



Prabha प्रभा

Q3 | 2025-26

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation Chronicle

An Evening of Light & Togetherness

Celebrating relationships, culture, and community



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MANISHA JAIN
Honorary COO,
Prabha Khaitan Foundation

A Season of Conversations and Celebrations

As another vibrant season of celebrations and conversations unfolds, this edition of Prabha reflects the many ways in which people, ideas, and cultures continue to connect through the initiatives of the Foundation.

At the heart of this issue is our annual Diwali Milan in New Delhi, a cherished gathering that brought together friends, associates, supporters, and well-wishers of the Foundation from across the country. More than a festive occasion, it served as a reminder of the relationships, shared values, and collective goodwill that sustain our journey year after year.

The spirit of connection resonates throughout these pages. From the soul-stirring flute recital of maestro Rakesh Chaurasia in Kolkata to the cinematic nostalgia of Umrao Jaan, from thought-provoking literary conversations in India, Dubai, and London to engaging discussions on health, diplomacy, society, and public affairs, each event reflects our enduring commitment to creating spaces for meaningful dialogue.

This edition also highlights the Foundation's continued efforts to engage young minds through storytelling and awareness sessions encouraging children to embrace creativity, empathy, and environmental responsibility. These initiatives reaffirm our belief that culture and education remain powerful catalysts for positive social change.

As we turn these pages, we invite you to revisit these memorable moments and the remarkable individuals who made them possible. Thank you for being an integral part of this journey. We look forward to continuing to build bridges through culture, literature, education, and dialogue in the months ahead.

Happy reading.

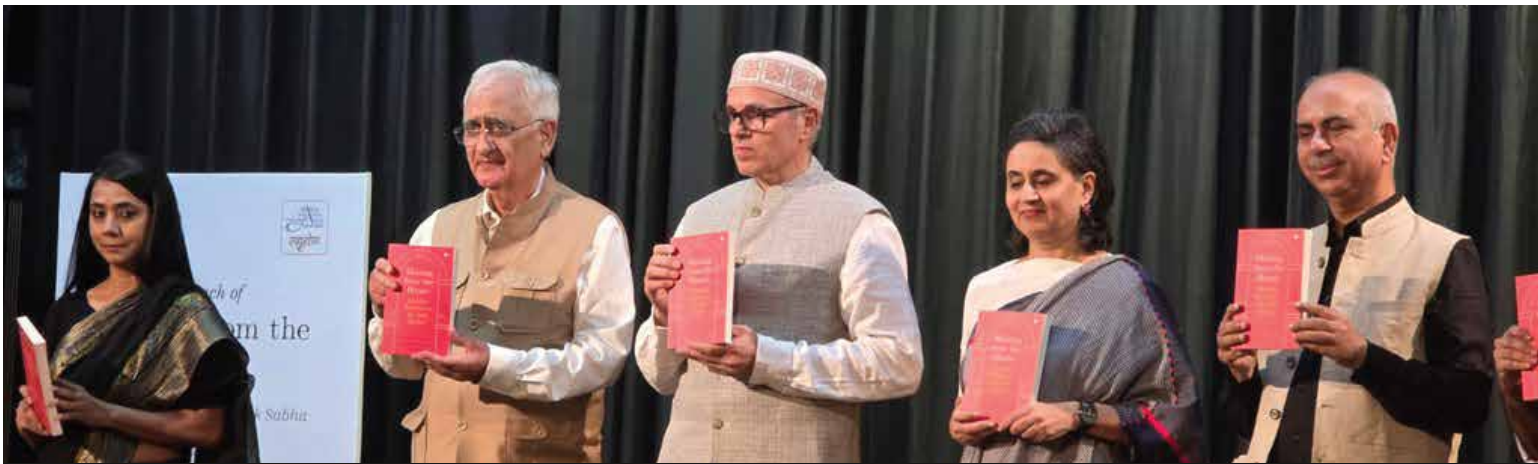
Manisha Jain

SNAPSHOTS

A glimpse into some of the Foundation's literary and cultural engagements — from thought-provoking book launches and enriching conversations to exhibitions celebrating India's artistic and intellectual legacy. These moments reflect our continued commitment to fostering dialogue, creativity, and cultural exchange.



Prahlad Kakkar, Shyam Saran, Ashis Nandy, Manjari Chaturvedi, Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra at the Launch of Manjari Chaturvedi's Book in Delhi organized by Prabha Khaitan Foundation in association with Om Books International



Prabha Khaitan Foundation in association with Juggernaut Books launched 'Missing From The House - Muslim Women In The Lok Sabha' by Rasheed Kidwai and Ambar Kumar Ghosh in Delhi



Ehsaas Women of Chennai Vidya Gajapathi Raju Singh, Kaveri Lalchand and Deepika Goyal with Neelima Dalmia Adhar at The Write Circle in Chennai



A snippet from the Exhibition in Kolkata on Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar

An Evening of Light, Warmth, and Togetherness

Prabha Khaitan Foundation hosted its much-awaited Annual Diwali Meet in New Delhi, bringing together an illustrious gathering of distinguished guests, cultural patrons, diplomats, artists, entrepreneurs, and long-standing associates of the Foundation for an evening steeped in warmth, celebration, and camaraderie. Hosted in the true spirit of the festival of lights, the annual gathering once again reflected the Foundation's enduring commitment to nurturing meaningful relationships through culture, conversation, and community.

The beautifully illuminated venue came alive with festive elegance as guests from diverse spheres gathered to celebrate the joyous occasion in an atmosphere of grace and togetherness. The evening served not only as a festive celebration, but also as a heartfelt reunion of the extended Prabha Khaitan Foundation family — individuals connected through a shared appreciation for literature, arts, social impact, and cultural dialogue.

The celebrations were marked by soulful music, vibrant conversations, and a spirit of goodwill that resonated throughout the evening. Guests exchanged festive greetings over an elaborate spread of traditional delicacies and seasonal fare, while the ambience reflected the richness and warmth associated with Indian festivities.

Over the years, the Foundation's Diwali Meet has evolved into a cherished annual tradition in the capital, creating a space where cultural exchange and personal connections flourish beyond formal engagements. The evening beautifully embodied the essence of Diwali — light over darkness, hope over uncertainty, and togetherness above all else.

As laughter, conversations, and festive cheer filled the evening, the gathering stood as a reminder of the enduring bonds and shared journeys that continue to define the spirit of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**.



Shashi Tharoor

Sundeep Bhutoria



Ehsaas Women with Pt Vishwa Mohan Bhatt



Kanak Rekha Chauhan, Esha Dutta, Pooja Goenka, Abokali Jimomi, Jyoti Agarwal, Madhuri Halwasiya, Manisha Jain



Esha Gupta



Suhel Seth, Deepa Mishra, Shruti Agarwal, Dimple Trivedi and Apra Kuchhal



Sundeep Bhutoria with Rajdeep Sardesai



K Sreenivasarao



Srinjoy Chowdhury



Sachin Pilot





Anant Vijay and Vandana Singh



Sachchidanand Joshi and Malvika Joshi



Ashley Lalremruati and Viketuno Rio



Gaurav Girija Shukla and Pratyaksha



Jai Prakash Pandey and Rama Pandey



Prem Prakash



Yameer Adhar, Mrinali Luthra, Geeta Mehra, Sharnamli Mehra and Anil Mehra



Sanjeev Paliwal



Neelima Adhar, Karuna Goenka, Dipali Bhasin



Malika Varma, Shraddha Murdia and Rachna Seth



Vinnie Kakkar and Saurabh Kakkar



Sanjiv Saraf



Sunita Kohli



Muzafar Ali and Huma Khalil



Kulsum Malik and Sunita Shekhawat



Bharti Madhok, Mansi Malik, Amelia Lalremdiki Sailo, Esha Dutta



Vinti Kathuria, Sonia Aggarwal, Shweta Bansal



Amitabh Adhar



Shinjini Kulkarni



Juan Angulo



V. Namgyel



Sundeep Bhutoria with Diana Mickeviciene



Anmol Ahluwalia



Pratibha Prahlad and Rajiv Talwar



Dimpi Talwar



Shishu Seth



Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo



Nivritti Kumari Mewar

An Evening of Sisterhood and Celebration

On the eve of the annual Diwali Milan hosted by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** in Delhi, an unforgettable gala dinner brought together over 60 **Ehsaas Women** from across India and different parts of the world for an evening steeped in warmth, camaraderie, and shared purpose. The gathering served as a beautiful prelude to the larger festivities, celebrating not only the spirit of Diwali but also the enduring bond that defines the Ehsaas community.

Set against an atmosphere of elegance and festive splendour, the evening became a heartfelt reunion of women connected by empathy, culture, creativity, and social commitment. Conversations flowed effortlessly as old friendships were rekindled and new connections were forged, reaffirming the essence of **Ehsaas** — a platform that transcends geography and generations through meaningful human relationships.

The gala reflected the Foundation's belief in nurturing a sense of belonging and togetherness. From laughter-filled exchanges to moments of reflection and gratitude, the evening captured the emotional strength of a community built on mutual encouragement and shared journeys. The presence of **Ehsaas Women** from diverse cities and countries added a truly global dimension to the celebration, making the gathering both intimate and inspiring.

As the evening unfolded amidst festive décor, music, and culinary delights, it became evident that the spirit of **Ehsaas** continues to grow stronger with every passing year. More than a social gathering, the gala dinner stood as a celebration of sisterhood, solidarity, and the enduring relationships that remain at the heart of the Prabha Khaitan Foundation's vision.



