



Q2 | 2024-25

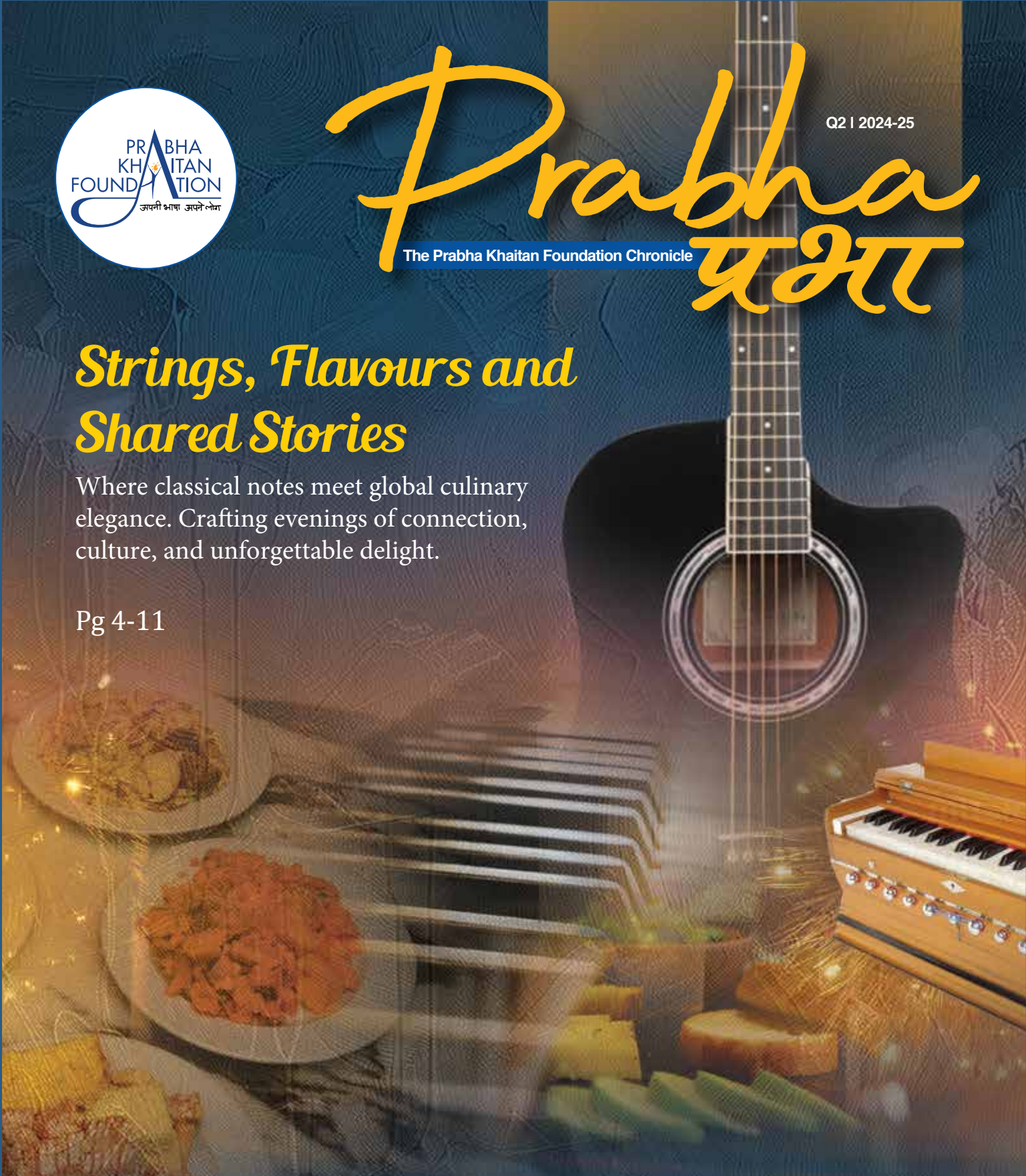
# Prabha प्रभा

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation Chronicle

## Strings, Flavours and Shared Stories

Where classical notes meet global culinary elegance. Crafting evenings of connection, culture, and unforgettable delight.

Pg 4-11



INSIDE

AYURVEDA  
INSIGHTS

18



BREAKING  
BARRIERS

19



EMPOWERED  
EXCHANGE

23



URDU  
ELEGANCE

24





MANISHA JAIN  
Honorary COO,  
Prabha Khaitan Foundation

## *Art, Ideas & Human Connections*

As you turn these pages, you'll find a vibrant reflection of the Prabha Khaitan Foundation's ever-growing cultural journey. This edition brings together soulful music, literary conversations, creative engagements with children, and initiatives that celebrate compassion and creativity.

Curated with great thought and care by our Ehsaas Woman of Udaipur, Shradha Murdiaa, this magazine captures the essence of what we stand for - the meaningful experiences that connect people, places and ideas. Shradha's eye for detail and commitment to cultural storytelling shines through every feature.

It has been my pleasure to edit this issue and bring these stories together in one cohesive narrative. Each event and initiative echoes the Foundation's vision of enriching lives through art, dialogue and community.

I hope this edition inspires you as much as it inspired us to create it. Thank you for being part of our shared cultural tapestry.

*Manisha Jain*



SHRADDHA MURDIA  
Ehsaas Woman of Udaipur

## *Heritage Behind Welcome*

### *Serving Stories, Weaving Worlds, Tuning Strings: Where Heritage Meets Welcome*

What is heritage, if not the stories we inherit and the songs we continue to sing? It is the invisible thread that binds us to those who came before woven into our rituals, music, flavours, silences. It lives in the way we greet, the way we share a meal, and the way we open our hearts to others. As Rumi said, “Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. It will not lead you astray.” The pull of a place is its heritage – its music, its taste, its ways of being that speak without words.

In India, every greeting is an offering of heritage. A folded hand *Namaste* in the north speaks of humility; *Vanakkam* in Tamil Nadu radiates respect; *Sat Sri Akal* in Punjab carries the echo of eternal truth; *Adaab* in Kashmir is an embrace of grace; *Jai Shri Krishna* in Gujarat invokes the divine with warmth; and *Ram Ram Sa* in Rajasthan echoes the sunlit simplicity of desert devotion. These are not mere words they are vibrations of belief and timeless oneness.

Across the world too, traditions bloom in gestures of welcome: In Kyoto, the tea ceremony becomes a meditation on respect and beauty. In Morocco, mint tea in engraved silver cups is not refreshment but an heirloom of generosity. In New Zealand, the haka greets with strength, pride, and ancestry, echoing the earth it springs from. In Poland, guests are welcomed with bread and salt – symbols of respect and abundance alongside comforting dishes like pierogi, bigos, and barszcz, offered with a warmth that says, “You are home here.” Recently, at India’s Kumbh Mela, millions gathered in devotion, offering food, water, and shelter to strangers as sacred acts of welcome, ringing the true belief: *Atithi Devo Bhavah* .(The guest is God)

Music gives heritage a voice. As Plato said, “Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything.” It is the first language of cultural welcome the morning ragas by the Ganges in Banaras, the mangal dhvani of nadaswaram in Carnatic traditions, the rhythmic clap of khartal in Jaipur’s courtyards. Each note is a doorway into the unseen heart of a civilisation.

Food carries heritage to the senses. Saffron and cardamom whisper of Mughal courts; turmeric and asafoetida evoke temple kitchens; jaggery and ghee remember harvest festivals. As Anthony Bourdain wrote, “Food is everything we are. It’s an extension of nationalist feeling, ethnic feeling, your personal history, your province, your region, your tribe, your grandma.” And so is music. So is art. So is every warm welcome. In Benaras, heritage is not curated; it breathes in every corner ghats becoming amphitheatres of devotion, alleys becoming galleries of taste with *mallaiyo*, chaat, and memory.

Tradition teaches us that welcome is not a transaction but a truth, a way of seeing the divine in another. May this issue remind us that in every greeting offered, every note sung, every flavour shared, and every story told, we are not merely preserving heritage we are becoming it.

This edition invites you on a journey through places where hospitality becomes a custodian of heritage. Through essays, interviews, reflections, and the wisdom of authors whose books illuminate these cultural spheres, we hope to inspire hoteliers, chefs, musicians, cultural curators, and readers to see themselves as keepers of the flame that is our shared human story.

Let us honour that spirit.

It is an honour to be the Guest Editor for this issue of Prabha, and a joy to be part of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**.



# Strings & Notes

Bridging Heritage and Hospitality  
through Music, Taste, and Culture



In an inspired confluence of sound, spirit, and sensorial delight, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** curated a striking series of cultural evenings that left audiences across the country both moved and mesmerized. Through growing collaborations with leading hospitality partners, these events not only celebrated music but also redefined how Indian classical and contemporary performances could be experienced, focusing on atmosphere, ambiance and artistry.

At the heart of this celebration was the legendary **Shubha Mudgal**, whose evocative voice filled the rooms with timeless classical energy, connecting centuries of Indian musical heritage to the modern ear. Equally compelling was Grammy Award-winning **Ricky Kej**, who brought his globally acclaimed soundscapes to the fore, blending themes of sustainability, world harmony, and Indian ethos with electronic beats and visual storytelling. These concerts were not just performances; they were immersive journeys into emotion, purpose and artistic finesse.

What truly set these evenings apart was the thoughtful integration of **culinary artistry with cultural nuance**. One standout event was the **Cheese and Sake Pairing Evening**- hosted in partnership with select boutique hotels, the experience created a unique dialogue between East and West. Japanese sake was served alongside artisanal cheeses.

For the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, these events reflected a deeper shift towards experience-driven engagement, where heritage is not only preserved but felt in meaningful and memorable ways. With the support of hospitality collaborators, each evening was crafted to offer a relaxed, immersive, and often unexpected encounter with the arts. Whether it was the glow of candlelit courtyards, the resonance of a tanpura under an open sky, or a curated menu, every element spoke of careful and creative curation.

These evenings also aligned with the Foundation's larger vision: to **bridge classical and contemporary**, connect local and global voices, and blend tradition with innovation. The audience included artists, cultural patrons, diplomats, young creatives and curious minds, making the events truly cross-generational and inclusive.

At a time when art is often experienced through screens and fleeting attention spans, these gatherings brought people back to presence and shared experience. They served as a reminder that heritage can evolve gracefully. It can sit beside a glass of sake, travel through modern sound systems, and still stir the soul with depth and power.

Looking ahead, the Foundation aims to take such events to new cities and international platforms. The goal remains simple: to make culture more alive, inclusive and immersive, one note and one story at a time.

**You'll see more from this vibrant cultural series in our next edition as well. Stay tuned.**

# Mumbai Welcomes Music with Meaning

The inaugural concert of the collaboration of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** and ITC Hotels unfolded at ITC Maratha, Mumbai. As monsoon showers set the mood, Grammy-winning musician Ricky Kej took the stage with his ensemble, delivering an unforgettable performance rooted in themes of nature, peace and global unity. The city's cultural elite, music lovers and dignitaries gathered to witness this powerful fusion of sound and sustainability. The energy in the hall was electric, and the performance struck a deep chord with the audience, making it a perfect start to the cultural series.



Ricky Kej



## Classical Grandeur Echoes in Chennai

The journey of the collaboration between **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** and ITC Hotels continued with a spellbinding concert by renowned classical vocalist Shubha Mudgal, held at ITC Grand Chola, Chennai. This evening celebrated the depth and purity of Indian classical music. Shubha Mudgal's performance, filled with emotion and finesse, left the audience captivated and moved. Her rich voice, paired with a live ensemble, created an unforgettable atmosphere that resonated long after the final note. The event attracted Chennai's leading art lovers and admirers of Hindustani music, further strengthening the foundation's mission to bring culture to the forefront.



Shubha Mudgal



## A Curious Pairing: Cheese Meets Sake



While wine and cheese may be a familiar indulgence, the intriguing union of Japanese sake and artisanal cheese opened up a whole new flavour experience at a unique evening hosted by the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** in collaboration with Taj Bengal. Guests were treated to an exquisite journey of taste and aroma, where sake was paired with handcrafted cheeses from across India.

Leading this immersive session were two passionate experts — Namrata Sundaresan, co-founder of Kase Cheese, a Chennai-based artisanal cheese brand, and sake specialist Lolita Sarkar. Together, they walked the audience through an elegant tasting session, sharing insights into the lactic harmony between cheese and sake, and how each enhances the other's profile.

The menu featured a wide variety of cheeses such as Bouche Goat Cheese, Manchego, Smoked Provolone, Halloumi, and KaseBlu — all crafted by Kase Cheese. Each was carefully matched with a distinct sake, bringing forth surprising bursts of umami and balance on the palate.

With this elegant and thoughtfully curated evening, the Foundation continues its endeavour to celebrate global culinary arts while supporting homegrown excellence. The event left guests not only delighted but also inspired to explore new and unexpected gastronomic pairings.







Sangeeta Datta

## Rakhshanda Jalil on using Urdu poetry to look at the social fabric of secular India



Rakhshanda Jalil

A scintillating session of **An Author's Afternoon**, was organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** with Dr. Rakhshanda Jalil. Rakhshanda Jalil is a writer, translator, critic and literary historian. She has unveiled some hard facts in her latest book, "Love in the time of Hate- I'm the Mirror of Urdu". The program commenced with a warm welcome note by Esha Dutta, Honorary Convenor of North-East Affairs. Sangeeta Datta, **Ehsaas Woman** of London was the conversationalist for the evening.

"It was expected of people like me, a nerd. I did rather well academically in my masters and the obvious choice, the default option back in the day was teaching and I do have teachers in the family and it seemed academic. It seemed like the natural option and I did try it first at Khalsa College in Delhi University then briefly at Aligarh University and I felt like that there are enough bad teachers and I just didn't want to add to the numbers. My heart was never in the job and I knew I didn't want to do that and maybe it came too easily, right after college. Back then, you didn't have to do an MPhil or PhD. I did a PhD later. Back in the day you just did your MA and you got this job so easily. I see the maramari for it now and there was no such thing. Delhi University had made it a fairly simple process.

Talking about events or experiences which must have turned her into the fierce Champion for Urdu Hindustani, a language which has been much contested a language which falls squarely into the politics of literature, the author stated, "Like how in South India, you leave your chappal your slippers outside when you enter the house in my family, we left English outside, like there was no written down rule and my parents were both perfectly literate and cosmopolitan people in their own way but it was an unspoken rule that we at home will speak in Urdu Hindustani like not immaculate Urdu but we will speak in Urdu to our parents and outside the house of course English was a necessary evil but I had a very domestic way of speaking to some extent even now I speak very fluently but I don't have a critical idiom, so when I'm asked why I don't write in Urdu it is because my entire education has perforce been in English, has perforce been in

English so my frame of reference my vocabulary my critical idiom is all in Urdu so I increasingly access it" expressed Dr. Jalil.

