



In association with



भारत सरकार  
GOVERNMENT  
OF INDIA



संस्कृति मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
CULTURE



# Puri Literary Festival



18<sup>th</sup>  
April  
2025

TAJ PURI RESORT  
& SPA, ODISHA

20<sup>th</sup>  
April  
2025



# Philosophy

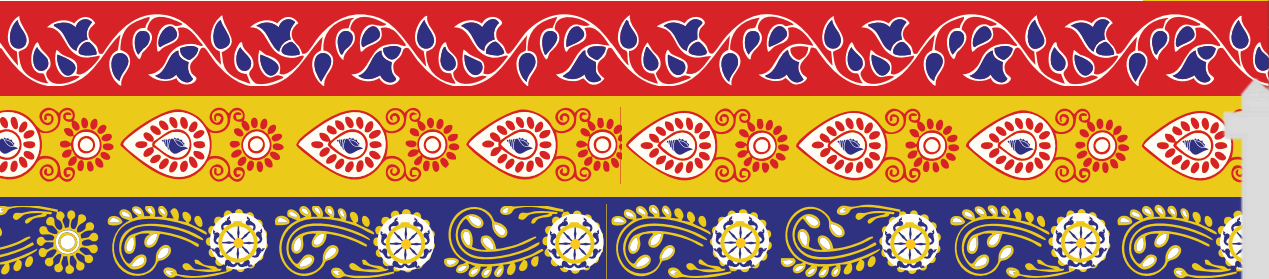
## *Weaving stories of Tradition, Transformation, & Triumph!*

Set against the serene backdrop of Puri, a city steeped in spirituality and heritage, the Puri Literary Festival 2025 celebrates India's enduring cultural legacy and its progressive aspirations. Rooted in the philosophy of Samavāya—the harmonious coexistence of tradition and modernity—the festival seeks to inspire a holistic dialogue that bridges India's ancient wisdom with its contemporary ambitions. The Puri Literary Festival 2025 is an ode to the eternal cyclicality of time and knowledge, a harmonious dialogue between the past and the future, inspired by the sacred wheels of the Konark Sun Temple and the divine Ratha of Lord Jagannath. These wheels symbolise the perpetual motion of life, the ceaseless journey of humanity through epochs, and the profound interplay of tradition and transformation.

Key objectives of the session are to reaffirm Puri's spiritual and cultural legacy and to foster global dialogue with an indigenous lens. At its core, the festival embraces the belief that India's timeless wisdom and artistic heritage serve not as relics of the past but as guiding lights for the future. It is through this lens that the festival seeks to explore how the nation can ascend to new pinnacles in art, architecture, literature, and economic development while remaining deeply rooted in its cultural ethos.

The festival's impact will extend far beyond the venue, with an outreach program spanning every district of Odisha. Events including heritage walks, folk art performances, and discussions on Odia literature will ensure grassroots participation, rekindling pride in Odisha's traditions. In schools and colleges, workshops and storytelling sessions will inspire the youth, while expert-led dialogues on environmental sustainability, digital literacy, and cultural preservation.

The culmination of these efforts will be a "Vision for Tomorrow" document, encapsulating insights to guide future policy and cultural initiatives. The Puri Literary Festival 2025 promises to be an enriching experience that echoes throughout the state, inspiring a deeper connection with India's cultural roots while embracing a modern, forward-thinking world.



# Partners

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Festival Partners



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# Schedule

18th April 2025  
Friday

- |               |  |                     |
|---------------|--|---------------------|
| 01.           | Inaugural  | 10:00 AM - 11:30 PM |
| 02.           | Changemakers Unplugged:<br>Social Entrepreneurship Stories | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM   |
| LUNCH         |  | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM   |
| 03.           | Voices of Her: Women in Indian Literary Tradition          | 3:15 PM - 4:15 PM   |
| HERITAGE WALK |  | 4:15 PM Onwards     |
| DINNER        |  | 8:00 PM             |

