



## The 15<sup>th</sup> Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival is All Set to Celebrate a Decade and a Half of Literary Excellence

- Popular genre writers in science fiction, mystery, horror, fantasy, romance, memoir
- Special focus - Environment and Climate Fiction, Translation, Feminist Publishing, OTT-film- stage-audio and the book
- Shortlist announcement of the 9th edition of Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize
- First look at books by Upamanyu Chatterjee, P. Chidambaram, Meghna Pant, Somnath Batabyal, Santanu Bhattacharya, Pt Kumar Bose
- The Festival will host authors from Australia, France, UK, Singapore
- Oxford Junior Literary Festival (OJLF) featuring 'meet the author' interactive sessions, a dance workshop, word games and storytelling.
- Poetry Café with established and new poets

Website: [www.AKLF.IN](http://www.AKLF.IN) | Twitter: TheAKLF | Facebook: TheAKLF | Instagram: theaklf | YouTube: The AKLF

**Kolkata, February 2, 2024:** The announcement of the much-awaited fifteenth edition of the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) took place at the iconic century-old Oxford Bookstore, located at Park Street, Kolkata. The event was graced by the esteemed presence of dignitaries, including Maina Bhagat, Director, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival; Anjum Katyal, Director, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival; Swagat Sengupta, CEO, Apeejay Oxford Bookstores; and Neeta Sreedharan, Programming Head, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival.

The festival is scheduled to take place on 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024, featuring various sessions across multiple venues throughout these dates. Allen Park will serve as the central hub, hosting majority of the events, while the Poetry Café is all set to be hosted at Alliance Française du Bengale. Other noteworthy sessions, including the OJLF, will take place at the Oxford Bookstore and a special session with Jerry Pinto and Anuja Chauhan is scheduled to be held at the Tollygunge Club, adding to the richness of this literary feast.

The AKLF 2024 boasts an impressive lineup of speakers, with 126 stalwarts gracing the occasion. Notable names to include **Abhijit Gupta, Anuja Chauhan, Alka Pande, Anita Agnihotri, Anuja Chauhan, Arshia Sattar, Aruna Chakravarti, Bickram Ghosh, Bittu Sahgal, Carina Rozenfeld, Chandan Gowda, Debkumar Mitra, Divrina Dhingra, Durjoy Datta, Gargi Rawat, Indrajit Hazra, Jerry Pinto, Kunal Basu, Louise Fowler-Smith, Maria Goretti, Meghna Pant, Monideepa Banerjie, P. Chidambaram, Pandit Kumar Bose, Pierre Bordage, Riddhi Sen, Ruchir Joshi, Ruchira Gupta, Sam Miller, Shaun Kenworthy, Somnath Batabyal, Sonal Ved, Srijato Bandopadhyay, Sudeshna Roy, Swapna Liddle, Swastika Mukherjee, Tara Gandhi, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Urvashi Butalia, Ushoshi Sengupta, Veer Rajwant Singh, Vivaan Shah** are among others. The festival will also



embrace virtual participation of prominent personalities like **Dia Mirza, Lennie Goodings and Priti Paul**.

This edition shall witness the announcement of the shortlisted names for the prestigious Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize. The festival to provide a first look at the upcoming works of distinguished authors, including **Upamanyu Chatterjee, P. Chidambaram, Meghna Pant, Somnath Batabyal, Santanu Bhattacharya and Pt Kumar Bose**, presenting a sneak peek into the literary gems awaiting readers. This year's edition also aims to bring together a wide array of voices, with authors from Australia, France, the UK and Singapore gracing the festival. The global perspective shall add depth and richness to the literary discussions, promoting a cross-cultural dialogue on various themes.

The announcement pertaining to the **Oxford Junior Literary Festival (OJLF)**, to be held at the Oxford Bookstore, aims to captivate the younger audience with interactive 'meet the author' sessions, a dance workshop, word games, and storytelling sessions. The festival aims to instill a love for literature and creativity among the next generation. **The Poetry Café**, held at Alliance Française du Bengale, will provide a vibrant space for established and emerging poets to share their verses.