When prompted on her source of inspiration, the author responded, "I did indeed come from a home where neither parent was directly involved in Urdu. My father was a cardiologist and my mother was a librarian in our school, DPS where I went. Neither of them had studied Urdu formally but I remember Urdu books in the house. The central government has actually, in theory, a third language formula. Schools are required in middle school to teach another language. Increasingly the default option in most schools is sanskrit. I went to a school which offered a whole bunch of languages: French, German, Italian, Spanish, Punjabi. Urdu was one of them and we had a Mr. Basim he was our transport in charge, he was a refugee from the other side of the partition, a survivor who introduced me to Urdu."

Talking about taking the PhD route after 20 years of having completed her Masters, the author said, "I want to say this to young students especially, I see so much confusion and turmoil in the choice of the ML and the PHD subject because you haven't thought things through so much and somebody like me who does it 20 years later, it's like soil that's lying fallow, No education goes waste and neither does time if you're putting your time to good use. If you're reading voraciously and eclectically and seemingly randomly, I think somewhere it comes together. I think I see those 20 odd years as a parcel of land that is allowed to lie fallow. It doesn't become a wasteland, it doesn't become banjar, it doesn't become a desert. It just takes time to rejuvenate itself and when you throw the seeds on it they sprout much more healthily, vigorously, certainly that's what happened to me."

Dr. Jalil continued, "The route I took to PhD was a very circuitous one. While I was reading randomly and so on. I was also translating and the choice of my thesis was the 'Progressive Writers' Movement' revealed itself to me because by then I read so many people that I hadn't consciously thought of as Progressive writers like Fahad Ahmad, Manto



K Mohanchandran



Arnab Chatterjee



Esha Dutta

or Rajender Singh Bedi, they are all partition crop of writers that are interpreting nation building projects in different ways.”

Briefing about the book and Progressive Movement on 10th April, Dr. Jalil explained, “It was the first of its kind meeting. It happened in Rafia Hall in Lucknow and it was an all India Progressive Writers’ Association meeting. Prem Chand, who’s going to die 2 months later, who’s a lion in winter. He’s a big name and he’s a pan-India name, not just a Hindi writer. He came to give the presidential address of this first all- India Progressive Writers’ association. Delegates have come from all over the country, very vigorous PWA in Kolkata have come from Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and all over the country, all over undivided India. Prem Chand is telling this galaxy of writers that we will have to change the standard of beauty. *Humein khoobsoorti ka mayaar badalna hoga*. We will no longer go looking for beauty in these moon maidens with long hair and almond eyes. We are going to look for beauty anywhere and everywhere that we find. If we find beauty in a woman who’s got sweat on her brow and she’s suckling a child and she’s working in the field- let her also be the subject of your literature. He is asking literature to be socially engaged, socially purposive, *zameen se judi hui*, society se judi hui. Let literature hold up a mirror



Madhurima Sinha

to society and in that mirror you see everything that is in your society- good, bad, indifferent- whatever is there around you must be reflected in your literature.”

“Art for art’s sake is no longer required. Art for life sake is what holds value now.” The session drew to a close with a very interactive conversation with the audience sharing their experiences and anecdotes on their experience with Progressive Writers’ Movement. Her eloquence and passion for storytelling captivated everyone present, making the discussion both enlightening and inspiring. A formal closing note was delivered by Madhurima Sinha, PR Head Taj Bengal and felicitation of Dr. Jalil was done by Mohanchandran Kottarapurath, Senior Vice President Operations, East & North East, The Indian Hotels Company Limited.

*This session “An Author’s Afternoon” was in association with venue and hospitality partner Taj Bengal.*



Padmesh Gupta



Dharmesh Rajput

**‘Women are the Architects of a New Generation’ - Dr. Padmesh Gupta Discusses His Book ‘Dead End’**

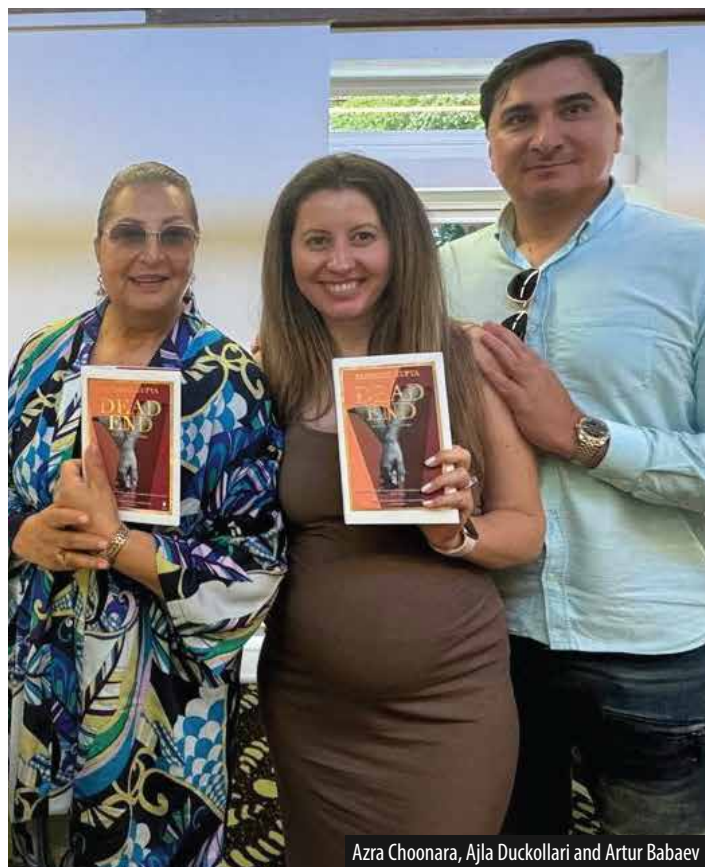
Education is vital for women, whether they are housewives or not earning members of the family, as they are the ones who transfer knowledge and education to the new generations,” stated Padmesh Gupta, drawing inspiration from his grandmother. Gupta was in conversation with Dharmesh Rajput, a Birmingham City University academic

‘Dead End’ is a powerful and emotional collection of short stories. Gupta’s narratives explore the complexities of human relationships, providing poignant reflections on love, pain, and modern life’s intricacies. His stories boldly address pressing societal issues such as racism, casteism, politics, and discrimination, highlighting their various manifestations across different countries, particularly in Asia and the UK.

Discussing the challenges of translating poetry, Gupta explained that translations often fail to convey the significance and relevance inherent in the original works. He likened his short stories to long poems, written with the same flow and passion. Each story raises questions or concerns about societal differences across countries. Referencing his story "Scorned," Gupta elucidated the differences between racism in the UK and color discrimination in India.



Promila Thomas, Sadek Ali, Kavita Oza and Rano Thukral



Azra Choonara, Ajla Duckollari and Artur Babaev

Dharmesh Rajput introduced the book, praising each story in 'Dead End' as a finely crafted masterpiece. He highlighted Gupta's skillful manipulation of language and profound understanding of human nature. Rajput noted that Gupta's prose is both elegant and thought-provoking, leaving readers deeply moved by the emotional depth and sincerity of his narratives.

Earlier, Titiksha, **Ehsaas woman** of Birmingham, welcomed the audience and introduced Padmesh Gupta, describing this event as an opportunity to explore his journey from poet to storyteller, and from Hindi to English.

In her closing remarks, **Ehsaas woman** of Birmingham, Piali Ray, thanked the audience, noting that the event had been particularly special due to the animated conversation and insights into creative writing.

A substantial number of book lovers and South Asia enthusiasts attended the event, including Dr. KK Srivastava, Dr. Bakul, Tony Chawla, Dr. Promila Thomas, Kavita Oza, Sadek Ali, Artur Babar & Ajla Duckollari amongst other eminent personalities.

*The Write Circle Birmingham was organised in association with SAMPAD and Kriti UK at the Midland Arts Centre.*



Tony Chawla and KK Srivastava



Audience



Neelima Dalmia Adhar

**Woman of Today  
Breaking all Shackles  
of Womanhood through  
her Writing**



Sonali Raha

In the city of shimmering landscapes, a record-breaking City, the world's busiest international airport and the tallest skyscraper city Dubai debuted and launched its very own **The Write Circle** with the guest author for the evening Neelima Dalmia Adhar was in conversation with Sonali Raha.

While Manisha Jain, Honorary COO, introduced the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, sharing the journey and the Foundation's vision; Madiha Saidi, **Ehsaas Woman** of Dubai took forward the proceedings to introduce the associates, author and the conversationalist.

Talking about the book, the conversationalist mentioned how unique the book was as it had a completely different perspective on Radha. The book has mentioned Radha- as a woman, Radha - the cosmic force and Radha beyond all our imaginations.

"According to me, nature is a living organism. It is one of the characters in the entire cast of characters- nature. My attempt was to be able to stir every single sense of the human mind whether it was touch, taste, sensuality, texture, fragrance, and colour. Colour plays a very important role in my life and all flowers and the seasons and moods change with season. I often dress according to the colors of the season or even the colour of the day. I'm a very colourful person and my attempt was to bring alive every single sensuousness in this book."

The conversation then segued into asking her childhood inspiration and she mentioned, "My childhood favourite was John Keats as a poet and the greatest thing that I admired about Keats was the fact that he was able to bring in so much sensuality into his expressions and his poetry. That has been scorched in my head since I was a little girl. So this is a very humble tribute to my hero which is Keats and I feel so happy and so fulfilled when I hear my readers, who easily dismiss mediocre writing. I feel that my



Saurabh Tiwari and Omar Muhammad Al Marzooqi

mission is accomplished. Hence nature plays a very important part not only in me but in my book as well."

The talk was initiated when probed into asking about how her book "Radha: The Princess of Barsana" took shape in the form of a book, Adhar responded, "Radha happened to me in a dream. It was soon after I had met this psychic seer, on one of my book event journeys I was in Ranchi and I met him after the book event and he told me that you have a mission on Earth which was incomplete in your last birth. He asked me to concentrate and meditate upon Radha and she will speak to you, she will tell you her story. I dismissed the idea then and I forgot all about it. Soon after, I had a dream and I believe that dreams are prophetic. I saw this very Vivid image of Radha. It was almost as if Radha was in appendage of me or the other way around that I was at appendage of Radha. It wasn't a dream, it was a real vision and I said I found my news and that's how Radha began."

The author continued, "I want to paint a picture of Radha and that's exactly what was my endeavour in the book. I did not want to write the story which is very limited in its scope and thinking about Radha, the Goddess, I did not want to get into that area. For me the most interesting, intriguing part of Radha's personality. We all know that Radha and Krishna were lovers, we all know



Juhi Yasmeen Khan, Manisha Jain and Mazhar Farooqui

that this was a very temporal, very earthly, very mortal love between two human beings. I wanted to get into the character of this woman who wore her infidelity like a badge of honour on her sleeve. She was proud she never shied away from the admission that yes, I am in a relationship with a man who's younger than me. Radha always believed that she was married to this dark-skinned blue man, who followed her in her dreams and said that this was her heart, this is who she was."

I have often felt that when I write I open up a portal in which some other alternate World energies come into me and write. I'm not trying to sensationalize what I write. Some of the pieces that I have written and I have gone back to them afterwards, I often read them and I say but who wrote this? These are not my words, these are words obviously in some other lifetime inside some pocket inside my brain which have come on to the paper and I'm astounded by my own expressions.

The author touched base on her personal process of writing and mentioned, "My style of writing which is that whenever I write I don't have a blueprint, I let the story follow in straight like Radha has taken over the trajectory of her own life and if I want believe that in this book so then that trajectory is another energy. I always write the beginning chapter of my book and the exit chapter before I fill in the insides and the inside chapters all follow like a link and a chain and you'll be absolutely astounded that I never make a blueprint of what I'm going to write about Radha. I did a little bit of research."

Talking about how far Radha dates back, she stressed, "I figured out that because there is so little and something so controversial about Radha, that people actually say there was no Radha right up to about 400 years ago. Later on, Radha is epitomised as a glorious prototype of an erotic woman who is in love with this beautiful man who is younger than her

and she is consumed by that relationship. So, I wanted to have a very powerful beginning. That is one of the tools of my writing which begins on a note where you grab the reader by the throat and he cannot let go of your book. So this came to me also as part of my own introspection. Nobody has talked about a trial. There are incidents where people say that Radha was left in Vrindavan after 16 years of being with Krishna, I think it was 18. And he goes away never to come back again to her."

A Q&A session with the author and audience stole all the light with a lot of interaction and information sharing. The author and the conversationalist were felicitated by Sadia Khan, **Ehsaas woman** of Dubai with Kantha Dupatta and the formal Thank you note delivery was by **Ehsaas Woman** of Dubai, Nidhi Sharma.



Madiha Saidi



Sadia Khan



Nidhi Sharma

*The Write Circle Dubai was organized with the support of Ehsaas Women of Dubai, in association with hospitality partner Taj Dubai, media partner Khaleej Times with the support of Union Cement Company.*



Vicram Sharma

In a very invigorating session of **The Write Circle Patna**, author Vicram Sharma educated and put light on various elements of health and significance of understanding and applying Ayurveda in our lives. In his latest book, “Ayurveda Advantage”, the author has laid down concepts in layman’s terms without technical jargons for readers of any kind. Anubha Arya, **Ehsaas Woman** of Patna welcomed the gathering and Anvita Pradhan, **Ehsaas Woman** of Patna, moderated the conversation with befitting questions and smooth flow leading to a riveting conversation.

When Pradhan prompted, “You mentioned that food, sleep and sex are the three pillars of life. How we manage these determine our mental, physical and spiritual potential. The key to finding balance lies in the doctrine of Tridosha.” Sharma elaborated, “the five elements of nature which are absolutely essential to life are the air that we breathe, water, Earth, space, ether and fire. These five exist in us in every individual as with tridosha as Vata, Pita and Kafa. Every individual is born with a very unique disposition, composition of this and that more or less stays the same throughout that individual’s life, of course, these are subtle forces so they are always in a state of flux but we human beings spend most of our lives in just keeping this balance between Vata, Pita and Kafa.”



Anubha Arya



Tejrashi Mehrotra

## Exploring Holistic Wellness: An Insight into Health and Ayurveda with Vicram Sharma



Anvita Pradhan

Elaborating about the food and its aura, he declared, “It is very important, even in Hinduism we say that people should play bhajan or something pleasant when food is being cooked. This is seen in many cultures. I was in Turkey and you see the Turkish culture is such that when food was cooked traditionally the Dervishes would be dancing and they would be singing songs of love. That energy would then be infused in the food, how you’re eating your food, with whom you’re eating, the content of your conversation, what are your thoughts when you’re eating the food. All of those things are very important. So mindful eating is very important.”

