

Media for Change: The Asian Neighbourhood

Kolkata, 12th January, 2013: The National Library in association with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) and the School of Media, Communication & Culture, Jadavpur University presented *Media for Change: The Asian Neighbourhood* on the occasion of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2013. The panelists, human rights activist and award winning writer **Premesh Chandran** from Malaysia, author **Bidisha** from UK, **Ruchira Gupta**, head of ApneAap, an NGO, **Jonathan Shainin**, Senior Editor, The Caravan magazine, author and journalist **Salil Tripathi** and film studies lecturer **Abhijit Roy** highlighted the intensifying role of media as a major influencer of social reforms.

The panel discussion brought to the fore ways in which media can bring about social change and what role emerging new media can play in traditional journalism. Moderated by **Nilanjana Gupta**, Professor of English at Jadavpur University and erstwhile Dean, Faculty of Arts, Jadavpur University, the discussion, a part of one of AKLF 2013's key themes of "The Asian Neighbourhood" also brought out the importance of alternate media. Resurgent in recent times having grown surely and steadily for quite a while now, alternate media is a critical medium of social communications and has a great potential to play a very strong role as a parallel and often primary social influencer.

About the key Panelists:

Premesh Chandran is human rights activist and a writer who co-founded Malaysiakini.com, the leading online publication in Malaysia today. The site reaches over 300,000 readers per day in four languages (English, Malay, Chinese, and Tamil). Founded in 1999, Malaysiakini has won various international awards including from Asiaweek, Businessweek and others and has also been featured in various books and international journals, credited as key driving force of political change in Malaysia. Chandran is also the founder of Malaysiakini's non-profit training organization, the Southeast Asian Centre for E-media.

Bidisha (born Bidisha Bandyopadhyay) is a critic, broadcaster and writer specializing in the arts and culture; social justice issues including gender, class, sexuality and race; and international affairs. She began writing professionally for arts magazines such as i-D, Dazed and Confused and the NME at the age of 14 and published her first novel at 18. She writes for The Guardian and has worked for BBC Radio, presenting programs such as Woman's Hour.

Ruchira Gupta is an Indian sex trafficking abolitionist, journalist and activist. She has worked for over 25 years to end sex trafficking and has been honored for her work by nations, governmental leaders, and organizations on a global scale. In 2002, she established ApneAap Women Worldwide, a nongovernmental organization known as ApneAap, which addresses women's rights and the eradication of human sex trafficking.

About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) 2013:

A Community initiative by the Apeejay Surrendra Group, the annual literary festival hosted since 2010 in Kolkata is the first international literary festival in Kolkata, a city celebrated for its intellectual depth and cultural heritage. An array of special curated discussions, performances and some of the finest literary events are scheduled for the fourth edition from 9th- 13th January, 2013. A noteworthy literary and cultural representation from across India and overseas will be seen at the Festival, amongst the finest minds from India and overseas. Prominent personalities attending will be Ramachandra Guha, William Dalrymple, Shyam Benegal, Pavan Varma, Yasmin Ali Bhai Brown, Amit Chaudhuri, Leila Seth, Manil Suri, Ruchir Joshi, Onir, Urvashi Butalia, Shobhaa De and Tishani Doshi and several others. Events are scheduled at significant cultural and heritage venues across Kolkata like National Library, St John's Church, banks of Hooghly, Lascar Monument, and at India's finest and most loved 92 year old iconic bookstore- Oxford Bookstore, Kolkata. Amongst the many highlights is Festival's collaboration with the Tibor-Jones South Asia Prize to recognize and encourage new and emerging writers in the South Asian region.

For event videos & pictures Log On to <http://www.aklf.in/>

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