

Redstockings Literary Society

Redstockings is the English Literary Society of Bharati College, University of Delhi. It was established in the year 1999 and is run by the English Department of the College. Over the years, Redstockings has organised play reading competitions, literary quizzes, film quizzes, a quiz centred on Shakespeare and poetry competitions. One year, students also recreated literary characters which was great fun. One of our brilliant students from Sri Lanka, Shefani Reffai, started a newsletter in 2013, which became very popular and which has been continued by students that have followed in her wake. Another reticent student Heer deserves special mention as the most diligent and keen reader in the College library. And so, Redstockings marches on.

Council 2022-23

TIC: Dr Naila Anjum

Convener: Dr Anavisha Banerjee

President: Divyanshi Dash

Vice President: Tanishka Singhal

Treasurer: Archana Aggarwal



● About Founder- The Redstockings Literary Society was founded in 1999 by the combined efforts of the then English faculty, specifically Dr Promodini Varma, Dr Mukti Sanyal and Dr Sonali Jain. It was meant primarily to provide an outlet for the creativity of students of the Department of English and was to be run by them with minimal guidance from the faculty. Since then, it is the students who have run it and the faculty has mainly provided background support whenever required.

● Aim- The idea behind RLS is to bring together people with a passion for literature and utilize their skills in the most efficient ways possible.

● Vision- The name of the society was suggested by one of our students, Vinay Mansukhani, as a variation on the Blue Stockings, the eighteenth century group of women with intellectual and literary interests.

● Mission- Vinay and her classmates felt that though they had intellectual and literary interests they also wanted to create a society that would promote fun and wanted to register their own individuality as Indian women and therefore Redstockings instead of Blue Stockings.

● The Redstockings Chronicle- The Redstockings also runs a monthly on-line magazine called “The Redstockings Chronicle”. It offers a platform for all aspiring student writers to freely give expression to their creativity. The editorial team brings out a new theme each month and opens the floor for contribution of articles from students across departments and disciplines. This way it serves as an inclusive platform for all students and provides a space for showcasing their creativity.

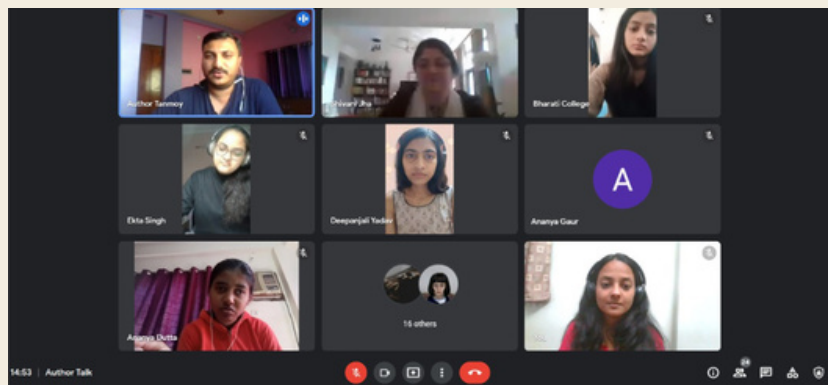
● Outreach and extension activities by RLS-

1. Redstockings Heroes First Initiative- Redstockings Student volunteers working with NGO Nirmal Chhaya, play session with pre-schoolers. Decorative painting session of earthen lamps. Stall put up of the products made at Nirmal Chhaya.
2. A book donation drive.
3. Redstockings Heroes Second Initiative- Literary Afternoons with Senior Citizens -Old Age Home, Bindapur. The group of students was led by Devanshi Dabas, English (hons) 3rd Year.