“In India and in Hinduism Ayurveda is really revered. So just like water is one of the elements, the same is fire. You must remember that being capable of keeping you warm in the winter is also capable of burning you down to ashes. It just depends on how it is dealt with and the fire that exists outside, exists in our system as the digestive fire,” indicated the author.

“Another important element of Ayurveda is sleep. Most people think today that it’s okay if I haven’t slept for a few nights. I’ll make it up next week or I’ll make it up but that does not happen. The damage is done. It is important to not take stimulants after 3pm. Like, coffee stays for 10 hours in your body. So it is advised not to have it.” disclosed Sharma.

The session drew to conclude with an interesting Q&A segment. He clarified many queries which were eye-openers to the majority of them. He shared that Ashwagandha was his favourite plant for the body. Shatavari, amla and moringa are very good for women and their hormonal balances. Anubha Arya, **Ehsaas Woman** of Patna delivered the formal Vote of Thanks and Tejrashi Malhotra felicitated the author.

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organized with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Patna, and was in association with Navras School of Performing Arts; Hospitality Partner, Hotel Chanakya; and Hindi Print Media Partner Dainik Jagran.*



**Bihar's first woman IPS officer  
Manjari Jaruhar, a torchbearer  
for women and example of  
resilience and grit**

Chandni Chopra and Manjari Jaruhar

**P**rabha Khaitan Foundation organised yet another- **The Write Circle** Delhi, to bask in the brilliance of literary and enchanting world of conversations with a decorated woman police officer of the era and author Manjari Jaruhar.

Shinjini Kulkarni, **Ehsaas Woman** of Noida opened the curtains for the evening by giving a formal Welcome Note. To moderate the conversation, Chandini Chopra, **Ehsaas Woman** of Agra took the lead.

“I was brought up by my grandparents and there was no question of going to movies, restaurants or shopping. It was all about studies, learning manners, dressing properly, behaving properly and no interaction with cousins or male friends whatsoever. I had no experience of doing any physical activity. My friends considered me to be a very delicate girl. I was a fairly good student and was supposed to go to Lady Irwin College. There was a lot of excitement that I was about to go, my fees were paid for 6 months and everything was in place but my father asked my grandparents to convince me to not go. And then, I decided to take up civil exams. When I did, I qualified for IPS. But my father was horrified. He said how I would do a daroga ka job,” explained the author.

Sharing an anecdote, she mentioned that, “No education goes to waste. I remember getting a spot as an officer, because I had learnt cooking. I joined cooking classes during my summer holidays and those classes had me learning everyday religiously, she would teach 3 dishes a day, starter, main dish and a pudding. When the officer interview happened, low and behold, my interviewer was a food blogger and she asked me the recipe for mayonnaise and I could tell her drop by drop. That impressed her and I got through.”

Her dedication paid off when she successfully cracked the examination, earning the distinction of becoming the first lady IPS officer from Bihar and the fifth in all of India. Her accomplishment was a resounding testament to her resilience and unwavering commitment to her dream.



Dipali Bhasin, Karuna Goenka, Unnati Singh, Shinjini Kulkarni

“IPS training for women now has not changed at all. The training should be more inclusive and encompassing in today’s time. The syllabus is all decided by the Highest level in the Ministry of Home Affairs. There is no change in uniform, it has to be 5 eyelets of the shoe, buttons of my belt should be 4 buttons, cuff of the shirt should be of particular inches. We are always grateful to Kiran Bedi, the first police officer, that she never asked for any concession. She obliged what the men were doing and agreed to do exactly that,” mentioned the author. She mentioned that women are made to do all the hard physical work at par with men but when it came to posting and on-field jobs, only men were considered and women were given only desk jobs.

The author shared many anecdotes with the receptive audience that she did not add in the book. Her book “Madam Sir” tells the story of her journey to becoming the first woman from Bihar to join India's elite police cadre, overcoming adversity and discrimination. Shinjini Kulkarni, **Ehsaas Woman** of Noida expressed formal gratitude and Unnati Singh, **Ehsaas Woman** of Indore felicitated the author with a beautiful handloom stole.

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organized with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of India, and was in association with Sai Shinjini Academy of Fine Arts & Culture; Hospitality Partner, The Connaught; and Print Hindi Media Partner, Dainik Jagran*



Saikat Majumdar

Aarti Gupta

## The Unsaid and the Unsettling: A Conversation with Saikat Majumdar

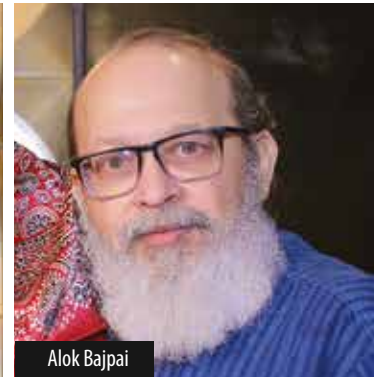
A very fresh and interesting outtake on writing and life was the theme of **The Write Circle Kanpur** by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**. It was an absolute honour to host Saikat Majumdar, a novelist, academic, and a commentator on the arts, literature, and higher education. He was in conversation with Aarti Gupta, **Ehsaas Woman** of Kanpur. Welcome note was delivered by Geeta Malhotra, **Ehsaas Woman** of Kanpur.

Ushering the conversation right in about the author's formative years, the author mentioned how childhood is a very important part of one's life and how they frame your life to be. "I think childhood keeps coming back in my fiction but in a very complicated way. The thing that stands out the most is that my mother passed away young in her 50s. She was an actress, primarily on stage, so I have a very interesting relationship with theatre. Though I'm in literature, I have these memories of watching her play. Soon, I realised that there is a lot of stigma and suspicion attached with it, which led to a lot of controversies and struggles in a middle class society. So I found refuge in books and literature," said the author.

The author went on to narrate the transition of his teaching career and then how he moved onto writing which gave his solace. "My training is primarily in Western literature, I read a lot in Bangla too. I was pursuing a certain form of artistic excellence which was very Western, European modernism. I had a mixed experience but the real interesting thing happened when I started reading Indian literature in Translation. My initial response was 'oh this is kind of bad writing'. I realised that I have a defining sense of good writing in a very narrow way. That really led to an expansion of what is good writing, that was a process of Education again," stated the author.



Geeta Malhotra



Alok Bajpai

"I spent 6 months in South Africa last year, I follow a lot of African literature, how English becomes a language of literature in Africa, in Ireland, in New Zealand, in South Asia and Caribbean. This is something that really interests me. I teach a lot in this field, in many ways it makes me a much more International person," commented the author on his wide array of following literature over the years.

The event concluded with a Majumdar adding one takeaway from his novel "The Remains of the Body" was marriage. He said, "Marriage is like blue cheese, with time it starts to stink."

But the real connoisseur is someone who knows how to appreciate the stench." He mentioned how love and power always co-exist, especially in Indian households like husband/wife or parents/children. The session was glued with the audience and author discussing his books circling around his non-syntax form of writing.

The formal thank you note was delivered by Geeta Malhotra, **Ehsaas Woman** of Kanpur. The guest author was felicitated with Ajrakh stole.

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organized with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Kanpur, and was in association with Hospitality Partner, The Landmark Towers; and Print Hindi Media Partner, Dainik Jagran*

## Dr R Balasubramaniam- On India's cultural heritage, leadership and spirituality



R Balasubramaniam



Priyanshi Patel



Shaneel Parekh

A riveting and mind-expanding exchange took place in the city of Ahmedabad with renowned author, development activist, public policy expert and leadership trainer- Dr R Balasubramaniam. **The Write Circle** Ahmedabad organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** was held with a discerning audience for a fine literary experience. The welcome note was delivered by Shaneel Parekh, **Ehsaas Woman** of Ahmedabad. He was in conversation with Priyanshi Patel, **Ehsaas Woman** of Ahmedabad.

Narrating his formative days, “The story is possibly the story of any typical Indian middle class in person, 40 years ago but coming from the city of Bangalore I had never seen an Indian village and the only aspirations that your parents give you is do medicine or do engineering, it was limited to that. Those were the days when we only had five IITs, and since I did not get into any, I joined a normal engineering college in the city, which I did not attend more than a day. Then decided to join the Ram Krishna Mission, where I spent two months reading many Swami Vivekananda’s books like ‘His call to the Nation’ and ‘Youth of India’. And that time I was moved and inspired his words for the nation. I joined colleged again, so driven and that is when started Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement,” the author recounted.

When Patel probed about what were the life-altering incidents from Dr. Balasubramaniam’s life and his experiences from living in the tribal community, “From the perspective of writing, living with indigenous communities in Wayanad was the possibly the greatest gift that I’ve had for myself because when you go in from an urban setting to rural India, it’s like a American coming down to India. He thinks India is poor, it’s full of snake charmers and I have to save this world. I went into the same arrogance into to this tribal colony thinking that I’ll be the next Albert Schweitzer

and the Nobel prize is just around the corner. But it was just the opposite, my existence did not matter,” narrated the author.

The immersive conversation went on to highlight the special parts of his book, “Power Within.” The author said, “My book might have endorsements from Bill Gates and Anand Mahindra, but what they fail to notice is a name called Meenakshi. She is a Jenu Kuruba, one of my own children. She is an entrepreneur and runs her own ragi based food product unit. She has also written her bit for the book for me which makes the book more special for me. Tribal life is something I have always wanted to go back to,” reaffirming his commitment to marginalising populations.

The fascinating and highly informative conversation then continued to pass on the mike to the audience for an interactive Q&A. The event celebrated India’s rich cultural heritage and its relevance to Indian society. The session wrapped with a thank you note by Shaneel Parekh, **Ehsaas Woman** of Ahmedabad and Shradha Ramani felicitated the author Dr Balasubramaniam with a vibrant kantha uttoriyto stole.

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organized with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Ahmedabad, and was in association with Karma Foundation; Hospitality Partner, The House of MG.*



Neelima Dalmia Adhar

**A Captivating Conversation on Literature, Legacy, and Feminine Spirit- with author Neelima Dalmia Adhar**



Pooja Jain

An absolute compelling session of **The Write Circle**, Meerut was organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**. This time it was the multi-faceted personality and four-time author Neelima Dalmia Adhar. She was in a conversation with Pooja Jain. The welcome address was delivered by Anshu Mehru, **Ehsaas Woman** of Meerut.

Jain embarked on a very interesting journey of conversations with the author by interrogating her formative days. The author's industrious father navigated through the crests and trough of lives and she has been the witness of it all. When asked what she has learnt from her father as she has seen and witnessed his historic highs and the unexpected lows. In reply, "Little that I do know of my father when I spent time with him during my childhood was that he was a father in absentia because my mother and father had a turbulent relationship as a dysfunctional family. But what I do also remember is that he was a man who was an industrial genius, financial wizard and courageous. I don't see that kind of passion and driving spirit in anyone today. Everybody is scared to take on and rightly so if you want to survive in a system you cannot go against it."

The author then inquired about the slump in readership in today's generation. "There is a huge revival of interest in the reading world. You can say that because of audible books and Kindle, it is so much easier for people, you don't have to have the books to be able to read. I think there was a bit of a slump, there was a time where readership was going down but I

think that is on the rise. If I look at my own journey as a writer, I write to the youth. I write to the future of the nation because if I am able to get my message across to them and if they are convinced by what I'm saying then they will carry forward reform ideas that really improve themselves as human beings, philosophers, successful leaders and so on."

The ongoing conversation between them persisted on the topic of the relationship between Radha and Krishna and what was the inspiration and significance in today's world. She responded, "Today's women do not believe in today's marriage as an institution, nor does today's man. She's supposed to be loyal and supposed to be fidelity but she's not governed by that."

The conversation culminated in an engaging Q&A session between the author and the audience. When asked whether 'Radha: The Princess of Barsana' was more like a fan-fiction, a result of research, or a story that simply flowed through her as she wrote, the author explained that the book is a blend of imagination and research. Certain elements, such as the character of Radha's husband, were creative additions not found in her research. However, many aspects - like Radha and Krishna's love story, her marriage at the age of 13, and the legend of her being discovered on a lotus by the King and Queen of Barsana rather than being born of a human - were drawn from traditional narratives and form the researched foundation of her story.

The session concluded with a formal Vote of Thanks by Garima Mithal, **Ehsaas Woman** of Meerut. The author and conversationalist were felicitated with handloom stoles.

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organized with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Meerut, Hospitality Partner, Hotel Crystal Palace; Print Hindi Media Partner, Dainik Jagran and patron Shree Cement Limited.*



Garima Mithal



Anshu Mehra



H.E. Mrs. Marje Luup and Shinjini Kulkarni

## “The Role of Women in Bridging Cultures: Are Women the Keepers of Culture and Old Traditions?”

A riveting session of **Tête-à-tea** was held in Delhi for a free-wheeling conversation with a discerning audience.

This session welcomed Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia in India, H.E Mrs. Marje Luup for a topic discussion on “The Role of Women in Bridging Cultures: Are Women the Keepers of Culture and Old Traditions?” She was in conversation with **Ehsaas Woman** of Noida, Shinjini Kulkarni. The event opened with a formal Welcome Note delivered by Dipali Bhasin, **Ehsaas Woman** of Delhi.

The discussion commenced with H.E. Mrs Luup provided a concise summary about the population and the landscape of the country, Estonia. “Estonia is a really small country but we are not the smallest one in Europe, geographically Belgium or Netherlands or Switzerland are smaller than Estonia but at the same time we are only 1.3 million people.” explained Her Excellency. “There is a lot of nature, there are a lot of wild animals still existing in our nature and the historians say that Estonian tribes have been living in this location for more than 11,000 years. It’s a long time and one of the longest inhabited parts of Europe in this regard,” remarked H.E. Mrs. Luup.

What has kept the people of Estonia in the country is the culture and an important part of them are music and food. She mentioned modern Estonia and traditional Estonia and how both of them coexist together. “Estonians are very fond of local and traditional food. We are the picking nations. In the Autumn, we go mushrooming, berry picking and then we spend hours at home preserving those. We marinate them and then during the winter time it’s very good to have something in the jars,” commented H.E. Mrs. Luup.

Certain initiatives makes a difference to the country, specially the ones that involve women because when you involve women you’re involving the entire family. H.E. Mrs. Luup remarked, “It contributes to a cross cultural understanding and cooperation between communities, countries and civilizations. For some women, participating in cultural activities like handicrafts and art is a hobby, for some a professional matter. They would not call it ‘women empowerment’ because it is a part of their daily activities.”

“There is a Feminist Foreign Policy. Some Nordic countries have it. Canada has put a lot of importance to the feminist foreign policy. It means that they are trying to involve women more, not only in their own countries like the government structures of those countries but developmental, cultural cooperation also. They always try to involve more women. Sweden is the front runner in this regard so they have had feminist policy approach for several years already,” elaborated H.E. Mrs. Luup.

