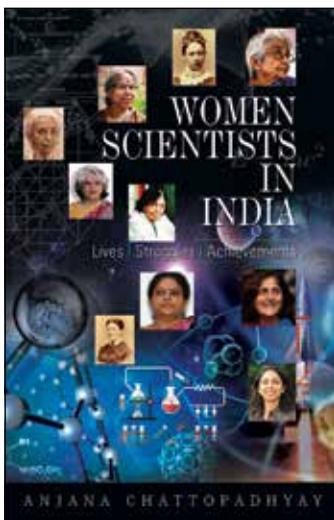


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PICK OF THE MONTH



Women Scientists in India
Anjana Chattopadhyay
978-81-237-8144-0; Rs 485

Brahmaputra Literary Festival



“Literature is mirror of the society. It is the art of discovering extraordinary in the ordinary.”

- Sarbananda Sonowal, Chief Minister of Assam

In its focus on nation building, the government emphasizes that it can be achieved through propagation of literature and culture and therefore literary festivals become a driving force to development, said Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam while inaugurating the second edition of Brahmaputra Literary Festival at Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra, Guwahati. He added that the Brahmaputra Literary Festival is an investment for a bright future.

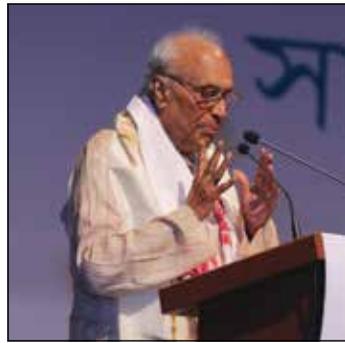
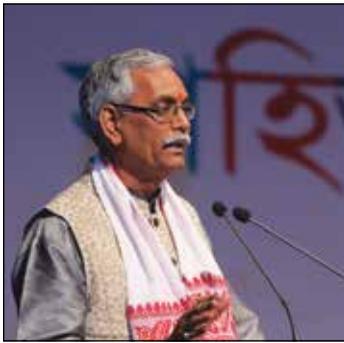
He hoped that through this event, young writers will learn the language

of literature and devote their time to create literature which brings peace and brotherhood so that the entire society believes in living together.

Shri Sonowal also observed that there should be more focus on literary translations. Assamese literature would also benefit through literary translations. He urged writers, especially young and women writers to promote value of life.

“India is a multilingual, multireligious and multicultural country,” said Shri Indranath Choudhuri well-known author. He added, “In *Atharveda*, a book written





4000 years ago, there is Bhumi Sukta, which describes India as a country where people speaking different languages and following different religions live together.” He further said that the idea of India demonstrates unity through acknowledgement of differences.

Describing Assam and its literature as heterogeneous, Prof. Indranath Choudhari said, “The singular truth about India is that it is plural. Assam is the true replica of Indian pluralism.” “One of the greatest Asamiya poets, Sankardeva was the first person to create the cultural space of a total India,” he added.

“BLF is a confluence of writers. In India where there is confluence of rivers and writers, India finds sacredness. BLF wants to create space where writers have come to know each other and realize unity in our composite culture. This festival opens up possibility to understand each other, move together and know each other’s mind,” said Prof. Choudhari.

While being honoured to be at Brahmaputra Literary Festival, David Collin, noted French author, said “It is literary festivals that offer a forum to speak together. Talking about the importance of translation, he said that translations

help in creating link between different societies and it is necessary that literature in different languages are understood by each other.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma, Chairman, NBT said that the government works for the people and by organising such events, it helps in expansion of literature.

Talking about the Indian wisdom in ancient Indian scriptures, Shri Baldeo Bhai said that *Rigveda* which is recognized as the first written work by UNESCO talks about sense of humanity as a whole and without literature this sense of humanity cannot be understood. He added that NBT is working towards the promotion of book reading culture by organizing various activities.

Shri Naba Kumar Doley, Minister of State for Cultural Affairs; Shri Hrishikesh



Goswami, Media Advisor to the Hon’ble Chief Minister; Shri Santanu Bharali, Legal Advisor to the Hon’ble Chief Minister; Shri Vinod Kumar Pipersenia, Chief Secretary, Government of Assam; Shri V B Pyarelal, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Assam; and Shri Ajay Tewari, Principal Secretary, Government of Assam were also present on the occasion.