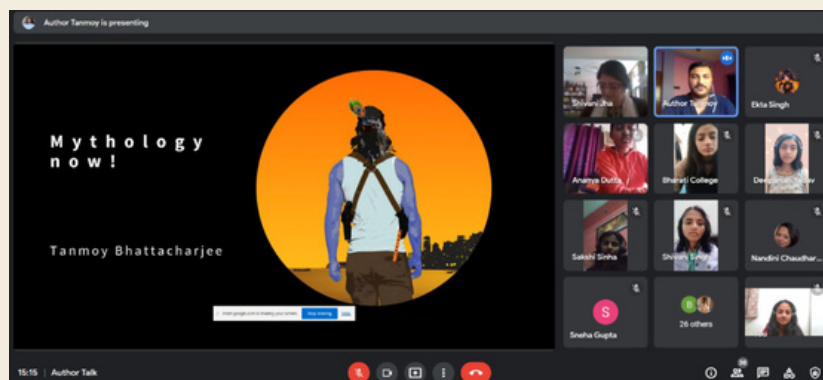
AUTHOR TALK WITH TANMOY BHATTACHARJEE

The Redstockings Literary Society organised an Author Talk with Tanmoy Bhattacharjee, the author of *The Epic Reimagined in Modern Mumbai: Mahabharata 2022* online on 5th of March, 2022 at 3 pm. The registration form had gained a good response within a few hours of going live. Students from all across the University of Delhi registered for the Talk.

We had with us Dr. Tanmoy Bhattacharjee who received his Master's degree from University of Mumbai and PhD degree from Tata Hospital, Navi Mumbai. He was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Otago in New Zealand and currently working as a consultant for a start-up he co-founded there. His work involves development of tools for diagnosis of diseases, specifically cancer, and has published multiple research articles and books in this field. Apart from science, he is passionate about reading mystery and adventure novels. He loves to get caught up in murder cases, find the odd treasures, and escape into imagined worlds, and is a huge fan of Agatha Christie and Terry Pratchett. It is because he cannot find enough such books that he has to write his own mysteries to keep himself amused. Nothing sparks his imagination like a visit to ancient ruins, old run-down buildings, or vast empty landscapes. It is his dream to live in a house of bygone era in the middle of nowhere, spending all his time reading, writing, and exploring.

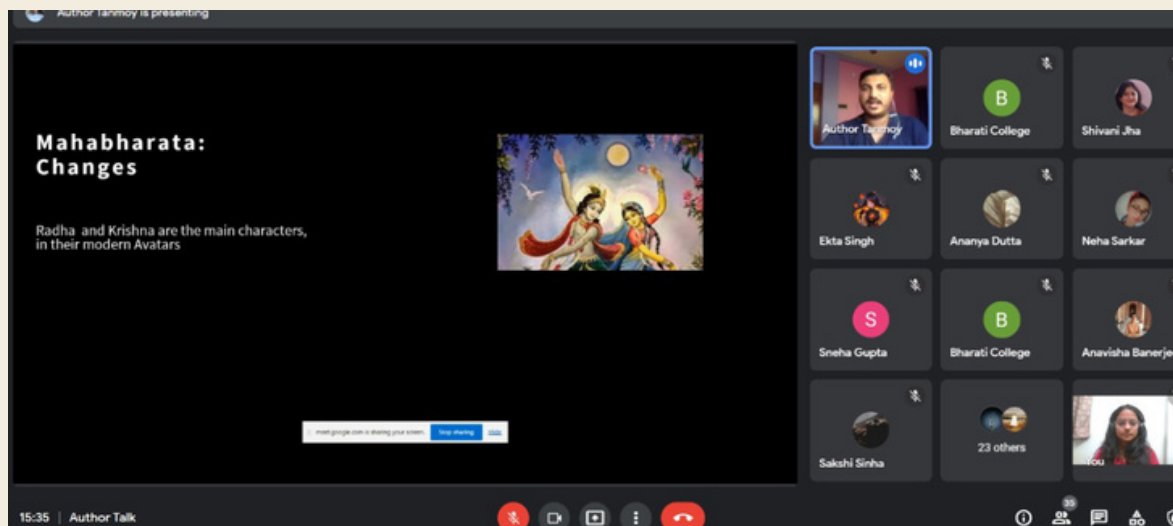


The event started with the President of Redstockings welcoming the attendees. The Faculty Coordinator took over to welcome the Author and introduce him to our audience. The Author began his presentation on a motivational note by talking about himself and his journey.