The discussion segued into an interactive Q&A session with the audience. She said that government support should be very important for a country. This means not only for women empowerment but also for the continuation of a culture and start all kinds of activities. Estonia has less government support because it is a normal thing to be an artist in the country. There are writers, artists’ salary and government funding in this regard comes as a huge support. When asked what tradition she would gift India, the Ambassador suggested the famed Estonian saunas, which would be perfect for India’s hilly regions.

The session concluded with a formal thank you note delivered by Dipali Bhasin. H.E. Mrs. Marje Luup was felicitated with a beautiful handloom stole by Chandni Chopra, **Ehsaas Woman** of Agra.



Chandni Chopra



Dipali Bhasin

*This session of **Tête-à-tea** was organised with support of **Ehsaas Women** of Delhi and was in association with Sai Shinjini Academy of Fine Arts & Culture; hospitality partner The Connaught, New Delhi - IHCL SeleQtions*

## मैंने उर्दू शायरी के आईने में दुनिया को देखने की कोशिश की है

- डॉ. रक्षंदा जलील

उर्दू किसी एक प्रांत की जुबान नहीं है, इसे खुले हृदय से स्वीकार करना चाहिए



Dr. Rakhshanda Jalil, Priyanka Sarkar

मैंने उर्दू शायरी के आईने में दुनिया को देखने की कोशिश की है, यह कहना है साहित्यिक इतिहासकार, अनुवादक, आलोचक और लेखिका डॉ. रक्षंदा जलील का। उन्होंने ये बातें प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन और रमा मेहता चैरिटेबल ट्रस्ट के संयुक्त तत्वावधान में उदयपुर के विद्या भवन सभागार में आयोजित कार्यक्रम पुस्तक किताब 'लव इन द टाइम ऑफ हेट इन द मिरर ऑफ उर्दू' की पृष्ठभूमि में संवाद के दौरान कही। उन्होंने कहा कि उर्दू किसी एक प्रांत की जुबान नहीं है। हमें ही उसे स्वीकार करने में उदारता बरतनी चाहिए।

रक्षंदा जलील एक बहु-पुरस्कार विजेता अनुवादक, लेखिका और साहित्यिक इतिहासकार हैं। उन्होंने 25 से अधिक पुस्तकें प्रकाशित की हैं और 50 से अधिक अकादमिक पत्र और निबंध लिखे हैं। उनकी कुछ प्रमुख पुस्तकों में शामिल हैं: "लाइकिंग प्रोग्रेस," "लविंग चेंज: ए लिटरेरी हिस्ट्री ऑफ द प्रोग्रेसिव राइटर्स मूवमेंट इन उर्दू," उर्दू नारीवादी लेखिका डॉ. राशिद जहान की जीवनी "ए रेबल एंड हर कॉज," और इतिहासकार हुसैन के उपन्यास "द सी लाइज अहेड" का अनुवाद, जिसे 2016 में जर्मन एंबेसी कराची लिट फेस्ट पाकिस्तान पीस प्राइज के लिए चुना गया और 2017 में म्यूज इंडिया ट्रांसलेशन अवार्ड के लिए रनर्स अप और जूरी की सराहना प्राप्त हुई। 2016 में उर्दू साहित्य में उनके योगदान के लिए उन्हें कैफ़ी आजमी अवार्ड और 2017 में पहला जवाद मेमोरियल उर्दू इंग्लिश ट्रांसलेशन अवार्ड प्राप्त हुआ।

लेखिका के साथ संवाद किया प्रियंका सरकार ने जो स्वयं एक संपादक, अनुवादक और लेखिका हैं। प्रियंका ने लेखिका से पुस्तक, परिवेश, जीवन और समाज से जुड़े कई प्रश्न किए।

डॉ. रक्षंदा ने पुस्तक पर कहा कि यहां जिस लव का मैं जिक्र कर रही हूँ यह इश्क मोहब्बत वाले प्रेम की बात नहीं हो रही है, बल्कि यहाँ पर मेरा मतलब देश के प्रति प्रेम, देश के लोगों के प्रति प्रेम और उस सबके प्रति प्रेम है जो हमें बनाता है-हमारी विशिष्ट पहचान और हमारी सांस्कृतिक विशेषताएँ। यह एक गहरा भावनात्मक जुड़ाव है और कभी-कभी जब हमें लगता है कि हमारे देश या लोगों को खतरा है या समस्याएँ हैं, तो यह प्रेम दुःख भी पैदा कर सकता है। उसका भी जिक्र पुस्तक में है।

मैंने इस मुल्क को बदलते हुए देखा है। नेहरू की मृत्यु के बाद यानी कि 60 के दशक के अन्त तक एक नेहरूवियन आइडियलिज्म इस मुल्क में बरकरार थी। हमें तालीम दी जाती थी कि नल को बंद करो, पानी बर्बाद मत करो। क्योंकि कई औरतों को पानी लाने के लिए बहुत दूर जाना पड़ता है। तुम बिजली को अपने घर में फॉर ग्रांटेड लेते हो लेकिन अभी तक गांव में लोगों के पास बिजली नहीं आई है। यह सब चीजें हमारे दिमाग में डाली गई थी तो एक आइडियलिज्म था। मैंने उस आइडियलिज्म को धीरे-धीरे बदलते हुए देखा है। 80 में हमारी इकॉनमी खुली एकदम से हम कंज्यूमर बनते गए लेकिन जो हमारी मूल वैल्यूज थी वह खोती चली गई। उसने हमारे मुल्क को एक अच्छी राह पर रखा और बहुत से फायदे हुए। उस वा नेहरू ने कहा था कि आधुनिक भारत के मंदिरों के गुंबद फैक्ट्रियों, विश्वविद्यालयों और कॉलेजों के रूप में होने चाहिए। यह उस समय एक बड़ी बात थी। ये पब्लिक बॉडीज़, आईसीसीआर आईसीएसएसआर, साहित्य अकादमी, इन सभी चीजों की नींव स्वतंत्रता के तुरंत बाद रखी गई थी। हमें इससे बहुत लाभ हुआ।

डॉ. रक्षंदा जलील ने बताया कि निबंध लेखन के मुकाबले उपन्यास लेखन में अधिक फैलाव होता है, जबकि निबंध संक्षेप में अपनी बात कहने की सुविधा प्रदान करता है। उपन्यास लेखन में एक लेजर की



Swati Agarwal



Varsha Rathore

तरह विशिष्टता की आवश्यकता होती है, जहां आप अपनी बात को विस्तृत रूप में प्रस्तुत कर सकते हैं। उपन्यास में पाठक को पूरे प्रवाह को समझने के लिए शुरू से अंत तक पढ़ना पड़ता है। इसके विपरीत, निबंध लेखन में संक्षिप्तता होती है। निबंध में लेखक को यह सहूलियत होती है कि वह विभिन्न दृष्टिकोणों से अपने विचार को प्रस्तुत कर सके और पाठक अपने सुविधा अनुसार अलग-अलग समय पर निबंध पढ़ सकते हैं। अपने व्यागत अनुभवों को निबंधों में समाहित करने की प्रक्रिया के बारे में भी बात की। उन्होंने कहा कि व्यागत अनुभव भी अक्सर पॉलिटिकल संदर्भों से जुड़े होते हैं। उदाहरण के लिए, उनकी किताब "लव इन द टाइम ऑफ हेट" में "हर दिल तिरंगा" नामक एक निबंध शामिल है, जो सरकार की "हर घर तिरंगा" योजना से प्रेरित था। उन्होंने बताया कि यह निबंध उर्दू शायरी के संदर्भ में तिरंगे के प्रतीकवाद को समझने की कोशिश करता है। मैंने उर्दू में तिरंगे से जुड़ी शायरी खोजी जिसे पुस्तक में समाहित भी किया। डॉ. जलील ने उर्दू शायरी के महत्त्व पर प्रकाश डाला। उनकी किताब में उर्दू शायरी का उपयोग विभिन्न मुद्दों को समझने और व्या करने के लिए किया गया है।

उन्होंने दुख प्रकट करते हुए कहा कि उर्दू भाषा को सीमित करने का प्रयास हुआ है। यह किसी एक प्रान्त या समुदाय की भाषा नहीं है। उर्दू भाषा के प्रचार और संरक्षण की जिम्मेदारी केवल सरकारी योजनाओं और नीतियों तक सीमित नहीं है। यह हर ब्य़ी की जिम्मेदारी है जो उर्दू के प्रति सच्चा प्रेम और समर्पण महसूस करता है। मैं यह सवाल पूछती हूँ कि क्या हम अपनी व्यागत जिम्मेदारियों को निभाने के लिए तैयार हैं। बच्चों को उर्दू सिखाने के लिए क्या हम उर्दू ट्यूटोर रखने के लिए तैयार हैं जैसे हम गणित या अन्य विषयों के लिए ट्यूटोर रखते हैं? क्या हम उर्दू में किताबें पढ़ने, उर्दू पत्रिकाओं और समाचार पत्रों को प्राथमिकता देते हैं?

यह सवाल किसी विशेष समुदाय से संबंधित नहीं है; यह सभी लोगों से है जो उर्दू की महत्ता को समझते हैं और इसकी सराहना करते हैं। यदि हम उर्दू को सांस्कृतिक और भाषाई धरोहर के रूप में मानते हैं, तो हमें इसके संरक्षण और प्रचार के लिए व्यागत स्तर पर भी कदम उठाने चाहिए। इस अवसर पर सभागार में उपस्थित युवाओं और विद्यार्थियों ने लेखिका से कई सवाल पूछे।

कार्यक्रम के अन्त में धन्यवाद ज्ञापित किया उदयपुर अहसास वूमन स्वाति अग्रवाल ने तथा अतिथि लेखिका को स्मृति चिन्ह प्रदान कर सम्मानित किया अहसास वूमन रिद्धिमा जोशी तथा अहसास वूमन श्रद्धा मुर्दिया ने प्रियंका सरकार को स्मृति चिन्ह देकर सम्मानित किया।



Tajender Singh Luthra

## "इंसान को कोई हरा नहीं सकता"

### - तजेन्द्र सिंह लूथरा

पाठकों की अपनी एक डेमोक्रेसी होती है  
और रचनाकार को उसका सम्मान करना चाहिए



Pratyaksha

**सा** इंसान को कोई हरा नहीं सकता और रेसिलियंस इसी चीज का नाम है कि हम इंसान के रूप में, मानव के रूप में कभी हारे नहीं। ह्यूमन रेसिलियंस पूरी मानव जाति के लिए एक महत्वापूर्ण विषय है और इसी के कारण हम अब तक आगे बढ़ सके हैं और भविष्य में भी आगे बढ़ते रहेंगे। यह कहना है कवि और वरिष्ठ भारतीय पुलिस सेवा (IPS) अधिकारी तजेन्द्र सिंह लूथरा का। वे **प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन** की ओर से **कलम** दिल्ली के सत्र को संबोधित कर रहे थे।

कार्यक्रम की शुरुआत में दिल्ली **अहसास वूमन** और **प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन** की दिल्ली एनसीआर मामलों की मानद संयोजक नीलिमा डालमिया आधार ने बड़े ही शायराना अंदाज से सभी का स्वागत किया। उन्होंने साहित्याक योगदान के लिए **प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन** के कार्यों के बारे में विस्तार से बताया। **प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन** कला, साहित्या, संस्कृति और महिला सशक्तिकरण की दिशा में काम करने वाली सक्रिय संस्था है। यह देश और दुनिया भर में भारतीय संस्कृति और साहित्या के ब्रांड एंबेसडर के रूप में अपनी पहचान बना चुका है। फाउंडेशन के कार्यक्रम और गतिविधियाँ भारत सहित दुनिया भर के 55 से भी अधिक शहरों तक फैली हुई हैं।

नीलिमा डालमिया ने **कलम** सत्र के अतिथि तजेन्द्र सिंह लूथरा का परिचय देते हुए उनकी किताबों और लेखन जगत के बारे में जानकारी दी। कवि ने सर्टिफाइड पब्लिक अकाउंटेंट (CPA) की शिक्षा अमेरिकन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ सर्टिफाइड पब्लिक अकाउंटेंट्स से और मास्टर ऑफ एग्जिटिव पॉजिटिव साइकोलॉजी की शिक्षा यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ पेनसिल्वेनिया (यूएसए) से प्राप्त की है। उनकी कविताएँ बदलाव, विद्रोह, सामाजिक मुद्दों और व्यागित संघर्षों पर गहराई से प्रकाश डालती हैं। इनकी कविताएँ न केवल सामाजिक न्याय के प्रति एक दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत करती हैं, बल्कि मानवता और व्यागित संघर्ष को भी बखूबी व्या करती हैं। उनका पहला कविता-संग्रह "अस्सी घाट का बाँसुरी वाला" (2012) प्रकाशित हुआ था। हाल ही में उनका संग्रह "एक नया ईश्वर" प्रकाशित हुआ है, जिसका रूसी और गुजराती में भी अनुवाद हुआ है। उनकी कविताएँ विभिन्न भारतीय और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय पत्रिकाओं में छपती रहती हैं। उनकी तीसरी पुस्तक का प्रकाशन शीघ्र ही होने वाला है।

इस खास मौके पर कवि के साथ संवाद किया लेखिका प्रत्याक्षा ने। प्रत्याक्षा की हिंदी और अंग्रेजी में कुल 11 पुस्तकें प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं, जिनमें 'जंगल का जादू तिल तिल', 'पहर दोपहर ठुमरी', 'एक दिन मराकेश', और 'तुम मिलो दोबारा' जैसी कृतियाँ शामिल हैं। वे कई फेलोशिप और सम्मान प्राप्त कर चुकी हैं।

प्रत्याक्षा ने कवि से उनके साहित्या सृजन और पुलिस सेवा दोनों ही क्षेत्रों से जुड़े कई प्रश्न पूछे, जिनका उत्तर लूथरा जी ने बहुत ही संवेदनशीलता के साथ दिया। उन्होंने कहा कि कविता अपने आप में एक अनूठी और अद्भुत विधा है जो रोज व्याकरण को तोड़ती है, नए शब्द गढ़ती है और खुद का रास्ता खुद बनाती है। कविताएँ हमेशा रहेंगी क्योंकि हम अपने अस्तित्वा से, इस दुनिया के अस्तित्वा से इनकार नहीं कर सकते। मेरे अनुसार, कविता को न तो तथ्य चाहिए, न कथ्य चाहिए। भाषा जब पूरी तरह विकसित हो गई, तब सबसे पहले कविता आई। कविता को पूरा वाक्य नहीं चाहिए, कविता