Ehsaas Women

When Melody Became a Celebration

Prabha Khaitan Foundation, in association with ITC Hotels, hosted an enchanting evening of music and cultural celebration at ITC Royal Bengal, Kolkata, featuring a soul-stirring performance by two-time Grammy Award-winning flautist Rakesh Chaurasia. The concert brought together connoisseurs of Indian classical music, art patrons, and distinguished guests for an evening that beautifully blended tradition, emotion, and artistic excellence.

The evening opened with a warm welcome that reflected on music as a timeless bridge between cultures and generations. The audience was introduced to the remarkable artistic journey of Rakesh Chaurasia, whose mastery over the flute has carried the legacy of Indian classical music onto the global stage. His performance, rich in emotion and technical brilliance, transformed the venue into a space of meditative calm and celebration alike.

From evocative ragas to dynamic rhythmic improvisations, the recital showcased the immense expressive range of the flute. Chaurasia's ability to effortlessly weave serenity with exuberance left the audience spellbound, drawing repeated applause throughout the evening. Accompanied by accomplished percussionists, the concert evolved into an immersive musical dialogue that resonated deeply with listeners.

The collaboration between **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** and ITC Hotels once again underscored a shared commitment to preserving and promoting India's rich cultural heritage through meaningful artistic engagements. The evening was not merely a concert, but a celebration of the enduring power of music to inspire reflection, connection, and joy.



Rakesh Chaurasia



Performance



Gaurav Soneja



Malika Varma



Esha Dutta



Dona Ganguly



Audience

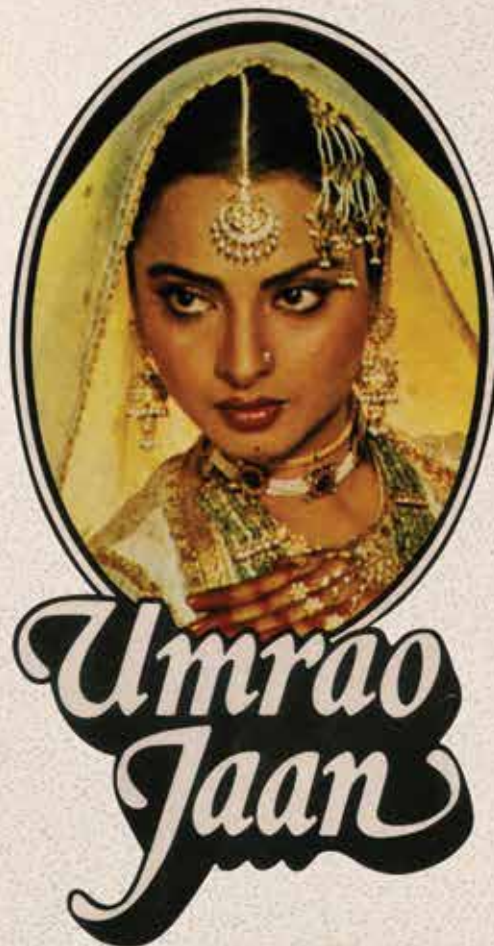
Where Cinema Became Poetry

Under the aegis of **Chalchitra Rangmanch**, **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** hosted a memorable evening in Kolkata with the special screening of iconic re-release of 4K Restored version by NFDC-NFAI of '*Umrao Jaan*', the timeless cinematic masterpiece directed by Muzaffar Ali. Presented in association with Rekhta Foundation, the event celebrated not only a landmark film in Indian cinema but also the enduring elegance of storytelling, music, poetry, and culture.

The evening commenced with a warm welcome by Esha Dutta, **Ehsaas Woman** of Kolkata and Honorary Convenor of North-East Affairs, who reflected on the Foundation's commitment to preserving and promoting India's artistic and cultural heritage through meaningful literary and cinematic initiatives. She described Chalchitra Rangmanch as more than a screening platform — "an experience" that seeks to honour films that continue to inspire reflection and emotional connection long after the credits roll.

The screening of *Umrao Jaan* transported the audience into the evocative world of courtesan culture, classical poetry, and hauntingly beautiful music. The restored visuals lent renewed splendour to the film's timeless frames, allowing viewers to rediscover the artistry, grace, and emotional depth that have made the film an enduring classic across generations.

The evening drew cinema lovers, cultural enthusiasts, and admirers of Urdu literature into a shared experience of nostalgia and artistic appreciation. More than a film screening, the event became a celebration of India's cinematic heritage — a reminder of how powerful storytelling can transcend time, language, and generations.





Rituparna Sengupta



Anirban Chakraborty



Nayantara Palchoudhuri



Mohua Chatterjee



Hiya Chatterjee



Meeta Sethia



Sanjay Sethia



Gouri Basu



Jaya Seal Ghosh



Esha Dutta



Unearthing the Silences of History

At a compelling session of **Kitaab** in Kolkata, organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** with the support of the Ehsaas Women of Kolkata, veteran journalist, Prem Prakash, engaged in a deeply thought-provoking conversation around his book *History That India Ignored*. In dialogue with noted actor, director, and producer Arindam Sil, the evening evolved into an engaging exploration of forgotten revolutionaries, historical memory, patriotism, and the narratives that continue to shape India's understanding of its freedom struggle.

The book was unveiled by Chief Guest Bratya Basu, Hon'ble Minister of Education, Government of West Bengal, in the presence of Guest of Honour Kunal Ghosh, politician and journalist. The event was also attended by Snehasis Sur, President of Press Club, Kingshuk Pramanik, Secretary of Press Club, Rupak Barua, MD & CEO of Woodlands Hospital, Esha Dutta, Honorary Convenor, North East Affairs of the Foundation and **Ehsaas Woman** of Kolkata, Gouri Basu, **Ehsaas Woman** of Kolkata, and Anindita Chatterjee, Executive Trustee. The dignitaries were felicitated with terracotta artefacts by Anindita Chatterjee and Esha Dutta, celebrating Bengal's rich artistic heritage.

In his address, Bratya Basu reflected on India's political and social upheavals through the lens of the Greek concept of hamartia — a tragic flaw leading to downfall — identifying Partition as the defining tragedy of the Indian subcontinent. He praised Prem Prakash for revisiting the role of revolutionary movements and highlighting figures often overshadowed in mainstream historical narratives. Referring to Clement Attlee's famous observation that Gandhi's role in hastening British withdrawal was

"minimal," Basu emphasised the importance of acknowledging militant resistance and revolutionary action alongside non-violent movements.

Kunal Ghosh echoed similar sentiments, appreciating the book for restoring visibility to Bengal's forgotten revolutionaries. He remarked that while a few iconic figures remain widely remembered, countless others who sacrificed for India's independence continue to remain absent from national consciousness. He also suggested that future editions could include stories such as that of Rani Shiromani of Karnagar, an Adivasi queen who resisted British rule decades before the Revolt of 1857.

Opening the conversation, Arindam Sil remarked on the fading public engagement with history and patriotism. "If this were a session on glamour or fashion, the hall would have been overflowing," he observed candidly, lamenting society's growing indifference towards the stories of those who fought for India's freedom.

Responding to Sil's question about the "alternative history" presented in the book, Prem Prakash clarified that his intention was not to create an alternative narrative but to correct an incomplete one. "For decades, the mainstream story of India's independence has focused largely on one path while neglecting the contributions of countless others who fought differently," he said. He explained that the book seeks to restore visibility to revolutionaries whose sacrifices have gradually faded from public memory.

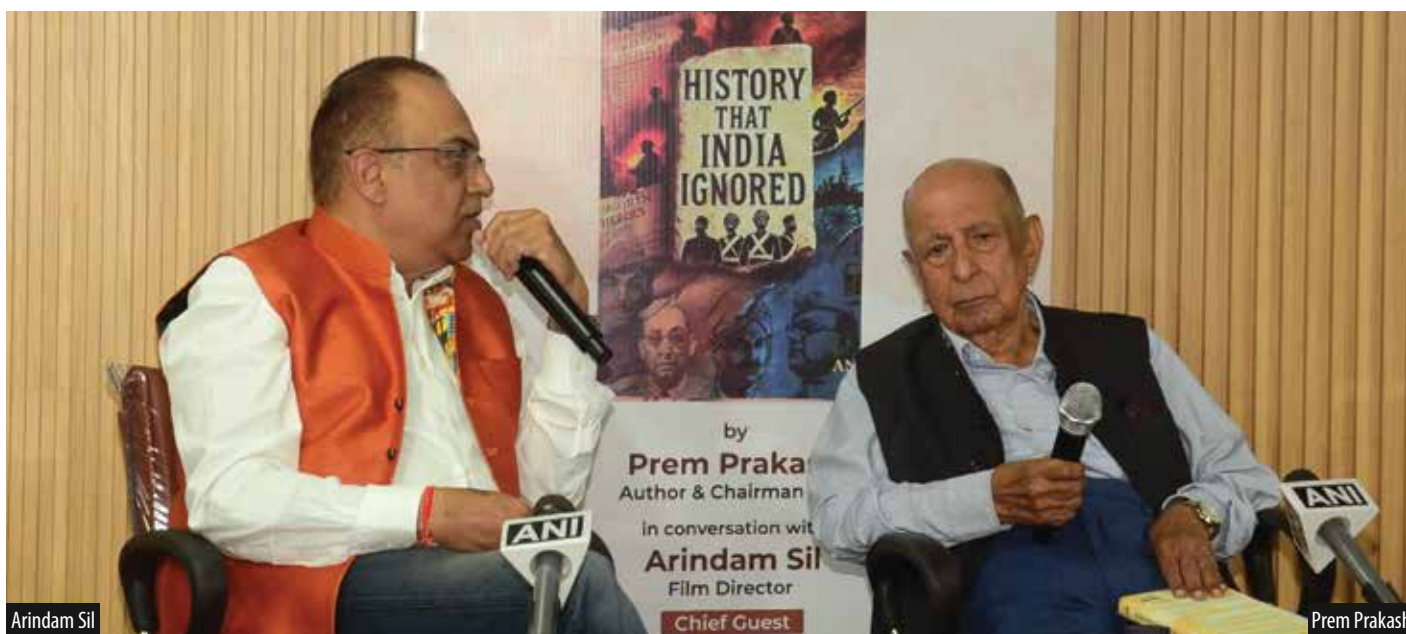
One of the most striking moments of the evening came when Prem Prakash recalled Clement Attlee's interaction with the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court after

independence. “Attlee reportedly remarked that Gandhi’s role in forcing British withdrawal was minimal,” he noted, adding that this revelation compelled him to further examine the influence of the INA and revolutionary movements in destabilising British authority.

