



## Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival announces dates for 10th anniversary edition with first list of 16 speakers

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### HIGHLIGHTS

- **Festival Dates** - 18th-20th January 2019.
- **Venue** - Coming Home to Park Street, iconic hub of heritage and change.
- **New Writers** - AKLF-Juggernaut New Writers' Competition, to identify and promote budding writers.
- **Women's Writing** - The first edition of Prabha Khaitan Woman's Voice Award in association with Oxford Bookstore, to celebrate fresh Indian voices in women's writing.
- **Children's Lit Fest** – Oxford Junior Literary Festival featuring leading children writers, literary quizzes, interactive sessions and storytelling.
- **Poetry** – Poetry Café that showcases the spoken word, classic and new poetry collections, Poets and prose writers.

**First list of speakers announced** - Some of the eminent speakers who will be part of the AKLF 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition include (*in no particular order*) **Andrew Sean Greer**, Pulitzer winner for Fiction 2018, **Ira Mukhoty**, known for her feminist writing; **Devdutt Pattanaik**, mythology expert and author; **Ramchandra Guha**, historian; **Rujuta Diwekar**, nutrition and exercise science expert and author; **Ravinder Singh**, Young Adult author; **Upamanyu Chatterjee**, author; **Ravish Kumar**, journalist, Poet and author; **Naseeruddin Shah**, actor and director; **Anuradha Roy**, novelist, journalist and editor; **Rajmohan Gandhi**, historian and biographer; **Shashi Tharoor**, writer and parliamentarian; **Shobhaa De**, columnist and novelist; **Seema Goswami**, journalist, author, columnist; **Anuja Chauhan**, author and screenwriter; **Ratna Pathak Shah**, actress and director.

Apeejay Surrendra Group and Oxford Bookstores today announced that the 10th anniversary edition of the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival will be hosted on Park Street from 18th-20th January 2019.



**Ms. Priti Paul, Director, Apeejay Surrendra Group**, said, *“Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) has connected, empowered and mobilized new voices and ideas since its inception in 2010. In the last nine years, the festival has contributed greatly to restoring Kolkata’s literary edge, a distinct and valued identity, I felt, at the time, it was losing. AKLF has developed as the fountainhead of the mission we pursue 365 days at Oxford Bookstores - of books, reading, literature, writers, publishers, building readership, creating awareness and attraction for the world of books and popularizing the whole gamut that goes with books and publishing.*

*Our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be held in historic Park Street’s iconic spaces giving everyone an opportunity to (re)visit, admire and enjoy their tangible and intangible heritage and will bring together all that is close to our hearts, and important to the community & world we live in, from 18 – 20th January 2019. In more ways than one, AKLF 2019 will be our 10th anniversary commemorative tribute to the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival and the important part it has played - and will continue to play - in Oxford Bookstore’s mission.”*

AKLF 2019 will focus on health, current affairs, women’s issues, and children’s literature among other themes. The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition will introduce AKLF’s own writing competition to identify and promote budding writers – **The AKLF-Juggernaut New Writers’ Competition**.

**Maina Bhagat, Director of Oxford Bookstores and Director of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) since its first edition in 2010** said, *“AKLF’s upcoming 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in January 2019 will be a rousing celebration! We are bringing our Festival back home to Park Street ! In doing so Oxford Bookstores ushers in delights that are in store for our beloved audiences, when the fountainhead and inspiration of AKLF, our iconic, heritage Oxford Bookstore Park Street, turns a 100 years old in 2020! ‘Much more than a bookstore’ has been Oxford Bookstore’s tagline and, indeed we are proud that the bookstore has been a mecca for generations of book lovers! It is quite remarkable that AKLF has, while representing diversity, continued to be firmly rooted in our community in Kolkata, a rare city whose citizens still value the life of the mind!*

*Hosting our free Literary Festival in Park Street, the buzzing heart of Kolkata, makes our 10th edition our toughest venue yet the one that is most inclusive and accessible. Join the phenomenal line- up of speakers we bring to you for a riveting experience on the city’s beloved Park Street for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, a cultural event that is valued, respected, anticipated, and celebrated. Post AKLF 2019 we are hoping to release an anthology containing the highlights from a decade of AKLF and nearly a century of Oxford Bookstore, sourced from our archives, which will also reflect the life, times and rich history of our great city.”*

The three days will witness noteworthy names, new and innovative presentation session formats on Park Street, with renewed commitment to keeping our Festival intimate, personalized and accessible to all. AKLF will host the first edition of the **Prabha Khaitan Woman’s Voice Award** in association with Oxford Bookstore, to recognize fresh voices in women’s writings from India and will announce the short list of the hugely appreciated **The Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize** to recognize book cover design and designers.



**Anjum Katyal, Co-Director of AKLF since 2012** said, *“As the city’s oldest literary festival and India’s only Literary Festival born out of a bookstore, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival programming for the milestone 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition will be a spectacle to remember. All through 2018 we have crafted innovative new formats leading up to our 10<sup>th</sup> year : provocatively curated discussions covering trending news, current affairs and social issues with leading experts through “AKLF 10/10”, informal and informative interactions with writers through “AKLF Conversations” and special book launches through “AKLF Premiere. As we move closer to AKLF 2019 in January 2019 our Festival days programming is focused on keeping AKLF the intimate in-depth festival that our audiences and delegates love, and that reflects the cultural and literary values of our city. Look for new ideas, fresh formats and exciting explorations that break out of the all-too-typical litfest mould combined with world-class content -- and above all, expect to be surprised!”*

While remaining the most “bookish” Festival, AKLF firmly believes that literature and the other arts have a symbiotic connection. This is why we have since 2010 presented live theatre performances, heritage walks, street theatre, eclectic live musical performances, film screenings, literary breakfasts, and even cooking workshops in our Festival amidst a great feeling of bonhomie and serious thought. The programming and new innovative formats for the tenth anniversary edition, AKLF 2019 on Park Street, aims to impress and delight fans and visitors from Kolkata, India and around the world.

**For further information, please contact:** Corporate Communication, Vinita Singh @ 9330992015