19th April 2025  
Saturday

- |       |   |                     |
|-------|---|---------------------|
| 01.   | Agents of Change:<br>Role of Writers as Social Commentators and Activists | 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM |
| 02.   | Unveiling the Past:<br>The Craft and Challenges of Indian History Writing | 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM |
| 03.   | Innovation and Aspiration:<br>The Start-Up Revolution in India            | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM   |
| 04.   | Parallel Session I: Odia Literature in the 21st Century                   | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM   |
| LUNCH |   | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM   |

# Schedule

19th April 2025  
Saturday

- |     |   |                   |
|-----|---|-------------------|
| 05. | Soft Power, Strong Influence:<br>Bollywood's Role in Shaping Narratives | 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM |
| 06. | Odisha 2036: Role of Odisha and Odias in Purvoday                       | 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM |

**CUL TURAL NIGHT FOLLOWED BY GALA DINNER** 7:00 PM Onwards  
only by special invitation

20th April 2025  
Sunday

- |     |  |                     |
|-----|--|---------------------|
| 01. | Passion to Purpose: Life Lessons for India's Youth       | 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM |
| 02. | Sustainability: Building a Climate-Resilient Bharat      | 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM |
| 03. | Parallel Session 2: Jagannath: Odisha's Identity         | 11:00 PM - 12:00 PM |
| 04. | Publisher's Meet   | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM   |
| 05. | Parallel Session 3: Odisha: A socio-cultural perspective | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM   |

**LUNCH**

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

- |     |   |                   |
|-----|---|-------------------|
| 06. | Decolonisation & the Global South:<br>Reshaping Multilateralism | 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM |
| 07. | Parallel Session 4: Mostly Real: Unfiltered with Prajakta Koli  | 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM |
| 08. | Award & Closing Ceremony  | 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM |

# A Celebration of Heritage & Culture

## *Heritage Walk – Vision of the Past to Shape our Present*

An immersive Heritage Walk, allowing participants to explore Puri's iconic landmarks such as the Jagannath Temple, Gundicha Temple, and the vibrant bylanes echoing with tales of devotion and tradition.

## *Tales by the Tide – Seaside Storytelling Sessions*

Puri's serene beaches will serve as the backdrop for enchanting storytelling sessions that celebrate the oral and intangible traditions of Odisha and beyond. Storytellers and performers will share folk tales in an engaging format that blends performance with interaction

## *Cultural Night – A tapestry of Traditions*

While the days will lead to thought-provoking discussions, the evenings will soothe the audience with a Cultural Night celebrating India's diverse artistic heritage. From the hypnotic beats of Odissi dance to the soulful strains of Hindustani classical & contemporary music and Paika martial art performances, the event will feature performances by renowned artists.

## *Timeless Sands of Odisha – Baluka Kala*

Renowned sand artists like Sudarshan Patnaik and others will grace the festival with their extraordinary talent, creating breathtaking sand sculptures that align with the themes of literature, heritage of Odisha, and global visions. Visitors will have the chance to witness live sand art demonstrations and admire a special exhibit of his iconic works, which have garnered international acclaim

## *Gallery of Pattachitra Art – Stories in Strokes*

A dedicated gallery at the Puri Literary Festival will bring to life the intricate art form of Pattachitra, known for its vivid storytelling and detailed craftsmanship, through curated exhibits and live demonstrations by skilled artisans. Attendees will be able to explore the fascinating tales depicted in these artworks and even participate in workshops to create their own Pattachitra masterpieces.

## *Flavors of Odisha – A Culinary Tapestry at PLF 2025*

Beyond the world of words, PLF 2025 offers a feast for the senses with a celebration of Odisha's rich culinary heritage. From the rustic charm of Pakhala Bhata to the divine sweetness of Chhena Poda, the festival will bring together iconic flavors that define the region's gastronomic soul. Rooted in tradition and crafted with care, every dish tells a story—of culture, community, and the timeless bond between food and folklore.



# Dialogue Sessions



1

## *Agents of Change: Role of Writers as Social Commentators and Activists*

A discussion on how Indian writers tackle caste, gender, and social justice through fiction, poetry, and essays. Authors will share their experiences of how they use literature to drive activism and advocate for civilisational and environmental causes.

A discussion on historiography, contested narratives, and Indic traditions in shaping historical discourse. Panellists explore nationalistic history writing, indigenous contributions, and the balance between cultural heritage and modern research.