The conversation also explored the recurring theme of betrayal in Indian history. Reflecting on moments ranging from the fall of Prithviraj Chauhan to the collapse of the Ghadar movement, Prem Prakash observed, “Our tragedy has often been betrayal from within.” He further revealed that many British records documenting collaborators were destroyed before independence, though surviving archives in London helped support his research.

Recalling his own experiences as a teenager witnessing the massive public reception for INA officers Shah Nawaz Khan, P.K. Sehgal, and G.S. Dhillon, Prem Prakash described the overwhelming emotion and patriotic fervour that defined that era. “I was almost crushed in the crowd,” he remembered, “but it reflected the extraordinary passion people felt for the INA.”

Throughout the evening, Arindam Sil and Prem Prakash reflected not only on history, but also on memory, responsibility, and the need to preserve stories that shaped the nation. The discussion concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Esha Dutta, bringing to a close an evening that celebrated history, storytelling, and the enduring spirit of India’s forgotten heroes.



Reimagining Health and Wellness in Modern India



Lucknow witnessed an engaging and intellectually enriching session of **Kitaab** with the launch of *The Weight Loss Revolution*, authored by Dr. Ambrish Mithal with co-author Shivam Vij. Organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, the evening brought together medical experts, public leaders, journalists, and wellness advocates for an insightful discussion on obesity, lifestyle diseases, and the evolving science of weight management.

The session commenced with an introduction to **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** by Madhuri Halwasiya, Honorary Convenor of Awadh Affairs and **Ehsaas Woman** of Lucknow, followed by the introduction of distinguished guests by Deepa Mishra, **Ehsaas Woman** of Lucknow. The book was formally launched by the Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Brajesh Pathak, who attended as the Chief Guest. The evening also featured reflections by Soniya Nityanand, Vice-Chancellor of KGMU, Lucknow, and senior journalist Sharat Pradhan. The dignitaries were felicitated by Vinod Pandey, General Manager of Taj Mahal Lucknow.

In his address, Brajesh Pathak reflected on the changing social attitudes toward health and fitness. Recalling how a fuller physique was once associated with prosperity, he remarked that society now belongs to the “slim-trim era,” humorously observing how people “hold their breath while posing for photographs to appear fit.” Beneath the humour, however, lay a serious concern about the impact of modern lifestyles. He spoke about the increasing disconnect between people and nature, pointing to sedentary habits, lack of sunlight, and growing health complications caused by urban living. Emphasising the importance of discipline and balance, he praised the book for translating complex medical science into practical guidance for everyday life.

Sharat Pradhan offered a deeply personal reflection on Mithal's journey, describing him as “a doctor who has gone far beyond his profession.” Recounting anecdotes from his early years in Lucknow, Pradhan praised Dr. Mithal's commitment to research, empathy, and public service despite moving into the corporate medical world. Referring to his Padma Bhushan recognition and pioneering work in bone mineral research, Pradhan noted that his greatest strength remained his humanity. “Every patient feels they are the closest to him,” he observed warmly.

The heart of the evening lay in the conversation between Dr. Mithal and Shivam Vij, which explored the science behind obesity and the revolutionary impact of newer weight-loss medications. Vij began by acknowledging the frustration many people experience despite following strict diets and exercise routines. “Lifestyle alone often isn't enough,” he remarked, pointing out how many patients continue to struggle despite their best efforts.

Dr. Mithal explained that one of the most important scientific breakthroughs in recent years has been the understanding of GLP-1, or glucagon-like peptide-1, a hormone naturally produced in the gut. “GLP-1 tells the brain that you are full,” he explained, describing how it helps regulate both appetite and insulin secretion. Researchers were eventually able to develop medications that mimic this hormone while remaining active in the body for longer periods, thereby creating more sustained satiety signals and better blood sugar control.

The discussion carefully balanced scientific optimism with practical realism. Dr. Mithal clarified that these medications are not “miracle drugs” or shortcuts, but powerful tools that work best alongside lifestyle changes. He explained that

average weight loss through GLP-1 receptor agonists ranges between 15–18% of body weight, with newer medications achieving even greater results in some patients. “Some patients lose 20 kilograms without surgery — something that was previously very difficult,” he noted.

At the same time, he stressed the importance of medical supervision. “These drugs are prescription-only for a reason,” he said, warning against unsupervised or cosmetic use. Side effects such as nausea, constipation, or vomiting were described as generally mild and manageable when monitored carefully.

Beyond weight loss, the discussion highlighted the broader impact of these medications on overall metabolic health. Vij pointed out how patients often reduce multiple diabetes medications after treatment, while also experiencing improvements in blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and fatty liver disease. Dr. Mithal described obesity as “the mother of many chronic diseases,” emphasising that treating obesity can help prevent a range of serious health complications.

The conversation also touched upon the emotional and psychological aspects of weight management. Dr. Mithal

observed that meaningful weight loss often transforms quality of life beyond physical appearance. “Patients feel more energetic, more confident, and more in control of their health,” he explained. However, he also cautioned against unhealthy approaches to rapid weight loss, stressing the importance of maintaining muscle strength and balanced nutrition.

Throughout the evening, the authors repeatedly emphasised that obesity should be understood not as a personal failing, but as a serious medical condition shaped by biology, lifestyle, and environment. The discussion reflected a larger shift in public health conversations — one that replaces shame and misinformation with evidence-based understanding and compassionate care.

The session concluded with an engaging Q&A, where audience members interacted enthusiastically with the speakers on topics ranging from lifestyle habits to long-term sustainability of weight-loss treatments. The evening drew to a graceful close with a heartfelt vote of thanks delivered by Kanak Rekha Chauhan, **Ehsaas Woman** of Lucknow, leaving the audience with a renewed perspective on health, wellness, and mindful living.



Brajesh Pathak



Madhuri Halwasiya, Kanak Rekha Chauhan and Deepa Mishra



Ambrish Mithal



Audience

*This session of **Kitaab** was organized with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Lucknow, and was in association with B.P. Halwasiya Foundation; Hospitality Partner, Taj Mahal, Lucknow; and Print Hindi Media Partner, Dainik Jagran*



Rewriting the Weight Narrative

In an intellectually engaging and socially relevant evening, **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, under its **Kitaab** initiative, hosted the launch of *The Weight Loss Revolution*, authored by renowned endocrinologist Dr. Ambrish Mithal and co-authored by Shivam Vij. Held in Jaipur, the session brought together science, public health, lived experience, and social reflection in a compelling dialogue on obesity and wellness in contemporary India. The evening was graced by Chief Guest Vasundhara Raje and began with a warm welcome by Apra Kuchhal, Honorary Convenor of Rajasthan & Central India Affairs, followed by an introduction by Vinnie Kakkar, National Advisor of the Foundation. The dignitaries were felicitated by **Ehsaas Women** of Jaipur — Sunita Shekhawat, Rina Bhandari, and Kulsum Malik.

In her opening remarks, Vasundhara Raje described the book as “a very impactful one,” commending its ability to make complex scientific concepts accessible to everyday readers. Stressing the urgency of recognising obesity as a serious medical condition rather than a cosmetic concern, she remarked, “We want everyone to understand that this is a disease and it needs to be taken care of quickly.” Reflecting on the realities of modern

lifestyles, she added, “Health often comes last. We have meetings, travel, late hours — all of these take their toll.”

What followed was a deeply insightful conversation between Dr. Ambrish Mithal, Shivam Vij, and Vasundhara Raje that explored obesity not merely as a lifestyle issue, but as a complex physiological and neurological condition. The discussion moved seamlessly between scientific explanation, public misconceptions, and the emotional realities of weight management.

Setting the tone for the discussion, Shivam Vij candidly observed, “It almost sounds magical — *ek dawai lo, injection lagao aur weight kam ho jayega*,” articulating the scepticism many people feel toward modern weight-loss medications. Responding with clarity and authority, Dr. Mithal explained that the science behind GLP-1 drugs is not new. “That’s exactly why there is so much controversy,” he noted, “but the truth is that the GLP-1 system has been known for 50 years.” He carefully contextualised the evolution of the treatment, adding, “It’s not a new class of drugs.”

Breaking down the biology in accessible language, Dr. Mithal explained, “GLP-1 is a hormone formed within our body. It goes to the brain and tells us to stop eating.” His explanation effectively bridged the gap between medical science and behavioural understanding, helping the audience grasp the deeper mechanisms behind hunger, satiety, and obesity.

The conversation also addressed concerns around safety and side effects. Echoing public apprehensions, Vij remarked, “It sounds a bit scary, you are altering brain chemistry *toh koi toh locha hoga.*” Dr. Mithal responded with balanced realism: “There is no drug that has been discovered that does not have side effects.” He further elaborated on the commonly observed side effects, including nausea, constipation, and diarrhoea, while emphasising the importance of medical supervision and informed treatment.

