



THE TIMES  
OF INDIA



YES BANK

# Kumaon Literary Festival

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# Unspoken Ways of Mountain Life

Dhanachuli is a tiny hamlet comprising a few hundred households spread over many undulating hills with a population of less than 2000. The female ratio is very high as is their literacy rate. The people of Dhanachuli live a simple, idyllic life which is reflected in their peaceful smiles and serene demeanor that can be seen on their ever smiling faces.

Far away from maddening crowd this balmy existence requires our due consideration and appreciation.

Therefore, it is our collective responsibility to ensure we respect their way of life by observing the unspoken ways of mountain life.

As you undertake this journey along with the people here, here are some guidelines to stay mindful of:

The villagers are mostly welcoming, though local women and children are at times shy and may not initiate a conversation on their own. But if you do start one, they respond warmly, particularly if the visitors are or include women.

While the villagers are accustomed to receiving visitors who are dressed up in western dresses, trousers and long dresses are preferred. Shorts and skirts should be avoided in respect of local culture and the cold weather conditions likely in the month of October. Shoes with heels should be avoided for your own comfort.

The scenic beauty brings out the artist in all of us and photography is welcome. However, avoid clicking people or their homes without permission out of respect for them. They are usually very open to being photographed if there is a known local person accompanying the photographers or trekkers.

While leisurely walks on one's own any time are safe and recommended, the longer treks should be explored, preferably with a guide accompanying the guest just in case you don't get lost.

The Dickensian lines "It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold, when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade." is the perfect way to describe seesaw temperature in hills. The temperature in the mountains drops suddenly. You may feel warm under the sun but cold in shade. Keep the warm clothes on notwithstanding. Early mornings and evenings after sunset tend to get cold.

While drinking is a way of life for mountain men, drinking in open day light by visitors may be considered inappropriate.

Playing soft music on your phone or other instrument is fine but any kind of loud music must be avoided.

Driving in the mountains requires special skill and observance of different set of rules. Please aware yourself of the rules and practices to avoid any mishaps.

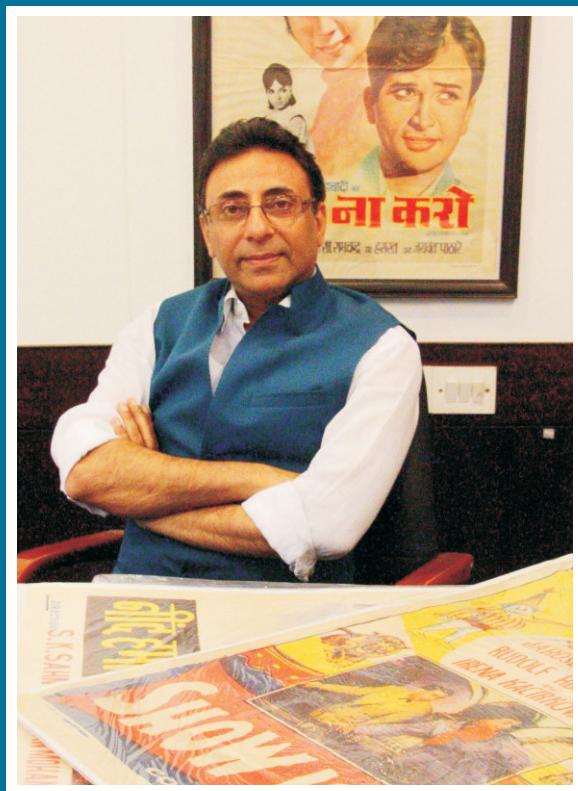
Lastly, the hotels in and around Dhanachuli are modest by city standards and in comparison with recognized hill stations. Weather in the hills is harsh and roads uneven. The business season is particularly prone to many challenges especially for small hotel owners. You will not be short changed on hospitality though and the memories you take will surely compensate for the little adjustments you may have to make. Be patient please!



Aao Jee Le Zindagi



# FOUNDER'S DESK



Kumaon Literary Festival is not an event. Neither is it just another festival. Kumaon Literary Festival is a manifestation of faith in the power of literature. The power of literature to change, influence, mentor and shape. It is a resolve. A resolve to build a literary community committed to developing culturally, socially and environmentally conscious societies that contribute to long term and sustainable growth and prosperity of the country.

India is passing through an immense tectonic shift ideologically, culturally and economically leading to cause for both celebration and concern. While the economic developments continue to create new opportunities of growth for the youth, an exodus of young population is taking place from the villages and smaller towns in search of employment opportunities. The old ways of life are fast diminishing with a concomitant disappearance of cultural and literary mores. The migrating youth do not always carry their way of life along thus, leaving behind traditions, customs, costumes, which gradually fade out of their memory.

We humbly believe that it is the responsibility of more stable and established adults of the society to provide guidance and offer their wisdom to the young and aspiring population in times of such transition. It is also our unshakable belief that thinkers, writers, poets and artists must play a significant role in providing guidance and through such guidance, coherence to the process of transition. There is an intrinsic logic and need to strengthen their role and contribution.

And this is exactly what we propose to do.

Yet, Kumaon Literary Festival is not a mission or a crusade. At its core remains, the celebration of literature. And what better location for this festivity than the hilly region of Uttarakhand, which shares a special relationship with literature, which is perhaps as old as literature itself.

Ours is a small but sure step and we sincerely believe and hope that this proverbial tortoise who moves slowly, but surely, guides us to our goals!

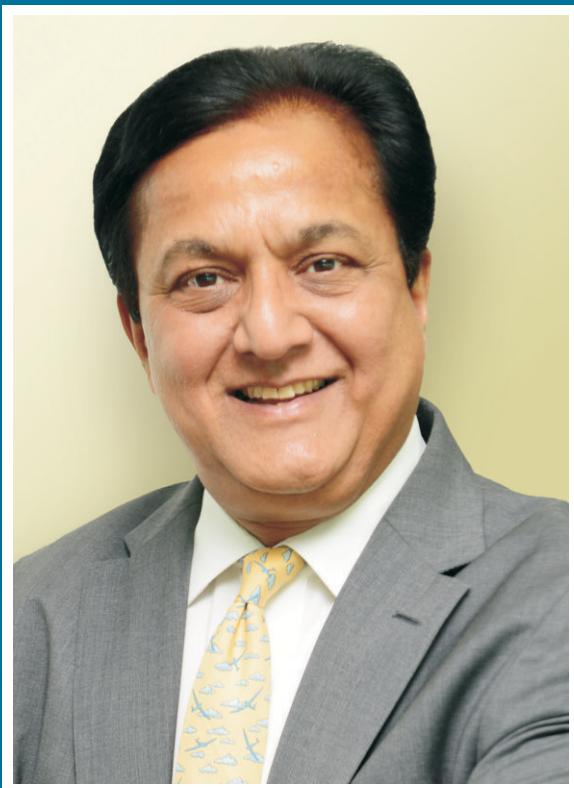
## **Sumant Batra**

Founder

# INDEX

YES Bank Desk	-----	08
NHP Centre	-----	10
Fellows of Nature	-----	11
Literary Bhagidari	-----	12
Women Unlimited Series	-----	13
KLF Founder	-----	14
Core Planning Board	-----	16
KLF Secretariat & Sparrows	-----	25
Speakers	-----	26
Sponsors & Partners	-----	66
Young Writers Session	-----	87
Poetry Contest Winners	-----	87
Destination Dhanachuli	-----	88
About Te Aroha	-----	89
Schedule - Day 1	-----	90
Schedule - Day 2	-----	91
Schedule - Day 3	-----	95
Nainital	-----	98
About Abbotsford	-----	99
Schedule - Day 4	-----	100
Schedule - Day 5	-----	103
Acknowledgement	-----	106
KLF Lifetime Achievement Award	-----	108

# YES BANK DESK



YES BANK is delighted to present the maiden edition of Kumaon Literary Festival to celebrate India's rich literary heritage.

Kumaon Literary Festival has been envisaged as democratic forum for literature lovers and authors to come together for a collective dialogue on literary consciousness. The inspiring region of Kumaon has recounted timeless stories of kingdoms, ancient architecture and scripture as well as concern for the environment. It is therefore timely that the region has its own literary forum as a national creative platform.

YES BANK's association with Kumaon Literary Festival, through YES Institute's YES Culture initiative, aims to provide a stellar platform for the vast creative talent and resurgence, synonymous with India's literature, modern culture and rich heritage. As a global think tank, YES Institute has been extensively involved in promoting ideas and discourse through relevant dialogues on environment, culture, urbanization and sustainability in India.

Initiatives such as Kumaon Literary Festival have the potential of promoting India's talent by focusing on multi-lingual writings, local authors, extensive genres and participation of young audiences. As a patron of the arts and literature, YES BANK foresees this association for the benefit of the larger society. In this regard, I am pleased to announce YES Institute Fellowships to be conferred at the Festival for young and promising authors from Kumaon.

We at YES BANK share the Kumaon Literary Festival's commitment to widen the coverage of Indian literature, culture and arts and to bring together some of the finest writers and literary enthusiasts. I firmly believe that this partnership will further augment India's cultural stature globally, provide new professional avenues for our nation's talented youth, as well as strengthen our cultural fabric.

Thank You,

Sincerely



**Rana Kapoor**

Managing Director, CEO 

Chairman   
THINKING INDIA



Community living is an important part of any civilized society. Respect for each other's culture and country's heritage; contribution to socio-economic development of communities; and protection of habitat of human and the wildlife are fundamental to peace and harmony in any society. Rise in economic prosperity of a country and its constituents without corresponding growth of their culture is likely to make economic prosperity unsustainable in the long term. Producing leaders that excel in the field of art, literature and other cultural areas is fundamental to cultural development of the country.

NHP Centre is a humble effort to develop a framework of diverse, creative and integrated initiatives that aid in cultural progress and social consciousness of communities and are essential indicators for measuring the happiness quotient, growth and success of its members.

A not for profit initiative, NHP Centre is founded by Sumant and Asha Batra. NHP Centre is the producer of Kumaon Literary Festival and various other initiatives.



## FELLOWS OF NATURE

Nature writing was once considered to be the rock and roll of literature. In the last few decades it has shown a steady decline. Like all extinctions, nature writing's gradual disappearance represents a profound loss. Writing in this category is born out of love, respect, and awe of nature. It finds its subject during days of close observation of the beauty of the natural world. Writing about the close relationship between humankind and nature plays an important role in creating interest and building respect for it amongst book lovers and others. There is a pressing need to restore this literary art. The best way to do it is through stories.

With the objective of reviving interest in nature writing and reading, and through this form of literature, build awareness and develop respect for nature, and eventually help in conservation, NHP Centre, in partnership with the French Institute in India, Wildlife Trust of India and Wisdom Tree have initiated "Fellows of Nature"(FON), a project that entails inviting submissions of short stories on the theme of nature from around the world. A jury chaired by Siddhartha Gigoo (Asia winner of Commonwealth Short Story Award 2015) will select best stories from the submissions received, for publication. The FON project will have the following outcomes arising out of this single initiative.

- (i) A book of fine collection of short stories on nature
- (ii) FON Award to be presented to the two best stories. The cash award will be presented at the second edition of KLF
- (iii) Create a community of nature writers; and
- (iv) Put the spotlight on critical environment issues

**Sujata Parashar**  
Director,  
**Fellows of Nature**

**Sumant Batra**  
Founder,  
**Fellows of Nature**



Literary Bhagidari is a project to mentor the youth through literature. India is currently passing through a phase of rapid social, cultural and economic transition. Significant changes are occurring in the ways of life of people. An immensely young population has to deal with the dynamics of this transition on a daily basis. It is the responsibility of the more stable and established adults of the society to provide guidance, mentorship, and offer their wisdom to the young and aspiring population who are the future thought leaders. The role of art and literature assumes far greater importance in such times as thinkers, writers, poets and artists can make an important contribution in guiding the youth.

With this objective, NHP Centre and Kumaon Literary Festival, with support from the Australian High Commission in India have started this initiative to involve the literary community in mentoring the youth.

Mrs. Natalie Daalder, wife of His Excellency Mr. Patrick Suckling, the Australian High Commissioner to India is the ambassador of Literary Bhagidari project.

### **Supported by**



**Australian High Commission  
in India**



One of the highlights of Kumaon Literary Festival is the innovative Women Unlimited Series initiative, a programme supported by United Nations Women.

The majority participants in the festival are women. Not just as participants, women feature prominently across the entire spectrum of the festival including, the planning board, speakers, moderators, curators, chefs, performers, secretariat and volunteers. In other words, the Kumaon Literary Festival is powered by women and also empowers women.

For more details about this initiative, please visit  
[www.kumaonliteraryfestival.org](http://www.kumaonliteraryfestival.org)

### **Supported by**



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women



**HeForShe**  
UN Women Solidarity Movement  
for Gender Equality



## **Sumant Batra**

Founder

Sumant is a corporate and policy lawyer of global eminence; writer, poet, museum curator and a creative entrepreneur. He is the founder of Kumaon Literary Festival. He has founded a number of initiatives to promote art, culture, literature and music. He is founder of a boutique hotel (Te Aroha), a museum (Chitrashala) and a production house (The Speaking Hats).

He is senior international consultant to the IMF, World Bank Group and OECD and has worked extensively on policy matters in Africa, Eastern Europe, Middle East and South Asia. Rated as India's No. 1 insolvency lawyer by Legal 500, his contributions to reforms in Indian insolvency system are well-recognised. Sumant has held leadership positions in prestigious multi-lateral, global and national organisations.

He is a frequent speaker at various international and domestic conferences.

Sumant lives in New Delhi with his wife, Asha and two children.

# CORE PLANNING BOARD



## **Barkha Dutt**

Chairperson, Advisory Board

Barkha Dutt is Consulting Editor with NDTV, India's premier news network. She is one of India's best-known journalists and the youngest to receive 'Padma Shri', one of India's highest State honors. She emerged as a household name with her frontline war reporting on the Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan in 1999. In her twenty-year career, she has reported from several conflict zones, including Kashmir, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq cementing her reputation as a fearless journalist who reports from some of the most dangerous places in the world. In the last one year, Barkha Dutt has interviewed Nobel laureates Al Gore, Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzai, and many renowned global personalities.

Barkha is the host of the weekly, award-winning talk-show *We The People* as well as the daily prime-time show *The Buck Stops Here*.

She has just turned entrepreneur with her own multimedia content company

She has won over forty national and international awards for journalism including the Global Leader for Tomorrow award at the World Economic Forum, Commonwealth Broadcasters' Award for 'Journalist of the Year' and the Asian Television Award for 'Best Talk Show'. In 2012, she won 'International TV Personality of the Year' at the Association for International Broadcasting Awards in London and 'Best Current Affairs Presenter' at Asian Television Awards in Singapore. In 2014, her interview with Malala Yousafzai won the Asian Television Award for 'Best Talk Show' and Barkha was "highly commended" in 'Best Current Affairs Presenter' category. Last year, she also won News Television Award for Best TV News Anchor (English) for a second year in a row. She has also bagged Indian Television Academy award for Best Talk Show for five consecutive years. This year, her weekly show *We The People* won the ENBA Award for 'Best Talk Show'.



## Janhavi Prasada

Member, Planning Board

Janhavi began her journalism career in 1998 with the Pioneer, a leading newspaper daily in India. She has produced and anchored TV programmes aired in India for Doordarshan and abroad for UK Sony TV, US Channel 57. Sixteen years into the field of television and involved with a number of media houses like ANI (Reuters), B.A.G Films in India to HTV, Wales and BBC World Service, London, she produced and anchored news and current affairs programmes in both TV and radio formats. Her company, Srijan Media produces quality digital content and ideation of 360 degrees integrated media campaigns. Janhavi is the founder of "Youth 4 Gandhi Foundation", an NGO that has the credit of running the first of its kind online multimedia campaign on "Gandhi & Sport" for school children and is one of the most extensive artwork archive on Gandhi in the 21st century in all formats (print, audio, digital) under one platform.

Janhavi is writing a graphic novel on Mahatma Gandhi based on his autobiography - "The Story of My Experiments With Truth" to be published later this year by Harper Collins. She will be illustrating parts of the book as well. She is a mountain buff and nurtures her 145-year-old ancestral hill house as a boutique countryside homestay - Abbotsford. It is here that she gets most of her inspiration that is reflected in her works.

Her schooling was at Mayo College, Ajmer. She is an alumnus of St Stephens' College, New Delhi and Cardiff School of Journalism, Wales, United Kingdom.



**Kiran Manral**  
Member, Planning Board

Kiran was a journalist before she quit to be full time mommy. Her blogs were both in India's top blogs and she was a Tehelka blogger columnist on gender issues. Her debut novel, The Reluctant Detective, was published by Westland in 2012 and her second novel Once Upon A Crush, was published by Leadstart in 2014.

She initiated the online volunteer network India Helps, post the 26/11 terrorist attack on Mumbai and the team of volunteers worked on the rehabilitation of the affected and the bereaved of this and the 13/7 bomb blasts amongst others. She is also part of the core founding team of [www.csawarenessmonth.com](http://www.csawarenessmonth.com) (Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Month) and [www.vawaawarenessmonth.wordpress.com](http://www.vawaawarenessmonth.wordpress.com) (Violence Against Women Awareness Month), two very well received social media awareness initiatives. She was awarded the Women Achievers award by Young Environmentalists Group in 2013.



