. When she flees his captivity, she finds herself in the chilling, unfamiliar position of being prey hunted by otherworldly creatures in the Jotsoma forest. As bullets begin to run out and the body counts slowly but surely increase, we see more blood-soaked and horrifying creatures, terrifying things that push our hero Amba to the very edge of being human. The story ends with a rather sudden and unexpected twist—a distinctly chilling ending that I had genuinely not even thought of, and it worked itself out.

Frontlist: The story of Amba is written in such a fast-paced and brutal manner that it is impossible not to connect with her anguish. She is supposed to be this infallible prophesied character but is treated harshly. What was the purpose of doing so?

Richa: A reluctant hero, to begin with, Amba could have chosen to refuse the 'call,' but then her experience would have been of a victim, not a Hero. The plot is such that it makes her face ordeals again and again and provokes her repeatedly to make choices. And that reveals the integrity of her character. The motivation to act becomes bigger than her fears, and her unresolved issues are resolved. In fact, the plot forces her at the end of the epic battle to face up to her biggest fears. The overall theme is of choosing light over darkness but also, for Amba, about the transformative power of forgiveness. If one were to make comparisons, like Harry Potter, Amba too is an orphan; she survives the extreme trauma of watching her parents killed. Like Frodo in LOTR, Neo in Matrix, or Simba in Lion King, Amba is also forced to undertake a journey to face great odds, which transforms her externally and internally. In that sense, it is also a look at the human condition and supernature—the story of the 'becoming' of a Hero.

Frontlist: The characters are irreparably damaged and suffer both the horrors of wars and the psychological torments of living in such times. Which character was the easiest to write, and which was the hardest?

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS

Richa: It being a Military Horror sub-genre, the characters' psyche was fantastic to delve into. There were no boundaries, but they are relatable because they were rooted in real, authentic emotions like envy, pride, lust, fear, love, and so on. I had maximum fun creating Colonel Rosie Madbull, the psychopath jailor—one of the vilest characters I have created.

It's said that an epic saga of good vs evil is only as 'good' as the villain, and psychopathic jailor Colonel Rosie Madbull, the villain in Contamination, is as evil as they come. A man with a twisted moral code is infinitely more dangerous because, as the one in charge of the terrifying Bakir prison, he is also a powerful man, a formidable foe. And he has a back story. Rosie Madbull's father dies at the hands of indigenous settlers, and Madbull is consumed by revenge. Getting inside his head was like walking into a huge dark room with only one way out and thousands of keys. His meanness is like a real organ. Like most psychopaths, he is a sadist and enjoys the sufferings of others. Madbull is truly wicked; he believes the rules do not apply to him. He is dangerous because he has the means to remove anyone who gets in his way. Everything in the world revolves around his needs. Sadistic psychopaths like Rosie do not have feelings and cause a lot of damage.

In the realm of supernatural and horror, Contamination also explores brother-sister strained relationships and the power play between the genders. Amba's heroism contrasts with her brother Nakul's cowardice. He is jealous and full of envy and hatred for his sister. In his heart, he believes that it's because of Amba's 'weird powers' that he is taunted and made fun of as a 'weakling.' He is unable to love his wife properly as a sense of inferiority and loss grips him; we will later get to know the reason for his bitter resentment towards his sister Amba. So, he is vulnerable, too, and you end up empathizing with him.

The Great Gaur was also tough to write. In the human world, it is nothing but a monstrous beast, but in its supernatural, it serves as a mentor to Amba, indeed, saves her life from certain death. Their first encounter had to be written at two levels which were challenging but fun.

One of the challenging characters to write about was Amba's mentor, Patala, the Witch. After a confrontation with Patala, Amba gains a profound understanding of her purpose or skill. Armed with this new ability, our Hero prepares for the most difficult part of her journey and achieves the goal she sets out to accomplish. She is initiated into a magical world, where she must face several ordeals until she reaches the story's climax—the final face off with her nemesis.

Frontlist: Our only complaint about the book is that it is too small. Will you explore the world of Amba and Others more in-depth in future iterations?

Richa: Contamination was a deeply immersive writing for me. I tried to develop an original universe that I hope I can return to in future stories.

Frontlist: Several twists in the book remind us of the writing styles of various notable authors. Who in particular are your favorites?

Richa: Since time immemorial, storytellers have written about good vs evil battles waged between the Hero & their Nemesis. Growing up as kids, we all heard countless stories of such good vs evil battles from our Nanis and Dadis and read about them in books like the Amar Chitra Katha and whatnot - epic wars between the Veer and the Asuras. It was fun as both the parties could assume any Avatar; both had this huge armory of Astras - some of them could take any form, some were cursed, some had gifts, some had bad Karma, and some were in their nth birth! They had interesting mentors who could be from the Dark World or could be animals or ghosts. The stories were fantastic but were relatable because they were rooted in real, authentic emotions like envy, pride, lust, fear, love, and so on. And then there were epics like the Mahabharata, easily the biggest treasure trove of stories in the world. In our teens, it was the spectacular Marvel Universe, but the classic Hero's template remained the same. I was fascinated by this genre, marrying myth and modern masala, a mashup of ancient and contemporary; this space is exciting.