One of the most striking moments of the evening came when Dr. Mithal firmly stated, “Obesity is a disease of the brain.” The remark fundamentally reframed the discourse around weight, shifting it away from shame, laziness, or lack of discipline toward biological complexity and scientific understanding. When Vij questioned why some people seem able to manage their weight more easily than others, Dr. Mithal responded with intellectual honesty: “There is no biological reason to explain why some people are able to control this and why they are not.”

Adding a grounded and experiential perspective, Vasundhara Raje reflected on the recurring struggles many people face with dieting and weight regain. “People keep trying to lose weight but it comes back, diet after diet,” she observed. Her statement resonated strongly with the audience, particularly when she underscored that sustainable health is ultimately “a commitment for life.”

The evening concluded with an engaging Q&A session where audience members participated enthusiastically, raising questions around lifestyle, food habits, medication, and emotional wellbeing. The discussion stood out for its balance of scientific rigour, practical wisdom, and empathetic understanding, making it not just informative, but deeply relatable.



Vinnie Kakkar



Audience

This session of Kitaab was organized with the support of Ehsaas Women of Jaipur, and was in association with Hospitality Partner, ITC Rajputana.



Sanjeev Paliwal

Shikha Varshney

असल जीवन की कहानियों पर आधारित है लेखन” - संजीव पालीवाल

- लंदन के ताज होटल में ‘कलम’ साहित्यिक सत्र आयोजित

प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन की साहित्यिक शृंखला ‘कलम’ के तहत रविवार, 28 सितम्बर 2025 को लंदन के ताज होटल में एक विशेष साहित्यिक संवाद आयोजित किया गया। कार्यक्रम के मुख्य अतिथि भारत के वरिष्ठ पत्रकार, लेखक एवं मीडिया व्यक्तित्व संजीव पालीवाल थे, जिन्होंने अपने लेखन, पत्रकारिता और साहित्यिक अनुभवों को श्रोताओं के साथ साझा किया।

इस अवसर पर उन्होंने कहा कि लेखन का वास्तविक स्रोत असल जीवन की कहानियाँ हैं। संजीव पालीवाल ने यह भी कहा कि साहित्य की सबसे बड़ी शक्ति उसकी जीवन से निकटता में निहित होती है। उनके अनुसार वास्तविक अनुभवों से जन्मी कहानियाँ पाठकों के साथ गहरा भावनात्मक संबंध स्थापित करती हैं।

कार्यक्रम को सार्थक संवाद प्रदान किया लंदन की प्रतिष्ठित लेखिका शिखा वार्शनी ने, जिन्होंने संजीव पालीवाल से संवाद किया। उन्होंने लेखक की साहित्यिक यात्रा, पत्रकारिता के अनुभवों और लेखन की प्रेरणाओं से जुड़े अनेक प्रश्न पूछे। बातचीत के दौरान संजीव पालीवाल ने कहा कि उनका अधिकांश लेखन वास्तविक जीवन की घटनाओं और लोगों की कहानियों से प्रेरित है। पत्रकारिता के लंबे और समृद्ध अनुभव ने उन्हें समाज के विविध पक्षों को करीब से देखने का अवसर दिया, जिनसे अनेक कथानक और पात्र उनके लेखन का हिस्सा बने।

कार्यक्रम का शुभारंभ यूके हिंदी समिति के संस्थापक एवं वरिष्ठ प्रवासी साहित्यकार डॉ. पद्मेश गुप्त के आत्मीय स्वागत भाषण से हुआ। उन्होंने बताया कि ‘कलम’ प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन की एक महत्वपूर्ण साहित्यिक शृंखला है, जिसका उद्देश्य साहित्य, संस्कृति और रचनात्मक संवाद को प्रोत्साहित करना है। कोलकाता स्थित यह संस्था विभिन्न सामाजिक एवं सांस्कृतिक गतिविधियों के माध्यम से भारतीय संस्कृति के संवर्धन में सक्रिय भूमिका निभा रही है। लंदन में इस शृंखला का आयोजन यूके हिंदी समिति, वातायन, वाणी फाउंडेशन और ताज होटल के सहयोग से यूके-इंडिया ईयर ऑफ कल्चर के अंतर्गत किया जा रहा है।

कार्यक्रम के अंत में लेखक द्वारा हस्ताक्षरित पुस्तकों की प्रतियाँ उपस्थित अतिथियों को भेंट की गईं। इस अवसर पर ब्रिटेन के अनेक साहित्यकार, पत्रकार, शिक्षाविद् और साहित्य-प्रेमी उपस्थित रहे। भारतीय उच्चायोग, लंदन की सांस्कृतिक अधिकारी अनुराधा

“

साहित्य की सबसे बड़ी शक्ति उसकी जीवन से निकटता में निहित होती है।

”

पांडे, लेखिका दिव्या माथुर, अनुराधा अजितसरिया, सुरेखा चोपला, ऋचा जैन सहित अनेक गणमान्य अतिथियों की उपस्थिति ने आयोजन की गरिमा को और बढ़ाया।



Padmesh Gupta



Audience

प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन और ताज 51 बकहिंगम गेट द्वारा आयोजित कलम लंदन के सहयोगी हैं वातायन और यू के हिंदी समिति



Syed Mohammad Ashraf

Faiza Abbasi

हर लेखक को अपना रास्ता खुद बनाना होता है सैयद मोहम्मद अशरफ़

- सैयद मोहम्मद अशरफ़ साहब :
अदब और अफसाने की रौशन दुनिया

हर लेखक को खुद अपना रास्ता बनाना होता है, नकल करने से बचना चाहिए - यह कहना है सैयद मोहम्मद अशरफ़ साहब का। आप प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन की ओर से रेखा तथा अल-बरकात संस्थान, अलीगढ़ के सहयोग से आयोजित लफ़्ज़ में बतौर अतिथि वा के रूप सम्बोधन कर रहे हैं।

कार्यक्रम के आरम्भ में प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन से जुड़ी विभिन्न गतिविधियों की जानकारी लेखक का परिचय अहसास वूमेन डॉ. फायज़ा अब्बासी ने दिया। डॉ. अहमद मुज्तबा सिद्दीकी ने दिया जो सहायक प्रोफेसर, भूगोल विभाग, अमुवि अलीगढ़ और अल बरकात एजुकेशनल सोसाइटी के संयुक्त सचिव पद पर है।

डॉ. फायज़ा ने बताया कि लफ़्ज़ का यह आयोजन फाउंडेशन की 'अपनी भाषा अपने लोग' को बढ़ावा देने की पहल का हिस्सा है। प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन कला साहित्य और संस्कृति के क्षेत्र में काम करने वाली एक सक्रिय संस्था है जिसकी गतिविधियाँ भारत और दुनिया भर के 55 से अधिक शहरों तक पहुंच चुकी हैं। रेखा फाउंडेशन इस दिशा में उसका सहयोगी है। लफ़्ज़ के अलावा फाउंडेशन कलम, किताब, एक मुलाकात, सुर और साज और आखर जैसे कार्यक्रम भी आयोजित करता है।

लफ़्ज़ के इस कार्यक्रम में उपस्थित विशेष अतिथि सैयद मोहम्मद अशरफ़ साहब का परिचय देते हुए बताया गया कि सैयद मोहम्मद अशरफ़ तालुक का एक रहानी और इल्मी खानदान से है। आपकी पैदाइश मारहरा शरीफ़ (सीतापुर) में हुई-जो हिंदुस्तान की एक मकबूल सूफी बस्ती है। आप खानकाह बरकातिया के सज्जाद नशीन, हजरत सैयद शाह मुस्ताफ़ा हैदर हसन मियाँ रहमतुल्लाह अलैह के फ़रज़ंद हैं।

इब्तिदाई तालीम आपने मारहरा शरीफ़ और सीतापुर से हासिल की और फिर अलीगढ़ मुस्लिम यूनिवर्सिटी से उर्दू में एम.ए. किया, जहाँ आप गोल्ड मेडलिस्ट रहे। साल 1981 में आपने उर्दू मीडियम से UPSC (सिविल सर्विस) का इम्तिहान पास करके इनकम टैक्स डिपार्टमेंट में बुलंद ओहदों पर काम किया। आपको साहित्य अकादमी पुरस्कार, गालिब सम्मान, इक़बाल सम्मान और उर्दू अकादमी का लाइफ़टाइम अचीवमेंट अवॉर्ड जैसे बड़े इनामात से नवाज़ा गया है।

लफ़्ज़ के इस आयोजन में उनके साथ संवाद किया अलीगढ़ की अहसास वूमेन डॉ. फायज़ा अब्बासी ने। उन्होंने साहित्य परिवेश, तत्काल समय और बदलते दौर के बारे में उनसे संवेदनशील बातचीत प्रभावी ढंग से की।

उन्होंने अपने अदबी सफ़र के बारे में बताया कि उनके घर में शुरू से ही एक इल्मी और अदबी माहौल था। उन्होंने पहली कहानी 1969 में लिखी थी, जो प्रकाशित नहीं हुई, लेकिन अफसाना लिखने की शुरुआत वहीं से हुई।

“
कभी लगा कि इंसान में एक लोमड़ी छुपी है,
कभी शेर नजर आता था।
”

उन्होंने बताया कि उन्हें शिकार का शौक था, जहाँ जानवरों और परिंदों से मुलाकात होती थी। लेकिन जब अलीगढ़ आए तो वहाँ इंसानों की ऐसी-ऐसी शक्लें देखीं कि, "कभी लगा कि इस इंसान में एक लोमड़ी छुपी है, कभी शेर नजर आता था।" यही इंसान और जानवर की आवाजाही, अफसानों की बुनियाद बनी।