**Priya Kapoor**  
Member, Planning Board

Priya began her career in journalism with The Indian Express. During this time she wrote a weekly column on Delhi called Delhi Upclose which was published the city section of the paper, Delhi Newslne. She worked at the academic publisher Routledge in London for two years before joining Roli Books ten years ago. In her time at Roli Books she has commissioned and edited both mass market successes such as Dongri to Dubai by Hussain Zaidi as well as award winning books such as Taj Mahal Foxtrot by Naresh Fernandes. Being a history student she enjoys digging around archives and would probably be working in a museum if the publishing bug had not caught her first. Her formative years were spent in the beautiful Garhwal hills in Mussoorie and perhaps this is why she prefers mountains to just about anywhere else.

Priya was educated at Woodstock School, Mussoorie, Royal Holloway, University of London and has a MSc from London School of Economics.



## Rishi Suri

Member, Planning Board

Rishi Suri is a senior editor covering international affairs at The Daily Milap, India's oldest and largest circulated Urdu daily newspaper. He is an internationally recognised journalist known for his strong views and opinions on global politics and diplomacy. His interviews with various international personalities and heads of states and his articles on different subjects in the Middle East have been widely acclaimed and appreciated.

Rishi is one of the select few certified diplomatic correspondents by the Ministry of External Affairs in India and has been a part of various international delegations and programs. He is a distinguished alumni of the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) run by the State Department of the United States of America. Along with playing an active role on the Steering Committee of the Australia India Youth Dialogue he is also a Media Fellow with the Australia India Council since 2012 and has also been a Chevening Scholar (UK) since 2013.

Rishi also plays an administrative role in the publication as he is part of the fourth generation of the family running the newspaper, started by Mahashay Khusal Chand Ji, later known as Mahatma Anand Swami Saraswati in Lahore (now in Pakistan) on the 13th of April, 1923. The Daily Milap was a social reformist newspaper and an instrument of social change while fighting tooth and nail for the freedom of the country. Gradually through the love of the people, Milap grew and prospered and, even in its current functioning carries with it many values which it has stood for over the years. It is this lineage which has greatly contributed to Rishi's knowledge, personality and development of his thought process.



## **Saif Mahmood**

Member, Planning Board

Saif is a New Delhi-based lawyer holding a doctorate in Comparative Constitutional Law in South Asia. He speaks and writes on diverse issues ranging from law to literature and is associated in different capacities with a number of academic, legal, professional and literary organizations around the world. Founder of the online group, South Asian Alliance for Literature, Art & Culture (SAALARC) and an aficionado of Urdu poetry, he remembers most of his Ghalib, Iqbal and Faiz by heart, recites them effortlessly and translates them into English cautiously. His translations have appeared in a number of prestigious publications and his passionate recitations on varied platforms have enthralled many an audience.

Saif blogs on [besabab.wordpress.com](http://besabab.wordpress.com) where he has also authored a series on Urdu poets of Delhi titled "Dillijoekshehertha".



## **Sujata Parashar**

Member, Planning Board

Sujata is a novelist, poet, short story writer and activist. Her debut novel, *In pursuit of infidelity* (2009) explored the man – woman relationship outside the institution of marriage from a modern woman's perspective. It was a bestseller. The second in the series, *In Pursuit of Ecstasy* (2011) studied the youth - parent relationship in modern times and made an attempt to portray how the seeds of dissension between the two impact the society at large. The book was long listed for the Economist Crossword Book Award 2012. Her latest novel, the third in the "pursuit" series, *In Pursuit of a Lesser Offence*, was released in 2014 and explores the relevance of institution of marriage in current times. Her first short fiction *Wake me only when the Sun is high* (2011), and her first book of poems (2012) in the series "Poetry Out and Loud" have won awards.

She holds a Masters in Human Rights and is a certified professional in the field of Travel and Tourism management. She also has a rich and diverse professional portfolio: She has worked on and completed several prestigious assignments in this field including working for ACORD, a Delhi based social research and consulting firm on projects related to good governance, editing a manual for caregivers and relevant health professionals on psychosocial support for Person with Hemophilia (PwH), writing a formative research report on 'Linkages between Youth and HIV/AIDS' for National Aids Control Society (NACO), and carrying out a research on child rights issues of the marginalised and excluded children for an international organization.

She is currently on the executive board of Empowering Minds; a national level NGO located in Delhi. Sujata loves to travel and unwinds by watching a period drama or film.



**Sonali Misra**  
Member, Planning Board

An editor at Scholastic India, the leading publisher of children's literature in the country, Sonali Misra is one of the youngest members of the KLF team. She has always been fascinated with the power of language, and has been an avid reader ever since she could read.

Sonali pursued her passion for literature at Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi, from where she graduated in 2013 with a first division in English Honours. There, she found new avenues to express herself. She was the editor of the department and college magazines and also wrote for them. Alongside, she headed the creative writing society of the college. She won many creative writing competitions for her short stories, and was awarded the prestigious Anubha Dhar Prize for

Creative Writing in English by her college in 2013. In the same year, two of her short stories were published in the Women's Educational Worldwide (WEW) student journal, Voices and Visions (an international joint project of seven different WEW institutions from five different countries), that focuses on women's voices and concerns.

Sonali formally started her career in 2013 at Macmillan Publishing Services, and previously interned at Penguin Books India and Comic Con India. Presently, she is working on her first novel.

# SECRETARIAT & SPARROWS



**Richa Thakur**  
Sr. Programme Coordinator



**Shikha Upadhyay**  
Creative Support &  
Team Member



**Shruti Bhatt**  
Programme Coordinator



**Abhimanyu Kharab**



**Asmita Joshi**



**Avantika**



**Kshetrimayum  
Brahul Singh**



**Kashish Badar**



**Kavya Wahi**



**Piyush Nagpal**



**Swara Shukla**

# SPEAKERS



## Aanchal Malhotra

Aanchal Malhotra is a multimedia artist whose works explore the written word, photographic imagery and traditional printmaking. It reflects on issues like cultural diaspora and displacement, notions of withdrawing from or belonging to a certain place, the forgotten fragments of collective experiences, and family history and genealogy.

She is currently working on a project entitled, 'Remnants of a Separation' - a study of the material remains of the Partition. Her primary research is based on the objects that individuals took with them when they left their homes on either side of the border - the belongings that became a part of their journey.

Third generation of the Bahrasons Bookseller family, she has grown up surrounded by books and works as a literary agent at Red Ink Literary Agency and is actively involved with Tara-India Research.

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## Abha Iyengar

Abha Iyengar is an internationally published author, poet and British Council certified creative writing facilitator. Her work has appeared in The Four Quarters Magazine, Kritya, Muse India, The Asian Writer, Pure Slush, and others. Her story, "The High Stool", was nominated for the Story South Million Writers Award. Her poem-film "Parwaaz" won a special jury prize at Patras, Greece and screened to acclaim at international film festivals. She won the Mariner Award 2010, and the Lavanya Sankaran fellowship 2009-10. She was a finalist in the FlashMob 2013 Flash Fiction contest. Her poems have appeared in the Anthology of Contemporary Indian Poets and her fiction in The Indo-Australian Anthology of Short Fiction. Her published works are Yearnings (poetry), Flash Bites (flash fiction), Shreyan and Many Fish to Fry (novels). A short story collection, "The Gourd Seller and Other Stories" is her latest work, published in 2015.

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## Aditya Bal

Aditya Bal grew up in a family which ran a hotel in idyllic Kashmir, watching his maternal grandmother rustle up delicious meals and bake most passionately. After a successful modeling career spanning 8 years and a short stint in Bollywood, Aditya decided to head to Goa to pursue what he did best: cooking. A chance meeting with NDTV Good Times gave his culinary skills a new direction and today he is one of the most celebrated anchor-chefs on Chakh Le India, the most popular food show on the channel.

He hosted a slew of very successful cookery shows for Ndtv Good Times, and during this process has learned the nuances of proper regional and sub-regional Indian cuisine. He also enjoys writing cookbooks and published his first book last year.



## Advaita Kala

Advaita Kala is the celebrated literary brain behind Sujoy Ghosh's Vidya Balan starrer film Kahaani, author of best seller Almost Single and the script writer for Ranbir Kapoor - Priyanka Chopra starrer Anjaana - Anjaani. Hotelier by profession, Advaita quit her job as a hotel executive to pen the sequel to Almost Single. Advaita has lived in six cities before choosing to stay in Delhi for over two years. However, she still travels extensively.



## Ajay Jain

Ajay Jain describes himself as a traveller, Road Tripper to be more precise. He is the owner of Kunzum Café, a one of its kind Travel café located in Hauz Khas Village. Its a quaint and cozy destination where travellers from all across can sit and discuss myriad travel experiences over a cup of coffee and cookies. With a business model that many might turn down as unfeasible, Jain with his passion has managed to make it sail.

He started out as an Engineer and worked in IT Hardware, but along the way meandered his course and took travelling full time. Kumzum was named after a Pass in the Himalayas, a perfect metaphor of crossing from ordinary and mundane to unexpected and unexplored.

He has written along the way, Postcards From Laddakh and Peep Peep Don't Sleep are primarily visual, whereas Delhi 101, is a quirky travel guide to city. His Don't Feel Stupid at Sixty, is an interesting attempt to sum up his travel philosophy and mantra for life.



## Ajay Rawat

Ajay Rawat is a much respected ecological crusader and highly acclaimed international authority on forests history and ecology. He was Chairman of the International Union of Forestry Research Organization, Vienna, from 1995 to 2005, the first Asian to be nominated to this position. It is the biggest and oldest forest research organization in the world. He has written many books chief among them being, Man and Forests, Forests on Fire, Forest History of the Mountain Regions of the World, Indian Forestry a Perspective, and Indian Forestry through the Ages.

As an activist he successfully saved the famous Naini Tal Lake and nine other lakes in the Nainital Lake Region from ecological degradation owing to pollution through Public Interest Litigation. For his relentless work, erudition and passion he has been awarded with many accolades including the International Award, Order of the Golden Ark in Netherlands, Best RTI Citizen of India, Godfrey Phillips Bravery Gold Medal, Vijay Shree and First Narain Dutt Aushadhalaya Trust Award by the Vice President of India.



## Akshay Manwani

Akshay Manwani graduated from St. Xavier's College in 2000, and subsequently followed the crowd to business school. Having subjected himself to the monotony of a corporate life for six years, Akshay turned to freelance writing in 2009 where he combined his twin interests of cinema and sports. Since then, his writings have appeared in Business Standard, The Caravan, Mumbai Mirror, Scroll.in, DailyO, Mint, NBA.com/India and The Big Indian Picture.

Akshay's first book, *Sahir Ludhianvi: The People's Poet*, was published in December 2013 by HarperCollins India. In 2014, Akshay won the RedInk award for Best Lifestyle and Entertainment Story for his detailed feature on B.R. Chopra's *Mahabharata* television series given out by the Press Club Mumbai. Akshay is currently working on his second book about renowned writer-filmmaker, Nasir Husain.

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## Ameena Saiyid

Ameena Saiyid, the managing director of Oxford University Press in Pakistan and the founder of Karachi Literature Festival and Islamabad Literature Festival. She is the holder of the Order of the British Empire in 2005 for her services to promote Anglo-Pakistan relations, women's rights, education and intellectual property rights in Pakistan. She was awarded the French Knighthood, Chevalier des Arts et Lettres, (Knight of the Order of Arts and Literature) by the Government of France in 2013.

Ameena became the head of Oxford University Press (OUP) Pakistan in 1988, becoming the first woman to ever head a multinational company in Pakistan. She built up OUP Pakistan's publishing programme by recruiting and training editors, designers and illustrators and expanding its operations across Pakistan with an objective to promote Pakistani authors within the country and abroad. In 2010, she became the first woman to be elected president of the 150-year-old Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI).

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## Amit Shankar

Amit Shankar has authored 4 national best sellers; *Flight of the Hilsa*, *Chapter 11*, *Love is Vodka-A Shot Ain't Enough* and *Café Latte*. He has over a decade of advertising, marketing and management experience. During his tenure with some of the world's largest advertising agencies, he has spearheaded communication for global brands like Nestle, UNICEF, Cisco, HP, GM, Pedigree, Microsoft, Honda and Canon. Currently he is the CEO of Sparrow-south East Asia's largest animation studio.

His maiden venture, *Flight of the Hilsa*, explores and demystifies happiness. *Chapter 11*, his second title, explores the muck and sleaze behind the glistening corporate façade. *Love is Vodka, A Shot Ain't Enough* explores the confusion around the word love and his latest offering; *Café Latte* surveys various hues of death.



## Anuja Chauhan

She is often described as 'the best writer of the Indian commercial fiction genre'. As a writer, she is best known for her best-selling, contemporary "rom-com" novels, *The Zoya Factor*, *Battle For Bittora*, *Those Pricey Thakur Girls* and *The House That BJ Built*.

Anuja worked in advertising agency, JWT India, for over 17 years, eventually becoming the Vice President before resigning in 2010 to pursue a full-time literary career. Over the years she worked with brands like Pepsi, Kurkure, Mountain Dew and Nokia, creating Pepsi's 'Nothing official about it' campaign and ad slogans like, Pepsi's 'Yeh Dil Maange More' and 'Oye Bubbly'.

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## Arvind Passey

Arvind passey began his professional life marching up and down the drill square of the Indian Military Academy as a gentleman cadet and ended his job-era playing hide-&-seek with media teams as the head of corporate communications.

A few of the 1800+ poems written by him are published in journals in India & UK but the rest still in notebooks, loose sheets, penned on napkins, and in computer files.

His short-stories have been published in various anthologies and his articles published in the like of Education Post, Huffington Post, Business Insider, & Marketing Bazaar. He dreams of travelling to every country in the world, and of finally completing his first novel.

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## Asif Noorani

Asif Noorani is a former editor, senior columnist, author, book and music reviewer and a prominent Pakistani television personality. He is the author of *Tales of Two Cities* in which Kuldip Nayar narrates the migration of his family from Sialkot to Delhi, while Asif Noorani, who was only five at the time of Partition writes about his family's migration from Mumbai to Pakistan. His second book, on the flamboyant Pakistani cricketer Shahid Afridi, was also a bestseller. His book on Mehdi Hasan, with rare renditions of ghazals, medley of folk, film and semi-classical numbers will go into production for the third time. In 2012, he rewrote and updated the quick selling coffee-table book *Journey Through Pakistan*.

Asif Noorani contributes to leading Pakistani Dawn Group of Newspapers and occasionally Indian publications. His articles are on art, literature and music. He reviews books and music recordings. He is particularly known for his humorous writings and travelogues.



## Avirook Sen

Avirook Sen is an independent journalist based in Gurgaon. He has been a reporter and editor for 25 years, working in print, online and broadcast media. Sen launched the *Hindustan Times* Mumbai edition as resident editor, edited *Mid-Day*, and was executive editor of the news channel *NewsX*. He has written on a wide range of subjects, from cricket to terrorism and, most recently, crime. His work has appeared in *India Today*, *Hindustan Times*, *The Express Tribune* (Pakistan), *New Scientist*, *NDTV*, *DNA*, *Firstpost*, *Mumbai Mirror* and a number of other prominent publications.

His first book, 'Looking for America' (Harper Collins, 2010) was described by *Vogue* magazine as a 'Kerouac-like' travelogue, and enthusiastically reviewed.

His bestselling second book, 'Aarushi', (Penguin, 2015) has reignited a national debate on the criminal justice system, on media ethics, and Indian middle class attitudes. Sen is an ardent admirer of Capote and Hitchens, and even more so of Hunter Thompson.



## Barkha Dutt

Barkha Dutt, one of India's best-known journalists and the youngest to receive 'Padma Shri' is consulting Editor with NDTV. In her twenty-year career, she has reported from several conflict zones, including Kashmir, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq cementing her reputation as a fearless journalist who reports from some of the most dangerous places in the world.

Barkha is the host of the weekly, award-winning talk-show *We The People* as well as the daily prime-time show *The Buck Stops Here*. She has just turned entrepreneur with her own multimedia content company.

She has won over forty national and international awards for journalism including the Global Leader for Tomorrow award at the World Economic Forum, Commonwealth Broadcasters' Award for 'Journalist of the Year' and the Asian Television Award for 'Best Talk Show'. In 2012, she won 'International TV Personality of the Year' at the Association for International Broadcasting Awards in London and 'Best Current Affairs Presenter' at Asian Television Awards in Singapore.



## Basanta Rajkumar

Basanta Rajkumar is an officer of Indian Forest Services. He is presently the Managing Director of Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board, Government of Punjab.



## Chandan Mitra

Dr. Chandan Mitra is an Indian journalist, presently Editor and Managing Director of The Pioneer newspaper in Delhi, India. He was nominated as a member of the Rajya Sabha during August 2003 to August 2009. He was elected to another term in the Rajya Sabha, as a member of Bharatiya Janata Party from Madhya Pradesh, in June 2010.

He studied from St Stephens and later finished his Doctorate from Oxford. Mitra started in journalism as Assistant Editor with The Statesman in Kolkata before he moved to the Times of India in Delhi and then The Sunday Observer. He went on to become Editor of the paper, and later moved to the Hindustan Times as Executive Editor. He worked for as Chief Editor for Pioneer which he later acquired.