Mamta Kalia and Neelima Dalmia Adhar

को कुछ शब्द चाहिए, कुछ फ्रेज चाहिए। इसी वजह से हजारों साल पहले जो हमारे धर्म ग्रंथ और बड़े क्लासिक लिखे गए, वे सब काव्य के रूप में लिखे गए। कविता में ऐसी अद्भुत क्षमता है कि वह छोटे वाक्य में बड़ी बात कह सकती है।

उन्होंने इंग्लिश भाषा में लेखन के बारे में कहा कि प्रोज लिखने के लिए इंग्लिश ठीक है, लेकिन कविता लिखना बड़ा चुनौतीपूर्ण काम है। इंग्लिश भाषा के पास कविता के लिए ऑडियंस की कमी है। अगर कोई ऑडियंस है भी, तो अक्सर वह कविता को पूरी तरह से समझ नहीं पाता और इसलिए वाह-वाह भी नहीं कर पाता। इसलिए मैं अपनी कविताओं का खुद ही अनुवाद कर देता हूँ।

कवि ने पाठकों की संख्या के बारे में कहा कि सोशल मीडिया के कारण पाठकों की संख्या बढ़ी है। पढ़ने वाले कम नहीं हुए हैं, बल्कि सोशल मीडिया के कारण साहित्या में विस्तार हुआ है। एक आदर्श पाठक वह होता है जो सच्ची फीडबैक देता है और सही मार्गदर्शन प्रदान करता है, न कि झूठी वाहवाही करता है। पाठकों की अपनी एक लोकतांत्रिक भूमिका होती है, और रचनाकार को उसका सम्मान करना चाहिए। लूथरा ने यह भी कहा कि पढ़ना बहुत जरूरी है और लेखकों को अधिक पढ़ना चाहिए। जब तक आप पढ़ेंगे नहीं, तब तक आप जान नहीं पाएंगे कि क्या लिखा गया है या क्या लिखा जा रहा है।

मौके पर कवि ने अपनी कुछ रचनाओं का पाठ भी किया जिसे दर्शकों ने काफी पसन्द किया। इस अवसर पर दर्शकों ने भी कवि लूथरा से कई प्रश्न पूछे। कार्यक्रम के अंत में कहानीकार ममता कालिया ने अतिथियों को तमिलनाडु की पारंपरिक पोन्डाई दुपट्टे ओढ़ाकर सम्मानित किया। धन्यवाद ज्ञापन नीलिमा डालमिया आधार ने किया।

**कलम** दिल्ली का आयोजन **अहसास वूमन** की सहभागिता, **वेन्यू पार्टनर इंडिया इंटरनेशनल सेंटर**, **हिंदी प्रिंट मीडिया पार्टनर दैनिक जागरण** और **एसोसिएट ऑर्गनाइजेशन दिनेशानंदिनी रामकृष्णा डालमिया फाउंडेशन** के सहयोग से हुआ।



## Muskaan Workshop on Storytelling and Puppetry for Educators at NH Goel World School

**M**uskaan, an initiative focused on enriching classroom experiences, recently conducted a storytelling and puppetry workshop for foundational years' educators at NH Goel World School. Led by renowned storyteller and puppeteer Ms. Shreedevi Sunil, the workshop offered teachers an engaging space to explore creative teaching methods that go beyond conventional instruction.

Ms. Sunil introduced storytelling not just as an art form, but as a powerful educational tool. She demonstrated how elements like voice modulation, body language, and emotional expression can help teachers connect with students and make lessons more impactful. Teachers actively participated in storytelling exercises, exploring ways to weave narratives into academic subjects and link learning to real-life contexts.

A significant portion of the workshop was dedicated to puppetry. Teachers learned how puppets can serve as imaginative classroom aids, encouraging curiosity and participation. Ms. Sunil guided participants on puppet handling, giving characters distinct voices, and using movement and silence effectively. Teachers practiced with puppets themselves, gaining hands-on experience and confidence in integrating this medium into their teaching.

What made the workshop truly effective was its interactive nature. Educators were not only listeners but active contributors—telling stories, creating puppet characters, and reflecting on how to apply these techniques in their classrooms. The emphasis on

local context and relatable storytelling helped teachers envision ways to make lessons more meaningful and rooted in children's everyday experiences.

Teachers responded with enthusiasm, sharing how the workshop re-energized their teaching approach and opened up new possibilities for engaging with students. Resources shared by Ms. Sunil will further support their continued exploration of storytelling and puppetry.

The workshop's learnings will be shared across the wider teaching community at NH Goel World School through the EP leader, ensuring its broader impact. Thoughtfully organized and smoothly executed, the workshop proved to be a valuable professional development experience.

In all, the **Muskaan** workshop served as a reminder of the power of creativity in education. It offered teachers new tools to foster joy, curiosity, and deeper learning—ensuring that stories and imagination find a rightful place in every classroom.



*A joint initiative with Education For All Trust, this session of Muskaan was supported by Shree Cement Limited*

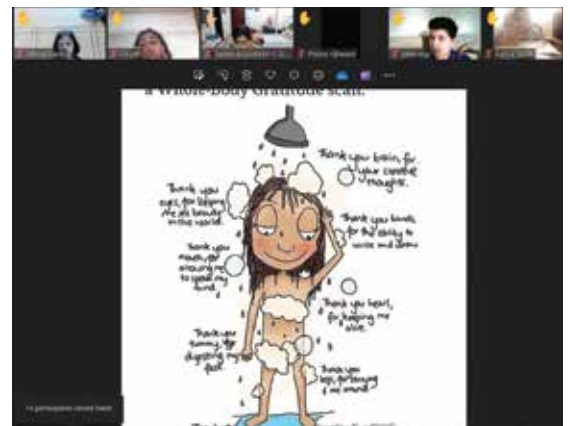


In light of the recent concerns about child safety, it is important that certain concepts be grasped by children from a young age. Making sure that children know what potential risks are and how to differentiate between Good and Bad Touches.

**Muskaan** organised an online event focusing on Good Touch and Bad Touch for students in Classes 2, 3, and 4. Wow Wonders which is a value-based center promoting learning through fun, music, art, and craft facilitated by Neha Budhia and Preeti Maroti via Zoom conducted this event. It was attended by almost one thousand students from different parts of India.

Sumitra Ray, the Student Programmes Advisor opened the function with greetings to all participants present in the meeting. The main purpose was to raise awareness among young minds about their bodies being their own property and importance of personal safety measures. Children were encouraged to refuse unwanted touches assertively as well as withdraw confidently from uncomfortable situations. Moreover they were taught how to identify “NO touch areas” just like safe or unsafe touches were also explained. These ideas were effectively demonstrated through role-play done by Neha Budhia and Preeti Maroti.

Through Jayneen Sanders' powerful book, "Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept," the vital lesson of not keeping traumatic experiences a secret was brought to light. In addition, children were taught about the importance of having a "Safe Circle," a group of five trusted individuals who they can turn to in times of need. The session ended with an interactive Q&A, allowing students to ask questions and get any concerns clarified. It is our hope that this joint effort will equip children with the necessary knowledge to prioritize their safety and protect their well-being in the complex world we live in today.



*A joint initiative with Education For All Trust, this session of Muskaan was supported by Shanti Devi Goel Trust*



Sumitra Ray



Lubaina Bandukwala

## An Interesting Session with Lubaina Bandukwala

An engaging event focused on storytelling and a book discussion session organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** under the aegis of **Muskaan** for the children of Class 4 across India. The event was conducted by Lubaina Bandukwala, who was trained as a journalist but has followed her heart into children's publishing as a writer and editor and curator of children's literature festivals. She has edited publications for most major media houses and has served as consulting editor for several publishing houses.

The event aimed to discuss about the story book named "The Misadventures Of A Diamond Thief", written by Lubaina herself to foster a love for reading, enhance comprehension skills, and encourage young minds to share their interpretations and insights.

The session took place on Zoom & almost five hundred student participants from all over India had joined the meeting. The event began with a warm welcome by Sumitra Ray, the Student Programmes Advisor, to the guest speakers and all participants, followed by a brief introduction to the day's agenda.

Lubaina narrated a captivating tale of her story book which was chosen for its engaging plot and relatable characters. She used various presentations and voice modulations to make the story come alive for the children. Later some Fun activities related to the story were conducted.

The event concluded with a Q&A session where children asked questions about the story, storytelling techniques & book recommendations.

The children were highly engaged throughout the event, actively participating in discussions and activities. A positive feedback was received from both students and parents, with many appreciating the interactive and fun approach to learning.

The storytelling and book discussion event was a resounding success, achieving its objective. The event provided a platform for young readers to explore their imaginations, express their thoughts, and connect with peers from different parts of the country.



*A joint initiative with **Education For All Trust**, this session of **Muskaan** was supported by **Infinity Group***



Savie Karna



Savie Karna with the Students

Kolkata, July 4, 2024 — The hallowed halls of BSS School Kolkata buzzed with excitement as **Muskaan** organised an enthralling author event featuring author Savie Karna. The event, marked by enthusiasm and intellectual engagement, saw students diving into the world of literature and storytelling.

The session commenced with Mrs. Sumitra Ray, the Student Programme Advisor of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** introducing the esteemed author to the eager audience. Mrs. Ray's introduction highlighted Karna's literary journey, her passion for storytelling, and her contribution to contemporary literature. The atmosphere was charged with anticipation as students awaited the opportunity to interact with the celebrated author.

Savie Karna took the stage, captivating the students with anecdotes from her writing career and insights into her creative process. Her engaging talk covered the nuances of character development, the importance of cultural context in storytelling, and the sheer joy of weaving narratives that resonate with readers of all ages. The author's eloquence and passion for her craft left a lasting impression on the young minds present.

Following her talk, an interactive session ensued, where students eagerly posed questions about her books, her inspirations, and tips for aspiring writers. Karna's responses were both insightful and encouraging, fostering a deeper appreciation for literature among the attendees. The interactive nature of the session allowed students to connect with the author on a personal level, making the experience both educational and inspirational.

In a gesture of appreciation, Savie Karna's books *Laxmi Panda: The Story of Netaji's Youngest Spy* were presented to the principal of BSS School for their library.

**Muskaan** extends its heartfelt gratitude to Aashirvad for supporting this initiative. Their invaluable support made it possible to bring this enriching experience to the students of BSS School, fostering a love for literature and encouraging young minds to explore the world of storytelling.

The response from the students was overwhelmingly positive. They particularly enjoyed the author's explanations of the technical components of a story – its plot, characterization, and so on. They are also extremely intrigued by the two books by Ms. Karna ("*The Nameless God*" and "*Lakshmi Panda: The Story of Netaji's Youngest Spy*") and are already 'booking their spots' to read them after the exams.

BSS School boasts a number of young writers, many of whom have won awards in interschool fests. Several of these students expressed a desire for more in-depth discussions on the technicalities of writing. They suggested organising a focused session with Savie Karna and select students for a more interactive experience. Some also inquired about the possibility of having a young writers' workshop with the author.

Sunita Sen, Principal of BSS School, shared her thoughts on the event: "Authors visiting schools always add value to students' learning. They get an overview of not only a certain perspective, but also get exposed to a global understanding. It was heartening to have Ms. Savie Karna visiting our school and interacting with our students. It gave the students a good idea of how to put their thoughts into words and collate the same into writing a book."

The event concluded with a sense of fulfillment and inspiration, as students left with a renewed enthusiasm for reading and writing. **Muskaan's** commitment to promoting literature and the arts continues to shine through events like these, nurturing the intellectual and creative growth of young learners.

*A joint initiative with Education For All Trust, this session of Muskaan was supported by Aashirvad Heritage Pvt. Ltd.*



### Savie Karnel's Session at Modern High School for Girls

On August 2, 2024, the students of Modern High School for Girls experienced an engaging literary session that left a lasting impact on their young minds. Organised by **Muskaan**, the session featured author Savie Karnel, who captivated the audience with her insights into storytelling and her latest book, *Laxmi Panda: The Story of Netaji's Youngest Spy*.

Savie Karnel, known for her ability to weave historical narratives with relatable characters, began the session by sharing her journey as a writer. She spoke passionately about her inspiration and the meticulous research that goes into her work, particularly her latest book, which delves into the life of Laxmi Panda, one of the youngest spies under Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose during India's freedom struggle. This story, set against the backdrop of India's fight for independence, resonated deeply with the students, especially with Independence Day just around the corner.

Using visuals and interactive storytelling techniques, Ms. Karnel brought the past to life, making history accessible and exciting for her young audience. The students were particularly intrigued by the story of Lakshmi Panda and her courageous role as a spy, which sparked their curiosity and led to a lively Q&A session.

Mrs. Chatterjee, the Primary and Junior Coordinator at Modern High School for Girls, remarked on the session's success: "The session with Savie Karnel was delightfully interesting, particularly the Q&A segment, which was lively, interactive, and engaging. It led to an exchange of well-thought-out questions and insightful ideas."

Ms. Shabnam B Choudhury, the Junior School Coordinator, also shared her thoughts: "An otherwise ordinary August

afternoon indeed turned into a fun-filled learning experience for our young learners. Ms. Karnel's introduction to her writing journey and her book on Laxmi Panda generated keen interest among the girls. They were intrigued to learn more about the spy and her role in the national freedom movement."

The session was more than just a book reading; it was an educational experience that inspired the students to explore their creativity and foster a love for reading. As they listened to excerpts from *Lakshmi Panda* and another of Ms. Karnel's works, *The Nameless Life*, the students discovered the power of storytelling and the importance of preserving history through literature.

**Muskaan's** initiative to bring authors like Savie Karnel into the classroom is a testament to its commitment to nurturing young minds and encouraging a deeper understanding of India's rich cultural heritage. The event was a memorable experience for all involved, turning a regular school day into an extraordinary journey through history and literature.



Mrs Sumitra Ray, Mrs Chatterjee

A joint initiative with **Education For All Trust**, this session of **Muskaan** was supported by **Aashirvad Heritage Pvt. Ltd.**



## Celebrating World Friendship Day with Artist Feyago



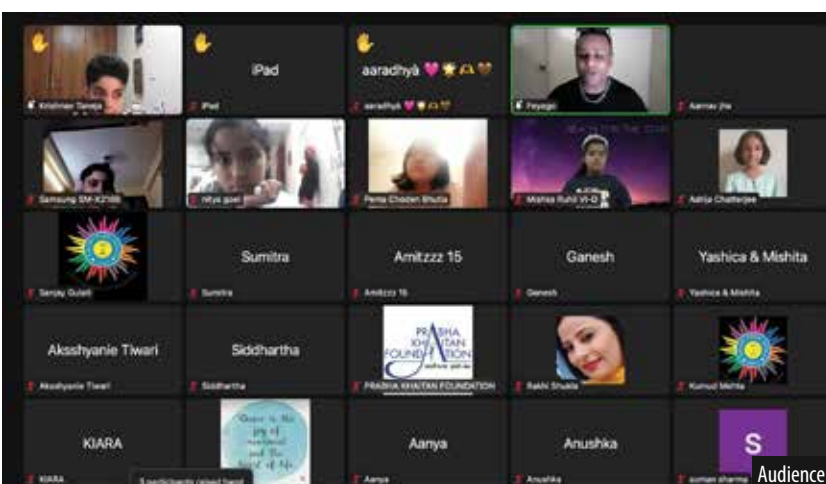
This month, **Muskaan** is thrilled to host a special celebration of World Friendship Day, supported by Arya Realty. Students from all over India have gathered to participate in this vibrant event, creating a truly national tapestry of young talent and enthusiasm.