उनकी कहानी "डार से बिछड़े" ने उन्हें पहचान दिलाई और इस अदबी सफ़र में उन्हें कई अहम शक्तियंतों का साथ और रहनुमाई मिली। उन्होंने बताया कि बचपन में उन्हें भी शायरी का शौक था - जैसा कि भारत के ज्यादातर उर्दू-दाँ नौजवानों को होता है। मगर दिल की बात, और ज़ेहन की बात - कहानी के ज़रिए कहने में उन्हें ज्यादा सुकून मिला। फ़िक्शन की तरफ रुझान - एक होशमंद चुनाव था। उन्होंने बताया कि ग़ज़ल और शेर कहने के बावजूद वो कहानी को ज्यादा असरदार मानते थे, क्योंकि: "हमें अपने दादा से भी कहानी ही मिली थी - यानी नस्र की विरासत।"

उन्होंने बताया कि कहानी लिखने से पहले ऐसा लगता है कि इसे एक खास अंदाज़ में लिखेंगे, लेकिन जैसे-जैसे कहानी आगे बढ़ती है, उसके किरदार अपनी ज़िंदगी खुद जीने लगते हैं और फिर वही किरदार हमारी कलम को चलाने लगते हैं।

कार्यक्रम में मौजूद दर्शकों ने उनसे प्रश्न किए, जिनके उन्होंने विस्तार से उत्तर दिए। इस अवसर पर लेखक एस.एम. अशरफ़ की पुस्तक 'नंबरदार का नीला और दीगर कहानियाँ' पर उन्होंने हस्ताक्षर किए, जिसे दर्शकों ने सहेजा। यह कार्यक्रम का एक खास और यादगार लम्हा बन गया।

मौके पर अतिथि लेखक का सम्मान प्रोफेसर ए.आर. किदवई द्वारा स्मृति-चिह्न प्रदान करके किया गया। प्रोफेसर ए.आर. किदवई को भी स्मृति-चिह्न भेंट किया गया। डॉ. मनीषा मणि, अहसास वूमेन, अलीगढ़ द्वारा दिल को छू जाने वाले शब्दों में धन्यवाद ज्ञापन प्रस्तुत किया गया।



Manishaa Mani

लफ़्ज़ अलीगढ़ का आयोजन अहसास वूमेन अलीगढ़ तथा हॉस्पिटैलिटी पार्टनर अल-बरकात संस्थान, अलीगढ़ और रेखा के सहयोग से किया गया था।



Rajesh Kumar Vyas

Jitendra Kumar Soni

लेखक को वही लिखना चाहिए जिससे वह स्वयं संतुष्ट हो :

डॉ. राजेश कुमार व्यास

- जयपुर में आयोजित 'आखर' कार्यक्रम में पुस्तक 'कथू-अकथ' का हुआ विमोचन

लेखक को वही लिखना चाहिए जिससे वह स्वयं संतुष्ट हो। यह विचार डॉ. राजेश कुमार व्यास ने जयपुर में प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन की ओर से आयोजित साहित्यिक कार्यक्रम 'आखर' के दौरान डॉ. जितेंद्र कुमार सोनी से संवाद में व्यक्त किए। इस अवसर पर विशिष्ट अतिथियों की उपस्थिति में यशवंत व्यास की पुस्तक 'कथू-अकथ' का विमोचन भी किया गया।

कार्यक्रम में डॉ. व्यास ने कहा कि डायरी लेखन जीवन की विसंगतियों को जीने का नाम है। यह केवल व्यथा की कथा नहीं, बल्कि मन की शांति और आत्म-अनुभूति का माध्यम भी है। उन्होंने कहा कि डायरी केवल व्यक्तिगत अभिव्यक्ति नहीं, बल्कि एक ऐसी साहित्यिक प्रक्रिया है जिसमें कविता, संस्मरण और यात्रा वृत्तांत जैसी अनेक विधाओं का समन्वय दिखाई देता है।

संवाद के दौरान डॉ. जितेंद्र कुमार सोनी ने राजस्थानी भाषा, संस्कृति और साहित्य से जुड़े विभिन्न पहलुओं पर प्रश्न किए। इस पर डॉ. व्यास ने कहा कि राजस्थानी भाषा को संवैधानिक मान्यता और रोजगार से जुड़ाव न मिल पाने के कारण कई चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। इसके बावजूद राजस्थानी लेखक निरंतर लेखन के माध्यम से भाषा और साहित्य को आगे बढ़ा रहे हैं।

अपने प्रसिद्ध यात्रा संस्मरण 'नर्मदे हर' के बारे में उन्होंने बताया कि छत्तीसगढ़ यात्रा के दौरान अमरकंटक और नर्मदा उद्गम स्थल के अनुभवों ने उन्हें गहराई से प्रभावित किया। उन्होंने कहा कि नर्मदा ऐसी नदी है जिसकी परिक्रमा की परंपरा भारतीय संस्कृति की विशिष्ट पहचान है।

डॉ. व्यास ने आगे कहा कि सृजनात्मक लेखन व्यक्ति को नौकरी और जीवन की विसंगतियों से मुक्ति का मार्ग प्रदान करता है। लेखन तभी प्रभावी होता है जब वह अनुभूति और आत्मसंतोष से उत्पन्न हो।

भविष्य की योजनाओं के बारे में बताते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि वे कश्मीर और ललितादिव्या जैसे ऐतिहासिक विषयों पर कार्य कर रहे हैं। उन्होंने कश्मीर को एक समय में सनातन संस्कृति का महान केंद्र बताते हुए कहा कि शारदा लिपि और शारदा पीठ जैसे महत्वपूर्ण अध्याय आज लगभग विस्मृत हो चुके हैं, जिन्हें पुनः सामने लाना आवश्यक है।

कार्यक्रम में डॉ. कैलाश चतुर्वेदी, राजेंद्र बोड़ा, अब्दुल लतीफ उस्ता, श्रवण सिंह राठौड़, डॉ.

“

लक्ष्म अलीगढ़ का आयोजन अहसास वूमेन अलीगढ़, श्री सीमेंट लिमिटेड के सहयोग से उनकी सीएसआर पहल के रूप में तथा हॉस्पिटैलिटी पार्टनर अल-बरकात संस्थान, अलीगढ़ और रेख्ता के सहयोग से किया गया था।

”

राजेश मेठी, राव शिवपाल सिंह, फारूख आफरीदी, डॉ. कमलेश मीना, वरिष्ठ पत्रकार महेश शर्मा सहित अनेक साहित्यकार, शिक्षाविद् और गणमान्य नागरिक उपस्थित रहे।



Abhilasha Pareek



Audience

कार्यक्रम का आयोजन प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन द्वारा किया गया तथा इसे सफल बनाने में ग्रासरूट मीडिया फाउंडेशन के साथ-साथ हॉस्पिटैलिटी पार्टनर आईटीसी राजपूताना का विशेष सहयोग रहा।



Kalpana Chaudhary

Rahul K Singh

लोक परंपराओं को अगली पीढ़ी तक पहुँचाना समाज और साहित्यकारों की जिम्मेदारी : राहुल कुमार सिंह

- प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन के 'tête-à-tea' में गूँजा
“छत्तीसगढ़ का लोक-पुराण”

प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन की चर्चित साहित्यिक शृंखला tête-à-tea के अंतर्गत रायपुर में आयोजित विशेष संवाद सत्र में लेखक राहुल कुमार सिंह ने कहा कि लोक परंपराएँ किसी भी समाज की पहचान होती हैं और उन्हें आने वाली पीढ़ियों तक पहुँचाना साहित्यकारों तथा समाज दोनों की जिम्मेदारी है। कार्यक्रम का विषय “छत्तीसगढ़ का लोक-पुराण” था, जिसमें लोक साहित्य, लोक-संस्कृति और परंपराओं के विभिन्न पहलुओं पर सार्थक चर्चा हुई।

इस अवसर पर राहुल कुमार सिंह ने कहा कि छत्तीसगढ़ की लोककथाएँ, लोकगीत और मिथकीय आख्यान केवल मनोरंजन के साधन नहीं हैं, बल्कि वे समाज की स्मृतियों, विश्वासों और सांस्कृतिक चेतना के महत्वपूर्ण वाहक भी हैं। उन्होंने लोक-पुराणों की परंपरा को भारतीय समाज की आत्मा बताते हुए कहा कि लोककथाओं में समाज की संवेदनाएँ, संघर्ष और जीवन-दर्शन स्वाभाविक रूप से अभिव्यक्त होते हैं। उनके अनुसार लोक साहित्य किसी भी समुदाय की सांस्कृतिक पहचान को जीवित रखने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाता है।

कार्यक्रम में रायपुर की अहसास वूमेन की कल्पना चौधरी ने राहुल कुमार सिंह से संवाद किया। चर्चा के दौरान लेखक ने अपने लेखन, शोध-प्रक्रिया तथा छत्तीसगढ़ के लोकजीवन से जुड़े अनुभव साझा किए। बातचीत में यह बात प्रमुख रूप से सामने आई कि आधुनिकता और तकनीकी युग के बीच लोक-संस्कृति के संरक्षण की आवश्यकता पहले से अधिक बढ़ गई है। राहुल कुमार सिंह ने कहा कि यदि लोक परंपराओं का दस्तावेजीकरण और संवर्धन नहीं किया गया तो आने वाली पीढ़ियाँ अपनी सांस्कृतिक जड़ों से दूर हो सकती हैं।