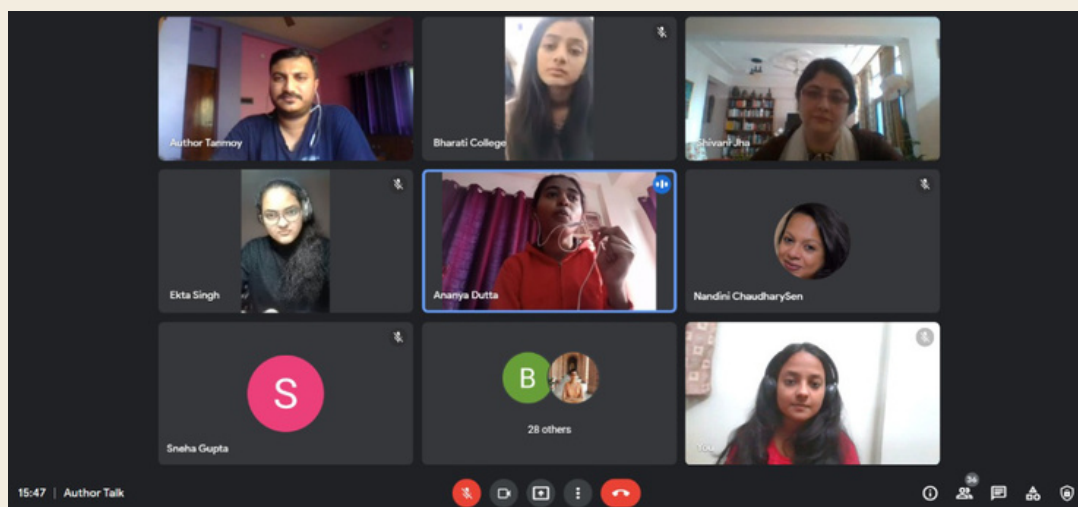
Before enlightening the audience about his book, *The Epic Reimagined in Modern Mumbai: Mahabharata 2022*, the audience was made to watch the Book Trailer. The trailer looked good with a suitable soundtrack and gothic visuals, suiting the thriller and mysterious theme. The trailer was gripping as well as thought provoking. The series of events were showcased graphically, creating suspense frame by frame. It prepared us for what we are going to experience once we pick up the book. The trailer, even though elaborate, doesn't give away a lot about the book. The characters were introduced at the end of the trailer, completing the trailer.

Interestingly, the Author enlightened the audience about the struggles one may have while publishing. He also spoke about his journey as an author and what made him choose such a topic for his book. He emphasised on the moments from the iconic Mahabharata that he wanted to maintain in his retelling set in 2022.



Later, Ananya Dutta from the Editorial Board of Redstockings read out an excerpt from his book for the audience.

“The death of an ordinary person got a visit from a mere beat constable, if at all, hours after discovery of the body. In the case of the wealthy, an assistant superintendent of police had been summoned, seconds after the death had been reported.”



The floor was then open for questions. Many students from the audience were thrilled to ask the author about his struggles as a writer. The responses revealed his sincerity and love for reading as well as writing. The event came to an end with a vote of thanks by the Vice President of Redstockings.

AUTHOR TALK WITH DR. NANDINI SEN

The Redstockings Literary Society organised an author talk with Dr. Nandini Sen, the author of the book “The Second Wife and Other Stories” on 11 April 2022 in the Theatre Room at Bharati College, University Of Delhi. The registration form gained a handsome response.

We began the talk with the opening speech by Divyanshi Dash, the president of Redstockings. Faculty coordinator Dr. Shivani Jha welcomed the guests and introduced them to the audience. Throughout the talk show author, Dr. Nandini Sen and discussant Dr. Vinita Chaturvedi talked about the book, and childhood stories that inspired the book, and shared some warm thoughts with the audience



Dr. Nandini Sen and Dr. Vinita Chaturvedi weren't the only ones talking, the audience was participating too, asking mindful questions about the book and the background stories. The English Department faculty was present there and engaged in the talk.



The book had not only fiction stories but some compiled memories from her childhood too. After the exciting minutes of some questions, the event ended with Tanishka Singhal, Vice-President of Redstockings thanking the guests and audience.

● FAREWELL -2022

The Redstockings Literary Society organized the farewell for batch 2019-22 on 26 April 2022 in Seminar Room at Bharati College, University of Delhi. Redstockings team bid their seniors a heartfelt goodbye with amazing performances and fun games.