## *Unveiling the Past: The Craft and Challenges of Indian History Writing*

2

3

## *Innovation and Aspiration: The Start-Up Revolution in India*

A deep dive into the success stories, challenges, and future of India's start-up ecosystem—covering funding, scaling, and regulatory hurdles.

A conversation with social entrepreneurs driving change through initiatives in poverty alleviation, education, and clean energy aligned with India's developmental goals.

## *Changemakers Unplugged: Social Entrepreneurship Stories*

4



This session at PLF 2025 will examine Bollywood's role in shaping historical and socio-cultural narratives, especially concerning civilizationally significant events. It will explore the authenticity of historical portrayals, the responsibility of filmmakers in handling cultural sensitivities, and the inclusion of indigenous voices in storytelling

*Soft Power, Strong  
Influence: Bollywood's  
Role in Shaping  
Narratives*

5

6

*Odisha 2036:  
Role of Odisha & Odias  
in Purvodaya*

A discussion on Odisha's growth trajectory, focusing on infrastructure, economy, social development, and governance as it nears its centenary.

Tracing the evolution of female voices in Indian literature—from bhakti poets to modern writers—this session explores gender, identity, and empowerment, highlighting Shakta-inspired narratives and their impact on storytelling.

*Voices of Her:  
Women in Indian  
Literary Tradition*

7

8

*Muse or Machine?  
Exploring the Soul of Art  
in the Digital Age*

As AI reshapes creativity, this session examines whether machines can replicate artistic depth or serve as muses for human expression. It explores AI's role in storytelling, cultural preservation, and the evolving definition of artistic value.

A discussion on how social media influencers drive trends, preserve Indic traditions, and advocate for societal causes while balancing global appeal with Indian ethos.

*The Influence of  
Influencers: Social Media  
in the Modern Era*

9



Exploring how post-colonial nations are redefining global governance, tackling power imbalances, and fostering south-south cooperation for an equitable world order

*Decolonisation & the Global South:  
Reshaping Multilateralism*

10

11

*Sustainability:  
Building a Climate-Resilient Bharat*

A discussion on multi-stakeholder collaboration, policy innovation, and integrating traditional wisdom with modern solutions to combat climate change.

Icons from cinema, sports, and education share insights on transforming passion into purpose, resilience, and contributing meaningfully to society

*From Passion to Purpose:  
Life Lessons for India's Youth*

12

13

*Publisher's Meet:  
Navigating the Literary Landscape*

An interactive session on publishing trends, digital disruption, and strategies for aspiring authors to succeed in today's literary world.

This session highlights India's relevance in addressing modern challenges and fostering global harmony by exploring ancient wisdom on mindfulness, dharma, and inner peace.

*Bharat:  
The Spiritual Capital of the World*

14



# Parallel Sessions

1

## *Jagannath: Odisha's Identity*

More than just a deity, Jagannath is a living, breathing identity for the people of the region. From the ubiquitous greeting of "Jai Jagannath" that echoes through streets, temples, and homes, to the grandeur of the world-renowned Rath Yatra or Chariot Festival that draws millions, the Jagannath tradition binds Odisha's society across caste, creed, and class.

This conversation will explore how Mahaprabhu Jagannath shapes not just religious practice but also inspires Odisha's art, literature, folklore, and everyday life.

2

## *Odisha: A Socio-Cultural Perspective*

On the evolution of Odisha's literature, from the ancient epics of Kalinga to the vibrant voices of contemporary writers. This session will journey through how Odia literature mirrors the region's cultural, social, and political shifts, influenced by Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, colonialism, and the post-independence resurgence of Odia identity. With a focus on themes of caste, gender, and social change, we'll uncover how literature has both shaped and reflected Odisha's values, celebrating the resilience and creativity that continues to inspire its future.

3

## *21st Century's Odia Literature*

Delve into how contemporary Odia literature responds to societal changes, global influences, and technological advancements. Discussions will feature prominent and emerging voices covering themes like urbanisation, migration, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. We'll explore how digital platforms have expanded the reach of Odia literature while preserving its cultural roots. By celebrating Odia writers' creativity and resilience, this conversation aims to showcase the enduring power of regional literature in shaping India's literary landscape.