Earlier, in her welcome address, Dr Rita Chowdhury, Director, NBT said that it was a long felt need of the people for a literary festival in this part of the country and when the first Brahmaputra Literary Festival was held last year, the wish in a way was fulfilled. The success of the festival had given us a certain courage to organize this second edition of the Brahmaputra Literary Festival.

Thanking all those involved in the organization of Brahmaputra Literary Festival for their help and cooperation, Shri Pramod Kalita, Secretary, Publication Board, Assam said may the Brahmaputra Literary Festival add new dimension to the world of literature.

The inauguration of the Festival began with an invocation to goddess of learning, Saraswati rendered by Tribeni Buzarbaruah.



Literature in the Market Place

Chaired by Mamang Dai, a session on 'Literature in the Market Place: Litfests and Book Fairs' at the BLF questioned the relationship between literature and money.

Anant Vijay, one of the panelists, expressed the concern that literary festivals have the tendency to be tarnished by commercial activities such as selling of ornaments, accessories, etc. alongside books, thereby shifting the focus away from literary matters. This, he explained, was a serious issue since without government funding literary festivals cannot sustain themselves without such financial options.

Bee Rowlatt offered a slightly different take on the matter by saying that literature and money have a symbiotic relationship. She remarked how even Shakespeare had a patron but also expressed concern that the



income of writers has declined in the last ten years.

The underlying theme of the discussion that followed was the purpose of literary festivals. All panelists agreed that their main aim was to promote the exchange of ideas.

Delfim Correira Da Silva articulated how as a teacher his primary objective regarding literature was that it should have an educational purpose. He praised

literary festivals for their ability to bridge the gap between writers and readers. According to him, the purpose of not just literary festivals, but also literature more generally, remains incomplete if readers and writers are not brought into conversation with each other.

Bee Rowlatt agreed with him and expressed further that the visibility that literary festivals

provide writers can be instructive for people who attend them since it gives them the opportunity to meet writers and envision a writing career for themselves.

In her concluding remarks, Mamang Dai brought together the various strands of discussion and observed that literary festivals have the potential to keep literature vibrant and that one should be mindful of one's impact on the impact of such festivals on communities.

The Great Indian Divide

Delhi University professor Kumud Sharma spared no words in criticising the Hindi literature written 'in sympathy' for the Dalits, who were exploited in India for ages, in a discussion on 'Hindi Sahitya Aur Vimarsh: Sandarbh Dalit Chetna.' She pointed out that it is the literature by Dalit writers which reflects the struggle of the 'lower class' people rather than those written about them by 'others'. According to her, contemporary literature is 'of the readers' and said that the sector is more demand-driven than ever before because 'readers rules the roost.'

Kaushal Pawar, while challenging a view that there has been a trend of projecting the diverse culture of India as 'different', asserted that it's the society that gets reflected in a manner and that the litterateurs need not be blamed for this.

"The menace of neo-class division, which was not visible earlier in our



school days, has even divided the political class, bureaucracy, let alone litterateurs," said Suresh Rituparna. He warned that "no society can thrive with revenge

feelings." To drive home his point that the class division ends when a society is faced with a threat from someone outside, he pointed out that the Indians who migrated to South Africa for work during pre-Independence period were from various communities including Brahmins, but they had to shed their differences as local Africans, who were scared of losing their jobs, posed a threat to the migrants.

"The Dalit literature, according to B D Morwal, did not evolve on its own as it is a product of an already matured literature." He, meanwhile, took on a section of Dalit intellectuals for a ban put on the word 'Dalit' in Kerala, saying it was their interest in using the 'shield' of being Dalit in their professional life. In reference to the class divide in epics, Vishesh Gupta, a college principal, mentioned that the class divide was less apparent in *Ramayana* than the later-created *Mahabharata*.



Who Moved My Screen: Changing Face of Indian Cinema

The session 'Who Moved My Screen: Changing Face of Indian Cinema' looked at the how the content, style and presentation have changed over the period of time. The speakers on the occasion were Anant Vijay (Chair), Vani Tripathi Tikoo, Oinam Doren, Sanjib Sabhapandit and Yatindra Mishra.