## Dr. Debasis Panigrahi

Dr. Debasis Panigrahi has published nine collections of short stories, three collections of novellas and one novel in Odia. He is a popular and critically acclaimed writer of short stories, novel and novellas from Odisha. Many of his stories figure in the anthologies of best Odia stories brought out by 'Kendriya Sahitya Akademi' and 'Odisha Sahitya Academy'.

He has bagged a host of literary awards; the most notable amongst them being 'Odisha Sahitya Academy Award' for short stories. His work have been translated and published in English, Hindi, Bengali, Telugu and Kannada. He is also the Honorary Advisor of Utkal Literature Festival (ULF), an English language festival held annually at Bhubaneswar.

He is a member of Indian Police Service and is currently posted as an Inspector General of Police at State Police Headquarters, Cuttack.



## Deepa Agarwal

Author, poet, translator and storyteller, Deepa Agarwal was born and grew up in Almora, Uttarakhand. She writes for both children and adults and has over 50 books published. A frequent contributor to magazines and journals in India and abroad, she has edited and compiled several anthologies. Among other awards, she has received the N.C.E.R.T. National Award for Children's Literature in 1993 for her picture book Ashok's New Friends, while her historical fiction Caravan to Tibet was on the IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) Honour List 2008. Her work has been translated into several Indian and foreign languages. She has also received fellowships to research children's literature. Recent titles include Rajula and the Web of Danger (Hachette India), Chanakya, the Master of Statecraft (Penguin India) in the Puffin Lives series and The Wish-fulfilling Cow and Other Classic Indian Tales (Scholastic India).



## Deepak Rawat

Born and brought up in Mussoorie, Deepak did his schooling from Hampton Court and St. George's Mussoorie. He graduated with honors in History from Hans Raj College, Delhi University and went on to do Masters and M.Phil. from JNU. His M.Phil. theses was titled "Representing masculinity in the Mahabharata".

Deepak joined IRS in 2005 and was selected as an IAS in 2007. He has held various key positions before being posted as District Magistrate of Nainital. He shares special bond with Kumaon as the former MD of Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam(KMVN), the Tourism authority of the region.

An ardent lover of history and literature he loves trekking and bird-watching being a quintessential mountain person.



## Deepti Pant

Deepti Pant is a creative artist and storyteller, for the last decade, she has been exploring the esoteric world of storytelling through films, transmedia, Dastangoi, Theyam or Kathak.

She is passionately involved in exploring the lost storytelling styles of India and wants to revive the interest of youth in Hindi, Urdu & Sanskrit stories.

Her selection is from mythology, literature or history, her style, aptly named Ras Gatha, is an assimilation of myth and fiction, translated to suit the taste of youth and wider audience.

As An NID and FTII alumni, she has been creatively involved with various training & advertising films. She has two regional films to her credit and as a professional in the field of storytelling & design, she has worked with brands like Samsung, LG, GSK, Procter &Gamble etc.



## Devapriya Roy

Devapriya began her career with The Vague Woman's Handbook, a quirky novel that was published by HarperCollins and subsequently appeared on the India Today Bestseller List.

She has also authored The Weight Loss Club: The Curious Experiments of Nancy Housing Cooperative, yet another quirky novel that was published by Rupa & Co.

Currently she is working on the second book of the Vague Women series, tentatively titled The Vague Woman's Guide to Paris, as well as a travelogue, The Heat and Dust Project (along with husband Saurav Jha), that chronicles the story of travelling through India on local buses "on a very very tight budget". The Heat and Dust Project is also a first-of-its-kind dynamic book as the couple used Facebook to document their journey even as it was underway.



## Dinesh Trivedi

Illustrious and articulate, Dinesh Trivedi is an Indian politician from the All India Trinamool Congress and current Member of Parliament in the Lower House representing Barrackpore, West Bengal.

A former Union Railway Minister, Dinesh studied in an elite boarding school in Shimla and Solan in Himachal Pradesh. He graduated from Kolkata's St Xavier's College and then went on to get an MBA from Austin, Texas in US.

Trivedi is the founder member and first general secretary of the Trinamool.



## Dolly Singh

Dolly is the founder of Poets Corner and Delhi Poetry Festival. A poet herself, her association with poetic causes brings out the truest of her abilities to fore. Her work is published in several national and international anthologies. Dolly is also the founder of New Leaf Poets Club that encourages young wordsmiths at school level and beyond. The group aspires to inculcate the love for poetry amongst young minds and offer them opportunities & exposure on a larger platform. Besides being a sensitive poet, Dolly is also an accomplished fashion designer. Her fashion line - Final Impressions by Dolly Singh has been in existence for over a decade. Her efforts and accomplishments were recently lauded by the Rex Foundation that awarded her with Karamveer Chakra and the REX Global Fellowship.



## Dr. Alka Pande

Dr. Pande is currently a Consultant, Arts Advisor and Curator of the Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. She has been passionately involved with the world of art for nearly three decades. Responsible for curating several significant and perceptive exhibitions in India and abroad, Dr. Pande has curated the latest international exhibition at the Pinacothèque de Paris titled The Kama-Sutra: Spirituality and Eroticism in Indian Art. In 2006, she was made - Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres – Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters – an award bequeathed by the French government to recognise significant contributions in the fields of art and literature. In 2009, she received the Australian Asia Council Special Award. She has authored several well-acclaimed books, with a strong focus on Indian arts and ancient Indian erotic literature and aesthetics.



## Dr. Bibek Debroy

Padam Shri Dr. Bibek Debroy, is permanent member of NITI Aayog. He is the former Director of the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies, Consultant to Department of Economic Affairs of Finance Ministry (Government of India), Secretary General of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Director of project LARGE (Legal Adjustments and Reforms for Globalising the Economy).

Dr. Debroy has authored several books, papers and popular articles, he has been Consulting Editor of Indian Financial and other newspapers. In past Dr. Debroy has taught at Presidency College, Calcutta, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade and National Council of Applied Economic Research.

In 2010, he started authoring a ten-volume unabridged English translation of the Hindu epic The Mahabharata which concluded in 2014.

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## Dr. Shekhar Pathak

Dr. Shekhar Pathak is a historian from Uttarakhand, who was awarded the Padma Shri in 2007 and was Professor of History at Kumaun University in Nainital for the two decades. Once every decade since 1974 he has undertaken a 'padayatra', better known as Askot-Aarakot Abhiyan (AAA). Currently he is a Nehru Fellow at Centre for Contemporary Studies at Nehru Memorial Library. He has worked on many aspects of Himalayan history, which includes his work on the "coolie begar" system, freedom struggle and local movements. He is co-author of book Asia ki Peeth Per, devoted to life, explorations and writings of Pundit Nain Singh Rawat.

He was also a fellow at Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, where he worked on the Chipko movement and tradition of peasant protest in Uttarakhand.

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## Ezekiel Isaac Maleka

Ezekiel Isaac Malekar is head of Jewish community in New Delhi, India and is Honorary Secretary of Judah Hyam Synagogue, which in addition to serving the Jewish community of New Delhi, caters to the Jewish diplomats from foreign missions. It has hosted former Israeli Prime Ministers like Shimon Peres and felicitated David Danieli, the present Israeli Ambassador to India.

Mr. Malekar, in addition to being a scholar of Judaism, is a noted human rights activist and a Deputy Registrar (Law) with the National Human Rights Commission in India. He was a key participant in the 15th International Conference on Human Integration, 2006.

He is actively involved in inter-faith activities between the Jewish community and the Hindu majority in India, as well as the Sikh community.



## Fahad Samar

Director, film critic, author and columnist Fahad Samar is the best selling author of Scandal Point and Flash Point, the first two novels in his Mumbai trilogy published by Harper Collins in 2014 and 2015.

A pioneer in youth culture programming in India, Fahad has directed cult TV shows like BPL OYE!, Superhit Muqabla and The Poppadum Show. Fahad is a well-known social commentator and has contributed columns regularly to the Mumbai Mirror, DNA and the Indian Express over the past ten years. He also writes on food, wine and travel for Upper Crust magazine. Fahad's articles and essays have appeared in Elle, Harper's Bazaar and Conde Nast Traveller among other publications. He is also a film critic and presents a weekly TV show, Friday Double Bill on NDTV Prime and Filmology with Fahad Samar on Radio One 94.3FM.



## Gautam Chintamani

Gautam is a born cinephile and author of Dark Star: The Loneliness of Being Rajesh Khanna (HarperCollins, 2014). Gautam's book is the first full-length biography of original superstar of Hindi cinema and had second edition within 8 weeks of its release!

His writing has appeared in India Today, Outlook, The Indian Quarterly, Pioneer, Tribune, The Asian Age, Times of India, Deccan Chronicle, Scroll and Daily O amongst others. He's also had a weekly film based columns in The Hindustan Times Brunch and Dawn, Pakistan's most read English daily.

Apart from it Gautam has made many award winning documentary films and television series like S.R.I. - Challenging Traditions, Transforming Lives explored the positive impact of System of Rice Intensification and Janam-Aagazh-Parvaaz – on the journey of children with special needs and their . Gautam's second book that explores the cultural impact of Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak on popular Hindi cinema is almost ready to go to press



## Gayatri Chatterjee

Gayatri Chatterjee is an independent film scholar and lives in Pune. She has written widely on cinema. Her two books are Awara (published by Wiley in 1992 reprinted by Penguin in 2003) and Mother India (2002) for the BFI film classics. Her articles feature in several Indian and International volumes. She has taught widely in many Universities in India and the USA; and has been a faculty in the direction department of the Film & Television Institute of India. She has made a film Homes for Gods and Mortals (68 mins, 2013) and is in pre-production for a film, Two Rivers and a City. At present she has developed and teaches a full course of Film Studies at the Symbiosis School for the Liberal Arts in Pune. Her forthcoming books are 'Love and Cinema...in India' and 'Sant Tukaram.'



## Geet Chaturvedi

Geet is regarded as one of the major poets in contemporary literature by critics and masses. He has authored five books till now. In 2010, he published three books, two collections of novellas - Savant Aunty Ki Ladkiyan (Aunt Savant and Her Daughters) and Pink Slip Daddy, and a collection of poetry, Aalaap Mein Girah (The Knotted Preludes). He was awarded the Bharat Bhushan Agrawal Award for poetry in 2007 and was termed one of the 'Ten Best Writers' of India by the English Daily Indian Express in 2011. His poems have been translated into eight languages. He translated poems of Pablo Neruda, Lorca, Adunis, Czeslaw Milosz, Mahmoud Darwish, Adam Zagajewski, Bei Dao, Dunya Mikhail, Iman Mersal and Eduardo Chirinos in Hindi.

He is currently working on his first full-length novel Ranikhet Xpres and lives in Bhopal.



## Harish Chandra Singh Rawat

Harish Chandra Singh Rawat is an Indian political leader and Chief Minister of State of Uttarakhand. He is a member of the Indian National Congress.

He has been elected four times to the Lok Sabha (Lower House) and once to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House). He has held the portfolio of Ministry of Water Resources and has been the Minister of State for the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Rawat's alma mater is University of Lucknow from where he obtained Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws. He is married to his fellow Congress member and politician Renuka Rawat, who also obtained Bachelor of Law from Lucknow University.



## HE Dr. Krishan Kant Paul

HE Dr. Krishan Kant Paul is the 6th and current Governor of Uttarakhand. He had previously served as Governor of Meghalaya for over one year with additional charge of Mizoram and Nagaland. As a former officer of Indian Police Service he served as Commissioner of Police, Delhi from 2004 till retiring from service in 2007.

While posted in Delhi, he had wide ranging experience of urban policing and was involved in handling some mega events like the 1982 Asian Games, followed by NAM and CHOGM in 1983.

Married to Omrita Paul, a former Indian Information Service officer, who is currently posted as Secretary to the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. He was amongst the first Ph.D. holders in Police Service, has maintained his touch with academics and continues to write on various matters of topical interest.



## James Champion

James Champion is a passionate wildlife enthusiast with a long and distinguished pedigree. His grandfather Frederick W Champion OBE IFS started campaigning vigorously for the protection of wildlife in the 1920s. FWC was also the pioneer of tripwire photography in India, now known as camera-trapping. His astonishing images graced the pages of publications including the Illustrated London News and Indian State Railways Magazine.

James has always been fascinated by wildlife, and is the guardian of much of his forefather's legacy. Conscious of the contribution that can still be made by FWC to wildlife conservation, with his astonishingly modern views of the importance of forests and nature, James' aim is to keep the legacy of his grandfather in India alive, and to inspire current and future generations of conservationists through his FWC's evocative writings and astonishing wildlife images.



## Jane Gill

Jane Gill is an English writer, has worked as a graphic designer for many years before finding her love of writing. She went on to publish her debut novel, *Dance with Fireflies*, in 2015. The novel was extensively researched, including the reading of hundreds of letters, stowed away in a trunk for many years by her Anglo-Indian grandmother who was a prolific letter writer.

Jane is currently working on the sequel to *Dance with Fireflies*, which is set in India at the turbulent time of partition. Early on, the book will reveal a scandalous family secret.

When Jane is not writing, she loves to read great books, camp by the sea and cook delicious food in the Cotswold home she shares with her husband, son and dog.



## Janhavi Prasada

Janhavi began her journalism career in 1998 with the *Pioneer*, a leading newspaper daily in India. She has produced and anchored TV programmes aired in India for Doordarshan and abroad for UK Sony TV, US Channel 57. Her company, Srijan Media produces quality digital content and ideation of 360 degrees integrated media campaigns. Janhavi is the founder of "Youth 4 Gandhi Foundation", an NGO that has the credit of running the first of its kind online multimedia campaign on "Gandhi & Sport" for school children and is one of the most extensive artwork archive on Gandhi in the 21st century in all formats (print, audio, digital) under one platform.

Janhavi is writing a graphic novel on Mahatma Gandhi based on his autobiography – "The Story of My Experiments With Truth" to be published later this year by Harper Collins. She will be illustrating parts of the book as well.



## Jeroninio Almeida

Jerry is affectionately called "the moJOsh Inspirator" and "Karma Guru" by several people who have benefited from his leadership training/ coaching or The Hero In Me inspirational oratory programs.

A mystic by nature, Jerry's self-learning and introspection of life, society and humanity as a free thinker, practical philosopher, futurist and spiritualist helps him to excel in his vocation as a motivational speaker.

As a social and political scientist, Jerry has led several campaigns which have become huge movements. He created and promoted global movements like The Joy of Giving, Right every Wrong, Laadli- Save the girl child, Karmaveer, Karmayuga, Restaurants against Hunger, One Billion Hungry with the UN, One Billion Rising and other social campaigns.

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## Jerry Pinto



Jerry Pinto is the author of *A bear for Felicia* (Puffin) and *Mowgli and the Bear* (Disney) and co-author with Garima Gupta of *When Crows are White* (Scholastic) which was shortlisted for a Crossword Award for Children's Literature. He works in the sphere of child rights with MeJol; is a trustee of the People's Free Reading Room and Circulating Library and an advisor to the Jehangir Sabavala Foundation.

Jerry teaches journalism at the SCM Sophia department of the Sophia Polytechnic in Mumbai, ranked by Outlook as one of the ten best post-graduate media programmes in the country.

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## Kanza Javed

Kanza Javed's manuscript, "Ashes, Wine and Dust" was short listed for Tibor Jones South Asia Prize 2013, making her at the age of twenty-one, the youngest and the only Pakistani writer nominated for the prize that year. The book looks at the life of a young, Pakistani woman, rejecting traditional society and carving her own path. More than anything, it narrates the double-life she feels she leads when she leaves Pakistan and ventures into America, where she feels conflicted between her Pakistani self and American self.

Kanza was a keynote speaker in the 'Aspiring Writers' panel at the Lahore Literary Festival 2013. Her narrative, 'Passing Morning' has won third prize in British Council's 'Charles Dickens Writing Competition'. Her short story, 'The Intruders' is to be published in Earthern Lamp Journal (January 2014 issue).

In India, she is being published by Tara Research Press.



## Kiran Chaturvedi

An experienced sociologist, qualitative consumer insight researcher, author and citizen activist, Kiran is sociologist by training, and a Gold medalist from Delhi University. She is the founder of Write & Beyond, a creative writing facilitation workshop based out of Gurgaon. She has experience of 14 years in Qualitative Consumer Research, most of it with RI, Mumbai (now TNS Global). During a 2 year hiatus from her job as a Market Researcher, she took her first entrepreneurial step with launching a pioneering Day Care cum Play School In Mumbai, Shining Beacon, as she found no suitable options in the market for her then 4 year old son.

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## Kiran Manral

Kiran was a journalist before she quit to be full time mommy. Her blogs were both in India's top blogs and she was a Tehelka blogger columnist on gender issues. Her debut novel, The Reluctant Detective, was published by Westland in 2012 and her second novel Once Upon A Crush, was published by Leadstart in 2014.

She initiated the online volunteer network India Helps, post the 26/11 terrorist attack on Mumbai and the team of volunteers worked on the rehabilitation of the affected and the bereaved of this and the 13/7 bomb blasts amongst others. She is also part of the core founding team of [www.csawarenessmonth.com](http://www.csawarenessmonth.com) (Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Month) and [www.vawaawarenessmonth.wordpress.com](http://www.vawaawarenessmonth.wordpress.com) (Violence Against Women Awareness Month), two very well received social media awareness initiatives. She was awarded the Women Achievers award by Young Environmentalists Group in 2013.

She lives in Mumbai with her family.

