



Fifth edition of Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob commences at Jorasanko Thakur Bari

Highlights

- *Special tribute to eminent writer Late Nabaneeta Dev Sen*
- *Celebrates 200 birth anniversary of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Akshaykumar Dutta*
- *Bishesh Sahityapremi Sommanona: a unique award to felicitate those who have been playing crucial role in spreading the outreach of Bangla Language*
- *Renowned authors from the neighbouring country Mitia Osman, Syed Manjurul Islam, Majharul Islam, Meher Afroz Shaon*

Kolkata, 22nd November 2019: The fifth edition of Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob was inaugurated today at Jorasankho Thakurbari, the birthplace of Gurudev Tagore in the distinguished presence of eminent writers **Shankha Ghosh**; Professor **Syed Manjurul Islam** and editor, publisher **Majharul Islam from Bangladesh** and **Pracheta Gupta** along with **Prof. Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury**, Vice Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University; **Tridib Kumar Chattopadhyay**, MD Patra Bharati Group of Publications and **Swagat Sengupta**, Director Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob and CEO Apeejay Oxford Bookstores. ABSU is presented in association with Patra Bharati Group and supported by Rabindra Bharati University.

The inauguration was preceded by a one-of-a-kind literary discussion with different Facebook Page Groups who work towards promoting new-age Bangla literature in the society; and a panel discussion tracing the evolution of Bangla Magazines to Webzines-titled **Little Magazine Theke Webzine- Cholar Pothe Chine Nin-** with Tapash Bhowmick (Korok), Prasun Bhowmick (Bijalpa), Debjyoti Bhattacharya (Joydhak), Dipankar Choudhury (Parobash) and moderated by Jayanta Dey. The inauguration was soon followed by interesting panel discussions on innovative and new areas of Bangla literature ranging from historical fiction to comedy. The panel – **Jara Pori, Jara Porai, Dui Dol-e Somane Somane Korchi Borai! (Publishers V/s Readers)** had Sudhanshu Dey, Majharaul Islam, Chumki Chattopadhyay, Rupa Majumdar and for the first time brought publishers and readers face-to-face to discuss the issues in publishing. **Eta Oitihashik Sotti, Bhalo Sahityo Itihashe Bhorti! (Writing the Past: Historical Literature in Bengali)** brought forth the intricacies of historical writing with Debotosh Das, Krishnendu Mukhopadhyay, Abul Kashem and Himadrikishore Dasgupta followed by the launch of Kashem's new book. The first day sessions ended with laughter and hilarity with



the panel **Mojae Meje Gechi, Tai Hashite Bachi (Who's laughing? Comedy in Bengali Literature)** which brought together stalwarts of Bangla comic writing, Sanjib Chattopadhyay, Subhashish Mukhopadhyay, Saikat Mukhopadhyay, Mirchi Somak and Pracheta Gupta. The evening wrapped up with the famous Light and Sound Show, a speciality of the Jorasankho Thakurbari, tracing the history and contributions of Rabindranath Tagore.

Speaking to the reporters during the Utsob, **Swगत Sengupta, CEO Oxford Bookstores & ABSU Director** said, *"India's first Bangla Literary Festival, Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob created by the nearly 100 year old Oxford Bookstores in 2015 is in its 5th year. The Utsob aims to bring in new elements for its audiences since inception and one of our endeavor for our milestone fifth edition is to come up with ABSU's own theme music. The almost 1- minute theme music is a first for Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob. Patra Bharti and Oxford Bookstores have jointly hosted ABSU inside Oxford Bookstore, moved to the much larger Apeejay House Lawns and now have the honour of hosting ABSU in the courtyard of Jorasankho Thakurbari for the second year. That the courtyard of the birth place of Nobel Laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore will ring with ABSU theme music this year is a matter of great pride for us."*

Present at the occasion **Mr. Tridib Kumar Chattopadhyay, Managing Director, Patra Bharati Group of Publications** said, *"Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob is world's first and the only Bengali literature festival, which will be stepping onto its fifth edition this year. The Utsob starts on 22nd November, and goes on till 24th November, Sunday. Adding a unique flavour this year are five eminent authors-publishers coming from Bangladesh, the only country in the world with Bengali as its national language."*