कार्यक्रम के आरंभ में अहसास वूमेन की आँचल गर्गा ने अतिथियों जनों का स्वागत किया। इस अवसर पर डॉ. ब्रज किशोर प्रसाद ने राहुल कुमार सिंह को दुपट्टा ओढ़ाकर सम्मानित किया। कार्यक्रम में साहित्या प्रेमियों, युवा पाठकों तथा संस्कृति से जुड़े लोगों की उल्लेखनीय उपस्थिति रही। श्रोताओं ने भी लेखक से लोक-साहित्य, भाषा और क्षेत्रीय संस्कृति से संबंधित प्रश्न पूछे तथा अपने विचार साझा किए।

अंत में आँचल गर्गा ने सभी अतिथियों और सहयोगियों के प्रति आभार व्यक्त किया। कार्यक्रम के सफल आयोजन में आँचल गर्गा, सृष्टि त्रिवेदी, कीर्ति किरदत्त और कल्पना चौधरी की सक्रिय भूमिका रही। उल्लेखनीय है कि प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन तथा अहसास



राहुल कुमार सिंह की “छत्तीसगढ़ का लोक पुराण”
केवल पुस्तक नहीं, बल्कि प्रदेश की सांस्कृतिक स्मृतियों और
जनजीवन का जीवंत दस्तावेज है।



वूमेन रायपुर साहित्य, कला और संस्कृति के क्षेत्र में निरंतर रचनात्मक गतिविधियों का आयोजन कर रहे हैं।



Aanchal Garcha



Kirti Kirdatt



Audience

कार्यक्रम प्रभा खेतान फाउंडेशन तथा अहसास वूमेन, रायपुर के सौजन्य से आयोजित किया गया। इसमें श्री सीमेंट लिमिटेड का विशेष सहयोग रहा तथा आरएल स्कूल ने वेन्यू पार्टनर के रूप में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई।



Jyotsna Mohan

Inheritance, Journalism, and the Weight of Truth



Madiha Saidi

An evocative evening of storytelling, memory, and reflection unfolded at **The Write Circle** in Dubai as acclaimed author and journalist Jyotsna Mohan engaged in a deeply engaging conversation with Madiha Saidi. Organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, the session explored the intersections of journalism, personal history, mental health, and the enduring responsibility of preserving truth across generations. The evening commenced with a warm welcome by Kajall S. Sagar, **Ehsaas Woman** of Dubai, setting the tone for an intimate and thought-provoking dialogue.

The conversation traced Mohan's remarkable journey from the fast-paced world of journalism to becoming an author chronicling her family's extraordinary legacy. Reflecting on her upbringing, she shared, "I've been surrounded by history all my life." Speaking with visible emotion, she recalled the regret of not having had enough time with her grandfather, a revolutionary and contemporary of Bhagat Singh. "There's so much I wish I had learned," she admitted.

At the heart of the discussion was her latest book, which goes beyond documenting the history of a newspaper to capturing the story of a family that repeatedly stood against oppression — during the freedom struggle, through the Emergency, and amid the violence that engulfed Punjab in the 1980s. Mohan recounted the devastating 1983 parcel bomb incident that claimed two innocent lives, calling it a tragedy her family "has never been able to live down."

One of the most powerful moments of the evening came as she read from her book about Bhagat Singh's final hours before execution. The audience listened in complete silence as she recited the young revolutionary's words: "If I remember God now, He'll call me dishonest. If I don't, He'll call me brave." The passage reflected not only Bhagat Singh's courage, but also the deep emotional connection her family carried to that era of sacrifice and resistance.

The conversation also explored the ethics of journalism and the changing media landscape. Recalling her family's

guiding philosophy, Mohan remarked, "Newspaper editors are not vendors. Our job is to speak truth to power." She reflected on how journalism once functioned as a mission rather than a commercial enterprise and acknowledged the challenges facing the profession today. "The journalism we knew is over," she observed candidly, "but the defiance continues."

The discussion later shifted to her earlier works. Speaking passionately about youth mental health, she noted how many young readers reached out saying, "Thank you for writing this — no one listens to us." She stressed the need for parents to engage more honestly with children in the age of smartphones and social media rather than pretending these realities do not exist.

Throughout the evening, Mohan emerged as a writer deeply committed to memory, honesty, and courage — someone carrying forward a legacy shaped by resistance and truth-telling. The session concluded with a vote of thanks by Kajall S. Sagar, **Ehsaas woman** of Dubai and was honoured by the gracious presence of H.E. Khalid Shahdud. The author was felicitated by Jamil Saidi, bringing the evening to a warm and memorable close.



Kajall S Sagar

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organised with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Dubai, and was in association with Hospitality Partner, Anantara Downtown Hotel*



Rasheed Kidwai

Madiha Saidi

Chronicles of Power, People, and the Poli- tics Behind the Head- lines

Prabha Khaitan Foundation hosted an intellectually vibrant evening at **The Write Circle** Dubai, where acclaimed author and journalist Rasheed Kidwai engaged in a compelling conversation with **Ehsaas Woman** of Dubai, Madiha Saidi. The session unfolded as an insightful exploration of India's political landscape, its personalities, and the deeply human stories hidden behind public power. The evening commenced with a gracious welcome note by Kajal Sagar, **Ehsaas Woman** of Dubai.

Opening the discussion with characteristic humility, Kidwai reflected on his long association with Indian politics and journalism. "There has been so much written about Indian history and politics," he observed, "but often the human story behind these leaders is missing." His writings, he explained, attempt to move beyond dates and designations to understand the journeys, vulnerabilities, and contradictions of the individuals who shaped India's public life.

Tracing his own journey from Lucknow to Delhi and later across international academic and journalistic spaces, Kidwai spoke warmly of the people and political leaders who had trusted him with their stories. Recalling his interactions with several Prime Ministers of India, he narrated a striking memory of seeing Gulzarilal Nanda, twice India's acting Prime Minister, waiting quietly at a public bus stop in Delhi. "That simplicity and integrity are difficult to imagine today," he reflected, underscoring how dramatically political culture has evolved.

The conversation then turned to his widely discussed work *The House of Scindias: A Saga of Power, Politics and Intrigue*. Kidwai offered fascinating insights into one of India's most enduring political dynasties. "From 1781 till today, there has hardly been a day when a member of the Scindia family was not connected to power," he remarked. Yet beneath the grandeur, he revealed deeply emotional family relationships, particularly between Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia and Madhavrao Scindia. Recounting moments from Rajmata's final days, Kidwai shared, "When she heard

her son's footsteps, her face would light up. He would sit beside her and recite the Hanuman Chalisa." The anecdote revealed the tenderness hidden beneath political divisions and royal formality.

Highlighting the role of women in politics, Kidwai praised Rajmata's ideological conviction and sacrifices, while also reflecting on the perseverance of women leaders navigating India's intensely competitive political environment. "Strength in politics often comes with immense personal cost," he observed thoughtfully.

Towards the close, the conversation adopted a lighter tone during a lively rapid-fire interaction. Asked whether power or money was more influential, Kidwai replied instantly, "Power." When asked about the most talkative politician, his witty answer drew laughter across the room. What emerged through the evening was far more than political commentary. Rasheed Kidwai transformed history into living memory, revealing the tenderness, ambition, humour, and humanity that shape public life. Guided elegantly by Madiha Saidi's thoughtful moderation, the conversation became an evocative meditation on India's democracy and the personalities who continue to define it. The evening concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Kajal S. Sagar, while the author was felicitated by Dada Vadu Shroff as a gesture of appreciation and admiration.



Kajal S Sagar

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organised with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Dubai, and was in association with GBF Middle East*



Neelima Dalmia Adhar and Jyoti Agarwal

Truth, Memory, and the Courage to Speak Unapologetically

The Write Circle in Shillong unfolded as an intense, deeply introspective, and emotionally charged literary evening featuring acclaimed author Neelima Dalmia Adhar in conversation with Jyoti Agarwal, **Ehsaas Woman** of Shillong. Organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, the session drew audiences into a fearless exploration of memory, identity, womanhood, inheritance, and the power of storytelling that refuses to soften truth. The evening commenced with a warm welcome by Pooja Goenka, **Ehsaas Woman** of Shillong, whose opening remarks set the tone for a dialogue marked by honesty, vulnerability, and remarkable literary depth.

From the very beginning, Adhar's candour transformed the session into something far more intimate than a conventional author interaction. Reflecting on her childhood, she spoke openly about growing up in an unconventional and emotionally fractured household. "I am a product of polygamy," she stated matter-of-factly. "I'm the fourth child of the sixth wife of my father. We are eighteen children." Her words carried neither self-pity nor dramatics, only unfiltered truth. Describing her upbringing as "a dysfunctional childhood," she spoke of an absent father, a deeply unhappy mother, and the emotional void that existed beneath material privilege. "We had everything, but we really had nothing," she reflected quietly.

The discussion then turned toward the powerful influences that shaped her personality and writing. Speaking about her mother, an accomplished poet, she expressed admiration tempered with humility. "She was an extraordinary writer," Dalmia Adhar observed. "I may have inherited her literary gene, but I cannot hold a candle to her." Of her father, she spoke with startling clarity and emotional complexity. "I inherited fearlessness from him," she admitted. "I don't know fear. I am reckless, and I am fearless."

That fearlessness emerged most visibly in the discussion around her widely debated memoir *Father Dearest*, a work that challenged familial silences and social expectations with remarkable honesty. Asked whether writing the book required courage, Dalmia Adhar responded without



Chenithung Odyuo



Pooja Goenka

hesitation. "I never thought about the consequences," she said. "If I was going to tell my story, I could not lie about it." She acknowledged that the book created discomfort within her own family but remained unwavering in her position. "This is my truth. Others are free to write theirs."