Opening the discussion Anant Vijay said that while cinema which was once prevalent in the Urban centres has now spread to small cities and towns. For Vani Tripathi Tikoo it is the audience who has changed the screen of Indian cinema. She believes that in the last 10 years the projection of the role of women, who were generally in movies for showcasing beauty and elegance, has changed drastically in a positive manner.

Sanjib Sabhapandit was of the view



that it is not the directors, producers or audiences that has changed the face of Indian cinema but 'Time'. Changing times brings in newer context and relevance for issues. He said that Satyajit Ray's direction may not work now as the issues of making movies through time and era has changed. And issues like Same-sex marriage or Single Parenthood which were not in the objectives of movie makers then have

more relevance in today's time.

Oinam Doren remarked that earlier producers were reluctant to produce films which they were not confident of making money. But with the promotion of independent filmmakers and evolution of technology and also the growth of different platforms for showcasing of the movies there is a change in the movie business. Independent film makers has the benefit of making and promoting films that they want to showcase.

Yatindra Mishra observed that with the changing scenario and taste of audiences certain changes are to be seen in the genres of film makers and composers. He also added that not only mainstream cinema but parallel cinema too made its presence felt among the audiences.

The Fair Pen

A poem in Assamese turned out to be the flashpoint of a discussion on woman writers and their empowerment, sending a message to the rest of the world that how woman rights were secured in the societies of India's North-East. The poem "*Ek asil burba burhi...*" recited by writer-journalist Maini Mahanta, narrates how, after an argument with her husband, an old woman challenges him to do the household chores and went on to do his work in the field, of course only to realise that the "grass is not greener on the other side". Mahanta echoed Rita Chowdhury, eminent Assamese author and Sahitya

Akademi winner, who said women writers never had to use male names, as had been the case with some writers in Bangla, Hindi and other Indian languages.

The discussion on 'Aadhunik Sahitya Stree Vimarsh : Aouchitya Aur Upalabdhi' at Tolstoy Hall traversed across borders, thanks to presence of the likes of Bee Rowlet and Vayu Naidu, throwing light on the emergence of women writers in the West as well. Explaining the change of trend of women writers Delhi University professor Kumud Sharma said it was essentially the male-female relationship that dominated the themes.



Vayu Naidu, based in London, brought in suffragette movement in the UK to drive home the point that how recent is the concept of women empowerment in the West. Young writer Bee Rowlatt lamented the lack of a memorial for the 18th century women rights philosopher and activist Mary Wollstonecraft.



Young Voice

The young Hindi poet Taro Sindik from Arunachal Pradesh was a pleasant surprise for Hindi scholars of mainland India during a discussion 'Yuva Rachanatamkta ki Dishayein.' Young writers of different languages introduced their work to the audience and expressed their opinion on the trend of writing in their respective areas. The speakers on the occasion were Kaushal Panwar, Monalisha Saikia, Anu Singh Choudhury, Ratneshwar Singh and Jayashree Kambara.

Interacting with River

“River has a very good quality.

Every drop of the river is a new drop. Every drop gives you a new momentum and dynamism in your life,” said Kula Saikia in a lively conversation held at Litmart. During the session, Kula Saikia, well-known Asamiya author, discussed about his collection of short stories *If a River and Other Stories* translated from Asamiya.

As river finds important place in his fiction, Saikia said, “If you are sad, you can talk to river. The river will carry it, will take it from you and will not give it back to you.” He added that river is flowing while ocean or sea keeps on hammering the banks but cannot flow. He remarked, “Do not talk to ocean, at the



time of tide, it will give it back to you.”

When asked about memories as one of the significant part of his stories, Saikia remarked, “Of the three tenses, what is important is past.” According to him, past

is what actually happened, present becomes the past and about future you cannot say anything.

Talking about his views on the language, he said that, “Word itself is so beautiful, every word takes you to your past. Every word has a different meaning for different people.” Why his stories start abruptly and end abruptly, Saikia observed that our thought process is full of ripples, while pondering over an event or a thing, many thoughts come up simultaneously. Therefore, his stories

give a space to readers to give an end to the story the way they like. Through imagination, he alienates the characters of his stories from the world they live in, he added.