Though it was not easy to see them leave, the teachers and junior did not think it is the last time, and so the farewell was titled “Until We Meet Again”.

It began with the opening speech by the President of Redstockings. We had several activities prepared for seniors such as a solo music performance by Ananya Dutta and a choir performance by other members of the society along with some other juniors. It was followed by fun games such as catch the ball, wherein whoever catches the ball will have to do a dare assigned, for eg: ramp walk; whisper challenge where the two participants will have to guess the author or the book title whispered to them. A game for the teachers was also prepared, known as “Who is more likely to?”. Not only music but we had some dance performances prepared too.



Seniors were assigned title badges with souvenir gifts, which teachers awarded. Special speeches were given by Dr. Shivani Jha and Dr. Nandini Sen and from the batch, Gauri Shukla shared her memories and warm words for the teachers and juniors.



The formal segment of the farewell came to an end with a cake cutting ceremony and distribution of the refreshments along with the vote of thanks by the Vice President of Redstockings.



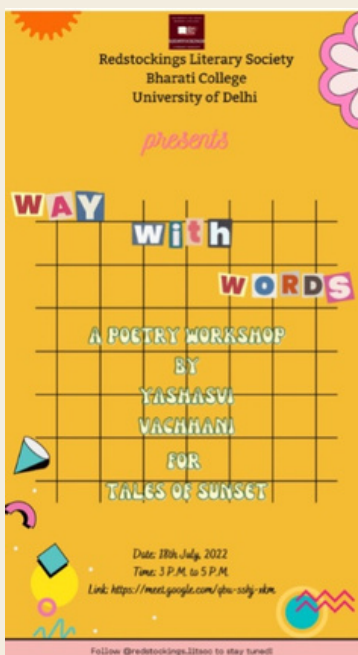
The final act of the farewell, by popular demand, was the dance floor shared by all the seniors.

TALES OF SUNSET



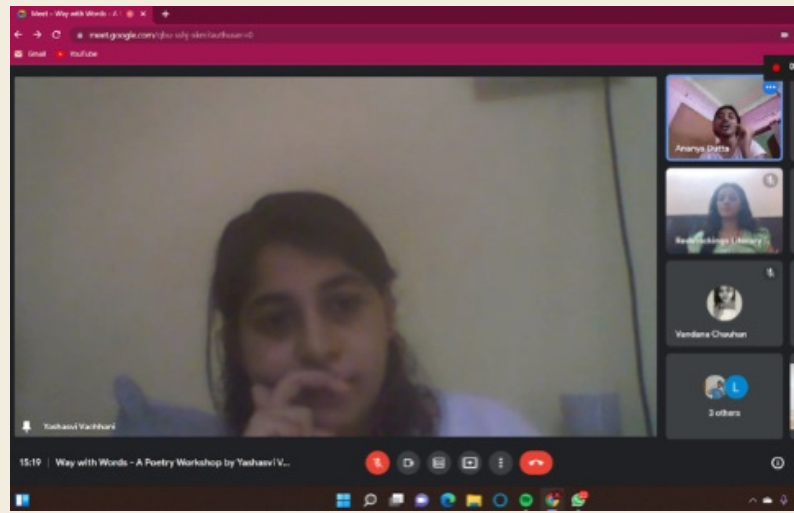
The Redstockings Literary Society organised an Online Writing Summer Camp in the month of July. The idea was born out of the lack of encouraging creative writing spaces in our community and so we decided on building one. It was a week-long workshop that motivated students to engage with their writing spirit and produce written work.

Apart from sharing poetry prompts and story prompts every day on Whatsapp as well as Google Classroom, there were regular activities like writing sprints, storytelling, writing through journaling, a special poetry workshop with an esteemed guest and an open mic to conclude it all.