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## Kuldeep Yadav

Kulpreet Yadav is a bestselling author, motivational speaker, and Founder-Editor of Open Road Review, an international literary magazine. Shortlisted in various writing contests, his short stories and essays have appeared in over 30 publications. Kulpreet is represented by Red Ink Literary Agency, and his forthcoming novel, 'The Girl who loved a Pirate', is India's first thriller based on marine piracy and hijacking.

Passionate about Creative Writing, Kulpreet also mentors aspiring writers at schools and colleges and has spoken at many literary festivals in India and abroad. He lives in New Delhi. More at [www.kulpreetyadav.com](http://www.kulpreetyadav.com)



## Kusum Budhwar

Kusum Budhwar's book "Where Gods Dwell", Central Himalayan Folktales and Legends was published in 2010 and has seen many reprints since then. Prior to this she has written Romance of the Mango: The Complete Book of the King of Fruits, both Penguin publications. She also contributed a chapter titled "Golu Dev and other deities of Kumaon", in the book "Gods Beyond Temples" by Dr. Harsha Dehejia.

Wife of an Indian Foreign Service Officer, she has lived in several countries and is widely travelled. Her bond with the Himalayas began early, having studied and taught in the hill stations of Dalhousie, Simla and Mussoorie. She now spends a better part of year in Mukteshwar, Kumaon.

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## Lovita J R Morang

Green Oscar Entrant for acclaimed documentary film "Discovery of Rhododendron Forest - where highest rhododendron grows", filmmaker, artiste and poet Lovita J R Morang is a versatile artist.

Lovita has pioneered the fashion industry in NE-India since 1993 and acted in a number of movies and TV serials. As an actress, she casted as a princess in a docu-drama on massacre of royal dynasty of Nepal produced by BBC. She acted as a protagonist for Sundance Award winner short celluloid cinema "Doremifa" and "Echo-Rongkuchak" the winner of national film award produced by FTII and Satyajit Ray Film Institute. As a poet she has fifteen books and anthologies that she has shared with renowned poets. Her book "Rhododendron Forest of Eastern Himalayas - an encyclopedia" is a prestigious book first of its kind.

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## Madhuja Mukherjee

Madhuja Mukherjee is an artist, writer, and filmmaker. She teaches Film Studies at Jadavpur University, Kolkata. Madhuja has done formative research on the 'Indian film industry' (including its contemporary phase, and regional sectors), and has published extensively. More recently, she has written on the 'soundscape' of Indian films. She is the author of New Theatres Ltd., The Emblem of Art, The Picture of Success (2009), and has edited Aural Films, Oral Cultures (2012).

Madhuja has done several academic and artistic presentations across the globe, and her first feature-film Carnival (2012), had its 'World Premiere' at the 41st International Film Festival Rotterdam. Qissa (2013) written by her (with Anup Singh, director), won many awards including Inalco Jury Award for "beautiful script, ..." at the 20th Vesoul International Film Festival of Asian Cinema, Vesoul, France, 2014. She has presented her media-installations internationally, and her first-graphic novel, KangalMalsat (2013), became a best-seller.



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## Manjiri Prabhu

Manjiri Prabhu is a Pune-based English Author, Film-maker and LitFest Founder/Director. Labelled 'Desi Agatha Christie', Dr. Manjiri Prabhu has published 8 books till date, two of which have been published by Bantam/Dell USA. The Cosmic Clues, The Cavansite Conspiracy, In the Shadow of Inheritance, The Astral Alibi, all have been critically acclaimed and acknowledged.

Dr. Prabhu holds a Doctorate in Communication Science and is an independent film-maker for Television. She has directed over 200 children's TV programmes and more than 50 short fiction and travel films.

Her thesis, converted into a book, titled Roles: Reel and Real, has become a rare reference book for students of Hindi cinema.

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## Mariam Karim Ahlawat

Novelist, playwright, and children's author Mariam Karim has been a university teacher of French language and literature.

Her first novel My Little Boat (Penguin India, 2003) was nominated for the IMPAC International Award 2005 and the Hutch Crossword Award. Her play The Betrayal of Selvamary was shortlisted for the Hindu Metro Plus Playwright Award 2010.

A Bagful of Dreams', a children's musical and 'The Undoing' are some of the her plays that have been staged widely. Her first book of folk and fairy tales for children was 'Tales Old and New' (HarperCollins India, 1994).

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## Maya Mirchandani

Senior Editor, Foreign Affairs Editor and a Senior Anchor at NDTV Maya is among the first generation of broadcast news journalists in the country. In a career spanning two decades she has reported on a range of issues-from environment to crime, from national politics to human rights and conflict to her real forte, world affairs.

Maya has received several awards and accolades, including most recently the Ramnath Goenka award for Excellence in Journalism. (for reporting on Politics and Government in 2010, and for reporting from the North East in 2012), the Exchange for Media award for best International News Reporting (Broadcast) in 2010, and earlier awards and commendations for her work on children affected by conflict in Kashmir, as well as a best documentary commendation for a special on the 20th anniversary of the Air India Kanishka bombing.

Outside of journalism, Maya's interests lie in the arts, especially painting, design and photography.



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## Maya Mirchandani

Senior Editor, Foreign Affairs Editor and a Senior Anchor at NDTV Maya is among the first generation of broadcast news journalists in the country. In a career spanning two decades she has reported on a range of issues-from environment to crime, from national politics to human rights and conflict to her real forte, world affairs.

Maya has received several awards and accolades, including most recently the Ramnath Goenka award for Excellence in Journalism. (for reporting on Politics and Government in 2010, and for reporting from the North East in 2012), the Exchange for Media award for best International News Reporting (Broadcast) in 2010, and earlier awards and commendations for her work on children affected by conflict in Kashmir, as well as a best documentary commendation for a special on the 20th anniversary of the Air India Kanishka bombing.

Outside of journalism, Maya's interests lie in the arts, especially painting, design and photography.



## Mona Verma

Recipient of the Uttarakhand Ratna, 2014. Haridwar based writer Mona is the author of three acclaimed works of fiction 'A Bridge to Nowhere', 'God is a River:a story of faith', and 'The White Shadow.'

Her contribution towards English Literature won her several awards including the 'Woman Of Substance' from The All India Women's' Conference, Hindustan Times Woman Of The Year Award, and the prestigious Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Puruskar, from National Union Of Journalists India.

Her latest work, 'The White Shadow', set in Banaras, is based on the predicaments of the child widows.

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## Namita Gokhale

Namita Gokhale has written six novels, a collection of short stories, and several works of nonfiction, all in English. Gokhale has written two books of non-fiction. Mountain Echoes which deals with the Kumaoni way of life through the eyes of four highly talented and individualistic women. The Book of Shiva is an introduction to Shaivite philosophy and mythology. She had retold the Indian epic, The Mahabharata, in an illustrated version for young and first time readers

Gokhale is passionately committed to showcasing and translating the best of Indian writing and engaging the vibrant Bhasha languages of the Indian sub-continent. She is one of the founder directors of Yatra Books which co-publishes with Penguin.

She is a founder-director of the Jaipur Literature Festival along with the author, William Dalrymple.

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## Neelam Kapur

Neelam is a Civil Servant, currently head of Directorate of Field Publicity which is responsible for rural interpersonal communication campaigns. She is an alumni of Lady Shri Ram College and has taught English Literature for about one year in St. Stephens College.

She has held various positions in Government of India dealing with communication and press relations. She developed and implemented the communication strategies for National AIDS Control Programme and was Director of International Film Festival of India for three years. She has also held positions of Press Registrar and Director General of Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity. She was Principal Director General (Media and Communication) as head of Press Information Bureau and functioned as principal official spokesperson for Govt of India from 2009 to 2014.



## Neeta Gupta

Neeta Gupta is the publisher of Yatra Books. She is also a Joint Secretary with the Bharatiya Anuvad Parishad and edits their quarterly journal, Anuvad. She has been working towards creating publishing connectivities across different languages and cultures



## Neha Prasada

Neha Prasada is the author of the book 'Dining With The Maharajas' which is a social history of the food traditions and lifestyles of royal India. It has been published by Roli Books in Dec 2012. She has also contributed an essay on the cuisine of the Punjab princely states for the forthcoming Punjab MARG volume.

Neha is an author and journalist based in New Delhi. She is a contributing editor with Architectural Digest (Conde Nast, India). Neha has worked for the Times of India, The India Today Group and Network 18's CNN IBN, writing and reporting on health, politics, governance, environment and social issues.

She has also worked as a media consultant on diverse projects, which include a political campaign and assisting the Handlooms and Handicrafts Exports Corporation (HHEC), set up the museum shop at the National Museum, New Delhi.



## Olivier Lafont

Olivier Lafont is a multi talented and versatile personality who writes fiction, feature film screenplays, and editorial pieces, but also acts in feature films, endorses some of India's most popular brands on television, and lends his voice to many media in many languages. A French polyglot, Lafont pursues his eclectic interests at the highest standards having worked with some of India's most acclaimed directors on films like 3 IDIOTS, Guzaarish and two HOLLYWOOD films, and continuing in the same vein with his new novel 'Warrior' out with Penguin India. He is a familiar face due to his work in over 80 adverts on television.



## Osama Jalali

Osama Jalali is a seasoned food critic, Festival curator, consultant & an authority on Mughlai cuisine. He has contributed immensely for the food section of The Hindu along with other publications.

His contribution to document and revive the lost & dying food heritage of India is worth a notice. His social media group Lost Recipes of India is one of the most popular groups on the subject. He has been the jury for the prestigious Indian Culinary Forum (ICF), Gurgaon Food Awards and various other seminars on Food as heritage across the country. Osama also consulted Oberoi group of hotels for their Rivaayat initiative to revive the traditional recipes of Mughal era.

He has been a part of various food shows on television; his episode on Epic Channel on Lost Recipes of Delhi went viral and was appreciated throughout. He was the guest of Master Chef India's Kunal Kapoor for his show My Yellow Table on NDTV Goodtimes.



## Parvaiz Alam

Professor & Dean at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Apeejay Satya University, Pervaiz Alam is a renowned Broadcast Journalist. Working as a Senior Producer, he spent more than 15 years with BBC in London. Recently, he directed and produced Life Gulmohar Style for BBC-- a series of 156 radio plays broadcast by about 20 FM Radio Stations in India.

At BBC World Television, he was the Executive Producer of the Programmes such as India Business Report, Question Time India, Hard Talk India, Question Time Pakistan, Bollywood Bosses, Face to Face and Mastermind India.

Director of more than 20 radio plays at the BBC Hindi Service, Prof. Alam has written two stage plays that were staged in several major cities of the UK, including London, Edinburgh and Birmingham.



## Phillipa Kaye

Philippa Kaye is an Indophile, traveller, budding author, lover of dogs rider of horses, entrepreneur and eternal optimist. She enjoys getting off the beaten track both personally and professionally and has dedicated her life to sharing her stories and helping others find their own off-road path. She currently lives in Delhi though has previously lived in Kanha, Madhya Pradesh and Jaipur, Rajasthan. Her blog <https://memsahibinindia.wordpress.com> contains diaries from life in India as well as slightly more unusual travel pieces. Conventional is not the name of her game.



## Piyush Jha

Piyush Jha is an acclaimed film director, ad filmmaker and the author of bestselling crime-fiction novels. Politically savvy at University he later pursued a career in advertising management after acquiring an MBA degree. Eventually he switched tracks, first to make commercials for some of the country's largest brands, and then to write and direct feature films.

Piyush's films are noted for unconventionality of the subject matter and for their relevance to contemporary society. Chalo America, King of Bollywood, Sikandar, all explore the unexplored and hidden.

Piyush's novels Mumbaistan, Compass Box Killer and the recently released AntiSocial are page-turners that explore the gritty, noir landscape of crime fiction in Mumbai.

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## Pragnya Wakhlu

Pragnya Wakhlu is an award winning singer, songwriter and guitarist from India. Her songs are about inner reflection, thoughts, feelings and issues she feels strongly about. She is also the front woman of the Pune-based band "Soul Strings".

Pragnya was nominated for the 'Bite my Music' Global Music awards as the only Indian in the 'Best Female Vocalist Category'. She bagged the 3rd place at the 'Indiego Music Awards (South East Asia 2011) for the Best Female Vocalist & is a two time nominee for 'Best female Vocalist' at the Jack Daniel's Rock Awards (2010,2011). She was selected by The Rolling Stone Magazine to perform for the 'Divas of Rock concert' showcasing women in the rock circuit in India.

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## Pratap Somvanshi

Pratap Somvanshi is an eminent and celebrated Journalist of Hindi print known for his incisive editorials and dry wit. He served on the Curriculum Board of Non-Formal Education, Government of India for ten years. He is also the Visiting Faculty for Media and Communication in Allahabad University.

He has written more than a hundred poems, stories for children and books for non-formal and adult education. His poems are translated in English, Kannada, Bengali, Urdu and Oriya and are available on Rekhta.org and Kavitakosh.org.

He directed one award winning documentary based on historical and religious aspect of Chitrakoot. Two of his short plays were broadcast by All India Radio. He is a regular speaker at National TV channels and won the South Asia Media Fellowship in 1999 for his work A Tale of Woe on Earth and Women-a study based on mining workers.



## Priya Kapoor

Priya began her career in journalism with The Indian Express. She worked at the academic publisher Routledge in London for two years before joining Roli Books ten years ago. In her time at Roli Books she has commissioned and edited both mass market successes such as Dongri to Dubai by Hussain Zaidi as well as award winning books such as Taj Mahal Foxtrot by Naresh Fernandes. Her formative years were spent in the beautiful Garhwal hills in Mussoorie and perhaps this is why she prefers mountains to just about anywhere else.

Priya was educated at Woodstock School, Mussoorie, Royal Holloway, University of London and has a MSc from London School of Economics.

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## Priyanka Singh Jha

She started as a correspondent at Citadel (a city magazine), The Asian Age (a national daily) and Intelligent Investor / Outlook Money (a personal finance magazine). She then began her stint as an editor at 26, with Society magazine (a national celebrity magazine) and followed it up with the editorship of HT Style (a daily lifestyle supplement) and HT Saturday (the Saturday edition of Hindustan Times).

In a career spanning over 15 years, she has written on varied subjects such as entertainment, art, business, crime, trends and of course, celebrities and their lifestyles. Known for her insightful interviews with top Indian celebrities, she has written popular columns such as Rough Cut (Screen), Hear & Now (HT Style) and Point of View (Society), in addition to contributing to publications such as Outlook, Tehelka and, The Week magazine.

More recently she penned Supertraits of Superstars, a motivational book with Bollywood's leading superstars at the heart of it.

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## Purabi Shridhar

Purabi Shridhar is a journalist for over two decades, she has worked with Indian Express, Sunday Mail and Femina, reporting and researching on a variety of subjects from crime, development stories, politics, secessionist movements to women related issues. The most constant and passionate factor in her life, apart from her husband and daughter of course, is food and everything to do with it. Exasperated at trying to explain North-East cuisine, she decided to document it in a book, The Seven Sisters, Kitchen Tales from the North East. A travel addict, journeys to her are about people, places and what they eat and how.



## R S Bedi

R S Bedi is a distinguished and decorated Army Personnel with a renowned family lineage. His father was a recipient of both Padam Shri and Padam Bhuhar. Kanwar Mohinder Singh Bedi "Sahar" the popular Urdu poet was his uncle, and was responsible for shaping and inspiring his creative and linguistic skills.

R.S.Bedi, retired from the Indian Government as Secretary and Founding Chairman of NTRO (National Technical Research Organisation). Prior to which he was a commissioned officer of the Indian Army. Bedi served the country proudly in both 1965 & 1971 war's with Pakistan. For his bravery the nation conferred on him the VIR CHAKRA. Post retirement in 2006 he has been pursuing his many passions with equal vigour. Billy, as he is known to friends, spends time between New Delhi his farm in U.P and a mountain top home in Dhanachuli.

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## Rajat Kapoor

Rajat Kapoor is an Indian actor and director born in 1961. He has acted in many successful films like Dil Chahta Hai, Monsoon Wedding, Corporate and Bheja Fry. He was nominated for Best Performance by an Actor for Siddharth: The Prisoner at the 2008 Asia Pacific Screen Awards. In the year 2010, he has also starred in a Bengali movie Iti Mrinalini opposite Konkona Sen directed by acclaimed Bengali film writer Aparna Sen. Kapoor frequently collaborates with actors Vinay Pathak and Ranvir Shorey. He is also a three time National Award winner, first for his 26-minute non-feature documentary, Tarana, then for his short, Hypnotosis, and after that for Raghu Romeo in Best Feature Film in Hindi section. His latest directorial venture "Aankhon Dekhi", garnered much critical acclaim.

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## Dr. Rakshanda Jalil

Dr. Rakshanda Jalil is a writer, critic, translator and literary historian. She has published over 15 books and written over 50 academic papers and essays on a range of subjects: culture, society, faith and literature. She writes Op-eds for the Indian Express on a regular basis. Her book on the lesser-known monuments of Delhi, Invisible City, continues to be a bestseller.