Essence of Dialect in Drama

A scholar at Benaras Hindu University and renowned classical music performer, Malini Awasthi, not only enthralled the gathering with her passionate rendering, but also enlightened them with her deep understanding of the music during the session ‘Rangamanch Aur Bharatiya Sangeet.’

“Dialects are the genuine source of *sangeet* (music),” Awasthi said while explaining how rich the Indian classical music has been for ages. While performing a folk masterpiece “*chero na mujhe...*” she underlined the fact as to how perfectly it was tuned to convey the exact message of the lyrics. Referring to the male actors who perform female roles in earlier *nataks*



(dramas), she said, “The message has always been important, not the character.” She pointed out how one tribal artiste plays an instrument, sings the song and also dances at the same time!

The importance of *rasa* (humour) in *rangamanch* (stage drama) was also visible in

the land of Kamrupa (present Assam), said Karuna Deka while referring to the ancient Kamrupiya Dhuliya Bhaona which has been popular for centuries even before the era of great Vaisnavite saint Srimanta Sankardeva.

Referring to the origin of present-day drama Partap Sehgal said *Parsi sangeet* has greatly influenced the Hindi *rangamanch*, which initially did not resist it, but ultimately was enriched by the Parsi culture. “What we see even in Hindi films are influenced by Parsi elements,” he mentioned.

In his submission, Vinay Upadhyaya said *sangeet* has always emerged from the different cultures carrying essence of the latter in various forms.



Young Writers Meet Publishers

For around 45 young regional writers hailing from different parts of North-east, the BLF 2018 brought a ray of hope in getting their works published, a tough task otherwise. Over a dozen publishers assembled at Litmart gave a few tips to the aspiring writers as to how to present a manuscript to the publisher. Quite a few publishers showed interest in putting into print some of the scripts that came up for discussion.

Theme Pavilion at NDWBF

“Cleaning rivers is not the need, the need of the hour is to stop polluting them,” said Sant Balwant Singh Sinchewal, the ardent crusader against water pollution whose innovative model of a clean village became a cynosure of all eyes from India and abroad. Echoing his sentiment, Dr Inderjit Kaur of Pingalwada Charitable Trust known for its zero budget organic farming said, “To pollute water is indeed a sin”.



They were at the Theme Pavilion engaged in a lively interaction with Jashwant Singh. ‘Environment and Climate Change’ was the Theme of the 2018 edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair.

Moderated by Pankaj Chaturvedi, the programme was organised by NBT in association with Punjabi Academy, Delhi. Earlier in his welcome address, NBT Chairman Shri Baldeo Bhai Sharma said that in today’s world people tend to rely so heavily on mechanical appliances

that most of the times they fail to identify themselves and in such trying times words of wisdom from good souls like Sant Sinchewal and Dr Kaur help people unburden themselves.

The interaction showed how one can transform history and to an extent the geography of an area facing an imminent environmental disaster and that too without any governmental help. Sant Sinchewal was known for his work in reclaiming the purity of a 160 kilometer

stretch of a river in Hoshiarpur district which had turned into a gutter.

Recalling his mentor Sant Puran Singh’s advice, Dr Kaur said for social work one need not expect help from political leaders and the affluent classes, rather such works should be carried out with the moral and material help from common people only.

Sant Sinchewal explained in detail how disposal of household waste water through inexpensive means and use of treated waste waters in farms can actually help overcome the problem of clean drinking water on one hand and save our precious water bodies from pollution on the other. The household wastes can also be a veritable source of organic manure, he added. In a positive note, he concluded that the road ahead may be difficult, but days are not far when our rivers, our airs and our mother earth will get back their pristine purity.

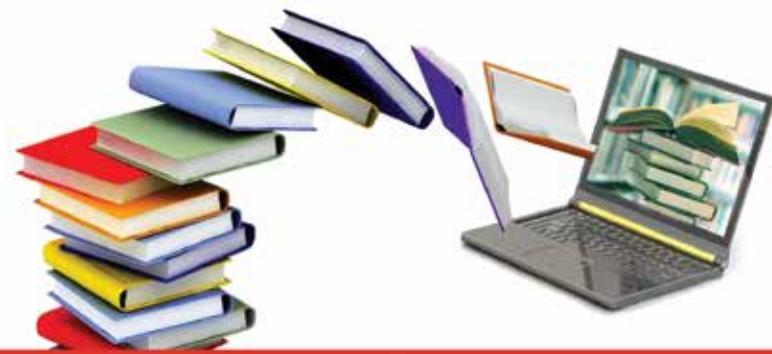


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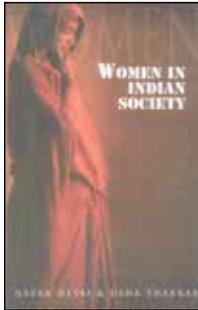
Books on Women

