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Author: Team Viva

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Beat the jury

The JCB Prize for Literature returns with inclusivity for Indian fiction in languages other than English high on its agenda. By *Team Viva*

They say ‘literature is the voice of human heart.’ As the JCB Prize for Literature jury comes back this year, Rana Dasgupta, literary director, said, “The Jury is conceived to reflect a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. This is how we ensure the verdicts are fresh and interesting to a large number of readers. The members of the 2019 jury are passionate readers, and eminent within their respective fields. They will have fascinating debates about the books we send in their direction.”

Pradip Krishen, Jury chairman, said, “I’m honoured and immensely pleased at this opportunity to peer deeply into a year’s worth of Indian fiction. It is especially gratifying that the prize goes out of its way to include Indian fiction in languages other than English, bringing it to the attention of a wider audience. It’s going to be intense and together with a set of wonderful colleagues on the jury. I’m looking forward to play my part in this year’s selection.”

The jury comprises Anjum Hasan (author and critic), Pradip Krishen (filmmaker and environmentalist), K R Meera (author), Parvati Sharma (author), and Arvind Subramanian (economist and former chief economic adviser to the Government of India).

The entries for the prize will close on April 30. The jury will announce the list of ten titles on September 4, followed by the short list of five titles on October 4. The winner of the Rs 25 lakh prize will be announced at the awards dinner on November 2. If the winning work is a translation, the translator will be awarded an additional Rs 10 lakh. Each of the five shortlisted authors will receive Rs 1 lakh; if a shortlisted work is a translation, the translator will receive Rs 50,000.

The 2018 prize was awarded to *Jasmine Days* by Benyamin, translated from the Malayalam by Shahnaz Habib.