Her recent works include: Liking Progress, Loving Change: A Literary History of the Progressive Writers Movement in Urdu (OUO, 2014); a biography of Urdu feminist writer Dr Rashid Jahan A Rebel and her Cause (Women Unlimited, 2014; and a translation of 15 short stories by Intizar Husain entitled The Death of Sheherzad (HarperCollins, 2014). She runs an organization called Hindustani Awaaz, devoted to the popularization of Hindi-Urdu literature and culture. Her debut collection of fiction, Release & Other Stories, was published by Harper Collins in 2011, and received critical acclaim. At present, she is writing a biography of the Urdu poet, Shahryar, for Penguin.



## Randeep Surjewala

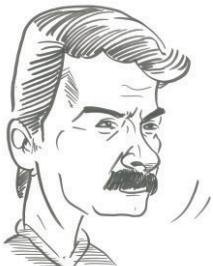
Randeep Surjewala is an Indian politician and a member of Indian National Congress party. He is an MLA in the Haryana state legislature and a former minister. In 2005, he was given the responsibility of Transport and Parliamentary Affairs and thus became the youngest minister in Haryana. He was the Spokesperson for the Congress party and was seen regularly on the prime time Debates during the last General Election. Eloquent and reasonable he is known for his incisive remarks and his grasp on the legal and constitutional framework.



## Ravi Dhingra

New Delhi based Ravi Dhingra is a Canon Photo Mentor and also a visiting faculty for photography at various Institutes including National Institute of Fashion Technology. He is also a Co-Founder of a photography based organisation called "CameraUnlimited Foundation", which is spreading knowledge and information related to photography through Workshops, Photo Walks and Tours. Ravi pursued photography as a hobby till he joined Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi in 1998 to learn the finer nuances of the craft.

With his photographs he tries to bring out the emotions attached with every subject. He wants the viewer to get involved with the photographs and feel the emotions. He has been associated with leading publications, advertisement agencies and corporate clients and his work has been widely published.



## Ravikant

Ravikant is a bilingual historian, writer, and translator based in CSDS, Delhi. He read, researched, and taught modern Indian and world history in various colleges of Delhi University before joining the Sarai programme at CSDS at its inception in 2000.

Ravikant's collaboratively edited books include *Translating Partition: Stories, Essays, Criticism* (Katha, 2001); *Deewan e Sarai 01: Media Vimarsh: Hindi Janpad* (2002), *Deewan e Sarai 02: Shaharnama* (Vani, 2005); His collaborative filmography includes Andaz Production's *Kali Shalwar* (2001), an adaptation of Saadat Hasan Manto's eponymous story, and *Jo Dooba So Paar* (2011).

Ravikant's ongoing social history project, 'Words in Motion Pictures', is an effort to offer creative connections between media forms and their diverse publics. The Hinglish Project, in collaboration with SOAS, London, tries to make sense of contemporary bilingualism in North India.



## Rishi Suri

Rishi Suri is a senior editor covering international affairs at The Daily Millap, India's oldest and largest circulated Urdu daily newspaper. He is an internationally recognised journalist known for his strong views and opinions on global politics and diplomacy. His interviews with various international personalities and his articles on different subjects in the Middle East have been widely appreciated.

Rishi is one of the select few certified diplomatic correspondents by the Ministry of External Affairs in India and has been a part of various international delegations and programs. He is a distinguished alumni of International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) run by State Department of USA. Along with playing an active role on Steering Committee of Australia India Youth Dialogue he is also a Media Fellow with Australia India Council since 2012 and has also been a Chevening Scholar (UK) since 2013.



## Rosemary Fox

Rosemary was born in Lansdowne, Garhwal, the daughter of Gerrard Wilkinson, an officer in the Royal Garhwal Rifles until his retirement in 1947, when the family moved to England. The Wilkinsons were friends of the renowned and pioneer conservationist FW Champion and his wife Judy, and used to stay with them in the jungles of the Himalayan foothills. These experiences helped forge in Rosemary a lifelong interest in wild places and wildlife, which she later shared with her husband, Irving Fox.

Rosemary has for many years worked as a volunteer in the Canadian conservation movement, serving on the Boards of Nature Canada, the Sierra Club, the Environmental Mining Council of BC, the Bulkley Valley Research Centre, Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board and Babine Watershed Monitoring Trust. She is currently the chairperson of the Conservation Committee of BC Nature (the Federation of BC Naturalists).



## Rudy Singh

Rudy Singh is passionate a filmmaker and photographer from Kumaon, with a keen interest in poetry and literature.

After working in a bank in Delhi he chucked away the city life and choose to be a horticulturist and a middle school teacher in Nanital, inspiring young minds to blossom both literally and figuratively.

He has worked on films for a wide variety of clients including HCL, Snapdeal, WorldOne, etc. He has also done a lengthy project with CSMVS - The Museum in Mumbai.

A student of history, he has also made a documentary film on a historical tradition in Uttarakhand. He is currently working on a film in the local Kumauni dialect a first of its kind project and is President of the Film and Arts Guild of Uttarakhand.



## Rutu Modan

Rutu Modan is an Israeli illustrator and comic book artist. She is co-founder of Israeli comics group Actus Tragicus and published critically acclaimed graphic novels *Exit Wounds* and *The Property*. Time magazine's Lev Grossman named it one of the Top 10 Graphic Novels of 2007, it also won 2008 Eisner Award for Best New Graphic Novel. After graduating with distinction from Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem, she edited the Hebrew edition of MAD magazine with Yirmi Pinkus, together they founded Actus Tragicus comics group in 1995. Modan received Young Artist of the Year award in 1997 and Best Illustrated Children's Book award from Youth Department of Israel Museum in 1998. In 2005, she was chosen as an outstanding artist of Israel Cultural Excellence Foundation.

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## Saif Mahmood

Saif is a New Delhi-based lawyer holding a doctorate in Comparative Constitutional Law in South Asia. He speaks and writes on diverse issues ranging from law to literature and is associated in different capacities with a number of academic, legal, professional and literary organizations around the world. Founder of the online group, South Asian Alliance for Literature, Art & Culture (SAALAR) and an aficionado of Urdu poetry, he remembers most of his Ghalib, Iqbal and Faiz by heart, recites them effortlessly and translates them into English cautiously. His translations have appeared in a number of prestigious publications and his passionate recitations on varied platforms have enthralled many an audience.

Saif blogs on [besabab.wordpress.com](http://besabab.wordpress.com) where he has also authored a series on Urdu poets of Delhi titled "Dillijoekshehertha".

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## Sameer Sinha

Sameer Sinha (IFS) is the Chief Conservator of Forests & Director, Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand, India's most celebrated Wildlife Reserve and a setting of many a fictional work and tales.

Sameer has over twenty years of hands on experience in the Wildlife Management sector at the local, national, regional and international levels. He was the Fulbright Nehru Fellow 2013-14 and holds a P.G. Diploma (Hons) in Wildlife Management from Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.

He helped establish and operationalise the South Asian Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) with eight member countries for strengthening regional cooperation for wildlife enforcement. He is also the author of "Handbook on Wildlife Law Enforcement in India" published by Traffic India and Natraj Publishers, and co-author of "Uttarakhand- a Celebration" published by the Uttarakhand Forest Department in 2008.



## Santosh Desai

MD & CEO of Futurebrands India Limited, Santosh is one of India's best-known social commentators. He is author of 'City City Bang Bang', a weekly column in The Times of India that looks at contemporary Indian society from an everyday vantage point. It covers issues big and small, tends where possible to avoid judgmental positions, and tries instead to understand what makes things the way they are.

He is the author of *Mother Pious Lady - Making sense of Everyday India*. The book is about a new India that is visibly emerging from within the folds of its many pasts. An IIM Ahmedabad post-graduate with 21 years of experience, he is former President of McCann-Erickson, India. He conducts workshops and seminars on a broad range of subjects in marketing for companies and educational institutions in India and abroad. He has addressed the global management boards of several multinationals including Hershey's, Microsoft, Philip's, Unilever, Coke and Reckitt Benckiser.



## Sarah Blau

Sarah Blau is a Jewish writer and a theatre artist based in Israel. She was born in 1973 and raised in the ultra-Orthodox town of Bnei Brak, near Tel-Aviv.

She holds a BA in history and psychology from Bar-Ilan University. Blau has edited and presented several TV programs dealing with contemporary views on religion and feminism in the Orthodox community, and writes reviews for the Hebrew press. She worked as an instructor at the Holocaust Studies Institute in Haifa. In 1999, Blau began holding an alternative Holocaust memorial service which ignited both great interest and controversy in Israel and abroad.

Blau, who writes about female Jewish myths, is one of the most prominent new voices in Orthodox literature in Israel, and was awarded the Prime Minister's Prize (2015). She has written two critically acclaimed books, *The Book of Creation* (2007), *Those Well-Raised Girls* (2012).



## Sathya Saran

Sathya Saran is a senior journalist and author of biography on Guru Dutt and his association with screen writer, filmmaker and actor Abrar Alvi Titled, *10 Years With Guru Dutt: Abrar Alvi's Journey*. The book was on the nomination list for the National Film Awards.

Till recently editor of ME, a monthly magazine, Sathya has set out on her own in new directions, yet to be made public. In the past, Sathya has edited Femina and been on the Board of governors of the NIFT. She is currently also Adjutant Professor at NIFT, Bombay where she teaches Fashion Journalism. She has authored a book of short stories, *Night Train and other Stories*.



## Satyarth Nayak

Satyarth is an author & script-writer based in New Delhi. Holding a Masters in English Literature from St. Stephen's college. His short story Eve won the British Council Writers Circle Prize in 2006 while in 2011, two of his stories were featured in Westland's Chicken Soup for the Soul series. His debut novel The Emperor's Riddles released by Amaryllis in 2014 became a bestselling mystery thriller. 'Variously described as a gripping tale of intrigue' by Hindustan Times, 'a heady mix of history and mystery' by The Hindu and 'a different avenue for budding writers' by New Indian Express, the thriller has been praised by writers like Amish Tripathi and Ashwin Sanghi.

Satyarth's latest short story Elixir has been selected and published in Penguin's latest anthology Something Happened On The Way To Heaven - 20 Inspiring Real Life Stories.

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## Saumya Kulshreshtha

Saumya is a writer, poet, blogger, editor, translator based in Delhi. She is the Founder-Director of Poets' Collective, a club of poetry enthusiasts, and a founding member of Kaafiya - a poetry festival soon to be held in Delhi. Saumya is keenly interested in arts, heritage and literature, and conducts routine workshops in schools, colleges and NGOs on poetry, creative writing, story-telling and mythology. Her stories, memoirs and poems have widely been published in anthologies and various digital portals. She is currently editing an upcoming anthology of poetry.

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## Saurav Jha

Saurav Jha is a commentator on energy and security. His first book, The Upside Down Book of Nuclear Power, was published by HarperCollins in March 2010 to favourable reviews, and is currently being translated into several Indian languages. Jha has written for publications such as Le Monde Diplomatique, World Politics Review, The Diplomat, as well as national dailies such as The Daily Telegraph, Hindustan Times and Deccan Herald.

Currently Jha is writing a techno-thriller Ayni as well as a quirky travelogue, The Heat and Dust Project (along with wife Devapriya Roy) that chronicles the story of travelling through India on local buses "on a very very tight budget". Both books are for HarperCollins India. The Heat and Dust Project is also a first-of-its-kind dynamic book as the couple used Facebook to document their journey even as it was underway.



## Shiv Shankar Maitra

Shiv is writer, traveller, documentary maker and a former marketing and communication personnel.

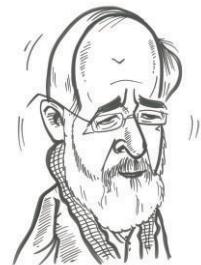
He is the author of the book, Brahmin Butcher, which traces the enticing journey of culinary art and reconstruct forgotten or lost recipes such as Andrani salt, Morah leaves, Mastica, etc. Its an endeavour to provide a window to cuisines and cooking methodologies of the ancient civilizations [3500BCE – 1700CE] of Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, Israel, Greek, Persia, Rome, Maya, Japan and of course India.

Shiv has been active on stage and National Television and has directed many short films dealing with social issues plaguing the 80's India. His other interests are to photograph food for restaurants, evangelise ancient recipes on various informal forums and propagate authentic recipes to fine dining specialty restaurants through collaborations with Chefs of Michelin starred restaurants from around the world.



## Siddhartha Gigoo

Siddhartha Gigoo studied English Literature at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is the author of two books of fiction, *The Garden of Solitude* (2011) and *A Fistful of Earth and Other Stories* (2015), which was longlisted for the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award 2015. His short story 'The Umbrella Man' won the Commonwealth Short Story Prize 2015 for Asia. He has also written and directed two short films, *The Last Day* and *Goodbye, Mayfly*, which were selected for several international film festivals. Two books of his poems, *Fall and Other Poems* and *Reflections* – written as a student – were published by Writer's Workshop, Kolkata. His writings have appeared in several literary journals.



## Sohail Hashmi

After Initial schooling at Aligarh, Sohail Hashmi studied at Delhi where he finished his Graduation from DU, PG and M.Phil from JNU.

He started working for PTI TV, later worked with the National Literacy mission, Home TV, BiTV and Kingfisher .com, before floating his own media company. He has conceptualised, researched, scripted and produced documentaries on Pioneers of Women's Education, history of Shahjahanabad, unknown freedom fighters, struggles of rural women to become literate and a 4 part series on the History of Urdu for the MEA (shown on Discovery for four Years).

Sohail is a former Director of Leap Years - a Creative Activity Centre for Children and a founding trustee of SAHMAT. He conducts extremely popular heritage walks in Delhi and loves to cook and talk about food.



## Sonali Misra

An editor at Scholastic India Pvt Ltd, the leading publisher of children's literature in India, Sonali Misra has always been fascinated with the power of language, and has been an avid reader ever since she could read.

Sonali pursued her passion for literature at Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi. She won many creative writing competitions for her short stories, and was awarded the prestigious Anubha Dhar Prize for Creative Writing in English by her college in 2013. In the same year, two of her short stories were published in the Women's Educational Worldwide (WEW) student journal, Voices and Visions (an international joint project of seven different WEW institutions from five different countries).

She formally started her career in 2013 at Macmillan Publishing Services, and previously interned at Penguin Books India and Comic Con India. Presently, she is working on her first novel.

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## Sonia Singh

Sonia Verma Singh is the Editorial Director of the news channel NDTV. As an anchor of the award winning programme for the Best Presented Show, India Decides @9, she has got both critical and viewer acclaim for her work. Conferred by FICCI with the 'Young Leader Award', Sonia has interviewed the country's top politicians, bureaucrats and stars.

Sonia has successfully anchored and editorially managed news ranging from numerous governments at the Centre, to the Kandahar hijack, Sonia Gandhi appointing Manmohan Singh as India's Prime Minister, the Gujarat riots and many other pivotal stories. She currently anchors the new weekly series, The NDTV Dialogues.

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## Suchita Malik

Dr. Malik teaches PG and UG Classes in English Department in Post Graduate Government College, Chandigarh. She taught two courses on 'Creative Writing' in the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow in 1996.

She has been writing middles, features-articles and travelogues, of which about 70 have been published in the Tribune, Indian Express, Hindustan Times and the Pioneer. 'Indian Memsahib', published in 2008 by Rupa & Co, it was followed by her second novel, a sequel titled 'Memsahib's Chronicles' in 2011. In 2014 her third novel titled "Women Extraordinaire" was released.



## Sudeep Sen

He studied at St Columba's School and read literature at Hindu College, University of Delhi. As an Inlaks Scholar, he received a master's degree from the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University in New York. Sen was an international poet-in-residence at the Scottish Poetry Library in Edinburgh, and a visiting scholar at Harvard University.

His books include Postcards from Bangladesh, Prayer Flag, Distracted Geographies, and Rain. He has edited anthologies including: The HarperCollins Book of English Poetry by Indians (2011), World Literature Today Writing from Modern India (2010), The Literary Review Indian Poetry (2009) and Midnight's Grandchildren: Post-Independence English Poetry from India (2004).

Sen has been translated into several languages including Arabic, Bengali, Czech, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Macedonian, Malayalam, Persian, Romanian, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, and Turkish. He has written, edited & translated over 30 books.



## Suhail Mathur

Suhail Mathur is an editor, literary agent and the author of the bestselling historical-mythological fiction, THE BHAIRAV PUTRAS. An alumnus of DPS NOIDA and NLU, Delhi, Suhail currently works in one of India's leading law firms. An avid debater, filmmaker and quiz enthusiast, he has won more than hundred such competitions. Suhail has won more than a dozen national literary competitions and has been awarded with Tales Pensieve's Best Book Reviewer Award, 2013.

A finalist on ZEE Cinema's reality show, Klub MJ Hunt, and an English cricket commentator with Star Sports & Airtel's mobile application, Suhail has featured in all leading newspapers and been interviewed by various news channels on matters of sports, films and literature.

He is also a part of the literary agency, THE BOOK BAKERS, and has been listed as one of the 'Top 51 Indian Writers To Follow' by EBooksIndia.



## Suhel Seth

Suhel Seth is an Indian entrepreneur, actor, columnist, social activist and author. He is the founder of Counselage, India's only strategic brand marketing consultancy focused on a whole-host of advisory services to Chairpersons and CEOs. As a writer he was penned, In your Face which is collection of his commentaries and essays full of dry wit and humor which is his trademark. He collaborated with Khuswant Singh and R K Laxman for the book Kalighat to Calcutta, and has also written Self Help books for your Managers.

Besides being a best-selling author, Suhel writes columns on current affairs in India for several publications such as - Pune Mirror / Mumbai Mirror, The Financial Times, London, Business India, The Hindustan Times and The Indian Express.