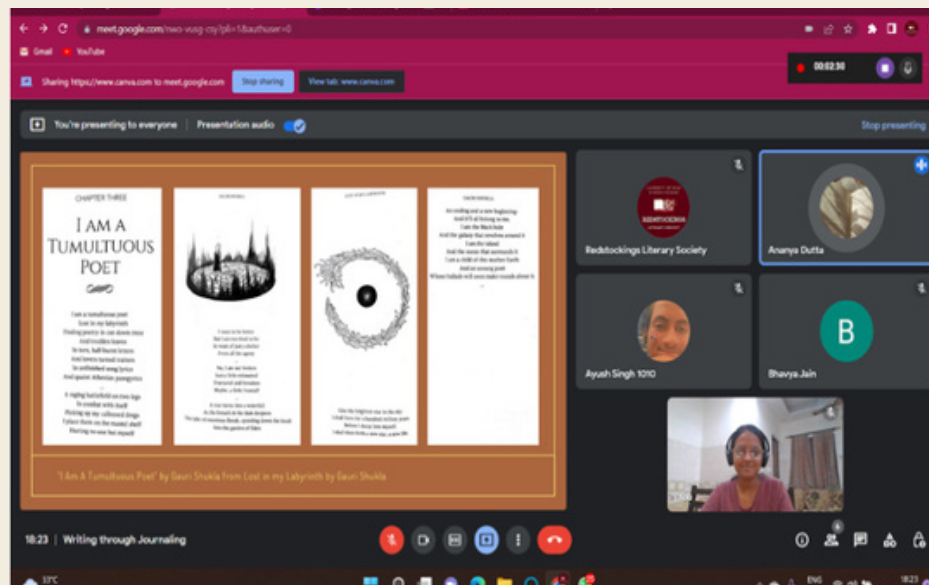


The Camp began with a Meet & Greet wherein the Team introduced the schedule and the Camp to the attendees. They were enthusiastic to kick start a week full of writing and learning. The Writing Sprint was to encourage the attendees to devote an hour every day to write. Everyone joined the Google Meet to write together at the same time. This led to a beautiful community of young writers who shared their work and received constructive criticism for the same.

The Storytelling session was a fun one in which the Camp attendees learned the art of storytelling and came up with their own stories. The Writing through Journaling session encouraged the attendees to journal everyday in order to be in touch with themselves which enhances their writing as well.



The Redstockings Literary Society invited Yashasvi Vachhani, who is an educator, writer, poet. She has been teaching creative writing and reading in schools for the last four years. Her work has been featured in SWWIM magazine and Of Brave Hearts and dry tongues. She is associate editor at The Bombay Literary Magazine. In an enriching session, she shared with the attendees beautiful list poems and motivated them to write as well.



The Camp came to a fulfilling end with an Open Mic on the last day where the students shared their stories and the poems. Later, The Redstockings Chronicle, the e-magazine of Redstockings Literary Society released a Tales of Sunset Special Edition featuring the work by the attendees.

ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT, AALA

Five students from the department, two graduates and three third-year students - Aria Susanth, Gauri Shukla, Divyanshi Dash, Ekta Singh and Ananya Dutta - were fortunate enough to attend the AALA CONFERENCE 2022, held in Chennai, India for the very first time and present their poster and research on the topic: "Exploring Assessment Tools for an Alternate Classroom in the New Normal at Bharati College, University of Delhi."

In an initiative started by the Ex-Principal of Bharati College, Dr. Mukti Sanyal, the five students volunteered as mentors to guide and help the other students (mentees). This led them to work on language assessment directly and prepare their poster.

The AALA (Asian Association for Language Assessment) Conference was a 3-day program. The conference started on 26th October 2022 with workshops. There were 4 workshops arranged for the attendees to choose from. The workshops were as follows. Ethical dilemmas in modern language assessment by Antony Kunnan, Unravelling teacher beliefs in assessment dilemmas by Jayakaran Mukundan, and Using a Learning-Oriented Assessment approach to the development of language assessments based on scenarios by James Purpura. The attendees from Bharati College attended the workshops led by Purpura and Mukundan.



The second day, 27th October 2022, consisted of the plenary speech, panel discussion and paper presentations. On the third and the last day, 28th October 2022, continued with the paper presentations and then proceeded for the poster presentations. The conference, with special mentions of the sponsors from London, namely duolingo English Test (The diamond sponsor), British Council, TOEFL (Gold sponsors), and TRINITY college London, Language Testing in Asia (Silver sponsors), witnessed the closure of the ceremony in the evening of the last day.