The valued partners for the three-day-long literary festival include **Kenilworth Hotel, Kolkata, as the hospitality partner; Cha Bar as the refreshment partner; Typhoo Tea as the gifting partner; AMRI Hospitals as the healthcare partner; 93.5 Red FM as the radio partner; iEAD and Apeejay School as the institutional partners. Australian High Commission, Alliance française du Bengale and Tollygunge Club** are among some of the valued partners of the 15<sup>th</sup> Apeejay Literary Festival as well. Several renowned publishing houses such as **Speaking Tiger, Penguin Random House, Hachette, HarperCollins, Niyogi Books, Rupa Publications, Westland Books, Juggernaut, Simon and Schuster, Bloomsbury, Om Books, Zubaan Books** and many more to appear as the festival partners, creating a collaborative literary environment.

Speaking about the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of AKLF, Priti Paul, Director, Apeejay Surrendra Group said, *"Oxford Bookstore Kolkata was the first bookstore to launch a literary festival, and we are delighted to be announcing the 15th edition of AKLF in 2024. When we began, our vision was for AKLF to be a gift to this city of books, art and culture, an international literary festival that was free and open to all. It was one more way of reaffirming our commitment to the world of readers, reading, writers and books. We are proud to see that over the years AKLF has become an important part of the city's annual cultural calendar."*

Anjum Katyal, Director, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival said, *"AKLF celebrates variety, diversity and inclusiveness. Our sessions range from popular genres like sci-fi, mystery, horror, fantasy and food to gender, current affairs and history. The world of reading, publishing and the book is one of the last bastions of discussion and debate, freedom of expression and alternate points of view. Environment and climate change, gender and identity, women's empowerment, our diverse heritage and the state of the nation today are some of our themes in this edition."*



Announcing the partners, Swagat Sengupta, CEO, Oxford Bookstores said, "*As we celebrate this landmark of 15th edition of the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, we feel grateful for the unwavering support from our cherished partners, who have joined hands in adding meaning and value to our festival.*"

*Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival is the only literary festival that is created by a bookstore - Oxford Bookstores. We are the passionate curators and connectors who celebrate literature every day. For more than 100 years we have bridged the gap between authors, publishers, and readers. Oxford Bookstore does not just sell books, we foster a vibrant community and offer a breeding ground for literary enthusiasts where conversations spark and connections are made. And as we embark on this special edition of AKLF, we continue driving our heart and soul to being more than just a bookstore."*

**About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival:** Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, India's only literary Festival created by a bookstore and Kolkata's first literary festival, reflects our city's vibrancy of thought, its engagement with the literary world at large and explores literature as part of our tangible and intangible heritage. Celebrate books, music, art, film, and more with the finest creative minds in the nation and globally, as events unfold at the city's magnificent heritage sites. Please visit [www.aklf.in](http://www.aklf.in) to know more.

**About Oxford Bookstores:** Established in 1919, Oxford Bookstore is one of the oldest heritage bookstores of the nation. It is India's only bookstore to curate multiple literary festivals like Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob and Hindi Sahitya Utsav. The Oxford Bookstore not only offers book lovers access to the very best books and ambience, but also India's first of its kind tea boutique, Cha Bar. At Oxford Bookstores, success is measured by the smiles on millions of happy readers that the brand has served over the last 100 years. Each time you walk into our iconic store in Kolkata, its old-world charm leaves you enchanted and desiring for more. Our fleet of 'happy to help' the knowledgeable booksellers and conversant hosts, work round the clock to bring to our vendees and world-class reading experience. Be it through our books or our fine teas we abide by the brand's motto – Much more than a bookstore – at every Bookstore. Please log on to [www.oxfordbookstore.com](http://www.oxfordbookstore.com) for any further information.

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