Speaking about the special sessions in the 5th edition the **Utsob Director Mr. Sengupta** shared *"ABSU 2019 will be our best offering so far, with 23 specially curated sessions which delve deep into topics such as heritage, poetry, music, cinema and audio of Bangla language in this pristine heritage venue invaluable to Bangla literary legacy. This year the Utsob has curated specific session to pay a tribute and homage to writer and academic late Nabaneeta Dev Sen and to celebrate birth anniversaries of social reformer Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and eminent writer Akshaykumar Dutta. In keeping with the objective of expanding the reach of Bangla Literature through this pioneering initiative, this year we have curated a very special event - Bishesh Sahitya Premi Sommanona to recognize people and organization who have been instrumental in spreading Bangla literature in its original physical form to the book lovers"*



The session Bishesh Sahitya Premi Sommanona aims to recognize people like Tarun Shaw (55+) and Paritosh Bhattacharya (75+), book sellers of the city who have been selling and delivering books at the doorstep across the city for years. Besides, organization like Liluah WhatsApp Library, an initiative with 850 people with a huge database of Bangla titles will also be honoured and felicitated for their effort.

ABSU 2019 speakers include authors **Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay, Sanjib Chattopadhyay, Shankha Ghosh, Samaresh Majumdar, Majharul Islam, Subodh Sarkar, Saikat Mukhopadhyay, Anish Deb, Debatosh Das, Himadrikishore Dasgupta, Pracheto Gupta and Srijato Bandopadhyay**; Historians, professors and researchers **Debasis Mukhopadhyay, Abhijit Gupta, Chinmoy Guha, Alokprasad Chattopadhyay**; publishers **Sudhanshu De, Rupa Majumdar, Majharul Islam, Esha Chatterjee**; celebrated theatre personalities **Sohini Sengupta, Chandan Sen, Sohag Sen and Sujoy Prasad Chatterjee**; popular musicians **Surojit Chattopadhyay and Parama Dasgupta**; and **Actors Rudranil Ghosh, Subhasish Mukhopadhyay and Saheb Chattopadhyay**.

Coming up tomorrow Saturday 23rd November:

Starts at 12 NOON with a discussion between prominent Facebook Literary Groups, followed by **Totkhunik Tatkhunik** presented in association with Kobita Club for those who love to write poetry; **Pet Pure Khai, Tai Mon Bhore Chai (The Bookworm-Foodworm: Cuisine Quest in Bengali Literature)** a session presented in association with Wow Momo for the food-loving Bengali's; **Boi Prokash o Addalochona (New on the Shelf: Book Launch and Discussion)** presented in association with eka; **Chotorai Bhoobhishot, Tarai Dekhae Poth (Back to the Future! Where is Children's Literature Headed?)** a session dedicated to the memory of Late Nabaneeta Deb Sen acclaimed writer. Further illuminating discussions like **Jekhane Somoy Thomke Daraye: Sahitye Somoyer Chino (Only Time Will Tell: Does Literature reflect its contemporary times?)**, **Kolponar Goyenda Vs Baastober Goyenda (Fact and Fiction: detectives from books vs real-life detectives)**, an engaging discussion among Nachiketa, Anish Deb, Bithi Chattopadhyay, Champak Bhattacharya (IPS), Rj Deep; **Payer Tolae Sorshe, Bhromon Kori Jorse (Booked! Travel in Literature)**, a discussion among Meher Afroz Shaon, Surojit Chattopadhyay, Atri Bhattacharya, Satyam Roy Chowdhury will keep audience hooked throughout the day.

Coming up on Sunday 24th November:

Begins at 12 NOON with a discussion between prominent Facebook Literary Groups; followed by **Shabdabaaji**- a word game contest and **O Nadi Re (The River Songs: A Musical Afternoon)**, a musical performance; **Facebook Ki Boier Dhukpuk (Facebook Vs Novel)**; **Bishesh Sahitya Premi Sommanona (Special Literature Lover's Award)** given to Tarun Shaw, Paritosh Bhattacharya and Liluah Whatsapp Library; and **Ujjal 200! Bidyasagar o Akshaykumar Dutta (Beyond 200! Celebrating Vidyasagar and Akshaykumar Dutta)**. Further illuminating discussions like **Natokei Sahitya, Eha ki Sottyo (Staging Books: Can contemporary theatrical**



writing considered literature?) a discussion among Sohini Sengupta, Sohag Sen, Chandan Sen and moderated by Sujoy Prasad Chatterjee; **Bhoot Banglar Rohoshyo (Hip Hip Horror!)** a discussion among Sirshendu Mukhopadhyay, Indrani Chakroborty, Joydeep Chakroborty, Syed Manjurul Islam and moderated by Binod Ghoshal; and **Boi Chai, Boi-o Chai, Dujonei Ekthai? (Literature & Cinema: Friends or Foe?)** A discussion among Rudranil Ghosh, Samaresh Majumdar, Swapnomoy Chakroborty and moderated by Alokprasad Chattopadhyay, will keep the audience engaged for the day as ABSU 2019 comes to a closure.

