



Press Note: Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2016 – Day 2

Event: Good Girl, Bad Girl: Representing the Prostituted Women in Popular Culture
Ruchira Gupta in conversation with Anupama Mohan

Kolkata, 15th January, 2016: Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2016 witnessed an out of the box inspiring discussion on the topic **‘Good Girl Bad Girl: Representing the Prostituted Women in Popular Culture’** at the premises of Presidency University. Indian sex trafficking abolitionist, journalist and activist **Ruchira Gupta** along with **Anupama Mohan**, professor of English at Presidency University brought to the fore sensitive issues related to prostitution and sex trafficking and their portrayal in civil society.

The discussion revolved around space for women in prostitution within mainstream feminist discourse in India, and the way it has evolved over time. It went on to delve into understanding the interface of society and prostitution, tracing economic and social undercurrents, the urgency of health concerns and what legal regulations are necessary. The discussion also brought out how essential it was for society to help these women live with dignity as a first step towards achieving the purpose of mainstreaming them.

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

Ruchira Gupta is the Founder and President of Apne Aap Women Worldwide – a grassroots organization in India working to end sex trafficking by increasing choices for at-risk girls and women. She has striven over her 25 year career to highlight the link between trafficking and prostitution laws, and to lobby policy-makers to shift blame from victims to perpetrators. In 2009, Gupta won the Clinton Global Citizen Award and in 2007, she won the Abolitionist Award at the UK House of Lords. In 2008 and 2009, Gupta addressed the UN General Assembly on human trafficking. She won an Emmy in 1997 for her work on the documentary “The Selling of Innocents,” which inspired the creation of Apne Aap. Her work has been featured in 11 books including Half the Sky by Sheryl WuDunn and Nicholas Kristof. Prior to founding Apne Aap, Gupta worked in the United Nations in various capacities in 12 countries for over ten years. In 2012 and 2013, she designed and taught courses on human trafficking for New York University’s School of Global Affairs.

AKLF 2016 Partners and Associations:

The AKLF 2016 edition has forged several new, prestigious associations, following its impressive collaborations in first year in 2010. We are proud to welcome on board both our new and regular partners including the Victoria Memorial Hall, Indian Museum, Australian High Commission, Embassy of Italy in India, Bloody Scotland, British Council, Calcutta Debating Circle, Crime Writers Festival, Embassy of Israel in India, Alliance Française, Portugal Embassy, Presidency University, Jaipur Literary Festival, Yes Foundation, FACES, Open Doors, FREED, The Creative Arts, Poetry Paradigm, MAKAIAS, Tollygunge Club, Max Muller Bhavan - Goethe Institute, The Park, Modern High School for Girls, Rakshak Foundation, Aishee, Streets of Calcutta, Calcutta Instagrammers, Wikipedia, Caravan, BEE books, Gibl.in, Bulk Email SMS India, Presto, She and Griffith Review. We also have 91.9 friends FM as radio partner, The Times of India as Print Media Partner, Anderson as Printing Partner, Selvel as Outdoor Partner, Typhoo as Refreshment Partner, Mera Tiffin as Food Partner, Indismart and Anon Production as special partners. A wide cross section of publishers, which include Niyogi Publishers, Future Publishers, OM Books and others will showcase their authors at AKLF 2016. AKLF is proud of these associations and hope they keep growing year on year.

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For media related information, please contact: Perfect Relations

Priyanka 9830615322 | Sramana 9836496930 | Amrita 9836230760