International Women's Day is celebrated on the 8th of March every year. It is a major day of global celebration of respect, appreciation and love towards women to a celebration for women's economic, political and social achievements. Listed below are a few titles published by the Trust on women and on issues related to women.

Women in Indian Society

Neera Desai & Usha Thakkar

Confined to women and women related issues, the book makes a concerted effort to present the status of Indian women against the ever-changing social, economic, political and academic backgrounds.

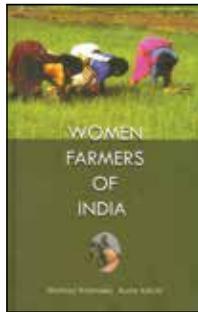


ISBN 978-81-237-3677-8; Rs 80

Women Farmers of India

Maithreyi Krishnaraj & Aruna Kanchi

The book is a significant study that brings to light the ever increasing role that women are playing in the agricultural and allied sectors in India, while the stake of the men folk has been dwindling day by day. The book is likely to trigger a debate about 'the invisibility of women farmers' in India and the resultant social, economic, political and cultural complexities—the issues that have largely remained outside the mainstream intellectual discourse.

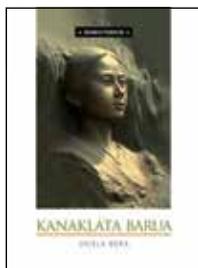


ISBN 978-81-237-5319-5; Rs 105

Kanaklata Barua

Shiela Bora

Kanaklata was only seventeen when she fell to the bullets of brutal police firing while trying to hoist the tricolour at the Gohpur Police Station, a symbol of British power. The book looks at the whole hearted participation of women in the freedom movement. It is also a narrative of the socio-political and cultural history of



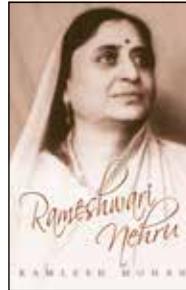
Assam and its major role in shaping India's modern history.

ISBN 978-81-237-7819-8; Rs 155

Rameshwari Nehru

Kamlesh Mohan

A versatile personality, an eloquent speaker and a strong believer in Gandhian values, Rameshwari Nehru worked for the social dignity, economic and political rights of Harijans as well as for women rights.



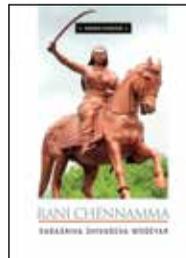
ISBN 978-81-237-6801-X; Rs 95

Rani Chennamma

Sadashiva Wodeyar

Kittur today is a tiny town in Karnataka. It was the capital a small princely state for nearly 164 years.

Rani Chennamma was the very first head of a princely state in India to rise against the mighty British Empire. Her life is an inspiring story which will thrill freedom lovers in any country, at all times.

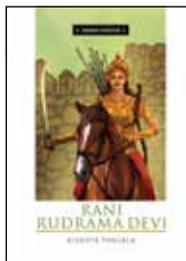


ISBN 978-81-237-2751-8; Rs 210

Rani Rudrama Devi

Alekhya Punjala

Rani Rudrama Devi, a thirteenth century Kakatiya warrior ruler was an able administrator, the boldest of warriors, an indomitable conqueror, an adorable daughter and a loving mother. Women like Rani Rudrama Devi have shown great strength and conviction in their own selves.



ISBN 978-81-237-7817-1; Rs 145

Sister Nivedita

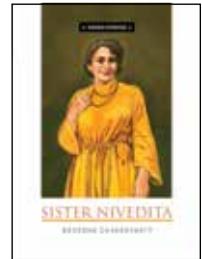
Basudha Chakravarty

Sister Nivedita's deep concern for a

country and its people thousands of miles away from her home places her among those selfless few who can be regarded as citizens of the world. Working tirelessly for the uplift of underprivileged

Indians, she soon realized that for her fellow-Indians freedom from their varied ills meant freedom from the alien British rule.