# Our Speakers



**Shri Hari Babu Kambhampati**  
Hon'ble Governor of Odisha



**Sh. Dharmendra Pradhan**  
Union Minister of Education,  
Government of India



**Sh. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**  
Union Minister of Culture,  
Government of India



**Sh. Sarbanand Sonowal**  
Union Minister of Ports,  
Shipping And Waterways



**Sh. Mohan Charan Majhi**  
Hon'ble CM of Odisha



**Sambit Patra**  
MP, Puri, Odisha



**Sh. Suryabanshi Suraj**  
Minister of Odia Language, Literature & Culture,  
Government of Odisha



**Sh. Sachchidanand Joshi**  
MS, KONGA



**Prof. Milind Marathe**  
Chairman, NBT



**Sh. Anurag Singh Thakur**  
Member of Parliament



**Tasleema Nasreen**



**Shehzad Poonawala**



**Amitabh Kant**



**Shallu Jindal**



**Hindol Sengupta**



**Abhijeet Majumdar**



**Vikram Sampath**



**Nandini Sengupta**



**Tuhin Sinha**



**Utpal Kumar**



**Deep Halder**



**Ramesh Chandra Gaur**



**Kanta Singh**



**Abha Mishra**



**Rajiv Vasudevan**  
Apollo ApolloVAID Hospitals



**Gaurav Shah**  
ISDM



**Tushar Juvekar**  
KPIT



**Raghava Krishna**  
Bhat



**Aadit Palicha**  
Zepto



**Yuvraj Malik**



**Shantanu Gupta**



**Sridhar Venkat**  
Mishra Patra Foundation



**Pranab Dhal Samanta**



**Moupia Basu**



**Madhuparna Das**



**Subash K. Jha**



**Ajit Padmanabh**



**Shefali Vaidya**



**Malini Awasthi**



**Koral Dasgupta**



**Saiswaropa Iyer**



**Janhavi Singh**



# Our Speakers



Sujet Kumar



H. E. Anil Sooklal  
*Ambassador of South Africa*



Swasti Rao



Rami Niranjana Desai



Jitendra N. Mishra



Falit Sijariya



Dibakar Ghosh



Elizabeth Kureila



Rajesh Tripathi



Prajakta Koli



Anubhav Singh Bassi



Malhar Kalambe



Vijay Shekhar Sharma



Harsh Chouhan



Nikhil Chandwani



Dr. Arabind Padhi



Dr. Sreeram Chaulia



Sudipto Sen



Rupa Mishra



Yogeshwar Dutt



Tanaya Patnaik



Sofia Firdous



Manogya Tiwari



Namit Saxena



Bodhisattwa Sanghapriya  
*IG Dhomes*



Pratibha Roy



Debdas Chhotaray



Rakshak Nayak



Debprasad Das



Prakash Mishra



Asit Mohanty



Das Benhur



Dr. Gaurhari Das



Harihar Hota



Dr. Itirani Samanta



Dr. Bhaskar Mishra



Subhranshu Panda



Anil Dhir



Panchami Manu Ukil



# Publishers Meet



*nbt*



*Jaico*



*Simon &  
Schuster*



*Westland*



*Rupa*



*Harper Collins*



*Penguin*



*Bloomsbury*



*Pan MacMillan*



*BlueOne*



*Hachette*



*PEN In Books*



# Special Features

## *Empowering Inclusivity & Indigenous Voices*

PLF 2025 is committed to fostering an inclusive space where literature, culture, and heritage unite people across all backgrounds. This year, we extend special support to Odisha's Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and indigenous artists, ensuring their voices and crafts receive the recognition they deserve.

## *Tribal Stalls & Indigenous Artisan Showcase*

Step into a living tapestry of Odisha's ancestral artistry. PLF 2025 dedicates vibrant spaces to PVTG artisans and tribal entrepreneurs, celebrating their exquisite crafts, textiles, and handlooms. Each masterpiece tells a story—woven with tradition, resilience, and cultural pride—offering visitors not just art, but a piece of history.

