

Press Note:

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2016 – Day 1

Event: 'Text And The City'

Interschool Literary Festival featuring Indrani Dasgupta Paul, Anuja Chauhan, Durjoy Dutta and Ravinder Singh

Kolkata, 14th January, 2016: Many hours before the formal inauguration of the seventh addition of the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2016, students from city schools congregated at Modern High School for Girls for a unique Interschool Literary Festival.

'Text And The City' a celebration of Kolkata, brought the students together with **Indrani Dasgupta Paul**, a leading model and media personality for 15 years, **Anuja Chauhan**, an advertising professional for 17 years and often described as the best writer of the Indian commercial fiction genre, **Durjoy Datta**, whose first book was published when he was 21 years old and with hit youth TV shows and **Ravinder Singh**, an engineer and a business management professional working in an IT firm and has written four hugely successful novels.

All the four spread inspiration and joy as they responded to the student interviewers with their life experiences in individual half hour sessions - Anuja read excerpts of her book, Durjoy was in conversation with a Modern High School student and Ravinder Singh interacted with students from different schools in a discussion moderated by Priyadarshinee Guha.

Indrani Dasgupta Paul said, *"This is the age to enquire & examine, question & debate and today was such a wonderful display of that. Each student was sharper than the other on contemporary issues and indeed this kind of exchange is what an ideas festival like Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, is all about. My co participants are authors of great repute and together I hope we have been able to meet the expectations of these brilliant young minds and inspire them to be the best that they can be."*

Mrs Paul felicitated the winners of the Essay Writing competition, - '**The Changing Indian City**' and handed over the prizes from Oxford Bookstores. The Essay Writing competition had been organized as a run up to the interschool literary festival and winners were announced by Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival co director Anjum Katyal during the event.

Mrs. Devi Kar, Director, Modern High School, *"Modern High School is extremely proud to have hosted for the second time the unique interactive litfest for schoolchildren conceptualized by Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival. It was undoubtedly one of the most exciting and rewarding events in our school calendar. Students enjoyed reading, researching and generally preparing to interact with the authors firsthand. Importantly, they were authors they could easily relate to. "*

Other than Modern High School for Girls the following schools participated: Garden High School, Garden High International School, La Martiniere for Boys, La Martiniere for Girls, Loreto House and Sri Sri Academy. Art work and photographs on Kolkata contributed by Modern High School students were on display.

About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) 2016

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 grew out of the bookstore's year round involvement with books, writers & publishers. In the seven 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 nearly 100 year old bookstore as its nucleus. AKLF offers an atmosphere of warm, welcoming intimacy, favours 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 2016 AKLF celebrates diverse themes encompassing books, theatre, the arts and cinema. AKLF's focus is on younger writers, newer voices and fresh audiences in its ongoing attempt to build an audience for books and reading. The 7th edition of AKLF is poised to scale new heights, with an outstanding and meticulously curated programme, bringing the world and the nation to Kolkata. Continuing to celebrate the city's magnificent public monuments and heritage sites the festival rediscovers the quaint and hidden charms of the city through heritage walks. AKLF highlights several unique concepts with a fresh approach that reflects current concerns such as diversity, gender equality, continuities across borders and youth engagements, which are also broad themes running through the festival. AKLF signature heritage sites include Nandan, Town Hall steps, The Indian Museum, Presidency University, Tollygunge Club and Victoria Memorial. AKLF 2016 has participation from Australia, Israel, Scotland, Italy, Nigeria, Portugal as well as England, France, Germany, Pakistan, Bhutan and others. Some of the prominent personalities who will be part of the literary extravaganza are Ben Okri, Meera Syal, Christine Manfield, Ashis Nandy, Vir Sanghvi, Bharathi S Pradhan, Shatrughan Sinha, Shobhaa De and more. The four day long, multi-faceted event has several stimulating components designed to give visitors and the audience an enriching experience, with a great blend of literature, culture, art and heritage. And all of this is absolutely free for Kolkata and her culture-loving audience.

Notes to Editors

Indrani Dasgupta Paul has been a leading model and media personality for 15 years now. Her endorsements include a gamut of brands, notably, Lakme, Allen Solly, De Beers, Seagrams Blenders Pride, and PC Chandra. Currently, pursuing her passion for the perfect cup of tea, she's a friend of Typhoo, and travelling the world enjoying Typhoo tea, one cup at a time. Her tales of adventure then transpire to her monthly columns or Telegraph in T2. She is currently mentoring the Beautiful inside out programme, where she coaches young girls to fulfil their potential.

Anuja Chauhan is an Indian author and advertiser, often described as 'the best writer of the Indian commercial fiction genre. She worked in the advertising agency, JWT India, for over 17 years eventually becoming vice-president and executive creative director, before resigning in 2010 to pursue a full-time literary career. As a writer, she is best known for her best-selling, contemporary "rom-com" novels, *The Zoya Factor* (2008), *Battle For Bittora* (October 2010) and *Those Pricey Thakur Girls* (January 2013). Her new novel, a jump sequel to *Those Pricey Thakur Girls*, released in May 2015. Titled *The House That BJ Built*.

Durjoy Datta was born in New Delhi, India, and completed a degree in engineering and business management before embarking on a writing career. His first book—Of Course I Love You!—was published when he was twenty-one years old and was an instant bestseller. His successive novels—Now That You're Rich!; She Broke Up, I Didn't!; Ohh Yes, I Am Single!; If It's Not Forever; Till the Last Breath; Someone Like You; Hold My Hand—have also found prominence on various bestseller lists, making him one of the highest-selling authors in India. Durjoy also has to his credit two television shows, Sadda Haq (Channel V) and Veera (Star Plus), both of which have done exceedingly well on Indian television.

Ravinder Singh is a software engineer who works with a prominent IT company in India. He grew up in a very small town of Orissa called Burla. He has written four novels entitled I Too Had a Love Story, Can Love Happen Twice?, Like it happened yesterday and Your Dreams are Mine Now. His new book is titled Tell me a story.

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