

## Groundbreaking JCB Prize for Literature opens for entries

*India's richest literary prize to celebrate and showcase Indian authors, break down language barriers*

**New Delhi, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018:** The inaugural JCB Prize for Literature is open for entries. Publishers across India are invited to enter novels for the prize, giving authors a chance to win **Rs 25 lakhs**, the country's richest literary award. The annual prize is designed to discover and celebrate **distinguished works of fiction** by Indian writers, and to break down the barriers separating literature in different Indian languages – so showcasing the full cosmopolitan breadth of contemporary Indian literature for readers everywhere.

The prize, funded by India's leading manufacturer of earthmoving and construction equipment, **JCB India Ltd**, and administered by the **JCB Literature Foundation**, is open for entries until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018. Publishers have entry quotas for works written in English, and separately, for works translated into English from any other language. If the winning book is translated, the translator will be awarded **Rs 5 lakhs**. By recognising the full range of India's literary traditions, the JCB Prize for Literature hopes to encourage future translations (both into English and between Indian languages) and therefore open up a truly *Indian* literature to readers.

**Lord Bamford, Chairman of JCB** says, "*As JCB approaches the important milestone of 40 years of manufacturing in India, there is no better time to launch the JCB Prize for Literature. It's my hope that, in some small way, this prize will encourage more and more people to read and also be of benefit to writers and publishers in this extraordinary country.*"

Award-winning novelist and essayist **Rana Dasgupta** is **Literary Director** of the prize and is responsible for holding the prize to the highest literary standards. Each year, the Literary Director will appoint a jury, whose job is to read all entries and select a longlist (in September), a shortlist (in October) and then a winner (in November). The jury will consist of distinguished individuals from a variety of fields, who bring to their deliberations the experience of many different aspects of contemporary life.

This year's jury consists of: award-winning film director **Deepa Mehta** (Chair), founder of the Murty Classical Library of India, **Rohan Murty**, Yale University astrophysicist and writer **Priyamvada Natarajan**, prominent novelist, **Vivek Shanbhag**, and author and translator, **Arshia Sattar**.

Books selected by the jury will be promoted in a **visionary publicity campaign** aimed not only at gaining many more readers for these important works, but also at raising the prestige and visibility of great literature itself. All shortlisted authors win **Rs 1 lakh** each.

**Literary Director Rana Dasgupta** says, "*In a multilingual country like India, where there are many distinct literary traditions, no one can say they know 'Indian literature' if they read only books written in their own language. With this prize we hope to stimulate far more translation between Indian languages, and so to give people a far deeper sense of what other people are talking and thinking about in the country.*"

The Literary Director is supported in his decisions by the Advisory Council of the JCB Literature Foundation. The Advisory Council is chaired by former Chief Mentor of the Confederation of Indian

Industry (CII) **Tarun Das**, who is accompanied by author **Amitav Ghosh**, Delhi University Professor of English Literature **Dr. Harish Trivedi**, and art historian and environmentalist **Pheroza Godrej**.

*“With the exception of writers who have been made famous by prizes in the US and UK, literary achievement receives rather little attention in India,” says **Tarun Das**. “The JCB Prize for Literature will trigger a much larger conversation around books, authors and reading in India, and present readers each year with the greatest works published in the country.”*

For information about the Prize and how to enter, please visit: [www.thejcbprize.org](http://www.thejcbprize.org)

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#### **About the JCB Literature Foundation**

The purpose of the JCB Literature Foundation is to promote the art of literature in India. The Foundation was set up by JCB, which has had a substantial and long-standing involvement in India’s social and economic life, in order to create an enduring *cultural* legacy in the country. In promoting the art of literature, the JCB Literature Foundation focuses on the following goals: enhancing the prestige and the commercial success of contemporary Indian literature, fostering translation between Indian languages, and introducing readers to Indian writing in languages other than their own. The principal activity of the Foundation is to administer the JCB Prize for Literature.

#### **About JCB**

JCB is a leading global manufacturer of earthmoving and construction equipment, the JCB Group has been active in India since 1979. Through its subsidiary, JCB India Ltd, the UK company today employs 5,000 people in India, and operates five state-of-the-art factories: in Ballabgarh (near New Delhi), in Pune, and in Jaipur. Products made in these factories have been exported to more than 93 countries around the world. Over its journey of close to four decades in India, JCB, through its products has contributed significantly towards the development of Infrastructure in the country. JCB is committed to CSR with a focus on communities around its factories in India and today its outreach extends to 54 Government schools and nine vocational training centres through which it reaches out to 16,000 students and trainees.