ABSU 2019 Partners:

The Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob is supported by Patra Bharati and Rabindra Bharati University. Various other partners have stepped in different capacities to contribute to the success of the fifth edition- Zee 24 Ghanta and Luna, Supporting Partners; Shabdabaaji, Kobita Club, Eka, Wow Momo as session partners; Radio Mirchi 98.3 as media entertainment partners; Studio 15 as visual documentation partner; and Cha Bar and Typhoo as Refreshment Partners and other partners like Teachers Centre.

About Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob (ABSU):

Apeejay Bangla Sahitya Utsob (ABSU), India's first Bangla Literary Festival (ie Utsob in Bangla) created by the nearly 100 year old Oxford Bookstores in 2015, honours the rich literary tradition of the Bangla language. The objective of ABSU, a prized initiative of Oxford Bookstores, is to make Bangla literature increasingly visible and accessible, build an audience for Bangla books and create a culture of readership and familiarization with Bangla language among the youth. An interactive platform bringing together voices of contemporary Bangla Literature from the national and international stage, ABSU showcases all aspects of Bangla literature and literary expression and their impact on various art forms. ABSU is committed to the journey of Bangla Literature which is both exciting and exhilarating and have brought eminent personalities to grace the Festival in the last three years.

They include renowned authors like Shirshendu Mukherjee, Nabaneeta Dev Sen, Samaresh Majumdar, Sankha Ghosh, Pracheta Gupta, Ranjan Bandhopadhyay, Sanjib Chattopadhaya, Saikat Mukhopadhyay, Anindo Chattopadhaya, Narsingha Prasad Bhaduri, Srijato, Binod Ghoshal, Himadrikishor Dasgupta, Anish Deb, Krishnendu Mukherjee and Subodh Sarkar; film Directors like Suman Mukhopadhyay, Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury and Arindam Sil; Bengali musicians Nachiketa, Surojit Chatterjee and Swagatalaksmi Dasgupta; Actors Sabyasachi Chakroborty and Barun Chandra. Utsob has also attracted prominent literary personalities from Bangladesh like Salina Hussain and Imdadul Haq Milon.



About Patra Bharati

Patra Bharati started its journey back in the year 1968, with the very reputed juvenile magazine, Kishore Bharati. In 1981 Patra Bharati entered the world of book publishing. It mainly concentrated on Children and Juvenile Literature. With the start of a millennium, Patra Bharati stepped up and started publishing of all Literature across all genres and age groups. The lines of restrictions were removed and a new age publication house that focused on varied forms of Literature was born. Patra Bharati has to its credit Novels, Essays, Compilations, Graphic Novels, Comics, Stories, Non Fiction, Prose and so on. Many titles have received Awards and Accolades and are best sellers in today's time. Very recently Patra Bharati has also entered into English Publication, under the name BEE Books which has started gaining popularity with some of its titles.

About Oxford Bookstores:

Established in 1919, Oxford Bookstore is the best equipped 'base-camp' for journeys of the mind offering its customers the widest range of outstanding titles and consistently courteous and informed service for close to a century. Today, with stores in major metros, India's first of its kind tea boutique, Cha Bar, India's only literary festival created by a bookstore, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, Oxford Bookstore offers booklovers access to the very best in publishing enhanced by a variety of events which salute books, visual & performing arts and celebrate the word. Oxford Bookstore measures its success by the smiles on millions of happy customers that the brand has served over the last nearly 100 years. There are a few treats as sumptuous as a visit to Oxford Bookstore in India. Each time you walk into our iconic store in Kolkata where the brand started in 1919, its charm leaves you wanting for more. Our fleet of happy to help expert booksellers and informed hosts work day and night to bring to customers world class reading experience be it through our books or our fine teas and live by the brand's motto - Much more than a bookstore – at every Bookstore.

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