## Sujata Parashar

Sujata is a novelist, poet, short story writer and activist. Her debut novel, *In pursuit of infidelity* (2009) explored the man – woman relationship outside the institution of marriage from a modern woman's perspective. The second in the series, *In Pursuit of Ecstasy* (2011) studied the youth - parent relationship in modern times. The book was long listed for the Economist Crossword Book Award 2012. Her latest novel, the third in the "pursuit" series, *In Pursuit of a Lesser Offence*, was released in 2014 and explores the relevance of institution of marriage in current times. Her first short fiction *Wake me only when the Sun is high* (2011), and her first book of poems (2012) in the series "Poetry Out and Loud". She is currently on the executive board of Empowering Minds; a national level NGO located in Delhi.

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## Sumant Batra

Sumant is a corporate and policy lawyer of global eminence; writer, poet, museum curator and a creative entrepreneur. He is the founder of Kumaon Literary Festival. He has founded a number of initiatives to promote art, culture, literature and music. He is founder of a boutique hotel (Te Aroha), a museum (Chitrashala) and a production house (The Speaking Hats).

He is senior international consultant to IMF, World Bank Group and OECD, has worked extensively on policy matters in Africa, Eastern Europe, Middle East and South Asia. Rated as India's No. 1 insolvency lawyer by Legal 500, his contributions to reforms in Indian insolvency system are well-recognised. Sumant has held leadership positions in prestigious multi-lateral, global and national organisations.

He is a frequent speaker at various international and domestic conferences.

Sumant lives in New Delhi with his wife, Asha and two children.

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## Sumedha Verma Ojha

Author of *Urnabhiih* - A Mauryan tale of espionage, adventures and seduction, Sumedha was born on the shores of the River Ganges in modern Patna; ancient Pataliputra, which was the capital of the ancient Kingdom of the Mauryans, and has appropriately gone back to her roots for her first book.

She graduated with honors in Economics from Delhi University's Lady Shri Ram College, and has a Gold Medal in Sociology from the Delhi School of Economics. After a stint as a bureaucrat in the Government of India, she now lives on the shores of Lac Léman in Switzerland with her husband. She is currently working on her second book on the Mauryans.



## Sumit G Sehgal

Sumit G Sehgal is an international wordsmith with a literary experience spanning eleven years with twenty-nine e-books in tow. This aspiring literary wizard took it upon himself to spend his entire quality time helping other people create literary masterpieces. This beautiful vision of his has helped many literary aspirants realize their dreams and his never-ending efforts are sure to bring to light a new era of authors and poets.

To add to his long list of credentials, he has been an extremely successful ghostwriter and currently heads *Butterfly & The Bee ...your literary angles*, an erudite hub for India's literati. Having been involved in theatre work, he also has expertise in different writing styles and poetry with a twist.

Sumit has been nominated for Rex Global Fellowship and Karamveer Chakra Award 2016 for his contribution to the Indian Literary World.

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## Surabhi Modi

Surabhi Modi Sahai is an education entrepreneur leading the most successful law test preparation brand in the country, Clat Possible.

She is also a film scholar and a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship in 2009.

An avid reader, Shakespeare enthusiast, a poet and most importantly a much admired English teacher to more than 5000 students, she innovates constantly and makes learning an enjoyable experience.

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## Surender Mohan Pathak

Surender Mohan Pathak is an author of Hindi-language crime fiction with nearly 300 novels to his credit. His writing career began in late 1950s. His first short story, 57 (The Man That Existed 57 Years Ago), was published by ManoharKahaniya, a popular Hindi magazine, in 1959, and his first full length novel, PuraneGunahNayeGunahgar, was published in 1963.

His major work falls under what is called the "Sunil Series" which consists of 121 novels.

The 'philosopher' detective SudhirKohli is another series character of Pathak which consists of 21 novels and delineates Delhi's fast and material life with the hero's viewpoint.

However, the most popular series of Pathak is Vimal Series. The hero of the series is a wanted criminal. The fact that despite being a wanted criminal, he has won the hearts of his readers can easily be credited to Surender Mohan Pathak's crisp and involving style.



## Susy Matthew

Susy is the author of historical saga - In a Bubble of Time - spans from 14 BC - 28 AD (published, 2012). Her second book, Elijah... Among the Shades of Time, also a historical novel, is set in 9th century B.C. in the Iron Age. (Published, January 2015).

A trained architect, Susy has constructed layered fiction set in antiquity. Her imagination has found expression through a trained eye of an architect thus bringing vivid characters from a lost age and history books to wonderfully crafted fiction.

Besides writing, Susy is a trained musician and has taught Western Classical music, she has painted murals and is busy with her third novel, while pottering in the garden!



## Syed Ali Hamid

Syed Ali Hamid was born and brought up amidst the decadent Avadh aristocracy in Lucknow, a city known for refined manners and extreme politeness in conversation. He has published four books of poems: Autumn Rainbow (1993), No Man's Land (2003), Desire, Ultimately (2013) and The Ontology of Desire: New and Selected Poems (2015). His other publications include, a book on the short fiction of Ernest Hemingway, and translation of Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea into Urdu which was awarded by the Uttar Pradesh Urdu Academy in 1990. He is currently Professor of English at the Almora Campus of Kumaon University.



## Tarun Thakral

With a background and career in Hospitality and a collector of vintage & classic vehicles, Tarun founded Heritage Transportation Trust (HTT) in 1996, to preserve the rich transport heritage of India. In 2013, HTT opened India's first comprehensive transport museum: Heritage Transport Museum which is an endeavor to showcase and interpret the multiple narratives of transport movement.

The museum brings alive the history and evolution of transport heritage in India through a rich and diverse collection of vehicles and associated memorabilia. The collection is representative of not just the objects directly related to transport but also of the socio-cultural life and art associated with it.

Built on a 3 acre complex, Heritage Transport Museum is spread over four air conditioned floors that offer over 100,000 square feet of exhibition space, library and reference centre, mini auditorium, souvenir shop, seminar rooms and refreshment area. The museum is located in Gurgaon, Haryana.



## Tripti Nainwal

Tripti Nainwal is a writer and editor. She has long been associated with Tinkle Comics and Amar Chitra Katha. Her script for Amar Chitra Katha's 'Jim Corbett, Friend of the Wild' was nominated for 'Best Writer' and 'Best Graphic Novel' at Comic Con Awards 2012. She has also scripted graphic biographies of Babu Jagjivan Ram and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Tripti has written three children's books titled, 'Wind – The Air in a Hurry', 'Space – The Great Beyond' and 'Earth - The Blue Marvel' published by TERI Press.

Among the many coffee table books that she has authored, a special one is 'Women of Bhagirathi Valley'. Some of her other books include, 'Arunachal Pradesh, an ode' and 'Nagaland - Arts, Crafts and People'.



## Tuhin Sinha

Tuhin A. Sinha is among the best-selling authors in India, a columnist and a screenwriter.

While his first book, That Thing Called Love was an offbeat romance, his second The Captain was a cricket thriller, and third Of Love And Politics a political thriller. His fourth and fifth books The Edge Of Desire and its sequel, The Edge of Power can be called socio-political thrillers with a strong feminist skew.

Daddy his sixth but first non-fiction narrative is India's first parenting book from a Dad's perspective and celebrates new age fatherhood. Let the Reason Be Love is Tuhin's latest book.

Other than his novels, Tuhin has co-authored the book India Aspires with Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping, Nitin Gadkari.

At present, is a consultant with Reliance Broadcast, in- charge of new programming initiatives for their TV channel, Big Magic.



## Udaya Shankar Pant

Udaya Shankar Pant is a Senior Civil Servant, currently Principal Chief Controller of Accounts of the Ministries of External Affairs; and Ministry of Overseas India Affairs; and holding addition charge of PrCCA in Central Ministries of HRD, Culture, Social Justice & Empowerment, Women & Child development, Youth Affairs & Sports, Tribal Affairs, Minority Affairs; and Disability.

Writing, academic activities, voluntary and social work are his key interests. In addition to serious writings, he is also a poet philosopher and Happiness Guru. His important published titles are "Payment and Accounting System in India" (1996), Budgeting and Public Financial Management in India, Open Secrets of Happiness (2005). Besides he has 12 more books on poetry in English and Hindi.



## Vandana Bist

Vandana is an Illustrator, writer and children's author too. After graduating from the Delhi College of Art, she started working as an illustrator with publishers like Katha, Penguin, Rupa, Harper Collins, Living Media, Srijan, Ratnasagar, Frank Brothers, Frank Educational Aids, Paljor (press of H.H. The Dalai Lama), Pakhi Prakashan, Children's Book Trust, besides others.

She has been writing since 1989 and her specific areas of expression are, adult fiction, poetry, children's fiction, poems for children and workshop outlines in schools. She has received many awards including Katha Prize for the best short story in English(adult fiction) Katha Prize for the best short story in English of the decade 1990-2000 and Katha Chitrakala Award-best Illustrator of the year.



## Vani Mahesh

Vani is the founder of EasyLib, the first online library in India (started in 2001). EasyLib now has spread to three different branches. Through EasyLib Vani has hosted more than a hundred literary events that span from storytelling sessions to creative writing workshops, to author meets.

Vani has a deep rooted interest in the Puranas (Hindu mythology) and has studied some of them in their unabridged forms. Vani is a consultant writer with Amar Chitra Katha and a literary reviewer with Deccan Herald and other magazines. She has contributed articles to Chicken Soup for the Indian soul and Life Stories - an anthology by the magazine Life Positive.



## Vikram Sampath

Bangalore based historian Vikram Sampath, the author of three acclaimed works of non-fiction "Splendours of Royal Mysore: the untold story of the Wodeyars", "My name is Gauhar Jaan!- the life and times of a musician" and "Voice of the Veena: S Balachander, a biography".

Vikram is a visiting Fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin and the University of Queensland, Australia. He currently serves with the Government of India's Ministry of Culture as Executive Director of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Southern Regional Centre.

He is the Founder of the country's first online digital repository for vintage gramophone records of the country called Archive of Indian Music (AIM) and is the Director of the Bangalore Literature Festival (BLF).

A trained Carnatic vocalist under several eminent Gurus, he writes regularly for newspapers and magazines on a wide variety of subjects.



## Vikramjit Singh Rooprai

An IT Consultant by career and a Heritage Activist by passion, Vikramjit is the founder of Youth for Heritage Foundation and Delhi Heritage Photography Club. He completed his graduation and post-graduation while serving as the Director of Research and Innovation at one of the top 5 Digital Marketing companies of the world. In final years of the first decade of the 21st century, he decided to turn into a Heritage Activist.

Vikramjit divides his time between IT Consultancy and Heritage Activism. His contribution in the field of heritage education and conservation is well-recognised. He has been making invaluable contribution in documenting the Indian heritage such as through his website Monuments of Delhi.



## Vinita Dawra Nangia

Vinita Dawra Nangia is a Columnist, Author, Senior Editor, The Times of India and a Motivational Speaker. She is the Director of Write India, a Times of India initiative to give 11 budding writers an opportunity to get a book published in their name under the mentorship of India's leading writers.

She is the Editor of Times Life, a supplement with the Times of India. Vinita is a well-known name in the lifestyle and fashion journalism. She is the author of It's Your Life: Reflections on Contemporary Living & Relationships, which is based on her columns O-Zone.



## Vipin Choudhary

Vipin Choudhary, is a poet, writer and translator. Vipin has translated story books of Ruskin bond, Emily Bronte( Biography), Mary Wollstonecraft ( Biography) and Sardar Ajit Singh ( Autobiography) Uncle of Shaheed Bhagat Singh.

She is continuously active in writing for radio drama, theatre, and films. Her publication include Nai Sadi Ke Haskashtra (2002), Andhere Ke Madhya Se (2008), Ek Baar Phir (2008) and Grey Shade (short story collection) is under Publication. She penned down Biography of Black writer Maya Angelo.

She has been honoured with many awards including Prerna Puraskaar by Haryana Sahitya Acadamy & Prerna Parivar, Hisar (2006), Viragangana Savitribai Phule Fellowship Award (2007) by Bharatiya Dalit Sahitya Akademi, Delhi, Prerana Puraskar Awarded (2008) by Bhartiya Bhasha Parishad, Kolkata.

Currently, she is vice-president of Manav Adhikhaar Sangh, an NGO working for preservation of Human Rights.



## **Yaseen Anwer**

Yaseen Anwer is a polyglot Indian poet. He founded 'Kaafiya: The Poetry Festival' in the year 2015, and is Festival Director for the same. He is the Founder of Poets Corner Group, conceptualized in the year 2011, and Co-founder of Delhi Poetry Festival, in the year 2013.

He is an engineering drop out by choice. Felicitated with "Young Poet Award 2012" by the Indian Poetry Society, his translated work can be found and read in Chinese, Portuguese, Hindi, and a few other languages. As a literary benefactor, he has chaired several sessions as a speaker / feature poet / moderator / guest speaker / guest poet at premier educational institutions and literary festivals.

His work has been published in more than 70 national and international Magazines & Journals. Besides writing, photography and digital imaging are the other two fields of his interest.



## **Yasser Usman**

Yasser Usman is a television journalist and film critic. He has been a recipient of the prestigious Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award and the NT (News Television) Awards thrice over. He has worked for over a decade in leading news organizations is currently with ABP News (formerly Star News). He is the author of Rajesh Khanna- The Untold Story of India's First Superstar (English and Hindi, Penguin India).

He lives in Delhi and is ever available on [www.yasserusman.com](http://www.yasserusman.com)



## **Artist : Anil Nakhasi**

The caricatures are the creative work of Anil, an independent documentary film maker, TV prog director, script writer, poet and an artist. He began his carrier as a journalist cum cartoonist and then switched to electronic media as a TV prog director in 1998. He has done more than thousand recordings, progs. of different genres. His works are in private collections in US, UK, Australia, Iran, Canada, Korea, China, Hongkong, India. As a Caricaturist he made a series of 51 Caricatures 'meri 51 Atal Rekhaayein', which was much liked by Shri Vajpayee himself when he was country's Prime Minister. His work has been widely appreciated by eminent personalities like Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, Khushwant Singh, Shyam Benegal, Adoor Gopalkrishnan.

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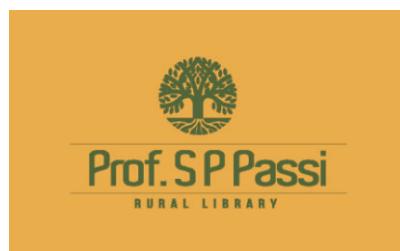
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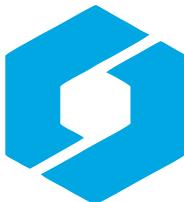
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Being 'The King of Good Times', Kingfisher also associated itself with "Sunburn", the largest, hippest music festivals in the country.

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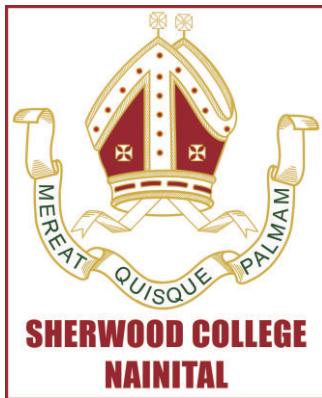
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Then there is the Summer Palace of Maharaja Ranjit Singh which has now been converted into a museum. It preserves the weapons dating back to the Mogul times and portraits of the ruling dynasties of Punjab.

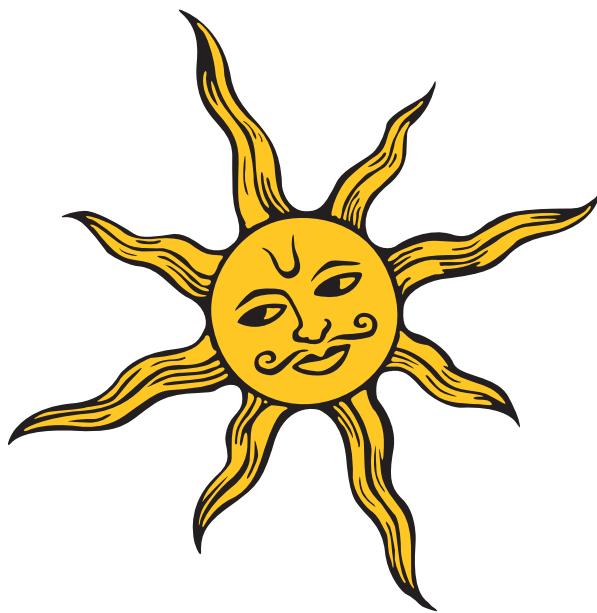
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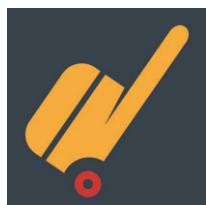
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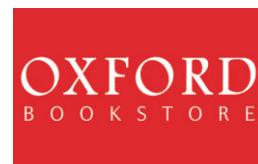
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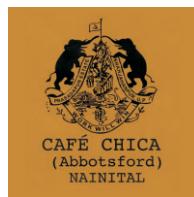
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*Finest of Teas, Herbs & Spices*

[www.mittalteas.com](http://www.mittalteas.com)

### Associated NGO's



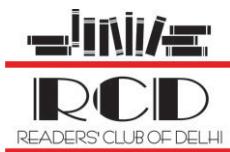
### Aided by



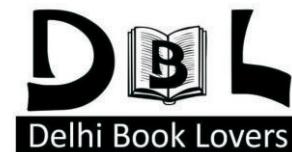
[www.poetscorner.co.in](http://www.poetscorner.co.in)



[www.blotcanvas.com](http://www.blotcanvas.com)



[www.readersclubdelhi.com](http://www.readersclubdelhi.com)



[www.delhibooklovers.com](http://www.delhibooklovers.com)



Sumant Batra's



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

## Young Writers & their tryst with the Publishing World

- Lalima Yadav
- Trivarna Hariharan
- Abhiraj Lamba
- Yashna Batra

## Poetry Contest Winners

- Yashi Srivastava
- Harpreet Kaur
- Parul S
- Neha Bahuguna



## Destination Dhanachuli

A mountain village is a perfect metaphor for escape. A temporary hyphen that breathes life into the long busy sentences of our everyday existence, the metaphorical comma that we all require to reboot, rejuvenate and revive ourselves.