### Annexure 1

#### The JCB Prize for Literature: 2018 jury members

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|    | <p><b>Deepa Mehta</b></p>          | <p>Deepa Mehta is an Oscar-nominated filmmaker whose work is celebrated on an international scale. Her emotionally resonating, award-winning films have played every major film festival, and been sold and distributed around the globe. Her films include the Elemental Trilogy: <i>Earth, Fire, Water</i>, the final film of which received an Oscar nomination for best foreign language film, <i>Bollywood/Hollywood</i>, <i>Heaven on Earth</i> and the epic adaptation of <i>Midnight's Children</i> - Salman Rushdie's three-time Booker Prize winning novel. Her work challenges traditions and stereotypes and is always daring, fearless and provocative. It's this spirit that saturated her latest work, <i>Anatomy of Violence</i>. Amongst her many honours, she has just received her star on Canada's Walk of Fame and the Honorary Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cinema at the Reykjavík International Film Festival.</p> |
|  | <p><b>Dr. Rohan Murty</b></p>      | <p>Rohan Murty is a technology entrepreneur. He founded the Murty Classical Library of India (MCLI) at Harvard University, whose mission is to present the greatest literary works of India from the past two millennia to the largest readership in the world. He has a PhD in computer science from Harvard and an undergraduate degree from Cornell. His research work on white spaces networking was seminal in opening up a new area of inquiry and has won awards and fellowships from Microsoft Research, Siebel foundation, and the National Science Foundation (NSF). In 2012 he was selected as a Junior Fellow at the Society of Fellows at Harvard.</p>   |
|  | <p><b>Priyamvada Natarajan</b></p> | <p>Priyamvada Natarajan is a theoretical astrophysicist at Yale. She is recognized for her seminal contributions to the study of dark matter and the formation and growth of black holes. She uses gravitational lensing observations, the deflection of light rays by matter in the universe, to map the detailed distribution of dark matter. Another abiding interest has been the study of the growth history of black holes over cosmic time and, in particular, the formation of the first seed black holes. She has proposed and worked on models for the formation of massive black hole seeds, direct collapse black holes and their observational signatures.</p> <p>Recipient of many awards and honors for her work including the Guggenheim, Caroline Herschel and Radcliffe fellowships, she also holds the Sophie and Tycho Brahe</p>  |

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|   |                              | <p>Professorship at the Dark Cosmology Center at the University of Copenhagen, and an honorary professorship for life at the University of Delhi.</p> <p>Aside from research, she is also deeply invested in the public dissemination of science, especially in illuminating how the scientific process. She is a regular contributor to the <i>New York Review of Books</i> and her first book, <i>Mapping the Heavens: Radical Scientific Ideas that Reveal the Cosmos</i> was published in 2016.</p>   |
|   | <p><b>Vivek Shanbhag</b></p> | <p>VIVEK SHANBHAG writes in Kannada. He has published five short story collections, three novels and two plays. He has edited two anthologies, one of which is in English. Several of his short stories have been adapted into plays and one has been made into a short film. Shanbhag was editor of the literary journal <i>Desha Kaala</i> from 2005 to 2012 and founding editor of a leading Kannada newspaper <i>Prajavani</i>'s literary supplement. His short stories have been translated into English and other Indian languages. His critically-acclaimed novel <i>Ghachar Ghochar</i> was published in India/US/UK in English translation; it is now translated into 16 other languages. He is the co-translator of U R Ananthamurthy's book <i>Hindutva or Hind Swaraj</i> into English.</p> <p>Shanbhag was a Fall 2016 Honorary Fellow at the International Writing Program, University of Iowa. He is an engineer by training and lives in Bangalore.</p> |
|  | <p><b>Arshia Sattar</b></p>  | <p>Arshia Sattar has a Ph.D. from the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. She has been a Fulbright Scholar (2010) and a Rockefeller Centre Fellow (2009). Arshia has translated from Sanskrit <i>Tales from the Kathasaritsagara</i> and <i>The Ramayana of Valmiki</i>, both of which are published as Penguin Classics. Her most recent publications include <i>Uttara: The Book of Answers</i> (Penguin India, 2016) and <i>The Ramayana for Children</i> (Juggernaut, 2016). She continues to work with the Valmiki <i>Ramayana</i> and teaches courses on classical Indian literatures in India and abroad. She also writes on books and Hindu myths for various magazines and journals and over the last decade, has been a jury member for several literary awards.</p>  |