The presenters from Bharati College received great feedback from the other professors who were present at the conference. Amidst researchers from all across Asia, the experience was extremely unique and special. They got the opportunity to listen to great academicians like Dr. Anthony Kunnan, Dr. James E. Purpura, Dr. Jayakaran Mukundan and Rukmini Bannerji, the founder of Pratham. The team expressed appreciation for the other presentations, cherishing the moments which were to be sought for a lifetime.

LECTURE WITH PROFESSOR GUHA MAJUMDAR

The Redstockings Literary Society organised a Lecture with Professor Rupendra Guha Majumdar, Formerly Associate Professor in Department of English at the University of Delhi on the 28th of October 2022, from 10 am to 12 noon. The registration form had gained a good response within a few hours of going live. The lecture was for the Department of English at Bharati College, University of Delhi.

We began the talk with the opening speech by the Vice President of the Redstockings Literary Society. Throughout the lecture, Prof. Majumdar discussed some Persephone: some Shakespearean heroines, and fading memories of the Pomegranate, and shared some warm thoughts with the audience.



“... Persephone was eventually persuaded by her abductor-husband Hades/Pluto using the temptation of the Pomegranate fruit to live with him for half the year and the other half in the world above....”



After having discussed Myths, Persephone, Orphism, and Heroines in Many known playwrights such as Shakespeare, Ovid, etc, Prof. Majumdar discussed some of his life stories to inspire the audience and created a warm atmosphere for everyone to share theirs as well.

The lecture ended with a vote of thanks by the faculty coordinator, Dr. Anavisha Banerjee

TRACE IN COLLABORATION WITH IRIS QUEER COLLECTIVE

The transphobia and rigid views of the society are apparent, and their effect lasts long. Transgender Awareness Week, is thus, observed annually from November 13-19 which leads up to the Transgender Day of Remembrance on November 20—a day to memorialize victims of transphobic violence.

On the 15th of November, Redstockings Literary Society, in collaboration with Iris Queer Collective organized Trace (as a part of Transparent) to celebrate the Transgender Awareness Week. It was held in the Central Lawn.



In collaboration with Iris Queer Collective, Redstockings organized Trace to write letters full of encouragement and love and all sorts of positivity for people who are trans. The aim was to convey that the students of Bharati College are with them. People were eager to learn about the transgender community and they attentively listened and took part in the discussion.

With efficient speaking, the pains and strengths of the transgender community were communicated.

The response was filled with acceptance, thankfulness, positivity and full of love.



Partition Across the Border: Introducing Intizar Husain by Prof. Tasneem Shahnaaz

The Redstockings Literary Society organized a Seminar with Prof. Tasneem Shahnaaz, from the Department of English of Sri Aurobindo College, University of Delhi on 27th of January, 2023 at 11 am in the Seminar Room of Bharati College. Students from all across departments had joined. The interest was so much that we had to make it hybrid so that professors and students from other colleges could also listen to the lecture.

The event started with the President of Redstockings welcoming the attendees. The Faculty Coordinator took over to welcome the Professor and introduce her to our audience. She began with briefly outlining the points that she would cover in the lecture. The topic of her lecture was Partition Across the Border: Introducing Intizar Husain. Thus, before introducing Intizar Husain to the audience, Professor Tasneem gave a brief introduction to the Partition of India. She defined Partition as a division of state into two or more entities where one of the successor states has something in common with the colonial face.

Partition literature and the importance of studying partition literature was delved upon. Writings that chronicle and explore the event of partition fall under Partition Literature. It is an important area of study because it moves beyond the political implications of Partition and provides us with its symbolic and metaphorical relevance. It shows us how drastic events such as these must be remembered and re-envisaged repeatedly. Partition Literature also captures the plurality of Partition experiences as opposed to the official records and documents. It offers accounts of human loss, trauma, suffering, memories, nostalgia, displacements and dislocations thereby making it imperative for us to study it. It gives a voice to the anguish of the survivors. Partition Literature intervenes and makes itself felt in the post colonial and nationalistic discourses. Professor went on recounting several novels that fall under Partition Literature. Professor Tasneem emphasized upon the fact that these texts force us to look at the past and thus understand the present for a better future.