The highlight of the event is an epic fun session featuring the super cool Hip Hop artist, Feyago! A trailblazer in Indian hip hop, Feyago has won accolades including the Best Hip Hop Act at the Vh1 SoundNation Awards. With hits like "Anthem Of The NorthEast" and "Baul Folk Rap," which have garnered over 10 million views on YouTube, Feyago is a force to be reckoned with in the music industry. Born in Kolkata and raised in Darjeeling, he has performed at over 300 major festivals and collaborated with top brands like Puma and G Star Raw.

But Feyago's influence extends beyond the music scene. He is deeply committed to social work, having partnered with Tata Cancer Hospital and the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** on various initiatives. His recent collaboration with Grammy-nominated singer Shontelle to raise funds for COVID-19 vaccines for the underprivileged in Kolkata is a testament to his dedication to making a positive impact in the community.

As part of this special event, Feyago delivered a powerful online performance for our children. His impactful lyrics resonated deeply with the young audience, creating a connection that transcended the virtual space. The children had the incredible opportunity to interact with him directly, asking numerous questions about his inspiration, music, and art. Feyago responded with great insight, offering valuable lessons and stories that the children truly enjoyed and learned from.

A joint initiative with **Education For All Trust**, this session of **Muskaan** was supported by Arya Realty





Srinjoy Chowdhury



Ukraine Ambassador to India Oleksandr Polishchuk handed over the prize to one of the winners

The third edition of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** (PKF) and Foreign Correspondent Club (FCC) quiz saw enthusiastic participation from journalists, diplomats, and individuals from diverse backgrounds. Conducted by esteemed quiz master Srinjoy Chowdhury, the event was a resounding success. S. Venkat Narayan, President of FCC, warmly welcomed the guests, setting the stage for an evening of intellectual stimulation and camaraderie. Rachna Seth, representing the foundation, introduced the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, highlighting its impactful initiatives.

The quiz itself was a riveting affair, featuring eight highly competitive teams. Team Earth, comprising Shreya Jai, Arindam Majumder, and Deepak Patel, clinched the first prize. Team Jupiter, represented by Kashish, Mayank, and Anuj, secured the second prize.

In addition to the main prizes, three audience members—Kiran Kherra, Espen Aasen, and Keshav—were awarded special recognition for their participation. The event also saw the presence of distinguished guests such as Norway Ambassador May-Elin Stener, Ukraine Ambassador Oleksandr Polishchuk, and Deputy Head of Mission of Estonia Margus Solnson. The success of the third edition of the PKF and FCC quiz underscored the spirit of healthy competition and highlighted the importance of knowledge-sharing and community engagement in today's interconnected world.



The Winners



Norway Ambassador to India May-Elin Stener handing over the prize to one of the winners



Srinjoy Chowdhury



Mateja Vodeb Ghosh, Marje Luup and Robert Maxian



S. Venkat Narayan



Rachna Seth and Neelima Dalmia Adhar

The fourth edition of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation (PKF)** and Foreign Correspondent Club (FCC) quiz saw enthusiastic participation from journalists, diplomats, and individuals from diverse backgrounds. Conducted by esteemed quiz master Srinjoy Chowdhury, the event was a resounding success.

S. Venkat Narayan, President of FCC, warmly welcomed the guests, setting the stage for an evening of intellectual stimulation and camaraderie. Rachna Seth, representing the foundation, introduced the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, highlighting its impactful initiatives.

The quiz itself was a riveting affair, featuring eight highly competitive teams. Team Mercury, comprising Rudroneel Ghosh, Reema Sharma and Keshav Padmanabhan, clinched the first prize. Team Jupiter, represented by Prashant Kumar Sinha, Dr Nishad Keelath and Anuj Kumar secured the second prize.

In addition to the main prizes, two audience members—Neelu Sharma and Anant Gupta were awarded for their participation.

The event also saw the presence of distinguished guests such as H.E. Ms. Marje Luup, Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia to India, H.E. Mr Robert Maxian Ambassador of Embassy of the Slovak Republic to India and H.E. Ms Mateja Vodeb Ghosh, Ambassador of Slovenia to India.

The success of the fourth edition of the PKF and FCC quiz underscored the spirit of healthy competition and highlighted the importance of knowledge-sharing and community engagement in today's interconnected world.



Daniela Mariana Sezonov Tane and Josel F. Ignacio



Srinjoy Chowdhury

The fifth edition of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation (PKF)** and Foreign Correspondents Club (FCC) quiz witnessed an exciting turnout, with enthusiastic participation from journalists, diplomats, and individuals from various sectors. The event, skillfully conducted by the esteemed quiz master Srinjoy Chowdhury, was a grand success.

Neelima Dalmia Adhar, **Ehsaas woman** of Delhi introduced the foundation and its impactful initiatives, setting the tone for an engaging evening. The quiz featured eight fiercely competitive teams. Team Saturn, represented by Shashiranjana, Azeez Narain, and Kartik Ramamurthy, emerged victorious, clinching the first prize. Team Jupiter, comprising Raja Sri Charan, Prashant Kumar Sinha, and Dr. Nishad Keelath, secured the second prize. Additionally, an audience member was also awarded a prize for their active participation.

The event also welcomed distinguished guests such as Romanian Ambassador Daniela Mariana Sezonov Tane and Philippine Ambassador to India, Josel F. Ignacio, adding to the event's prestige.

The success of this fifth edition underscored the spirit of healthy competition and highlighted the significance of knowledge-sharing and community engagement in our increasingly interconnected world.



Neelima Dalmia Adhar



With the Winners



Mani Shankar Aiyar, Vir Sanghvi, Rasheed Kidwai and Prakash Patra

## Unveiling the Truth: In-depth Reflections & Insights on “The Scam that Shook a Nation - The Nagarwala Scandal”

**P**rabha Khaitan Foundation organised a celebratory occasion of book launch event in Delhi, that was designed to introduce the new literary addition of *The Scam that Shook a Nation — The Nagarwala Scandal* to the audience and have a panel discussion circling the same with senior journalists and authors of the book, Prakash Patra and Rasheed Kidwai and Chief guest and former Union Minister and author, Mani Shankar Aiyar. The segment was moderated by Vir Sanghvi.

The event inaugurated with a formal welcome speech by Neelima Dalmia Adhar, the Honorary Convenor of Delhi NCR Affairs, presenting the Foundation and warmly greeting the guests and audience at the book launch. Deepali Bhasin, Anantmala Potdar, and Karuna Goenka, **Ehsaas Women** of Delhi graciously had the honours to felicitate the authors, chief guest Mani Shankar Aiyar, and the conversationalist Vir Sanghvi with crafted handloom stoles. **Ehsaas Women** of Delhi- Archana Dalmia, Neelam Pratap Rudy and Neelima Dalmia Adhar, too, stepped into the limelight for the book launch ceremony.

Moderator Vir Sanghvi began the session by briefly summarizing the significance of the Nagarwala Scandal, a case that shook the nation in the early 1970s. He then invited the authors to delve into their motivations and the research process behind the book. When Sanghvi asked about the inspiration behind the inquiry through their new book, Kidwai responded, “It is a very intriguing case, normally political scandals happened and they just remain in the realm of allegations, there are a lot of cases that we can cite but here a scandal that happened, Commission of Enquiry gave report and yet nothing happened, so it was very intriguing, it was very well documented.”

“There is nothing in this book that is not based on facts—the commission report, police records, everything that we have written is very well documented. We thought that after so many years people need to know what had happened in the past. Today a lot of scams happen, technology-driven



scams that are happening every day on our telephone/email but the scams have been part of our national life and they go back to 1971.” explained Kidwai.

The case may have been imposed as a scam but researchers who are the authors of the book do not find it to be a scam. They revealed that they go with the official version and not any impropriety on the part of anyone in the political establishment. Patra responded, “I don’t agree with that, it’s just not the official version. We have taken the statements made by about 200 people before the commission including the political establishment, Prime Minister Morari Desai, Mr Advani and so on. There about five six BJP leaders and Mrs Gandhi also deposed before the Commission. We went through the newspaper clippings of that time, the allegations made and how the police substantiated its claims.”

Rasheed Kidwai added, “The book is not just a recount of events but a deep dive into the socio-political ramifications of the scam. We wanted to provide a comprehensive view that would resonate with readers and offer new perspectives.”

Intrigued by the Nagarwala case scenario, Sanghvi asked as to how it was so easy for someone to handover the money only by knocking at the door by calling out the Minister’s

name. Kidwai clarified, “Our system is very gullible. It has been a trend in political scandals in our country that when it happens, the big names are arrested or their names are brought and media trial happens but in substantive terms, there so many scams have taken place like Harshad Mehta or Narasimha Rao’s time, there was a whole series like, fertiliser scam, gold star scam etc., but nothing happened in the end. All I’m trying to say is that nothing has changed in these 53 years. There are still allegations and there are political slugfest, allegations counter and nothing comes out from any sort of inquiry.”

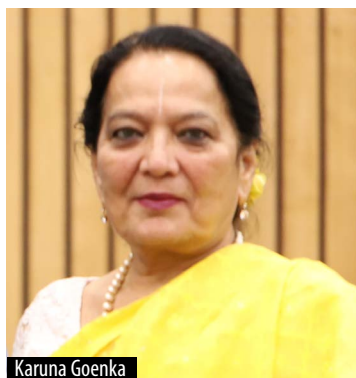
Shankar Aiyar mentioned that he grew up with a clear memory of the circumstances in which this incident took place. “I don’t think it was a scam or scandal. I think the right word is - sting operation. I say it because of the atmosphere in the year 1971, we had just had an election in which Mrs Gandhi had split her party, the majority of the party had gone out and formed a separate Congress. The opposition had joined hands with capitalists, BJP and formed what was called the Grand Alliance and in 1971 Mrs. Gandhi not only defeated the Grand Alliance but she won again.”

He continued mentioning there were many circumstances undermining Indira Gandhi and during this time Nagarwala acted. He explained who Nagarwala was. He was a professional prankster. He was a complete layout and never succeeded in holding down a job. Then he got the job at the Army in 1941 as a junior Commissioned Officer. In 1943 he got into the Indian Military Academy and became an officer and as an officer he was posted on the India-Pakistan border at a place called Harbanspur and he witnessed the horrors that had been inflicted on the 15 million people who were exchanged between India and Pakistan. “That inflicted him and therefore was desperate to make his contribution to the great national crises that had come to our country. That accounted for his naive act.” said Aiyar.

Kidwai added, “In this entire nagarwala episode has been the prime minister’s deposition before the commission. The Prime Minister Morarji Desai said that he was sure that the money did not belong to SBI, saying that State Bank of India money of 70 lakhs which at today’s time would be 72 crores, did not belong to the bank. This was a very serious allegation and if it was serious enough then the question is why did the Finance or the Prime Minister not act on this.”



Archana Dalmia



Karuna Goenka

Nagarwala was caught after proof, he was told by the police that if you confess then you’ll be let off and you can go away. He had deliberately placed clues in various different houses on the 24th of May which the police would easily catch if they found out the number of the taxi in which Nagarwala had moved after he abandoned the SBI car. It was that taxi number that enabled the police to capture everybody concerned including Nagarwala in less than 12 hours. Therefore when he wrote out his confession what else could the chief do. The money had already been returned out of the 60 lakhs only 3,000 rupees had been spent.

When inquired about the most surprising discovery during the research. Patra responded, “The most surprising aspect was the extent of the cover-up attempts and the numerous untold stories of individuals directly and indirectly affected by the scam.” Kidwai remarked about the reference in today’s time, “The themes of corruption and financial fraud are timeless. Understanding past scandals like Nagarwala helps us recognize and address similar issues in contemporary society.”

If conspiracy is to be understood that he came to get the 60 lakhs for Indira Gandhi, “she could have easily the Defence or Finance or Home Ministry to provide it or use some discretionary funds, there was absolutely no reason why she should go into a bank but the chap when he received this call was totally heaped up and then Indira Gandhi herself came on the line and he thought that this is my moment I have to do my bit for the country” elaborated Aiyar.

The session concluded with a lively Q&A segment, where audience members had the opportunity to interact directly with the panellists. Questions ranged from the technical aspects of the scandal to broader discussions on current political and financial integrity. The closing remarks were delivered by Deepali Bhasin, **Ehsaas Woman** of Delhi. The panel discussion not only shed light on the intricacies of the Nagarwala scandal but also sparked meaningful dialogue on its lasting impact on India’s socio-political landscape. Not many were convinced that the head of government should have been absolved from all blame.

Overall, the launch of “The Scam that Shook a Nation — The Nagarwala Scandal” left the audience with a deeper understanding with different insights of one of the most enigmatic scandals in Indian history.

*This book launch session was organised with the support of Ehsaas Women of Delhi, and was in association with Harper Collins.*



## Forest Field Staff and Volunteers from Rajasthan Honoured at the Fourth Edition of the Machhli & Vanya Prani Mitra Awards

**A** The prestigious awards, presented by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** and WWF-India, celebrate exceptional contributions to wildlife conservation and human-wildlife conflict management

The fourth edition of the Machhli and Vanya Prani Mitra Awards was held in Jaipur. The annual awards, presented by the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** (PKF) and WWF-India, recognise individuals whose extraordinary efforts contribute significantly to wildlife protection and conflict management.

The Machhli Award was awarded to Mr. Dharmendra Singh Rajpoot, a forest guard from Karauli, Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve—the domain of the legendary tigress after whom the award is named. Mr. Rajpoot was honoured for his exemplary work in wildlife crime control and emergency response, which led to the rescue and rehabilitation of numerous injured or stranded animals. His innovative approach made substantial improvements in wildlife protection, community awareness, and conflict management. Mr. Rajpoot received a cash award of Rs. 2 lakh and a certificate of appreciation for his outstanding contribution.

The Vanya Prani Mitra Award, which recognises exceptional management of human-wildlife conflict, was shared by Mr. Dharmendra Panigar and Mr. Youdhister Meena. Mr. Dharmendra Panigar is a dedicated volunteer

from Udaipur who has rescued over 3,000 snakes and various other wild animals. His work in minimising human-wildlife conflict and rescuing wildlife has been commendable. Mr. Youdhister Meena is a civil defence volunteer from Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve who has rescued more than 100 animals in the past four years, including pythons, vipers and nilgai. His efforts have been instrumental in reducing human-wildlife conflict in the region.