Having said that, I must mention the fictional map I drew for the book. Authors have been doing it forever, especially in fantasy books. It's my way of paying homage to what I think is the mother of all fantasy maps - Tolkein's Middle Earth in Lord of the Rings map practically invented all the fantasy map cliches. It's a great way to help readers orient themselves in the fantasy world. I think maps hugely influence how readers imagine the narrative when your plots are playing out in imagined fictional places; it gives them a sense of perspective.



AUTHOR INTERVIEWS



Kanchan Banerjee, Author of The Crash Of A Civilization

Kanchan Banerjee was born in West Bengal, India, where he had first-hand experience with Communist movements, including the rise of the Communist Left Front and Naxalism. He has also had excellent experiences through his interaction with the Muslim community in his native place in Bardhaman. Later, he moved to the United States, where he started researching and studying Indian history in world contexts to determine why Indians are so naive and forgetful about their past and utterly indifferent about their future and the way out. His book 'The Crash Of A Civilization' is a result of that quest.

Frontlist: What is a civilizational crash? When, according to you, did our civilization collapse?

Kanchan: Many of us are familiar with the work of Samuel Huntington, who wrote about the 'Clash of Civilizations'. Various civilizations, such as Western, Islamic, Abrahamic, Hindu/Indian, Chinese etc, have shaped the global culture and narratives on different matters. When the values, culture, and modus operandi of each do not see eye to eye, there is competition and a war of ideas and goals - conflict is bound to happen. In the case of India, it is the only continuous civilization that survived the onslaught of many hostile forces. Greeks, Meopotemaians, Egypt, Persia - all civilizations are gone for good. Even China lost its cultural heritage of Buddha and Confucius and adopted a western one, i.e., communism. The survival of civilizations has two aspects, the inner power to sustain assaults and the power to defeat hostile forces. In the case of India, centuries of assaults made it weak and down; it crashed, but it somehow survived while most others did not.

Bhartiya civilization never 'collapsed.' Many clashes were damaged, wounded, and trampled on, but it never collapsed, unlike most other civilizations. The forces of Islam converted much of Africa, Middle East including the great Persian civilization, and also parts of Europe. However, India fought and never surrendered to the Greeks, Huns, Sakas, and the Islamic invasions. This is due to the inner power of the civilizations. Millions gave life to defend society and country and are a winner still. And the assaults continue in various forms, conversion, market capture, and political colonialism via multiple ideologies, including failed yet still active ideology of Marxism.

Frontlist: The book provides a new perspective on civilizations and how Western forces influenced Indian civilization. Do you agree with me?

Kanchan: India is a pluralistic, open civilization that accepts all thoughts from everywhere. Yet firm in its commitment to truth and Dharma, the principles and acts of sustainability.

When we talk about the West, one has to understand what it is 'West'. Original Western thinkers like Plato, Socrates, and Archimedes were close to the thinking of India, and some of them may have visited India. But once Christianity became a state religion for most western nations, it suffocated and persecuted people, and even Galileo had to suffer for seeking and telling the truth. Vatican and Church became the oppressive imperial force, eventually giving birth to the colonist forces. The Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English people started colonizing the world and used Christianity to control millions' minds to rule and loot these nations. That colonial power has also distorted the history of these nations by making them feel inferior. That's what British colonists did.

But long before that, when Mongol Chengiz blood mixed with Turkik nomads along with Islamism, it became a massively destructive force for the native people everywhere. While the nations in Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Europe surrendered to this power within 100 years of the advent of Islam, it took them nearly 500 years to reach mainland India due to severe resistance by the people of India.

These forces used two Abrahamic religions - Christianity and Islam. Both are antagonistic to the Vedic ideas of pluralism; were addicted to iconoclasm and imposing their religion on others and rule. Some scholars estimate that over 80 million lives were lost; over 40000 temples and numerous universities were destroyed during the Islamic invasion of India.

Britain destroyed the Indian local education system and industries and caused the death of over 100 million deaths in man-made famines. These alien forces deeply impacted Indian culture, and the result is felt every day by every Indian today. And the colonization process - narratives, thought processes, society, and economy is still going on in new forms via new channels, and I call these New Colonists NeoCols.

Frontlist: How do you feel about various countries and individuals ruling India, and how has this affected India and its people?