Moving on to Intizar Husain, an author from across the border, she introduced him with a quote about the future of the short stories by him. She said, while talking about him, that he had in him all that he knew from India and all that he knew from Pakistan. Husain had a double perspective that helped him yoke the past and the present and blur the lines between the personal and the impersonal, the similar and the dissimilar. *Basti*, a novel by Intizar Husain, disrupts linear time. While talking about its narrative, she encouraged the students to ponder over the title of the novel and the true meaning of *basti*. The question put forth was, "Which *basti* is one's home? Which *basti* does one truly belong to?" Through Zakir, the protagonist of the novel *Basti*, Husain explored the exiled intellectual's state of mind and being. Professor Tasneem pointed out the meaning of the name Zakir- one who remembers. In *Basti*, Husain used subjective personal memory, collective memory and non linear cultural mythology. The concept of *hijrat* was elaborated upon by Professor Tasneem before moving ahead. She explained how Muslims felt a sense of euphoria at the prospect of forming a new Nation and how they regarded their migration as another form of *hijrat*. She related it to *Basti* and finished her lecture by talking about more of Husain's books.



The floor was then open for questions. Many students as well as professors from the audience were thrilled to ask the Professor about several things. The responses generated another sincere discussion about Partition and Intizar Husain. The event came to an end with a vote of thanks by the President of Redstockings.



A Talk on Environment and Literature by Professor Raj Kumar



The Department of English, Bharati College, University of Delhi organized a seminar on 13th February in the Seminar Hall. The seminar focused on 'Environment and Literature' to understand a new add-on subject for VAC, Ecology and Literature, in a better way. The programme started at 11:30 am with the opening remarks and the introduction of the programme by the convenor of the event, Dr. Shivani Jha and Dr. Naila Anjum, The dignitary on the dais was Prof. Raj Kumar of the Central Department of English, Delhi University.

Prof. Raj Kumar began by speaking on the dangers of the world we are currently living in, and referred to some natural disasters, like the earthquake in Turkey and Syria, which took an estimate of 40,000 lives and went on to connect these to the foundational ideas related with Ecology and literature, namely, Ecocriticism and Ecofeminism. The talk ended with a vote of Thanks by the convenor and was attended by faculty and students of the department. Prof. Saloni Gupta, Principal, Bharati College issued a letter of Appreciation for Prof. Raj Kumar for the enriching lecture.

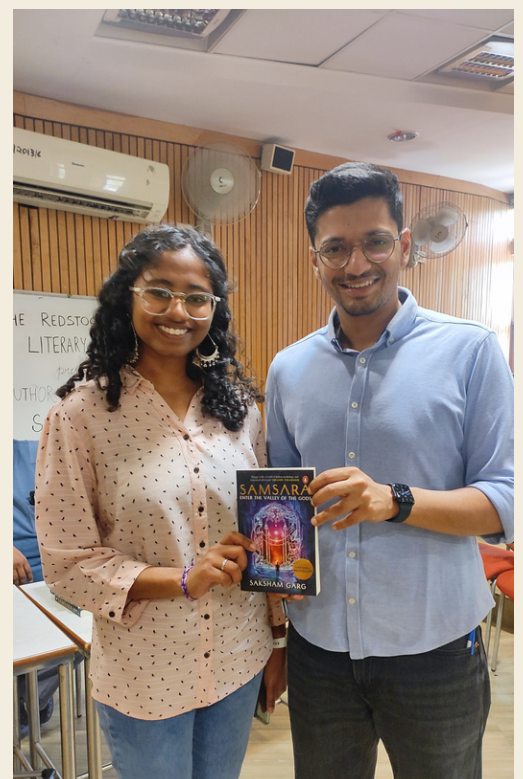


AUTHOR TALK WITH SAKSHAM GARG



The Author Talk, organised by Redstockings Literary Society on 29th March 2023, began with a brief introduction by the author Saksham to his book *Samsara: Enter the Valley of the Gods*. Afterwards, the process of writing was discussed upon and the author, who has also been an editor at Penguin Random House, put forward a comprehensive introduction to the field of publishing. Following headers were covered thoroughly:

- Author's journey and *Samsara*
- Polishing one's manuscripts
- Overview of the publishing industry
- Different stages of editing
- Dos and Don'ts of writing a killer book proposal.