The Vanya Prani Mitra Award carries a total prize of Rs. 4 lakh, which was split evenly between the two winners. Each winner also received a certificate of appreciation.

All the awardees were selected by a distinguished jury, comprising Mr. Rahul Bhatnagar, IFS (Retd.); Mr. Rajpal Singh, IFS (Retd.); and Mr. Yash Shethia, Director of Wildlife & Habitat Programme, WWF-India.

On the occasion, Mr. Ravi Singh, Secretary General and CEO of WWF-India, said: “These awards honour the champions who are vital in ensuring the preservation and flourishing of our wildlife. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** for their partnership in these awards. This recognition will inspire the field staff of the Rajasthan Forest Department to continue their crucial work in protecting and conserving the state’s wildlife and habitats.”



Arijet Banerjee



Ravi Singh



Aakriti Periwal



Kulsum Malik and Sunita Shekhawat

“At **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, we believe in the power of dedication and passion in protecting our natural heritage. These awards are a testament to the tireless efforts of individuals who go above and beyond to safeguard our wildlife and mitigate conflicts. We are proud to honour these heroes and remain committed to supporting initiatives that foster a harmonious coexistence between humans and nature.” – Cathy Tongper from **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**

The award ceremony also featured the screening of a special poetic composition titled *Ek Khat Jazbaat ka* (A Letter to the Tiger from WWF-India). This evocative tribute to India’s national animal was composed by Shantanu Moitra and

penned by Tanveer Ghazi. The video of the composition featured performances by Dia Mirza, Sania Mirza, Ranveer Brar, Viswanathan Anand and Shantanu Moitra, and the lyrics celebrated the spirit of harmonious coexistence between tigers and humans.

The PKF anthem—a musical marvel uniting India’s most melodious voices—beautifully celebrates the country’s diversity through a harmonious blend of musical solidarity was also played at the event, followed by an introduction from Aakriti Periwal, **Ehsaas Woman** of Jaipur, who provided insights into the Foundation and a brief overview of the two awards.



In the mist of the bone-chilling foothills of Kasauli, lived a young cheery boy, Rusky. The lad was 14 years, fair complexed with brown hair which toned up to shimmer beneath the sunshine. He went to 'Rosemary High School' which was a good walk for about

20-25 minutes from his house. Both his parents left for work early in the morning and his grandmother, who was nearly 68 years with hues of grey in her hair, looked after Rusky. One fine day, on his way to school, amidst the pines that covered the sloped terrains, the gentle breeze that made the crispy leaves rustle, the cotton candy like clouds which puffed up in the sky, Rusky encountered a horse stable. In there, were many horses but what caught Rusky's eye was a highly magnificent mare. She was a black beauty with dazzling white hair. Her eyes were caramel in colour and she just seemed to be different from the rest. There was just something about her which made Rusky fall in love with her. He felt like staring at her forever. Poor Rusky was getting late so he walked the way to school but all he was thinking about was the surreal mare he had witnessed some time back. He portrayed and named her 'Rupa'. Instead of focussing on his class lectures, he was just thinking about Rupa. The school hours almost passed by, when in the last period, Headmistress Lobo announced that the students will be contesting against each other for a poster making competition. Rusky already didn't like miss Lobo. Perhaps, she was an extremely agitated person and Rusky repelled from art. But this time, the competition was not optional. It was mandatory for every student to participate. Unenthusiastically, Rusky completed the poster which he considered to be a not-so-winning piece and submitted it. Within a wait of 15-20 minutes, the results were declared and to everyone's surprise, Rusky had won the poster making competition!! The young lad received a trophy and a certificate which he happily accommodated back home. Once Rusky got back home and lay down to his afternoon nap, he had a very strange but accurate point in his mind. He thought that fate had intervened because he saw Rupa and coincidentally he won the competition. He assumed that Rupa was lucky for him. So, the next day too, he took the same route from where he would cross the horse stable. The good luck for that day was that Rusky's exam went really well. From then on, he always used to cross Rupa and his day would go amazing! Though this sort of love was a little selfish, but Rusky loved Rupa whole heartedly, without even a doubt. On some days, he would sneakily treat Rupa with carrots from his kitchen garden!! Everything was going well until one day, Rusky suddenly fell ill. He skipped the last week of school before the summer vacations began, since he was in a dilapidated condition. Once he got fine, he went to school on the last working day. On his way to school, he was astonished to see that Rupa was not there at the horse stable. He got intensely worried so he visited the horse stable to inquire about Rupa, and was told that

## Enchanted: The love story of Rusky and Rupa

she had been transported to Kolkata, miles away from Rusky. He couldn't hold back his tears. Now, everyday he crossed the way, he felt lonely. His bright days appeared to be more dull than ever. He missed the days where he looked forward to seeing Rupa. So, Rusky came up with a plan. On a weekend, when his parents were home, he insisted them to take him to Kolkata for his summervacations. At first, both of them were reluctant since they felt that Kolkata is not an ideal spot for summer holidays. Perhaps, that place is neither a hill station nor a beach stay. But somehow, Rusky convinced them by mentioning the historical architecture which intrigued him. At last, they decided to go to Kolkata but the boy's real intention was to somehow find Rupa. Prior to the trip, Rusky managed to get the location of Rupa. He learnt that a wealthy and moneyed man had bought Rupa and she was at his farmhouse near 'The Pebble Market'. Once Rusky visited the famous places, he asked his parents to drop him to the The Pebble Market so that he could take along some souvenirs for his friends. Since his parents were really tired, they agreed to drop him to the market for a good time of about 2 hours, while they could stay at the hotel, which by chance, lied fairly in the radar of where Rusky was. So, before Rusky set out to find Rupa, he bought four local made coasters for his friends. With a lot of time on hand, Rusky was easily able to find the farmhouse which was just behind the street. But, what was more surprising was that more than a farmhouse, that place looked more like a palace. He entered the farmhouse from the back gate. It hadn't even been 10 seconds and he saw the true love of his life galloping towards him. Rupa stood right in front of Rusky and he hugged her so tightly and comfortably. Rusky's heart was filled after looking at her. Rusky walked towards the gigantic mansion and talked to the owner, 'Mr. Das'. He told him about his story and pleaded him to drop Rupa back to where she belonged. The gentleman was so heart touched that he commanded his driver to take back Rupa to Kasauli, where she could be free. Rusky couldn't thank Mr. Das enough. The smile on his face was the biggest one. The story of Rusky and Rupa was that of incalculable love. The love which crossed the boundaries of what the society assumes of today. One doesn't always needs to find their true love in a human being. On the contrary, love can be found within any creature with a beautiful soul.



~By Saina Sarin  
Ridge Valley School, Gurgaon



Usha Punia and Sundeep Bhutoria

## Celebrating Rajasthani Craft in the Heart of Kolkata

On a crisp November morning in 2006, the vibrant spirit of Rajasthan came alive in the cultural corridors of Kolkata. Swabhumi, the heritage plaza, played host to the Rajasthan Crafts Festival, a three-day celebration of traditional artistry, colour, and craftsmanship. Held on 26th November, the festival was supported by the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** as part of its ongoing mission to preserve and promote India's rich cultural heritage.

The festival was inaugurated by the esteemed Usha Punia, then Tourism Minister of Rajasthan, who had played a pivotal role in showcasing Rajasthan's cultural prowess during her tenure under the Vasundhara Raje Scindia government. The opening ceremony was graced by dignitaries, including Sundeep Bhutoria, Trustee of the Foundation, who reiterated the Foundation's commitment to sustaining indigenous arts and crafts.

The festival brought together master artisans and craftsmen from the deserts of Rajasthan to the bustling city of Kolkata, bridging geographical and cultural distances. Swabhumi was transformed into a microcosm of Rajasthan, as stalls burst with colourful bandhani and leheriya textiles, handcrafted jewellery, traditional leather goods, and intricately designed home décor. The aroma of camel leather and the shimmer of meenakari work made for a sensory experience that transported visitors straight to the heart of the Thar.

Over the course of three days, the festival saw an enthusiastic turnout of locals, art connoisseurs, and curious shoppers. What made the event memorable was not just the shopping or visual display, but the interactions — the conversations between artisans and visitors, where generations of technique and storytelling passed from one soul to another.

The Rajasthan Crafts Festival at Swabhumi was not just an exhibition; it was a cultural exchange, a revival, and a reminder of the timeless legacy of Indian craftsmanship. For the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, it was a proud moment to support and spotlight the unsung hands that carry forward our artistic lineage.

Nearly two decades on, this event remains etched in our memory as one of the early milestones in our long-standing endeavour to promote India's intangible heritage.



Glimpse from the event

## International Tiger Day: Roar for Conservation, Roar for Life



As the world marks International Tiger Day, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** joins the global call to action to protect the majestic tiger, a symbol of India's rich wildlife heritage and ecological balance. India, home to nearly 70% of the world's wild tiger population, bears a profound responsibility to safeguard this endangered species.

The tiger's plight is a stark reminder of the fragility of ecosystems in the face of habitat loss, poaching, and

human-wildlife conflict. Since the inception of Project Tiger in 1973, India has made commendable strides in tiger conservation, with the current population standing as a testament to the power of collective action. Yet, the journey is far from over.

Conservation is not just about protecting a single species—it is about preserving entire ecosystems that tigers inhabit, ensuring the health of forests, rivers, and biodiversity that millions of lives depend on. The

**Prabha Khaitan Foundation** urges communities, policymakers, and individuals to strengthen this commitment through awareness, sustainable tourism, and proactive measures to mitigate human-wildlife conflict.

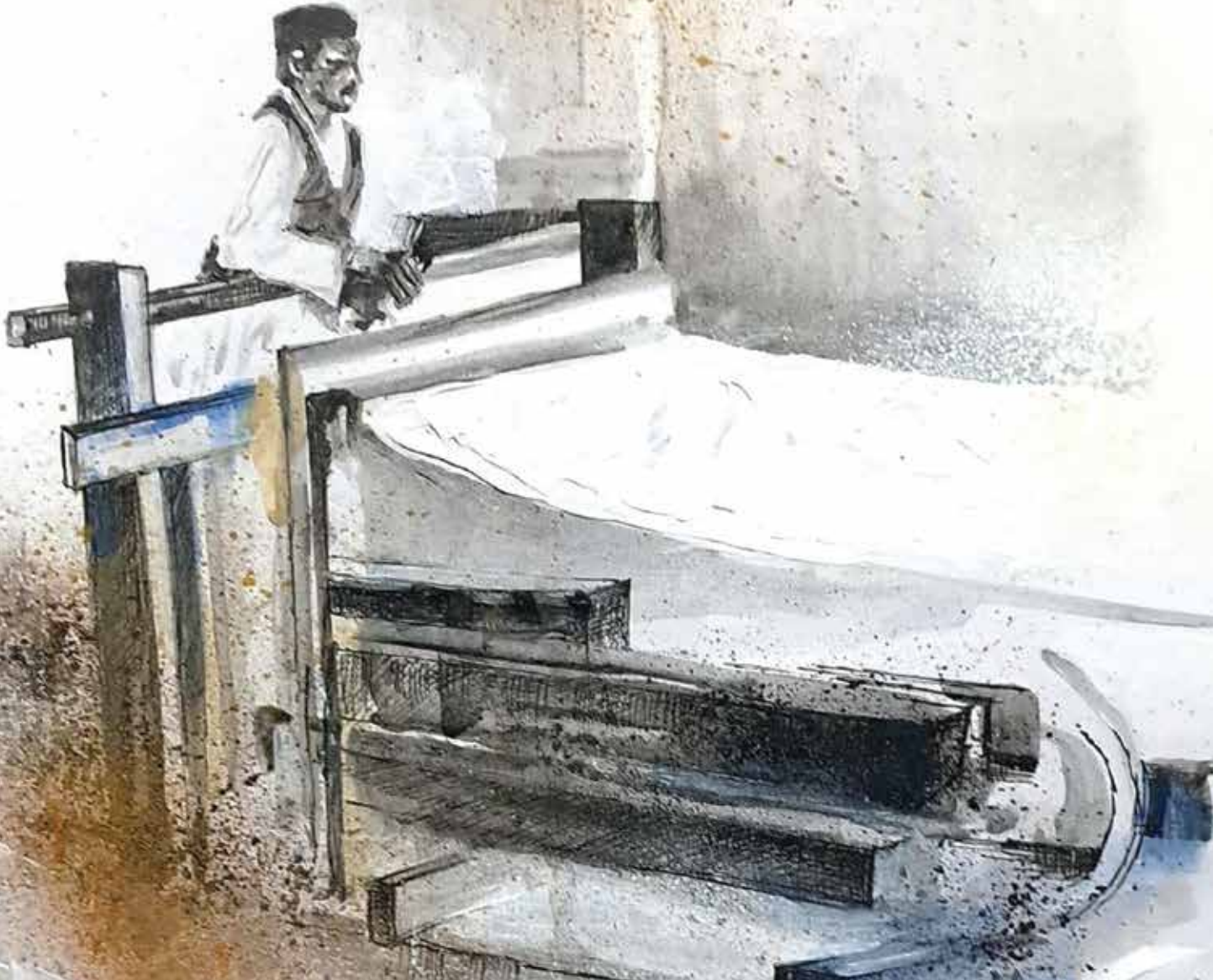
**The tiger is a symbol of courage, strength, and balance in nature.**

— Kailash Sankhala

International Tiger Day is not merely a celebration of survival but a call for vigilance and action. Together, we can ensure that the roar of the tiger continues to echo in the wild, serving as a beacon of hope and resilience for future generations.



## Celebrating National Handloom Day: Weaving Heritage, Crafting Futures



On National Handloom Day, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** pays homage to India's rich legacy of handloom weaving—a tradition that threads together centuries of artistry, craftsmanship, and cultural identity. The day is a poignant reminder of the artisans whose hands bring these intricate patterns and stories to life, fostering a connection between heritage and modernity.

India is home to a vast repertoire of handloom traditions, from the vibrant Banarasi silks to the

timeless Chanderi, from the bold Kanjeevaram motifs to the delicate Jamdani weaves. Each piece represents not just a fabric but an entire ecosystem of creativity, resilience, and sustainable practices. The handloom sector, predominantly powered by women, plays a crucial role in India's rural economy, embodying the ethos of self-reliance and community empowerment.

