



Eleventh Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival from Jan 17th

12 Bestselling Authors, 4 Women Bosses in Publishing amongst over 100 speakers / Poets to grace the 11th edition.

Jan 17- Jan 19th 2020

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AKLF 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Venues** - Allen Park, Park Street, Alliance Francaise, Park Mansions, Max Mueller Bhavan and Tollygunge Club
- **Voices** - 12 Bestselling Authors, 10 Columnists, 4 women bosses in Publishing, Over 100 speakers and poets across genres and age groups.
- **Writers' Awards** –Prabha Khaitan Woman's Voice Award in association with Oxford Bookstore will announce its winner. The 2nd edition of the Award that celebrates fresh Indian voices in women's writing.
- **Book Cover Design Awards** - Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize will unveil its shortlist book covers. This is the 5th edition of the Award in association with Jaipur Literature Festival
- **Global representation** - Authors from 8 countries Australia, France, Germany, Switzerland, UK, US and Italy
- **Tributes** - Celebrating iconic women whose voices originated from our City of Joy and rang globally - Soumitra Chatterjee and Aparna Sen to pay tribute to Late novelist and award-winning author Nabaneeta Dev Sen along with her daughters Nandana Sen and Antara Sen & Celebrate life and journey of singer Usha Uthup
- **Oxford Junior Literary Festival**, featuring leading children writers, a dance workshop, a quiz, wildlife filmmaking, interactive sessions and storytelling.
- **Poetry Café**, featuring protest and performance poetry, new poems, by Indian and International poets.

List of speakers announced: Bestselling and award winning authors **Anand Neelakantan, Abhinav Chandrachud, Francesc Miralles, Prayaag Akbar, Preeti Shenoy, Paul Zacharia, Rajat Gupta, Shobhaa De, Vikram Sampath, William Dalrymple**. Film and Theatre Personalities and Activists like **Aparna Sen, Kaushik Sen**, Bollywood actors like **Saurabh Shukla** and **Vivaan Shah**. Celebrated Singer **Usha Uthup**. Renowned Director **Anik Dutta**. Journalist, Authors and Columnists include **Kaveree Bamzai, Bachi Karkaria, Shutapa Paul, Manogya Loiwal, Jhimli Mukherjee Pandey** and **Sharmistha Goswami Chatterjee**.

Kolkata, Jan 08, 2020: Oxford Bookstores and Apeejay Surrendra Group today announced the 11th edition of the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival next week from 17th-19th January 2020.

Hosted on Park Street, the iconic hub of heritage, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival or AKLF, is the first international literary festival in Kolkata and Eastern India, is a not for profit initiative, is free for everyone, and continues to be since its inception in 2010 - the only Literary Festival organized by a Bookstore.

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2020 will focus on Nationalism and Identity, Homeland, Belonging. Nine sessions are dedicated to the various aspects of Women Empowerment, Pride, Climate Change, Art and Protests, dissent, democracy- the relevant and disturbing issues of the day have occupied space in the programme. There are lighter moments, as writers of romance, murder mysteries and mythological thrillers unfurl their magic and AKLF guests encounter unexpected moments of drama and theatre popping up throughout the literary festival in a vibrant atmosphere amidst offbeat stalls and food stops. The three day gathering of literary and cultural minds will also be introducing new and innovative formats of sessions.



Welcoming a new decade of literary excellence with its 11th edition, AKLF 2020 recognises that books, ideas, arguments, empathy and analysis, discussion and debate, freedom of expression and respect for multiple points of view, that is offered through its platform, is more relevant today, than perhaps ever before.

Prayaag Akbar, author of Leila now much talked web series shared *"It is a great pleasure to be back in Kolkata, a city of readers and a place that is very dear to me. Year after year, the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival brings together some very fine minds. In this time of great political flux, we need spaces like these for discussion and debate"*

Actor Vivaan Shah, participating for the first time, shared *"It is such an honour to be invited to Kolkata, the seat of culture and the literary capital for the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival. It's also ironic that I am coming here for a detective novel as Kolkata has such a rich history of iconic detectives in its literary past. It's one step short of going to a Western cowboy town like El Paso on having written a Western, and to talk about the Cowboy genre. It's an immense honour and I really, really, look forward to it"*

Maina Bhagat, Director of Oxford Bookstores and Director of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, *"AKLF's 11th edition in January 2020 is one of reaffirmation and reinvention, as we enter a new decade of celebrating the written word! With Indian literature itself occupying a much larger place in the world literary consciousness than it did at the beginning of the last decade when we first created it, we at Oxford Bookstore and AKLF too are turning the page not only to a new year but also on a new 10-year window of opportunities and possibilities!. To make the edition special Oxford Bookstore is donating books to the mobile library of Apne Aap launched during our 10 anniversary celebration last year'*

Availing of these, we aim to usher in a new resurgent and vibrant reading culture in the city and across the nation. 'Much more than a bookstore' has been our iconic, heritage Oxford Bookstore's tagline and, indeed we are proud that the bookstore has been a mecca for generations of book lovers! It has also been the fountainhead and inspiration for the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, which is highly valued, respected, keenly anticipated, and celebrated platform that bring writers, thinkers, the best minds of today, to share their thoughts and experiences with one of the most culturally engaged audiences in the world. Our 11th edition, presents an eclectic line- up of speakers and a riveting experience, across diverse contemporary topics, along with a strong representation of Writing for Children at the Oxford Junior Literary Festival, and Poetry Café, the mecca of poets!"

