

Press Note:

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2015 – Day 5

Event: ‘My Bookshelf: A Literary Adda’

Kolkata, 18th January, 2015: Apeejay Literary Kolkata Festival 2015 brought for the city of joy a stimulating discussion on ‘My Bookshelf’, a literary adda, with panelists **Hanif Kureishi, Ramachandra Guha, Ashis Nandy, Sugata Bose, Mohammed Hanif, Tilottama Tharoor, Meera Mitra, Ruchir Joshi, K. Anis Ahmed** and **Kalyan Roy**.

The informal session brought the best of literary minds from across the globe who shared their views and thoughts on topics like, culture, literature, society and their works in an introspective way.

About the Panelists:

Hanif Kureishi: Hanif Kureishi is the author of numerous novels, short story collections, screenplays and plays. Born and brought up in Kent, he read philosophy at King’s College, London. His screenplay of “My Beautiful Laundrette” won the New York Film Critics Best Screenplay Award and was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Screenplay. In 1991, he wrote and directed “London Kills Me.” His novels include “The Buddha of Suburbia,” which won the Whitbread Award and was adapted into a BBC television series; “The Black Album”; “Intimacy”; “Something to Tell You” and “The Last Word,” which was published in 2014. He has been awarded the Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and his work has been translated into thirty-six languages.

Ashish Nandy: Ashis Nandy is an Indian political psychologist, social theorist, and critic. A trained clinical psychologist, Nandy has provided theoretical critiques of European colonialism, development, modernity, secularism, Hindutwa, science, technology, nuclearism, cosmopolitanism, and utopia. He has also offered alternative conceptions relating to cosmopolitanism and critical traditionalism. In addition to the above, Nandy has offered an original historical profile of India's commercial cinema as well as critiques of state and violence. He is Senior Honorary Fellow of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) apart from being the Chairperson of the Committee for Cultural Choices and Global Futures in New Delhi. Nandy received the Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize in 2007. In 2008 he appeared on the list of the Top 100 Public Intellectuals Poll of the Foreign Policy magazine, published by The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Ramachandra Guha: Ramachandra Guha is a historian, author and columnist based in Bangalore. Best described as a multi-faceted personality, he writes on cricket, history, environment and politics. Ramachandra Guha is the author of the internationally acclaimed *India After Gandhi*. His other books include *Makers of Modern India*, *A Corner of a Foreign Field* and *Savaging the Civilized: Verrier Elwin, His Tribals and India*. He has taught at the London School of Economics, Yale, Stanford, and The Indian Institute of Science. He also writes columns for well known Indian newspapers. His latest book, *Patriots and Partisans*, is a wonderfully readable collection of essays on a wide range of topics

Sugata Bose: Sugata Bose is a historian, author and Gardiner Professor of Oceanic History and Affairs at Harvard University. He has published extensively, including a major biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, who was his grand-uncle. He is joint editor, with Dr Sisir Kumar Bose, of the *Collected Works of Netaji* published by the Netaji Research Bureau. He has translated into English all the songs Tagore composed on his overseas voyages and recorded them on four CDs titled *Visva Yatri Rabindranath*. Bose's many books include *Peasant Labour and Colonial Capital*, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy* (with Ayesha Jalal) and *A Hundred Horizons: the Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire*.

Kalyan Roy: Kalyan Ray is currently a Professor of English in New Jersey. His poems and translations have appeared at the US and India; some have been anthologized. His novel *Eastwards* was adopted by several universities and colleges in Asia and the US as a text in courses on Post-Colonial literature. His new novel *No Country* is about the Irish and Indian diaspora. He has published several books of translations of contemporary Indian poetry into English, including *City of Memories*, which has a Preface by Allen Ginsberg, and *Emperor Babur's Prayers and Other Poems* by Sankha Ghosh.

Mohammed Hanif: Mohammed Hanif is a Pakistani writer and journalist. His first novel *A Case of Exploding Mangoes* (2008) was shortlisted for the 2008 Guardian First Book Award and longlisted for the 2008 Man Booker Prize. It won the 2009 Commonwealth Book Prize in the Best First Book category and the 2008 Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize. Hanif has also written for the stage and screen, including a feature film, *The Long Night* (2002), a BBC radio play, *What Now, Now That We Are Dead?*, and the stage play *The Dictator's Wife* (2008). His second novel, *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti*, published in 2011, was shortlisted for the Wellcome Trust Book Prize (2012), and the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature (2013).

Tilottama Tharoor: Tilottama Tharoor is a humanities professor at New York University. She studied at Loreto House and Loreto College, Kolkata, where she was known for her debating prowess. Her special focus is on Indian writing in English.

Meera Mitra: Meera Mitra is a development specialist and an independent consultant working across the corporate and development sectors. Meera Mitra is the author of *It's Only Business: India's Corporate Social Responsiveness in a Globalised World* and *Breaking Through: India's Stories of Beating the Odds on Poverty*.

Ruchir Joshi: Ruchir Joshi is a writer, filmmaker, photographer and columnist for *The Telegraph*, *India Today* as well as other publications. He is best known for his debut novel titled *The Last*

Jet-Engine Laugh. He is also the editor of India's first anthology of contemporary erotica *Electric Feather: The Tranquebar Book of Erotic Stories*.

K. Asnis Ahmed: K. Anis Ahmed is a Bangladeshi writer and publisher of the English-language daily newspaper *Dhaka Tribune* and the literary journal *Bengal Lights*. Ahmed is the author of two books: a short story collection called *Good Night, Mr. Kissinger* and a novel, *The World in My Hands*. He has been called one of the most significant voices in Bangladesh today. Ahmed is part of a new generation of writers who use English "to connect to the larger corpus of world literature", and as a "rejection of the insularity of contemporary Bangla-language literature".

About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF):

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) is Kolkata's pioneering literary festival. Instituted in 2010 by the Apeejay Surrendra Group and its heritage Oxford Bookstore on Park Street, AKLF grows out of the bookstore's year round involvement with books, writers & publishers. In the six years since Kolkata saw her first literary festival in AKLF, literary festivals have mushroomed across the country, but AKLF stands apart with its unique identity as the only one with a now 94-year-old bookstore as its nucleus. AKLF offers an atmosphere of warm, welcoming intimacy, favors depth over size, and includes a variety of subjects from history to the environment. AKLF also celebrates Kolkata's magnificent public monuments and heritage sites as settings for Festival events and eminent literati and cultural stalwarts from across India and overseas join the festival scheduled every year in the second week of January. In 2015 AKLF explores literature as part of our tangible and intangible heritage, a theme that runs through several sessions of the festival. AKLF focusses on younger writers, newer voices and fresh audiences in its ongoing attempt to build an audience for books and reading. Prominent personalities attending will be Hanif Kureishi, Naseeruddin Shah, Charles Allen, John Elliott, Mohammed Hanif, Leila Seth, Michael Buckley, Upamanyu Chatterjee, David Davidar, Shekhar Gupta, Shashi Tharoor, Asish Nandy, Ramachandra Guha, Kishwar Desai, Nabaneeta Dev Sen amongst several others. There are some firsts in AKLF 2015. A heritage literary walk, a literary 'adda', a Young Adult litfest for high school students, a bloggers' meet, a children's bookfest crammed with activities, even a standup comic for the college crowd and a leadership training session for young teens on importance of character, karma and individual social responsibility™. Add to that our signature heritage site evenings at The Indian Museum, National Library, Victoria Memorial, Lascar War Memorial, indepth discussions, top of the line authors, thinkers and performers, and you have a literary experience not to be missed. And all absolutely free for Kolkata and her culture-loving audience.

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