Kanchan: It is a myth that India was ruled for centuries by alien powers. The forces who came to India before the Turks and Arabs as invaders; there is no trace of them today in India, but some of these forces ruled Delhi. Even the Mughals had less control over the entire India, which was less than 200 years. British Raj also had power, but it was for less than 100 years. India fought and became free of the Islamic occupation of Delhi by 1707 after the death of Aurangzeb and the British imperial forces by 1947. It is a sad saga of Indian history that was initially written by the victors, especially the colonists, which glorified the invaders who erased the glorious history of India through a dark conspiracy and strategy. History affects collective consciousness and, thus, behavior. Even after 75 years of independence, the history of India taught in the schools is more or less a Colonist-Islamist-Marxist version of Indian history. My book explores this area in depth and highlights why and how this distortion happened.

Frontlist: What are some ways in which Western civilization differs from past civilizations, and what does this mean for its current trajectory?

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS

Kanchan: It is evident that the knowledge and vidyas of Bharat influenced the entire world. Plato, Socrates, and Archimedes are a few examples influenced by Bharatiya's thoughts. Unfortunately, today, the West thought process needs to respect the deeper aspects of their sages. Today's culture is about materialism and greed. While modern western civilization is leading the scientific discovery and technology thereof, it has been misused to such a degree that we have to deal with many global crises, including climate change, pollution, and a significant increase in diseases such as Diabetes and Cancer. Western culture of overuse of natural resources guided by the greed of the profit mongers is responsible for it. The contrast is that Bharat always respected nature and religiously, consciously protected land, water, plants, and animal kingdoms. Some parts of the world's civilization disappeared due to the overuse of natural resources. Yet the world survived until the current crises was created after the industrial revolution.

Looking upon trajectory, on the one hand, modern science and spiritual sciences such as yoga can take human potential to infinity. Besides, there is a risk of this civilization falling into dust due to the ideologies of greed, religious bigotry, backwardness, the

imperial and colonial mindset of dominion, and destruction of the good in the world. The battle between the Devas and Asuras continues.

Frontlist: What impact did Muhammad's death have on the Islamic world?

Kanchan: There are several billion people who follow the religion established by the Islamic Prophet Mohammed. However, while his ideas and ideals impacted the world, Including 41 wars of Jihad, right after his death, a significant family feud erupted in a turn of events. Muslim world was quickly divided into Shia and Sunnis and many more branches of each sect. Nations such as Saudi Arabia (Sunni) and Iran (Shia) are arch-enemies. Different denominations within Muslim countries discriminate or fight against opposing sects. More people die in the world in fights between various Islamic forces than fights against the 'kafirs', the non-believers. But the idea of Jihad, a religious war to conquer people, societies, and lands by force or treachery, such as the global Christian missionary conversion agenda, continues. This is harming and slowing down the process of the arrival of a higher spiritual civilization on earth.

Frontlist: Why should one read this book?

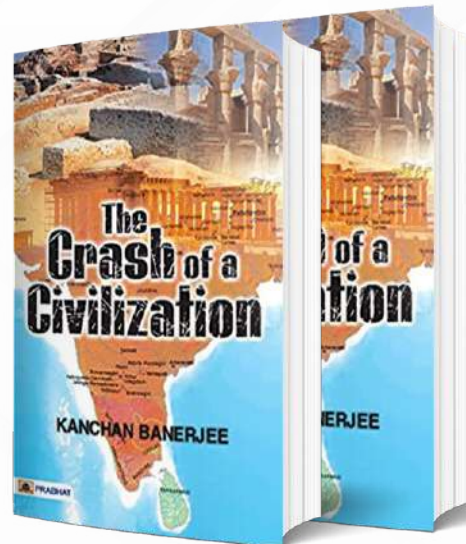
Kanchan: The history of a family, society, and civilization is essential because one can build a better future if only one knows the past. History empowers us and gives us direction for the future.

It was Rabindranath Tagore who said:

'There are some who are exclusively modern, who believe that the past is the bankrupt time, leaving no assets for us, but only a legacy of debts. They refuse to acknowledge the army marching forward can be fed from the rear. It is well to remind such persons that the great ages of the renaissance were when the man suddenly discovered the seeds of thought in the granary of the past.'

'The unfortunate people who have lost the harvest of their past have lost their present age, missed their seed for cultivation, and go begging for their bare livelihood. We must not imagine that we are one of these disinherited peoples of the world. The time has come for us to break open the treasure trove of our ancestors and use it for our commerce of life. Let us, with its help, make our future our own and not continue our existence as the eternal rag-pickers in other people's dustbins.'

And, of course, as an American poet, Maya Angelou wrote: "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived; but if faced with courage, need not be lived again."



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Frontlist Magazine
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31



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Frontlist Magazine
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33

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