## *Inaugural PLF Book of the Year Awards 2024*

Inaugural PLF Book of the Year Awards 2024: As the sun sets on the golden shores of Puri, a new dawn for literature emerges—one of celebration, recognition, and brilliance. The PLF Book of the Year Awards 2024 will shine a spotlight on the finest literary creations of our time. Across a spectrum of genres, including Fantasy, Thriller, Historical Fiction, Romance, Women's Fiction, Children's & YA, Biography, Self-Help, Travel, Religion & Spirituality, and Society & Politics, we will honor the pioneers of the written word. But the night will also hold a special honor: the Emerging Author of the Year Award, a tribute to the new voices making waves in the literary world. These awards will not only applaud those who have shaped the literary landscape but will also ignite the passions of future storytellers who are yet to be discovered.

## *Showcase by Leading Indian Publishing Houses*

Discover India's literary treasures at exclusive stalls featuring top publishing houses. From timeless classics to groundbreaking new releases, these curated collections will delight bibliophiles and ignite literary conversations.



# Founding Directors



**Omm Priyadarshi  
Chhotaray**

Traversing across all states and more than 6,000 villages in India, Omm Priyadarshi has gained deep insights from the country's diverse socio-economic fabric, establishing himself as a distinguished voice in development and policy advocacy.

He is the author of *Paika: Jana, Akhyana O Andolana*, and a recipient of the Prime Minister's Young Author Award.

He has helped shape policy at both national and global levels, having served as the Treasurer of the G20 Youth and represented India at prestigious international platforms, including BRICS and the Commonwealth.

A lawyer advocating for the right causes at the **Supreme Court of India**, Shivam Raghuvanshi has risen to prominence through his exceptional academic and professional achievements despite his humble background.

He is the author of two best-selling books, with his latest work, *Ballot, Bullet and Blood*, receiving significant acclaim.

In addition to his legal career, he has made notable contributions to student leadership, serving as the National Co-convenor of Think India, a national organization focused on empowering youth across premier academic institutions.



**Shivam Raghuvanshi**



**Shashank Shekhar Singh**

Shashank Shekhar Singh is at the forefront of transformative thinking with his brainchild, the **Adhyayan Foundation for Policy & Research (AFPR)**, which operates at the trisection of law, governance, and policymaking.

A lawyer by profession, his expertise in data-driven policymaking, ethical governance, and sustainability has made him a sought-after consultant and advisor in India and abroad.

He is deeply committed to and actively engages in initiatives that safeguard linguistic heritage and promote cultural continuity.

# Festival Co-ordinators



Mahendar Singh  
Sekhala



Hema Thakur



Pradhyumna Malpani



# Team



Tejaswi Singh



Mrunmayee Prasad Chitale



Pratyush Debasish



Pooja Mundada Mehta



Rakesh Barik



Siri Sriram

# Team



Tejaswi Singh



Mrunmayee Prasad Chitale



Pratyush Debasish



Pooja Mundada Mehta



Rakesh Barik



Siri Sriram

# Team



Sumanya Kashyap



Aswathy Hariharan



Pawan Singh Butati



Isha Nagpal



Ashutosh Singh



Ridhi Verma



Adhyayan Foundation for Policy and Research (AFPR) is an independent, not-for profit research and educational organisation (registered as an NPC u/s 8 of the Companies Act, 2013) dedicated to producing quality research on all issues significant to our nation to further help in the formulation, assessment, and implementation of public policies that could transform lives. Our optimistic and enthusiastic team, unique work ethics, and innovative approach help us bridge the gap in policy making for our country's wholesome growth and development. AFPR through its veteran board members, Fellows and Interns aims to address the dimensions of the society which are necessary for an all-inclusive development of the society. The organisation, by doing comprehensive studies and research on conflagrant issues ranging from economy to administrative efficiency and from ideological perspectives to international affairs, intends to find their actionable solutions and the course of corollaries emerging from them with a view to make the society all inclusive, peaceful and sustainable. The organisation intends to roll out concrete plans of execution on issues like Sustainable development, Good Governance, Political Studies, Economic Studies, Legal Studies, International Relations, and National Security, Strategic Studies & other similar issues.