Dhanachuli is one of those picture perfect places that still hold the magic of mountains and the solitude of village life. Inhabited by over 1500 people, it's quaint, simple and idyllic. Time too seems to slow down; suddenly one becomes more aware of the changing patterns of clouds and movement of sun than the ticking of the clock and ringing of the phone.

The people with ruddy cheeks and pink children overfed on fruits, orchards and rice fields, the aroma and freshness of it all overwhelms the senses and one finds solace in an afternoon siesta. Waking up we realise it's not just a dream, and on the vast canvas of sky overhead, with majestic Himalayan peaks in background and endless line of oaks and fir, the evening is painting in the broad brushes of red yellow and blues accompanied by the melody of magpie for symphony.

Dhanachuli with the tag line of "Aao jee le Zindagi" beckons us to probe what one is living for. The plains, at this moment, resemble Dante's Inferno and this mountain village Milton's Paradise Regained.



## Te Ar<sup>o</sup>ha DHANACHULI

The hills are alive with the sound of music and verses hang from the boughs of orchard trees. A lone minivet sings a melancholy ode on rhododendron, and warblers whoosh overhead. Te Aroha, the place of love, looms ahead, on a winding street, the yellow roofs glistening in the sun, the white washed walls striking amid the dark greens.

The interiors, carefully crafted to reflect the taste, are appealing to senses. The corners all tucked with books and antiques. On the walls the choicest paintings. In the room, as you draw back curtains, the grand drama unfolds. Clouds slide into the valley, tree branches sway with the winds and birds swoop past, all in one swift motion and vying for attention.

The many spaces to keep you occupied, the reading room with a shack full of lovely covers and old world relics. The café that swoops to and fro between the swing of seventies and twist of fifties, a lambertta to finish the setting and sepia posters of things that consist your memories.

The evening brings with it the silence of the hills, shimmer of candle lights and the flickering of many fireflies, the constant hum of cicadas and in some distance the strange sounds of forest. You are thinking this is what a perfect escape should look like, and suddenly a melody- as you listen intently, it's an old ghazal on gramophone in the alley, you smile, a drink in hand, and reclined in the armchair, you close your eyes.

# DAY ONE

## Friday, 23 October 2015

03.00 pm - 04.10 pm

### Opening Session

#### **Welcome note:**

Janhavi Prasada, Member, KLF Planning Board

#### **Founder Address:**

Sumant Batra, Founder, Kumaon Literary Festival

#### **Guest of Honour Address:**

Rebecca Tavares, Representative of UN Women in India, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka

#### **Launch of Dhanachuli Website & Festival Brochure & Chief Guest Address:**

Harish Rawat, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand

#### **Vote of Thanks:**

Rishi Suri, Member, KLF Planning Board

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04.15 pm - 05.15 pm

### Refashioning our past: becoming history conscious with a vengeance

**Dr. Bibek Debroy**, Member, Niti Aayog, Government of India

**Dr. Rakhsanda Jalil**, Literary Historian & Founder, Hindustani Awaaz

**Vikram Sampath**, Author & Historian

**Sohail Hashmi**, Historian, Filmmaker & Scholar

**Moderated by Maya Mirchandani, Senior Editor, NDTV**

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05.25 pm - 06.25 pm

### Humour: can art and comedy co-exist?

**Anuja Chauhan**, Author & Advertiser

**Fahad Samar**, Filmmaker & Author

**Ameena Saiyid**, MD Oxford University Press in Pakistan and Founder, Karachi & Islamabad Literary Festivals

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06.45 pm - 07.00 pm

### Dastaan-e-Dilli

**Vikramjit Singh** Rooprai ki zubani

**07.20 pm - 08.00 pm**

**"Pahar Ki Nari": Ballads of Basanti Devi**

Basanti Bisht is the first and only woman who sings the ancient form of Jagar that is sung to invoke a spirit in a living person's body. She learnt this form under her mother and trained in Classical music at the Pracheen Kala Kendra in Chandigarh. She sings at many programs and performs regularly on All India Radio and Doordarshan.

---

**09.00 pm onwards**

**Kashmir through a musical lens - an evening of songs and stories by Pragnya Wakhlu**

Kashmir has always been known as a beautiful land cloaked in an air of mystique. There are many facets of Kashmiri culture and poetry by Kashmiri mystics that remain hidden from the public eye.

This session of stories and songs will give you a view of Kashmir through a musical lens. Contemporary songs retaining a traditional flavour of Kashmir will be sung accompanied by the interesting history ( and anecdotes ) behind each song. The songs range from the poetry of Kashmiri Sufi mystic poet Lal Ded, the love story of Habakhaatoon and King Yusuf Shah Chak to the evergreen Kashmiri classic Bhumbro which elicits the story of Yemberzal and Nargis.

## **DAY TWO**

**Saturday, 24 October 2015**

**06.30 am - 07.30 am**

**Meander through the forest or small trails**

There are many trails around Te Aroha that meander through the forest next to Te Aroha. Here you can get glimpses of the local flora and fauna, architecture and life as you explore the little known paths and tracks into the forest. It is absolutely safe to walk around. The people of Dhanachuli are warm and welcoming!

---

**10.00 am - 10.10 am**

**A Presentation on Fellows of Nature by Sujata Parashar & Nicolas Idier**

**07.20 pm - 08.00 pm**

**"Pahar Ki Nari": Ballads of Basanti Devi**

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**03.00 pm - 05.00 pm**

### **Brewing poetry in the woods**

Evening comes and the oak trees in the woods near Te Aroha throw shadows on the undulating hills, the soft wind sings, making their leaves dance. This is Nature's song. We will sit under these very oak trees, under an orange-blue sky blushing with the hues of the setting sun, listening to poems on love, romance, relationships and drink them in, even as we sip on some of the finest teas brewed specially for us. Different flavours, different recitations, in keeping with Nature's one song. A heady brew to enrich our senses and sense of well-being.

**Mihir Vatsa**, Poet

**Menka Shivdasani**, Poet

**Pratap Somvanshi**, Senior Resident Editor, Hindustan Hindi Daily

**Sujata Parashar**, Author & Poet

**Moderated by Abha Iyengar, Author & Poet**

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**03.00 pm - 05.00 pm**

### **YES CULTURE Heritage Walk**

Merely 60-minute trek into the valley, through the fields of corn, cabbage and peas, lies the ruins of what was 150-200 year ago a buzzing village. The houses in the village date back to anywhere between 150 and 200 years. This hidden jewel of Dhanachuli is a must visit while at Te Aroha.

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**05.15 pm - 06.15 pm**

### **Remnants of a Separation**

**Asif Noorani, Sohail Hashmi** and **Aanchal Malhotra** in conversation with **Barkha Dutt**

An exhibition of Aanchal Malhotra's project Remnants of a Separation that narrates the history of the Indian subcontinent through remnants - the objects that individuals took with them when they left their homes at the time of the partition of India- the belongings that became a part of their life, their journey- whatever shape it was to take, and those which are now a part of their histories. What do you take with you when you don't know whether you will live to see tomorrow? Do you take anything at all? Is it the tangible- money, valuables, or is it the intangible that accompanies you- memories, values, a feeling of displacement. Whatever remains today from this event carries within it the history of a place and the distant image of a true home.

**06.30 pm - 07.15 pm**

**My Name is Gauhar Jaan**

A musical rendition & dialogue by Vikram Sampath

---

**07.15 pm - 08.00 pm**

**Ras Gatha: The making of mahabharat**

Kahani Gangaputra Bhism ki - a narration by **Deepti Pant**

It is said that Mahabharat happened because of Draupadi's cheer haran, is it so? What if, the Son of Ganga – the righteous and the mighty warrior Devvart had not decided to relinquish his throne. What if, Bhism had not become Bhism but remained Devvrat – the King of Hastinapur.

What if? Well, in this episode, taking examples from poetry, literature and mythology, we will discover how and what made Devvrat into Bhism and wonder what would have been the story if he had not given in to his father's desires.

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**09.00 pm - 09.45 pm**

**Sitaron Ki Duniya Mein - a night of star gazing and astrophotography**

Astrophotography workshop by **Himanshu Rastogi**

Who has not looked up at the night sky and ever wondered what the stars are? Dhanachuli is a perfect place for all those who love the stars too fondly. We have arranged a night event of stargazing. Look through the eyepiece of Te Aroha telescope to see the bejeweled beauty of the star clusters, observe the many-layered clouds of Jupiter, and see the fractured craters and mountains of the moon. This Star Gazing event offers an unforgettable opportunity for those who don't fear the night.

# DAY THREE

## Sunday, 25 October 2015

**06.30 am - 08.00 am**

**Shoot them at leisure: a photography workshop by Ravi Dhingra**

**Registration fee: Rs. 1000**

Join a photography workshop of two hours with Ravi Dhingra to learn the basics of photography! Ravi will share the fundamental yet fine nuances of nature photography as you seek to capture the rising sun and the sun-soaked snow peaks, the early birds and nature. The basic of lighting and composition are critical for photography. Ravi will share his expertise. Dhanachuli is a perfect destination for avid birders and enthusiastic naturalists. The area is home to a variety of rare birds through the year. Birds reside in abundance on the fruit and wild trees that inhabit the mountains of Dhanachuli. Learn the art of observation from him!

Ravi has kindly agreed to donate the revenue generated from the workshop to distribute stationary to students in a school in Dhanachuli.

New Delhi based Ravi Dhingra is a Canon Photo Mentor and also a visiting faculty for photography at various institutes including National Institute of Fashion Technology. He is also a Co-Founder of a photography based organisation called "CAMERAUNLIMITED FOUNDATION", which spreads knowledge and information related to photography through Workshops, Photo Walks and Tours. He has also curated a number of photography exhibitions under the banner of "CAMERAUNLIMITED" involving upcoming and established photographers. More about him can be found on [www.ravidhingra.in](http://www.ravidhingra.in).

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**10.00 am - 11.00 am**

**When will we have our next Karam Chand?**

**Surender Mohan Pathak**, Eminent Author

**Piyush Jha**, Filmmaker, Screenplay Writer & Author

**Dr. Manjiri Prabhu**, Author, Screenplay Writer

**Moderated by Kulpreet Yadav, Author**

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**11.15 am - 12.00 pm**

**Hum Tum - Lucky People: Things positive people do different**

**Vinita Dawra Nangia**, Author, Columnist & Senior Editor, Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd.

**Jerry Almeida**, Teacher and Motivational Speaker

**Moderated by Sujata Parashar, Author and Member, KLF Planning Board**

11.15 am - 01.15 pm

**StoPo Junction! Hear out the stroytellers and poets**

**Mohan Kabadwal Masterji**, Local Poet & Storyteller  
**Prof. S.A. Hamid**, Professor, Kumaon University, Almora  
**Sumit Sehgal**, Butterfly & The Bee  
**Deepa Agarwal**, Author  
**Lovita J R Morang**, Poet, Artist & Filmmaker  
**Mariam Karim Ahlawat**, Author & Poet

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**Poetry reading contest winners:**

**Yashi Srivastava**, (Lucknow)  
**Harpreet Kaur**, (Amritsar)  
**Parul S**, (Delhi)  
**Neha Bahuguna**, (Mumbai)

**Moderated by Dolly Singh, Founder, Poets Corner**

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12.15 pm - 01.15 pm

**Mythological & historical fiction in modern times: reasons for their popularity**

**Sumedha Verma Ojha**, Author  
**Satyarth Nayak**, Author  
**Olivier Lafont**, Actor, Author & Screenplay Writer

**Moderated by Suhail Mathur, Author, Bhairav Putras**

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**Music & poetry in cinema - will the glorious period return?**

02.00 pm - 03.00 pm

**Asif Noorani**, Columnist, The Dawn, Film & Music Reviewer  
**Akshay Manwani**, Biographer of Sahir Ludhianvi  
**Sathyia Saran**, Editor & Author

**Moderated by Dr. Saif Mahmood, Founder, SAALARC**

---

**Queen of Hearts or King's Guards - Role of women in ancient India**

03.15 pm - 04.15 pm

**Sumedha Verma Ojha**, Author  
**Susy Matthew**, Author & Trainer  
**Dr. Alka Pande**, Consultant, Arts Advisor & Curator - Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre

**Moderated by Priya Kapoor, Roli Books & Member, KLF Planning Board**

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**When two authors from different continents writing on the same subject meet**

04.15 pm - 04.55 pm

**meet**

Sarah Blau & Susy Matthew in an interesting conversation. One lives in Israel and the other in India. Yet both have been writing about same or similar subjects: ancient myths, biblical characters and lilith.

05.00 pm - 06.00 pm

**Legacies of historical and recent immigrants in India: people, places and stories**

**Aman Nath**, Co-Chairman, Neemrana Hotels

**Dadi Pudumjee**, Founder, The Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust

**Olivier Lafont**, Artist, screenplay writer & author

**Rabbi Ezekiel Isaac Malekar**, Priest and Honorary Secretary, Judah Hyam Synagogue

**Moderated by Surabhi Modi, Education Entrepreneur & Film Scholar**

---

**Book Release: Ashes, Wine and Dust by Barkha Dutt**

06.10 pm - 06.20 pm

Author **Kanza Javed**

Shortlisted for the Tibor Jones South Asia Prize 2013

Embroiled in the set imperative of middle class lifestyle in contemporary Pakistan, Mariam Ameen decides to challenge the tradition of being female. 'Ashes, Wine and Dust' describes the journey Mariam undertakes which becomes an exploration of human themes of self-identity, invisible ropes of social customs, stereotypes and love. As love in all forms is tested in the most strenuous ways possible, the case of disappearance becomes the less chosen road towards a self discovery.

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**Cross border tales: three storytellers and their extraordinary female leads.**

06.20 pm - 07.05 pm

**Kanza Javed**, Author

**Dr. Suchita Malik**, Author

**Mona Verma**, Author

**Moderated by Neelam Kapur, Directorate, Field Publicity, I&B Ministry, Government of India**

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**Reading of iconic speeches by Suman Batra**

07.05 pm - 07.50 pm

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**Fractals & EroText**

08.00 pm - 08.15 pm

A reading by **Sudeep Sen**

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**Sitaron Ki Duniya Mein - a night of star gazing and astrophotography**

09.00 pm - 09.45 pm

Astrophotography workshop by **Himanshu Rastogi**



# Nainital

*\*Ah Nainital!*

*Retreating Mountains*

*Purples of Ages –Pause for you...*

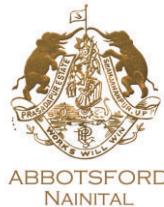
Himalayas are not just confined of geography, but are a part of our collective consciousness through the unbroken lineage of mythology, history, drama, literature and our songs .

Nainital with its mythical origin is one such place tucked in its foothills. Precariously perched right in the heart is the fabled Naini lake and around it the meandering streets of the town.

The place owes its charm to the Raj era too. Being the summer capital of the North West Province, it is dotted with many relics from that age, lending it a sepia charm.

As you take a leisurely stroll along the famous Mall Road, step back and pause at the placid waters of lake with the tapestry of surrounding mountains, making it postcard perfect. Walk into one of the charming cafés along the sidewalk to enjoy a great cup of coffee and memories all in a single afternoon, and say, Ah! Nainital.

*\*The lines above are abridged from the original Emily Dickenson's poem "Ah! Teneriffre"*



Built in 1876, Abbotsford is one of the most distinguished and stately homes of Nainital. The structure of the house, made of solid stone, is made to last generations. Surrounded by acres of dense Himalayan oak forest, Abbotsford Nainital stands tall amidst its surrounding, a proud relic from the age gone by, a perfect reminder of nostalgia and memories.

To explore Abbotsford, you can stroll through the estate's forest and take a spellbinding tour of the fragrant and colourful Himalayan flora and fauna. Else, relax if you please, in the crisp cool mountain air as the sounds of the rare Himalayan birds and wildlife gently call out for your attention.

All the suites have ample natural light, a fabulous view of the majestic Himalayan peaks, put together with the sounds of chirping birds and rustling trees, to create an enthralling experience for the senses.

# DAY FOUR

## Monday, 26 October 2015

**06.00 am - 09.00 am**

### **Nainital at dawn**

Walk down to the lake and catch the sunrise reflect on the waters. Boating begins by 8.45am - experience the waters and feed the ducks. If you're an early riser then 5.30am is the morning aarti at the iconic Naina Devi temple after which Nainital is named.