Anjum Katyal, Co-Director of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival said *"We need spaces for discussion and debate more than ever before. AKLF brings us such a space, where diverse points of view can encounter each other in a civilized atmosphere, where we can listen and respond to the finest thinkers and writers of today. AKLF celebrates India's rich literary and cultural heritage, woven over the centuries out of many strands and influences."*

Major Sessions at the festival:

Day 1: The inaugural session on Forgotten Treasures with **William Dalrymple** presenting his new book **Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for the East India Company**, followed by a conversation with Jawhar Sircar; a special session on what today's youth want to read with **Vivaan Shah, Kavita Kane, Karuna Ezara Parikh and Jimmy Tangree**; In a New Light: **Revisiting Dara Shukoh, Sri Chaitanya and Veer Savarkar** with Vikram Sampath, Avik Chanda, Chitrita Banerji and Oindrilla Dutt; a session on the issues we all are grappling with at present Homelands: Identity, nationalism and belonging with **Samrat Chowdhury, Bronwyn Fredericks, Carlo Pizzati, Saira Shah Halim and Saaz Aggarwal**; **Aparna Sen** discusses her latest film **Ghawre Bairey Today** - contemporizing the classic with much loved Piya Chakraborty and Samik Bandyopadhyay and Modhurima Sinha; **Tribute to Late Nabaneeta Dev Sen with Soumitra Chatterjee, Aparna Sen, Samik Bandyopadhyay and her daughters Antara Dev Sen & Nandana Dev**



Sen; Stories of Individual Vs State cases and struggles - David vs Goliath with Jawhar Sircar, Lal Bhatia, Sumona Chakravarty and Jael Silliman.

Day 2: Second day starts with a stimulating discussion on ‘Reading as Empowerment’ with the event **ABC Go! with Bulbul Sharma, Savvy Soumya Misra, Kaveree Bamzai and Devi Kar**, followed by a book launch of *Beyond Charity* by Savvy Soumya Misra; **Regret to Redemption? Rajat Gupta with his tell-all memoir in conversation with Kaveree Bamzai; Reigning Supreme? Interrogating the judiciary with legal eagle Abhinav Chandrachud, Arunava Ghosh in conversation with human rights lawyer Debjyoti Ghosh.** Bringing in a different flavor to the programme will be special Adda sessions like **Pride and Prejudice - experiences and perspectives across the Pride Rainbow spectrum. Pawan Dhall, Anuradha Bhagwati, Sangeeta Dutta, Jhimli M Pandey, Debjyoti Ghosh and Sandip Roy; Sing my Beloved Country: Usha Uthup on how music celebrates a multicultural India in conversation with Bachi Karkaria; A exceptional session Metamorphosis: The journey from book to screen with Bachi Karkaria, Prayaag Akbar, Saurabh Shukla, Anand Neelakantan and Raju Raman; Orient Express: French author Irene Frain discusses her connections with the Orient with Christine Cornet followed by the launch of the new Alliance Francaise space. With Institut Francais. This year Oxford Junior Literary Festival will witness True Crime Stories from the files with Subrata Biswas ex Zonal Director of NCB for the Eastern Region and actor & writer Vivaan Shah.**

Day 3: The last day will witness the eternal appeal of romance with **Preeti Shenoy, Lisa Heidke and Milee Ashwarya;** a captivating session on **Dissent and Democracy with Abhinav Chandrachud, Prayaag Akbar, Ruchir Joshi, Anuradha Bhagwati, Kaushik Sen and Sharmistha Goswami Chatterjee.** The Adda session of the day will be **Northeast India and Questions of Belonging with Manogya Loibal, Samrat, Prajwal Parajuly, Bijoya Sawian and Sabah Al-Ahmed;** a specially curated session on the inner workings of the publishing world from the bosses in *The Last Word: Publishing and the Woman Boss* with the distinguished publishers **Karthika V K, Preeti Vyas, Milee Ashwarya, Niti Kumar with Anjum Kalyal;** the most anticipated conversation of the day with the international bestselling author **Francesc Miralles and his famous book ‘IKIGAI — The Japanese Secret to a Long Happy Life’,** a book that touches on the various aspects of life based on ancient, well-practised Japanese technique called IKIGAI. The festival closes with a flourish with **‘Many Sides of Saurabh Shukla’: Actor, Screenwriter and Playwright in conversation with Vinay Sharma**

Beside the diverse sessions, conversations and discussions the festival will –

- Announce the short list of the hugely appreciated **Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize** to recognize book cover design and designers in association with The Jaipur Literature Festival,
- Host the second edition of the **Prabha Khaitan Woman’s Voice Award** in association with Oxford Bookstore, to recognize fresh voices in women’s writings from India.
- **Present** Oxford Junior Literary Festival (OJLF) for young readers with dramatised readings, storytelling, dance workshops, wildlife filmmaking and more.
- Present **The AKLF Adda** that invites you to be part of lively discussions on *Pride and prejudice*, the insider/outsider issue in the North East, and the impact of climate change.
- Join **Poetry Cafe** that will host the best of the city poets, and a riveting performance of protest poetry by Keith Jarrett of the UK. Cafe Litteraire celebrates our connections with French literature and culture.

This variety is perhaps what will set AKLF apart in the new decade.

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