POETRY WORKSHOP WITH BIJIT SINHA



Shortly after the Author Talk, the founder of The Tale of You, Bijit Sinha, began with the very tantalizing Workshop. Although titled as Poetry Session and Workshop, it was much more than that. He commenced the session with intriguing questions that kept the audience engaged with him throughout the hour. The session was not only interactive but it also helped the young and budding writers go into new depths and put forward the new limits that they can explore.

Following heads were officially covered:

- About Bijit Sinha
- Booklist 2022
- 3 tenets of your pitch
- The editors checklist
- Plan your marketing campaign
- Contact

The insider information and highlights about the marketing in the industry was the golden highlight of his session along with the common love for reading and poetry which was discovered in very appealing discussions that followed.



SPELL BEE- ABHIVYAKTI,23



On 11th of April, 2023, The Redstockings Literary Society organised a literary Spell Bee under Bharati College's Annual fest- Abhivyakti'23. The competition consisted of three rounds, each more challenging than the last. In the first round, participants from Bharati College as well as other colleges of University of Delhi were given ten words that they had to write down on a sheet of paper provided to them. The participants who spelled the maximum number of words correctly were sent on to the next round. In the second round, the anchor read out three words, out of which the participants had to correctly spell two words in order to qualify for the next round. The participants who qualified for the ultimate round were given the hardest words to spell and finally the top three participants were awarded with exciting cash prizes. The competition was judged by Dr. Anavisha Banerjee and Dr. Naila Anjum, who are the convener and the TIC, of Redstockings Literary Society, respectively. It was a nail-biting competition that was a joy to witness.



CHRONICLE- WOMEN'S DAY ISSUE

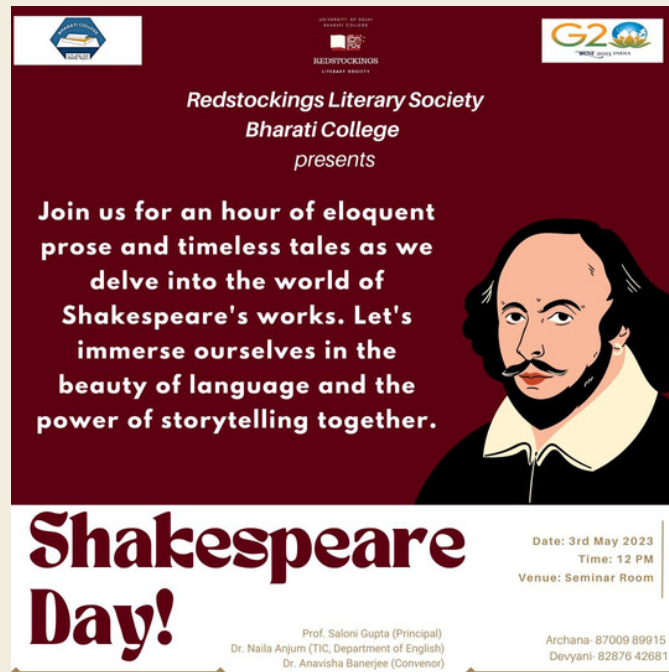


“I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will.”
Said Charlotte Brontë in Jane Eyre and this is a philosophy held on to by powerful women everywhere.

The Redstockings Chronicle published an issue, revolving around the themes of Women's day on 5th May 2023. This was in honour of the United States' National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, that is recognised on 5th of May every year. The issue brought out pieces by extraordinarily talented writers.



SHAKESPEARE'S DAY



On third of May, 2023, Redstockings Literary Society organised a dramatic reading in honour of William Shakespeare. Students came forward with exciting portrayals of Shakespeare's Plays as well as sonnets. The competition was judged by Redstockings' Convener, Dr. Anavisha Banerjee and President, Archana Aggarwal. It was a wonderful sight to witness students show such love and passion towards the pieces written by the literary legend. The competition came to a close with the commencement of winners with exciting prizes and encouraging words by Dr. Banerjee.