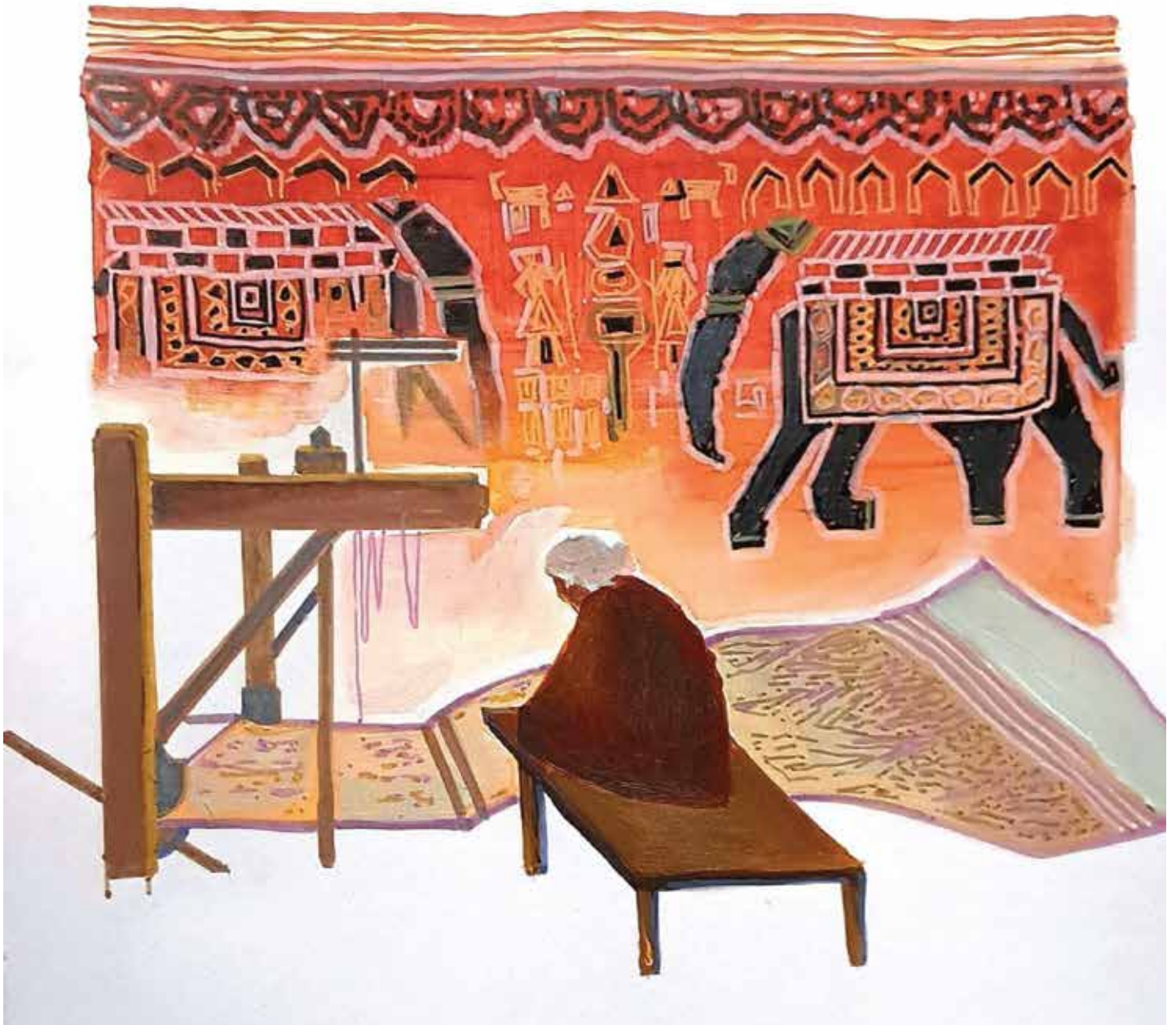
Despite its significance, the handloom industry faces challenges in the modern era, including competition from mass-produced textiles and the loss

of traditional knowledge. The **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** believes in the power of preserving this heritage by promoting sustainable fashion, fostering appreciation for handmade products, and empowering artisans through skill-building and market access.

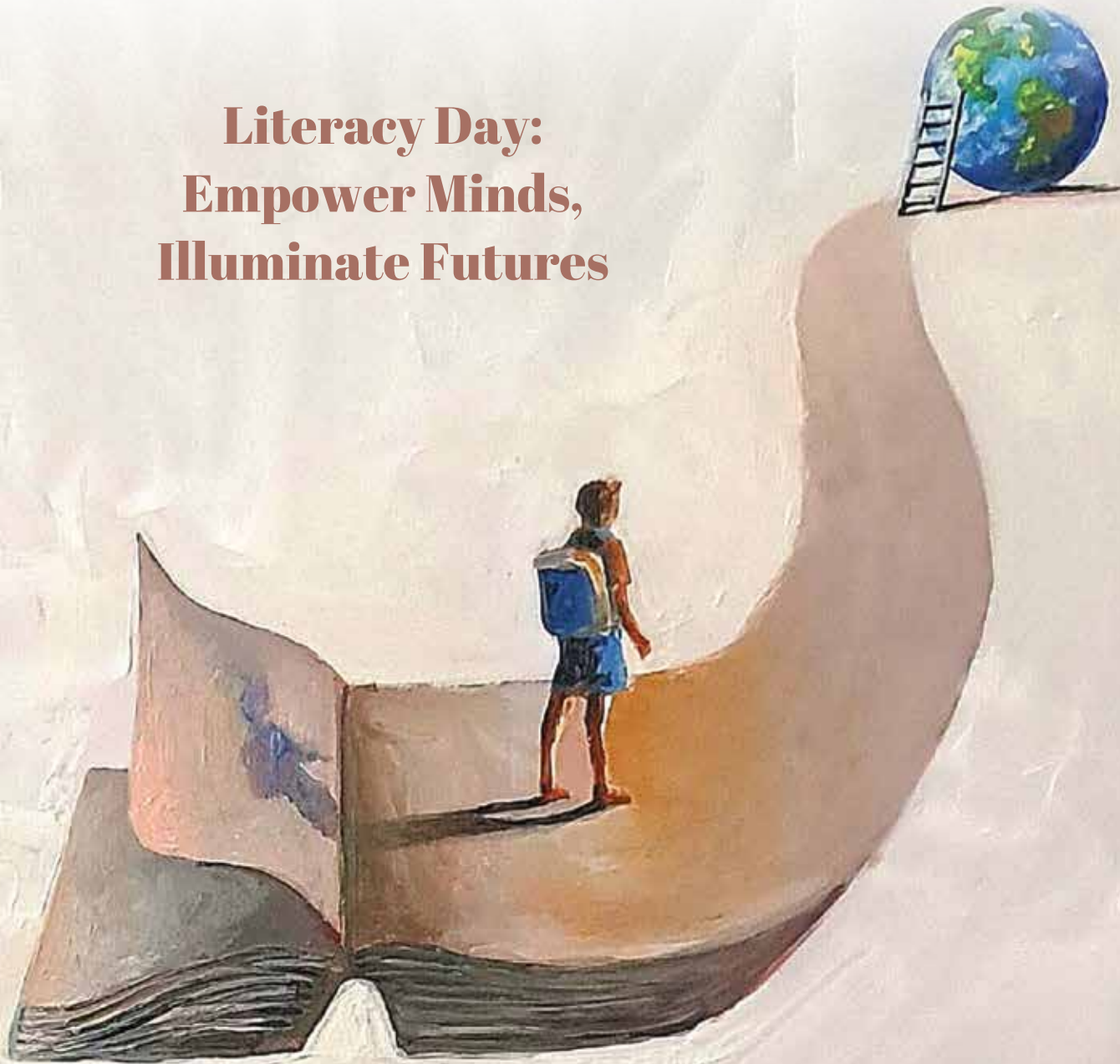
“  
A nation's culture resides in the hearts  
and in the soul of its people.

— Mahatma Gandhi  
”

On this day, let us recognize the artistry behind every thread and recommit ourselves to supporting the handloom community. By choosing handmade over machine-made, we ensure that these invaluable crafts continue to thrive, weaving stories of our heritage into the fabric of our future.



## Literacy Day: Empower Minds, Illuminate Futures



**O**n Literacy Day, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** celebrates the transformative power of education, recognizing literacy as the cornerstone of human development and societal progress. Literacy is more than just the ability to read and write—it is the key to unlocking opportunities, fostering independence, and nurturing informed citizens who can actively contribute to their communities.

Despite significant advancements, millions worldwide remain deprived of basic literacy,

perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality. India, with its vast diversity and challenges, has made strides in improving literacy rates, but the journey toward universal literacy demands renewed focus on marginalized communities, especially women and children in rural areas.

The Foundation believes that education is a shared responsibility, requiring the concerted efforts of governments, civil society, and individuals. Through initiatives that provide access to books, libraries, and

CAUSE OF  
THE MONTH  
JULY

46

Prabha  
प्रभा

digital resources, we aim to empower minds and bridge the literacy gap. Each step toward educating one individual enriches an entire family, an entire community.

“

Literacy is the bridge from  
misery to hope

— Kofi Annan

”

As we celebrate Literacy Day, let us reaffirm our dedication to this fundamental human right. By illuminating futures through education, we pave the way for a world where every mind has the opportunity to thrive, dream, and achieve.







## A Celebration of Joyful Beats and Vibrant Energy

In a spirited homage to the exuberance of Punjabi culture, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** presents a composition by the illustrious Grammy Award Winner, Ricky Kej, brimming with the electrifying energy of Bhangra. Featuring the resounding beats of the dhol, uplifting chants, and jubilant voices, this piece encapsulates the unbridled joy and vitality of India's most festive dance form.

Infused with the infectious rhythm of celebration, the composition invites listeners to tap into their inner dancer, reveling in the shared happiness that music and movement inspire. Through this masterpiece, Ricky Kej establishes Bhangra as the quintessential "fun" anthem for all who embrace its vibrant charm.





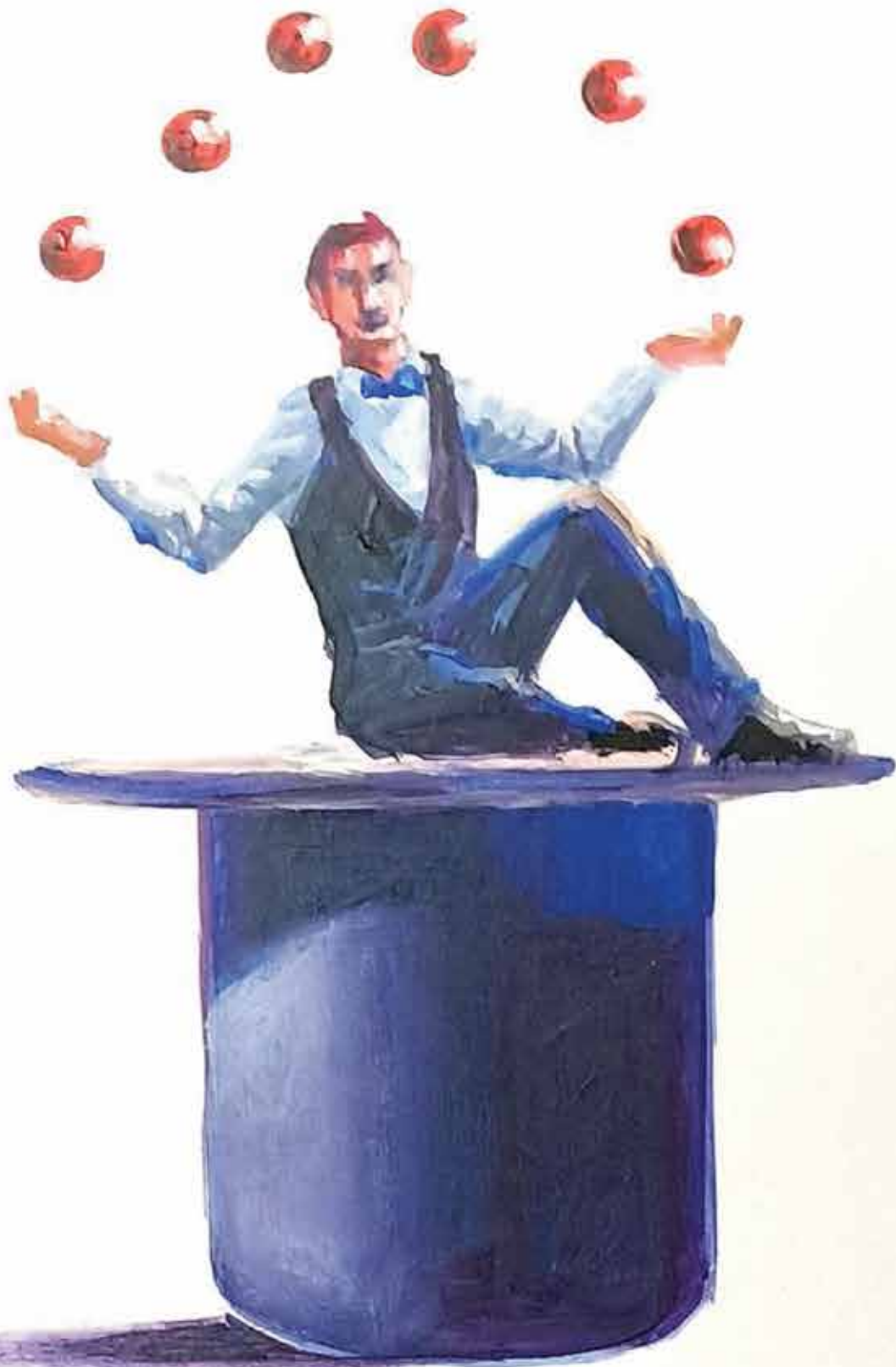


## A Rhythmic Tribute to Freedom and Diversity

Drawing from the raw authenticity of hip-hop, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** unveils a musical piece composed by Grammy Award Winner, Ricky Kej, that resonates with the spirit of freedom, diversity, and self-expression. Though born in the West, hip-hop's essence transcends cultural boundaries, finding echoes in every nation's unique voice and rhythm.

Ricky Kej's composition captures the heartbeat of individuality and honesty, blending beats and lyrics that celebrate the courage to embrace one's true self. It is a call to celebrate diversity and authenticity, reminding us that music is a universal language of truth and liberation.







## The Harmony of Curiosity and Wonder

With a symphony inspired by curiosity and discovery, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** presents a mesmerizing piece composed by Grammy Award Winner, Ricky Kej, that celebrates the intersection of magic and science. Each note echoes the awe and wonder of a child exploring the world, reminding us of the boundless possibilities that belief and imagination can bring.

This melodic journey, crafted by Ricky Kej, urges us to cherish our innate desire to learn, grow, and marvel at life's mysteries. A tribute to the dreamers and innovators, the composition encourages listeners to keep believing in the miracles that transform today's dreams into tomorrow's realities.