ISBN 978-81-237-7818-X; Rs 135

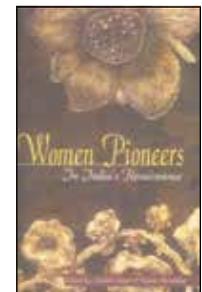


Women Pioneers in India's Renaissance

Sushila Nayar & Kamla Mankekar (Eds.)

Indian renaissance which coincided with the rise and growth of Indian nationalism and its culmination in freedom for the country, is singularly marked by the active role of a large number of women. Each of these women pioneers discussed in the book have, in their chosen mission, brought to it all the energy, mission and quality of service and sacrifice which lay within her.

ISBN 81-237-3766-1; Rs 250

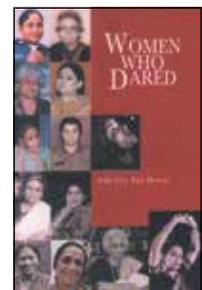


Women Who Dared

Ritu Menon (Ed.)

The present book records the contribution of a few representative women who have engineered the socio-cultural landscape of the country over the last fifty years. The readers will get a glimpse of the nation's own biography as it is reflected in the lives of women through their brief cameo autobiography.

ISBN 978-81-237-3856-7; Rs 185



Children's Pavilion at NDWBF

A number of activities for children were organized at the Children's Pavilion at the New Delhi World Book Fair in which hundreds of children from various schools and organizations participated.

'Youth Parliament' was organized by Amity University Press where students discussed about 'Interlinking of Rivers: A Boon or Bane'.

A workshop on 'Reading Changed my Life', a presentation on 'First Indian Sailing Expedition around the World (from 1995 to 1997) by Brig. T.P.S. Chowdhury, A puppet show on 'pollution caused by digital devices', a Mime Show were also organised.

Mr. Palle Schmidt, a renowned graphic artist from Denmark and creator of 132-page graphic novel titled *The Last Good Man*, introduced the art of making comic books to kids in a workshop organized at the Children's Pavilion. Stating that the core of creating a comic book is based on the story, he classified it into various sections—beginning, middle, and end. "The creation of a comic book is a rather detailed process and starts with a central idea, which is also supported by the setting and genre of the story", he said.

While interacting with the children, he asked them for some ideas and characters to start a story. He then correlated the stories

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concerning various characters living in the Jungle and formed a story out of it.

He added that once the plot of the story is set, we can move ahead with its illustrations, because to generate interest among children a comic should be complemented by illustrations. Afterwards, the enthusiastic children were asked to create a comic character of their own imagination.

An interactive session with the children accompanied by group songs presented by the Hare Krishna Devsare Bal Sahitya Nyas about inculcating awareness and sensitivity about the environment was organised. A panel discussion on involving children in environmental issues, cultural and activity based programmes, a workshop on managing children's library were also organised at the Pavilion.



NBT Newsletter is the house magazine of the National Book Trust, India — an autonomous organisation of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Higher Education, Government of India.

The views expressed in the signed articles do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Trust.

Editor: Binny Kurian

Editorial Associate: Surekha Sachdeva

Production Officer: Narender Kumar



NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA

Nehru Bhawan, 5 Institutional Area,
Vasant Kunj, Phase-II New Delhi-110 070

E-mail: office.nbt@nic.in

Website: www.nbtindia.gov.in

Readers are requested to write to the editor expressing their views about the NEWSLETTER.

Printed and published by Satish Kumar on behalf of National Book Trust, India and printed at Aravali Printers and Publishers Pvt. Ltd., W-30 Phase-II, Okhla Industrial Area, New Delhi-110020, and published at National Book Trust, India, Nehru Bhawan, 5 Institutional Area, Phase-II, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070. Editor: Binny Kurian.

Typeset and designed at Capital Creations, Subhram Complex, Munirka, New Delhi-110 067.

If undelivered please return to:

National Book Trust, India, Nehru Bhawan, 5 Institutional Area, Phase-II, New Delhi - 110 070

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