The conversation naturally flowed into her acclaimed novel *Radha*, a work that reimagines one of mythology's most iconic women through a deeply human lens. Rejecting conventional portrayals of Radha as merely divine, Dalmia Adhar explained that she was drawn instead to Radha's emotional rebellion and unapologetic desire. "I wanted Radha the woman," she said. "A woman who openly says, 'I love Krishna,' without shame or guilt." She described the genesis of the novel as an almost mystical experience rather than a carefully planned literary exercise.

The evening concluded with Vandana Gupta felicitating the author with a traditional Dokra artefact as a gesture of appreciation. Chenithung Odyuo of Vivanta Shillong, delivered the vote of thanks, bringing to a close a literary evening that celebrated not only storytelling, but also the extraordinary courage required to speak one's truth without compromise.

This session of The Write Circle was organized with the support of Ehsaas Women of Shillong, in association with Oil India Limited; Hospitality Partner, Vivanta Shillong



Neelima Dalmia Adhar

Lalrinsangi Nghinglova

Stories Beyond Certainty: Truth, Memory, and Reimagining Women

The conversation deepened further as Lalrinsangi discussed *Radha*, perhaps the author's most debated work. Describing the novel's opening as reminiscent of *The Scarlet Letter*, she invited Dalmia Adhar to reflect on its creation. The author candidly admitted that she had never formally studied literature, yet storytelling came instinctively to her. Recounting a mystical experience during Navratri, she described how *Radha* appeared to her almost as a vision. "I wasn't watching the dream. I was inside it," she said, recalling the vivid colours, fragrances, and sensations that convinced her she had found her subject.

For Dalmia Adhar, *Radha* became far more than a retelling of mythology; it was an act of reclaiming complexity for women historically reduced to symbols. "Radha was unrepentant, remorseless, and unapologetic," she remarked, rejecting the idea that female desire or emotional truth must always seek moral approval. "In your eyes I am guilty, but not in the eyes of the Almighty," she quoted, capturing the essence of her interpretation.

Throughout the session, Dalmia Adhar emerged as a writer unafraid to inhabit uncomfortable spaces — someone committed not to pleasing readers, but to confronting emotional and historical truths with unwavering honesty. The evening concluded with Prof. Irene Lalruatkimi felicitating the author and conversationalist with traditional Jaipur puppets, while Ashley Lalremruati, *Ehsaas Woman* of Aizawl, delivered the vote of thanks.

An evening of literary reflection and emotional candour unfolded at **The Write Circle** in Aizawl as celebrated author Neelima Dalmia Adhar engaged in an intimate and thought-provoking conversation with Lalrinsangi Nghinglova. Organised by **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, the session explored themes of identity, inheritance, psychology, truth, and the courage to challenge conventional narratives. Amelia Lalremdiki Sailo, *Ehsaas Woman* of Aizawl, welcomed the audience and set the tone for a deeply engaging exchange that moved seamlessly between personal memory and literary philosophy.

The conversation opened with reflections on the author's remarkable upbringing in a family of eighteen children. Asked whether her poet-mother and industrialist father had shaped her inner world and writing, Dalmia Adhar smiled and replied, "The simple answer is yes to both, yes." She spoke warmly of inheriting fearlessness and a "dangerously reckless, bold" spirit from her father, while crediting her mother's literary brilliance for nurturing her creative instincts. "She was absolutely spectacular beyond words," she recalled with affection.

The discussion then turned to psychology, a discipline that profoundly informs her writing. Holding a Master's degree in psychology, Dalmia Adhar described herself as a "people watcher," revealing how deeply she immerses herself in her characters. "I take on the soul or the body of that person, and I am able to write in that person's voice," she explained. Her fiction, she noted, emerges not merely from observation but from emotional inhabitation.

One of the most compelling segments of the evening revolved around her acclaimed work on Kasturba Gandhi. While history celebrates Mahatma Gandhi's extraordinary life, Dalmia Adhar observed, "The only person on this planet who had to deal with the ordinariness of that extraordinary man was Kasturba." Her aim, she said, was to "resurrect that woman and speak her voice," shifting the lens from the iconic figure to the woman who lived beside him.



Ashley Lalremruati



Amelia Lalremdiki Sailo

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organized with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Aizawl, and in association with Oil India Limited; Hospitality Partner, Folkland*



Riri Trivedi and Jyoti Kapoor

Healing the Self, Reclaiming the Spirit

Nagpur witnessed an emotionally resonant and intellectually enriching evening at **The Write Circle**, an initiative of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation**, where author, trauma therapist, and researcher Riri Trivedi engaged in a deeply reflective conversation with Ehsaas Woman of Nagpur, Jyoti Kapoor. The evening opened with a warm welcome note by Parveen Tuli, **Ehsaas Woman** of Nagpur, setting the tone for an intimate exploration of trauma, healing, emotional resilience, and the transformative power of self-awareness.

The session unfolded as an honest and layered dialogue, with Trivedi tracing her journey into the world of psychotherapy and trauma-sensitive healing. Speaking candidly about the roots of her work, she revealed that her professional calling emerged from deeply personal experiences. “Most people who enter this field do so because of their own challenges,” she reflected, recounting her struggle with post-partum depression during a time when conversations around mental health were nearly absent. “I didn’t even know what depression was,” she admitted. Alongside emotional exhaustion, anger issues, and relationship struggles, she slowly began questioning the nature of fulfilment, identity, and emotional wellbeing.

Rather than a sudden transformation, her path evolved gradually through what she described as “baby steps.” Leaving behind a stable corporate career was one such pivotal step. Initially drawn to yoga and holistic wellness, she soon found herself asking deeper questions about relationships, emotional patterns, and unresolved pain. This search led her towards spiritual inquiry, past-life regression, and eventually structured therapeutic practice rooted in trauma studies and clinical understanding.

Reflecting on this transition, Trivedi acknowledged the uncertainty that accompanied her decision. Coming from a family of chartered accountants and armed with degrees in marketing and law, the expectation was a predictable professional trajectory. Yet, despite financial comfort and a successful corporate life abroad, including time in Japan with a multinational company, she realised that external

success did not necessarily bring inner contentment. “Money was coming in, but it wasn’t making us happier,” she observed with quiet honesty.

Over time, her personal healing journey transformed into meaningful work supporting others navigating trauma and emotional distress. Together with her husband, who brought a research-oriented perspective to the practice, she built a framework that combined spirituality, psychology, and evidence-based therapeutic work. Today, her work extends across research, clinical intervention, and writing, with a recent PhD focused on childhood trauma and mental health.

Equally poignant was her reflection on loneliness and emotional silence across generations. She encouraged audiences to initiate honest emotional conversations with parents and elders, many of whom grew up in environments where feelings were rarely discussed.

The evening concluded with a lighter Q&A interaction that revealed Trivedi’s warmth and humour. Whether discussing wellness routines, favourite comfort foods, or the subconscious impact of visual media, she remained refreshingly candid and approachable. Monica Bhagwagar, **Ehsaas Woman** of Nagpur, delivered the vote of thanks, while Rahul Soni felicitated the author, bringing to a close an evening that left the audience deeply moved, introspective, and inspired.



Monica Bhagwagar



Parveen Tuli

*This session of **The Write Circle** was organized with the support of **Ehsaas Women** of Nagpur, and was in association with Hospitality Partner C P Club Nagpur and Print Hindi Media Partner, Lokmat*



Srinjoy Chowdhury and Philipp Ackermann

A Dialogue of Diplomacy, Culture, and Shared Futures

Prabha Khaitan Foundation hosted an intellectually enriching edition of **Tête-à-Tea** featuring His Excellency Philipp Ackermann, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to India, in conversation with senior journalist Srinjoy Chowdhury. Centred on the theme “India and Germany: Partners in Progress, Sustainability, and Innovation,” the evening explored the many dimensions of Indo-German relations — from diplomacy and education to trade, culture, and climate action. The session opened with a warm welcome note by Neelima Dalmia Adhar, **Ehsaas Woman** of Delhi and Honorary Convenor of Delhi NCR Affairs, who set the tone for a thoughtful and engaging exchange.

Recounting an anecdote from Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s European visit, Chowdhury observed how Germany and India have steadily built a relationship founded on trust and continuity. Reflecting on the many meetings between Chancellor Angela Merkel and Prime Minister Modi, Ambassador Ackermann remarked, “The fact that they met so often shows there was a remarkable level of trust.” He added that in diplomacy, face-to-face meetings remain the true measure of confidence between nations.

Speaking about the nature of Indo-German ties, the Ambassador noted with humour that the relationship often remains “below the radar,” but added, “That may not be the worst thing.” Unlike more volatile global alliances, he suggested, the India-Germany partnership is stable, consistent, and rooted in long-term cooperation. He highlighted Germany’s historic engagement with India through Indology, Sanskrit studies, and philosophical inquiry, recalling the influence of scholars like Max Müller and the admiration Europe once held for Rabindranath Tagore. “Tagore was a star when he came to Europe,” he said, reflecting on India’s enduring cultural influence.

The conversation also focused extensively on education and migration. Ambassador Ackermann revealed that nearly 60,000 Indian students are currently studying in Germany,

making them the country’s largest international student community. Praising their dedication and work ethic, he remarked that German universities view Indian students as “extremely committed and hardworking.” He also underlined Germany’s accessible education system, explaining that higher education remains largely state-funded and affordable.

On economic cooperation, Ackermann pointed to the presence of more than 2,000 German companies in India and emphasised the immense untapped potential in bilateral trade. Climate change and sustainability also emerged as key themes, with the Ambassador stressing that global climate goals cannot be achieved without India’s participation. “Without India, all combat is futile,” he observed while discussing the Green and Sustainable Development Partnership between the two countries.