Or, trek above Abbotsford's uphill forest trail 35-40 minutes and get a brilliant view of the kidney shaped Nainital lake, some beautiful birding, flora and fauna! You can also play a quick game of golf at the Raj Bhawan situated in one of the most scenic part of Nainital.

You can also visit the St John's Church.

---

**10.00 am - 10.10 am**

### **Welcome Address by Sumant Batra, Founder, Kumaon Literary Festival**

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**10.10 am - 11.10 am**

### **Documenting food heritage**

**Neha Prasada**, Author

**Purabi Shridhar**, Author

**Osama Jalali**, Food Historian

**Shiv Shankar Maitra**, Author

**Moderated by Aditya Bal, Actor & TV Anchor**

---

**10.0 am - 01.00 pm**

### **Interaction with students**

by **Jerry Pinto & Siddhartha Gigoo**

### **Creative writing workshop**

by **Abha Iyengar**

Abha Iyengar, an internationally published author, poet and British Council certified creative writing facilitator, will hold workshop for school & college students and young adults.

**Venue:** Auditorium, Uttarakhand Academy of Administration, Mallital, Nainital

**11.20 am - 12.20 pm**

**Jaane Kahan Main Kidhar Chala: choices and dilemmas of the modern-day Indian traveller**

**Saurav Jha**, Author

**Devapriya Roy**, Senior Journalist and Author

**Moderated by Ajay Jain, Kunzum Café**

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**11.20 am - 12.20 pm**

**Real fiction or fictitious reality**

**Surender Mohan Pathak, Piyush Jha** and **Tuhin Sinha** in conversation about the influence of real life stories and characters in their books.

---

**12.30 pm - 01.00 pm**

**Launch of the revised edition of Namita Gokhale's Mountain Echoes - Reminiscences of Kumaoni Women**

Namita Gokhale will be in conversation with Neeta Gupta on this much awaited revised edition of Mountain Echoes: Reminiscences of Kumaoni Women. This is the book that describes the Kumaoni way of life through the eyes of four highly talented and individualistic women – Shivani, Tara Pande, Jiya, and Shakuntala Pandeat. All four women were alive and well when the book was first published in 1998. It was a first-person account of their life in the mountains.

---

**02.00 pm - 03.00 pm**

**Turning literature into cinema**

**M K Raina**, Theatre Actor and Director

**Advaita Kala**, Author

**Maitreyee B Chowdhury**, Author & Poet

**Moderated by Priyanka Sinha Jha, Editor & Content Head, Screen**

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**03.10 pm - 04.10 pm**

**Count your words : Short - stories are back in vogue**

**Siddhartha Gigoo**, Author

**Mahesh Rao**, Author

**Amit Shankar**, Author

**Dr. Debasish Panigrahi**, Author & Poet

**Moderated by Sujata Parashar, Author & Member, KLF Planning Board**

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**04.15 pm - 05.15 pm**

**Have bloggers carved out a space in the digital world?**

**Arvind Passey**, Poet & Blogger

**Philippa Kaye**, Travel Blogger

**Ajay Jain**, Kunzum Cafe

**Moderated by Kiran Manral, Author**

**04.15 pm - 05.15 pm** **Hindi popular fiction & poetry: staying relevant in present times**

**Udaya Pant**

**Vipin Chaudhary**

**Geet Chaturvedi**, Hindi Novelist and Poet

**Aditi Maheshwari**, Director, Vani Prakashan

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**05.20 pm - 05.50 pm** **Lesser known facts and stories of Kumaon**

A talk by **Ajay Rawat**

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**06.30 pm - 07.30 pm** **Book release: Tripwire for a Tiger**

Author: **James Champion**

Tripwire for a Tiger is an anthology of articles written by F W Champion, one of the first wildlife photographers and conservationists. Together with Corbett, he was a founding member of India's first national park established in 1935, which was renamed to Corbett National Park in 1957. F W Champion is known as the father of Indian wild life photography and his books are reference point for wild life conservationist even today. In the 1920s he developed cameras triggered by tripwires. Using a flashlight as well, he obtained dozens of remarkable night-time photographs, which are among the first of wild tigers, leopards, sloth bears, dholes and other wildlife.

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**Jungle hai aadhi raat hai - Jungle lore, Jim Corbett and others**

**James Champion**, Conservationist, Nature Enthusiast & Author

**Sameer Sinha**, IFS, Director, Jim Corbett National Park

**Rosemary Fox**, Conservationist & Nature Enthusiast, Conservation Chair, BC Nature

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**08.00 pm - 09.00 pm** **An Evening of Sufi Songs with Harpreet Singh**

An evening of music and poetry encompassing the various languages - Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Rajashani and will serve as a reflection of the ageless wisdom and awakening that we have inherited. Harpreet's music forms a bridge, an offering to his generation, to walk the path to a deeper life, to perspectives that can be transformative.

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**09.00 pm - 10.00 pm** **Dinner : Uttarakhandi Food Festival**

Kindly hosted by Department of Tourism, Government of Uttarakhand & The Times of India

# DAY FIVE

## Tuesday, 27 October 2015

**06.00 am - 09.00 am**

### **Nainital at dawn**

Walk down to the lake and catch the sunrise reflect on the waters. Boating begins by 8.45am - experience the waters and feed the ducks. If you're an early riser then 5.30am is the morning aarti at the iconic Naina Devi temple after which Nainital is named.

Or, trek above Abbotsford's uphill forest trail 35-40 minutes and get a brilliant view of the kidney shaped Nainital lake, some beautiful birding, flora and fauna!

You can also play a quick game of golf at the Raj Bhawan situated in one of the most scenic part of Nainital.

You can also visit the St John's Church.

---

**09.50 am - 10.00 am**

### **A Presentation on Fellows of Nature by Sujata Parashar & Suman Batra**

---

**10.00 am - 11.00 am**

### **Kumaon through the colonial lens: history today**

**Dr. Shekhar Pathak**, Padam Shri, Historian and Scholar

**Jane Gill**, Author, Dance with Fireflies

**Deepak Rawat**, District Magistrate, Nainital

**Moderated by Rudy Singh, Filmmaker & Poet**

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**10.0 am - 01.00 pm**

### **Interaction with students**

by **Jerry Pinto & Siddhartha Gigoo**

### **Creative writing workshop**

by **Abha Iyengar**

Abha Iyengar, an internationally published author, poet and British Council certified creative writing facilitator, will hold workshop for school & college students and young adults.

---

**11.10 am - 12.10 pm**

### **Rajesh Khanna: A Look Back at the SuperStar**

**Gautam Chintamani**, Author, Dark Star: The Loneliness of Being Rajesh Khanna

**Yasser Usman**, Author, Rajesh Khanna : The Untold Story of India's First Superstar

**Moderated by Sathy Saran, Editor & Author**

**11.10 am - 12.10 pm**

**Younger writers and their tryst with the publishing world**

**Lalima Yadav**, Rudrapur, Uttarakhand, Author, We the people - behind a veil  
**Trivarna Hariharan**, The Indian Heights School, Dwarka, Author, (S)cool Day  
**Abhiraj Lamba**, The Doon School, Dehradun  
**Yashna Batra**, The Shri Ram School Aravali

**Moderated by Supriya Kaur Dhaliwal, St. Bede's College, Shimla, Author, Musings of Miss Yellow**

**Venue:** Auditorium, Uttarakhand Academy of Administration, Mallital, Nainital

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**12.20 pm - 01.20 pm**

**Reemergence of Graphic Novels & Comics**

**Rutu Modan**, An Israeli illustrator and comic book artist  
**Janhavi Prasada**, Graphic Novelist and Media Buff, Member, KLF Planning Board  
**Tripti Nainwal**, Graphic Screenwriter

**Moderated by Vani Mahesh, Author**

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**02.00 pm - 03.00 pm**

**Children's literature – not just night time stories**

**Jerry Pinto**, Author & Poet  
**Vandana Bist**, Author & Illustrator  
**Sonali Misra**, Editor, Scholastic  
**Mona Verma**, Author

**Moderated by Vani Mahesh, Author**

---

**03.10 pm - 04.10 pm**

**Sanskriti, Virasat aur Sahitya - preserving culture, heritage, nature and wildlife through art & literature**

**Rosemary Fox**, Conservationist & Nature Enthusiast, Conservation Chair, BC Nature  
**Tarun Thakral**, Founder, Transport Heritage Museum, Gurgaon  
**Vikramjit Singh Rooprai**, Founder, Delhi Heritage Photography Club  
**Meraj Anwar**, Wildlife Conservationist

**Moderated by Saumya Kulshreshtha, Writer, Poet & Editor**

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**04.15 pm - 06.45 pm**

**A reading session at Gurney House (what was once home to Jim Corbett in Nainital)**

Closed Event. Organised by the host, **Nilanjana Dalmia**. Strictly by invitation only.

**04.15 pm - 04.45 pm**

**Book Release: Let the Reason be Love**

Author: **Tuhin A. Sinha**

The book will be launched by Deepak Rawat, District Magistrate, Nainital

Tuhin A. Sinha will be in conversation with Kiran Manral

What makes strangers fall in love? This remains a conundrum—one that neither technological breakthroughs, nor the most passionate of lovers have managed to unravel. While some may attribute attraction to shared sensibilities or even a karmic connection, the fact remains that love comes without simple answers; it's damn complicated!

Written in Tuhin A. Sinha's impassioned and disturbingly honest narrative-style, Let the Reason Be Love is the author's second exclusive romantic offering after his 2006 debut bestseller, That Thing Called Love.

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**05.00 pm - 05.45 pm**

**Barkha Dutt in conversation with Avirook Sen, Author of Aarushi**

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**05.45 pm - 06.45 pm**

**Hindustani Poetry: Connecting the common man to literature**

**Sohail Hashmi**, Historian

**Pervaiz Alam**, Writer

**Geet Chaturvedi**, Hindi Novelist and Poet

**R S Bedi**, Literary Enthusiast

**Moderated by Dr. Saif Mahmood, Founder, SAALARC**

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**07.00 pm - 07.40 pm**

**Closing ceremony of 2015 Edition of Kumaon Literary Festival**

Felicitations of **Shri Girish Chandra Tewari (Girda Ji)** posthumously by **Rana Kapoor**, Managing Director & CEO, YES BANK by presentation of Certificate of Recognition and Cash Award of Rs. 50,000.00 to Shrimati Hemlata Tewari for his contribution in the field of literature and culture

Special Address : **Rana Kapoor**, Managing Director & CEO, YES BANK

Presentation of **Kumaon Literary Festival Lifetime Achievement Award** (posthumously) to Late Shri Girish Chandra Tewari (Girda Ji) by **His Excellency Dr. Krishan Kant Paul**, Governor of Uttarakhand

Address by Chief Guest **His Excellency Dr. Krishan Kant Paul**, Governor of Uttarakhand

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**Curtain closes on the First Edition of Kumaon Literary Festival**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The journey to a destination must be as fulfilling as the destination. And this six-month long and still counting journey has been one spectacular and memorable voyage. I am humbled by the overwhelming support and warmth with which the literary community has welcomed us in our very first edition.

The speakers and authors constitute the backbone of any literary festival. I am humbled by the support the festival received from authors and speakers we reached out to. Their contribution in the development of the first edition of KLF stays unparalleled. They remain at the heart of the building of this festival. Also, thanks are due to those performing at the festival or churning out special cuisines for KLF guests or holding workshops.

No festival of the scale we have planned is possible without the support of partners and sponsors. Particularly, when it is not a commercial event, the support becomes not only important, but also, imperative.

The support of the Government of Uttarakhand deserves a special mention. Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board, Uttarakhand Academy of Administration, Kumaon Vikas Nigam and other departments showed both enthusiasm and promptness in responding to our requests. I am humbled by their support! Nainital district administration headed by its dynamic District Magistrate, Deepak Rawat extended whole-hearted logistical and moral support needed to make the festival possible in a remote place. Thank you Deepak! Without you we would have struggled.

I would like to thank United Nations Women, The Government of France and Australian High Commission for supporting our key projects: Women Unlimited Series, Fellows of Nature and Literary Bhagidari, respectively. Without their support the uniqueness of the festival may not have been possible. I look forward to their continued support of the festival and its various endeavors.

A special thanks to our sponsors! Sparing funds for a literary event planned in a distant Himalayan village requires a generous heart and decision-making. YES BANK, Clat Possible, India Glycols Limited,

Sherwood College, P C Jeweller, Hero Electric, Da Milano, CocaCola, Kingfisher, Sula and many others who have been duly acknowledged in this brochure. The Times of India has been a great partner to work with. Punjab Heritage And Tourism Development Board also deserves a big Thank You.

I would like to thank hotel Taj Man Singh for their generosity in hosting the curtain raiser in Delhi and the hotels Le Meridien and The Claridges for hosting the festival guests in Delhi and Shervani and other hotels for hosting our guests in Nainital. Their hospitality surely will add charm to the over all KLF experience. The publishing houses, book stores and others joined in overwhelming numbers to support the festival.

The team of Te Aroha and Abbotsford deserves a special mention. Their cooperation and willingness to make the event a success was overwhelming.

I must express my gratitude to the KLF Planning Board members – Barkha, Janhavi, Saif, Rishi, Sujata, Priya, Kiran and Sonali. Without their support I wouldn't have dared to take even the first step on this long and challenging journey

I owe a special mention to Anil Nakhasi. He produced caricatures at a speed unmatched and unparalleled. His creative instinct is phenomenal. Sumit Sehgal, as always and ever willing to help, provided technical support and added value through his skills and emotions.

No words can do justice to the contribution of Richa Thakur, head of KLF Secretariat. Richa and Shruti Bhatt have worked unconditionally through days and nights. Shikha Upadhayay has been a great team member in content management and editorial support. KLF Sparrows rock!

They have worked relentlessly and tirelessly around my unreasonable demands, expectations and whims not once letting me down.

Finally, I bow to the people of Dhanachuli for hosting us in their heavenly abode!

I salute this land of the Devas!

## **Sumant Batra**

Founder

# Kumaon Literary Festival

## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



### Shri Girish Chandra Tewari (Girda Ji)

(Posthumously)

*Aaj Himalaya tumin ke dhattyu cha,  
Jago ho jago mere lal,  
Nahin kari di halo hamro neelami,  
Nahin kari di halo hamro halal..*

Seldom lives a man whose poems are not just confined to his subjective experiences, but burst forth like a gale; become a movement, influence an entire generation, revive a local dying language and leave a legacy.

Girish Chandra Tiwari, fondly called Girda, was the voice that moved and shaped the conscience of masses in Uttarakhand. A tireless crusader for social causes, he was at the forefront in all the movements of the region; Chipko movement, Uttrakhand Andolan and "Nasha Nahin Rozgaar Do", among others.

Apart from being a social activist he was a refined poet, a theatre personality and a versatile artist. His preferred instrument was 'hudka' and the language of his protest, Kumaoni. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of mountains, local culture and history of the region. With a strong socialistic bend, he lived among the Nepali migrants and gave up the comfort of government job to steer the causes he had undertaken.

Deeply influenced by the dissent poetry of Faiz he translated many of them in local dialect. As theatre director he was the first person to bring modern Hindi drama to the people of Kumaon. "Andha Yug" by Dharamveer Bharti was staged in Nanital and he wrote plays like "Nagade Khamosh Hain" reflecting the political times. Never someone to kowtow before authority he acted in plays like "Andher Nagri" during the time of Emergency.

A Life Time Achievement Award is a small token for a man who, with his ways and life, has bequeathed such abundance of creativity to the people of Uttarakhand. Girda is forever part of the memories of millions in the region, who fondly remember him as 'hudka' playing and Kumaoni singing sage.

# Aao Jee Le Zindagi...

गुनगुनी और चम्पई सी धूप सी, हर मोड़ पे बिखरी है रौशनी।  
पढ़ लो इन आँखों में झाँककर, इस मोहब्बत में है कितनी सादगी।  
पढ़ लो इन आँखों में झाँककर, है इस मोहब्बत में कितनी सादगी।

Chorus

(आओ जी लें ज़िन्दगी, दिल में हमारे हैं धानाचुली) X2

Stz1

छोटे से पहाड़ पे पीली छत का मकान है, कला है संगीत है उत्सवो की भरमार है  
मेल-मिलाप है कल और आज का सुन्दर साथ है।  
रंगों से हर सेज सजी है खुशियों की सौगात है।  
नदियां, बुरास और पंछी भी, बातें करने को तुमसे बेताब हैं।  
बीती हुई सदियों से पल रहे, महके से जाने कितने ख्वाब हैं।  
कर लो इनसे दोस्ती, दिल में बसालो तुम धानाचुली।

आओ जी लें ज़िन्दगी, दिल में हमारे हैं धानाचुली।

Stz2

इस विरासत को हमको संजोना है, इन खुशियों को अब हमने न खोना है,  
साथ मिलकर कुछ सपने सजाने हैं, इस धरोहर में कितने खजाने हैं।  
खुशियां हो, उत्सव हो, राग हो, रंगों की बिखरी हो जाटूगरी।  
कला और संस्कृति का मेल हो, गुनिओं की छा जाए कारीगरी।

आकर देखो तो सही, कितना सुहाना है धानाचुली!

आओ जी लें ज़िन्दगी, दिल में हमारे हैं धानाचुली!

धानाचुली...धानाचुली...धानाचुली!!!



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