



Press Note:

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Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2015 – Day 1

Event: *ReadRite – An Interactive Litfest for Schools*

Kolkata, 14th January, 2015: The sixth edition of the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival opened its inaugural day with **ReadRite** – the first of its kind interactive Litfest for school children. Even before the formal inauguration of AKLF 2015 slated later in the evening Chief Guest, **Justice Leila Seth**, eminent authors **Kanishk Tharoor, Pia Padukone, Devdan Chaudhuri, Sandip Roy** and **Indrapramit Das**; columnist and author **Salil Tripathi**, and literary scholar **Tilottama Tharoor** reached Modern High School for Girls, the venue.

“Modern High School for Girls is delighted to be associated with AKLF 2015. This interactive literary fest involving school students is a first of its kind in the city - if not in the country. The students interviewed authors, moderated discussions and joined the authors in a panel discussion. This unique event encouraged students to read and research extensively and also made them think and reflect. We are sure they found the whole experience enjoyable and enriching,” said **Mrs. Devi Kar, Director, Modern High School.**

Other than Modern High, students from 6 renowned schools of the city participated. The Schools are Loreto Day School - Elliot Road, La Martiniere Boys School, Mahadevi Birla World Academy, Birla High School, Sushila Birla Girls' School and Don Bosco School Park Circus.

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.

Notes to Editors

About Kanishk Tharoor: Kanishk Tharoor is the author of *Swimmer Among the Stars: Stories* (Aleph, 2015), a forthcoming collection of short stories. His journalism, criticism, and short stories have appeared in international and Indian publications; his short fiction was nominated for a National Magazine Award in the United States. He studied at Yale, where he graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa with BAs in History and Literature; at Columbia, where he was a FLAS fellow in Persian and South Asian studies; and at New York University, where he had a fellowship in the Creative Writing Program. He lives in New York City.

About Pia Padukone: Pia Padukone was born, raised and continues to live in New York City. A graduate of Stuyvesant High School and the London School of Economics, Pia has worked as a copywriter in healthcare advertising. In their spare time, Pia and her husband write 'Two Admirable Pleasures' a blog that combines their shared passions for books and the culinary dishes that are inspired by them. Pia debuts with *Where Earth Meets Water* and is working on her second novel.

About Devdan Chaudhuri: Born in Kolkata, Devdan Chaudhuri was educated in India (Fergusson College, Pune) and England (University of Essex). While pursuing his Masters, he lost the inspiration to become an economist and returned to Kolkata to work on his writings and research. Over the years he became an entrepreneur in the art and hospitality sectors. He enjoys travelling and photography. *Anatomy of Life*, his debut novel - nominated for the Tibor Jones South Asia Prize 2013 – has just been recently published.

About Sandip Roy: Sandip Roy is a senior editor with Firstpost.com, one of India's leading news portals. *Don't Let Him Know* (Bloomsbury) is his first novel. He is also a commentator for National Public Radio in the US and hosts a weekly audio postcard on public radio KALW 91.7 FM in San Francisco. His work has appeared in various anthologies including *Storywallah!* and *Out: Stories* from the *New Queer India* and he has won awards for his journalism. He currently lives in Kolkata.

About Indrapramit Das: Indrapramit is a writer and artist from Kolkata, India. His fiction has appeared or is forthcoming in *Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, *Apex Magazine*, *Redstone Science Fiction* and *Breaking the Bow: Speculative Fiction Inspired by the Ramayana*, among others. He also writes reviews for publications including *Slant Magazine* and *Strange Horizons*, and comics for ACK Media. He has an MFA degree from the University of British Columbia, which he uses as a small tablemat while pretending to be an adult. His first novel is due out shortly.

About Salil Tripathi: Salil Tripathi lives in London and is a columnist with Mint. He has written extensively on politics, economics, the arts and business for more than 25 years for the Wall Street Journal, Far Eastern Economic Review, The New Statesman, India Today, and other publications. As a correspondent in Singapore and Hong Kong, Salil covered the Asian economic crisis, and is the author of Offence: The Hindu Case. He is currently writing a travelogue, a book on a corporate scandal and a novel.

About 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.

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