The conversation concluded on a light-hearted note as Ackermann joked about India’s dominance in cricket and Germany’s strength in football, drawing laughter from the audience. Dipali Bhasin, **Ehsaas Woman** of Delhi, delivered the closing remarks, while the guests were felicitated with handcrafted puppets from Western India by Sonali Chauhan, General Manager of The Connaught.



Dipali Bhasin



Neelima Dalmia Adhar

This session of Tête-à-Tea was presented by Smartworks; Hospitality Partner, The Connaught, New Delhi - IHCL SeleQtions

Stories, Smiles, and the Magic of Imagination



Shreedevi Sunil



Shreedevi Sunil

Muskaan, a joint initiative of the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** and **Education For All Trust**, organised two engaging storytelling sessions at the Sunbeam Group of Schools in Varanasi, conducted by facilitator Shreedevi Sunil. Held at Sunbeam Suncity School and Sunbeam Gramin School, the sessions brought together storytelling, puppetry, and performing arts to create joyful and meaningful learning experiences for children across different age groups and language backgrounds.

The first session at Sunbeam Suncity School was conducted for students from Nursery to Grade 3. It opened with a lively finger-play adaptation of *The Three Little Pigs*, instantly drawing children into the world of rhythm and imagination. This was followed by a puppet performance of *The Wide-Mouthed Frog*, a humorous folktale that highlighted the importance of listening to elders. The session concluded with an African folktale carrying the memorable message: "Don't trouble trouble unless trouble troubles you!" The young students responded with enthusiasm, laughter, and curiosity, while teachers appreciated the highly interactive format that made learning enjoyable and immersive.

Encouraged by the success of the first session, a second storytelling performance was organised for the Hindi-medium students of Sunbeam Gramin School. Beginning with an interactive ice-breaker and a discussion on storytelling and puppetry, the session featured *Unlikely Friends* — a Hindi adaptation of Aesop's *The Lion and the Mouse*. Through themes of empathy, kindness, and friendship, the performance deeply resonated with the students, who participated with excitement and warmth.

Reflecting on the experience, Shreedevi Sunil shared that it was a joy to perform for the children of both schools and to witness the enthusiasm with which the stories were received. Representatives from Sunbeam Schools also expressed gratitude to the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** and **Muskaan** for bringing creativity, imagination, and the performing arts into education, ensuring that meaningful stories and values reach every child.

*Muskaan is a joint initiative of **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** and **Education for All Trust***



Shreedevi Sunil



Rubina Bembi

Stories, Smiles, and the Magic of Imagination

In the spirit of promoting a mindful and compassionate Diwali, under the aegis of **Muskaan, Prabha Khaitan Foundation** organised an insightful awareness session led by Rubina Bembi from Help in Suffering, Jaipur. The session focused on the often-overlooked impact of burning crackers on animals, the environment, and public health, encouraging young minds to rethink how festivals can be celebrated responsibly.

Through an engaging and interactive discussion, Rubina highlighted the distress caused to animals by loud noises and pollution, while also drawing attention to the harmful toxins and waste released into the environment long after the festivities end. Her thought-provoking session inspired students to reflect on how small choices during celebrations can create a meaningful difference for the world around them.

Students from schools across India participated enthusiastically, sharing their ideas and concerns while learning practical

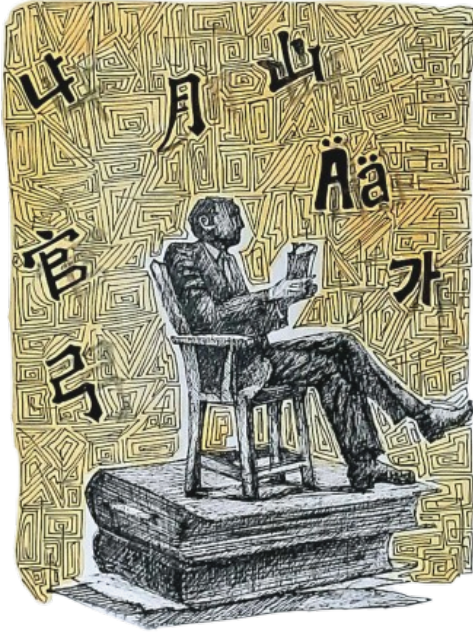
ways to celebrate Diwali more consciously. Discussions centred around protecting pets and stray animals, reducing noise pollution, and spreading awareness among friends and families about sustainable celebrations. The interaction reflected not only curiosity but also empathy and a growing sense of environmental responsibility among the young participants.

The session concluded with a heartfelt reminder that the true spirit of Diwali lies in spreading light, warmth, and compassion rather than noise and pollution. By encouraging children to become mindful and responsible citizens, **Muskaan** continues to create meaningful conversations around sustainability, kindness, and conscious living.

Initiatives such as these reaffirm the belief that festivals can remain joyful and vibrant while also being sensitive to the wellbeing of people, animals, and the planet.

*Muskaan is a joint initiative of Prabha Khaitan Foundation
and Education for All Trust*





International Translation Day: Bridging Worlds Through Translation

Translation is that which transforms
everything so that nothing changes.

— Günter Grass

On International Translation Day, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** celebrates the profound role of translation in connecting cultures, preserving heritage, and fostering understanding across linguistic boundaries. Translation is far more than the conversion of words from one language to another — it is the art of carrying emotions, ideas, traditions, and histories across diverse worlds.

In a country as linguistically rich and culturally diverse as India, translation plays a vital role in ensuring that literature, knowledge, and regional voices reach wider audiences. It enables stories born in one corner of the world to inspire hearts in another, creating bridges of empathy and dialogue between communities and cultures.

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation believes that translation is an essential force in promoting inclusivity, cultural exchange, and intellectual growth. Translators serve as custodians of voices and narratives, ensuring that languages continue to thrive while making knowledge accessible to all.

This day reminds us that language should never be a barrier to understanding. Through translation, humanity finds common ground — celebrating both the beauty of diversity and the universality of human experience.



World Animal Welfare Day: Compassion for Every Living Being

The greatness of a nation and its
moral progress can be judged by the
way its animals are treated.

— Mahatma Gandhi

On World Animal Welfare Day, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** emphasizes the importance of compassion, care, and coexistence with all living beings. Animals are an integral part of our ecosystems and our shared world, yet countless species continue to suffer due to cruelty, habitat destruction, exploitation, and neglect.

From domestic animals to wildlife, every creature deserves dignity, protection, and the right to exist in a safe and nurturing environment. Human actions have a profound impact on animal welfare, making it our collective responsibility to ensure ethical treatment, conservation, and sustainable coexistence.

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation believes that kindness toward animals reflects the compassion and humanity of society itself. Through awareness, education, and conscious action, we can encourage more humane practices and strengthen efforts toward wildlife conservation and animal protection.

World Animal Welfare Day serves as a reminder that every act of empathy matters. By treating animals with respect and care, we move closer to creating a more compassionate, balanced, and harmonious world for all forms of life.

Children's Day: Nurturing Young Minds

“Children are the world's most
valuable resource and its best hope
for the future.”

— John F. Kennedy



On Children's Day, the **Prabha Khaitan Foundation** celebrates the boundless imagination, innocence, and potential of children — the architects of tomorrow's world. Every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow, dream, and thrive in an environment filled with love, care, and encouragement.

Childhood is a crucial phase that shapes values, creativity, confidence, and emotional well-being. Yet, many children continue to face challenges such as limited access to education, malnutrition, inequality, and lack of opportunities. Ensuring their holistic development requires collective efforts from families, educators, communities, and institutions alike.

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation strongly believes that nurturing young minds through education, creativity, and emotional support lays the foundation for a brighter and more equitable future. By investing in children today, we empower future generations to become compassionate leaders, innovators, and responsible citizens.

Children's Day is not only a celebration of joy and innocence but also a reminder of our responsibility to protect and guide every child toward a life filled with dignity, opportunity, and hope.



Melodies of the Month

The Prabha Khaitan Foundation proudly continues its Music of the Month initiative, conceptualised by Grammy Award Winner, Ricky Kej. Through this unique musical journey, each composition seeks to inspire reflection, celebrate humanity, and explore themes that connect people across cultures, beliefs, and experiences. Blending emotion with melody, Ricky Kej's music transcends boundaries and reminds listeners of the enduring power of harmony, compassion, and unity.



Art of Devotion

In this soulful composition, Ricky Kej explores the essence of devotion, love, and selfless service — the true foundations of a meaningful life. Through serene melodies and uplifting harmonies, the piece reflects the quiet strength that comes from living with compassion, humility, and purpose.

The composition serves as a gentle reminder that devotion is not confined to faith alone, but is expressed through kindness, empathy, and the selfless acts that bring people closer together.

ARTWORK BY **SUDIPTA KUNDU**



We Are One

Inspired by the timeless hymn Raghupati Raghava, this evocative composition by Ricky Kej is a heartfelt tribute to unity, peace, and harmony among all faiths and communities. Rooted in the belief that the essence of every religion is the same, the piece celebrates the idea that while paths may differ, humanity ultimately seeks the same truth and connection.

Blending traditional influences with contemporary musical expression, the composition becomes a powerful anthem of togetherness, reminding listeners that compassion and understanding are the cornerstones of a harmonious world.



Compassion

Dedicated to one of humanity's most profound emotions, this moving composition by Ricky Kej celebrates compassion as the driving force behind human connection and positive change. Inspired by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Kailash Satyarthi's definition of compassion as "selfless problem solving," the piece reflects the beauty of empathy in action.

Through tender melodies and emotional depth, the composition encourages listeners to embrace kindness, understanding, and shared humanity. It is both a tribute to the spirit of compassion and a reminder that even the smallest acts of care can create lasting change in the world.

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Handscripted by Paresh Maity

