

## PRESS RELEASE

### SUBJECT: ANNOUNCING THE 6th EDITION OF HIMALAYAN ECHOES – KUMAON FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE & ARTS

**ABOUT:** Over the 5 five years, the Himalayan Echoes Festival, in the foothills of the Himalaya's (Nainital) has gained traction with like-minded readers, writers and people with a mountain sensibility who celebrate books, music and poetry in the wonderful setting of the lush green mountains dotted with cedar and oak trees. Last year we organized the first digital version of the festival due to covid restrictions. This year will be the 6th edition of Himalayan Echoes closely mentored by Namita Gokhale and directed by JanhaviPrasada.

**THEME:**2021 we will focus on a collaborative theme around the idea of:

C. A. L. M. - Creativity. Art. Literature. Mountains.

We hope to nurture C.A.L.M as an informal collective of mountain festivals.

**GOAL:**Our goal is to resonate voices from the Himalayan region. The intense two-day festival will forefront the beauty and joys of mountain life as well as the challenges before us and delve deep into the cultural diversity and unity of the Himalayan terrain. The shared outreach of the participating festivals will create a positive energy in such times.

**SUPPORT:**Himalayan Echoes C.A.L.M. is supported by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

**ONLINE LIVE TELECAST:** The festival will be held online this year on social media platforms, bringing a unique confluence of themes and ideas into your screens, smartphones, tablets, and laptops. It will be spread across 2 days with 4 sessions each day.

**TIMINGS:** The 2 days festival will be broadcast online (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube) on the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November 2021 from 10:30 AM – 2:00 PM.

#### **SPEAKERS & TOPICS:**

Celebrate the beauty and diversity of the Himalayan ranges through a thoughtfully curated thread of sessions which includes inputs from Nepal Literature Festival. Drukylul's Literature Festival, Bhutan Echoes, Mussourie Mountain Festival, Shillong Cherry Blossom Festival among others.

We have for you the internationally acclaimed musician **Ani ChoyingDrolma**- a Buddhist nun from Nepal known for her soul stirring Buddhist renditions, a session curated by **AjitBaral** founder of Nepal Literature Festival, moderated by **BhushitaVasistha**. **Mamang Dai** an understated repository of knowledge but a transformative Himalayan thinker from Arunachal Pradesh, also the first woman IAS from the region. **Arjun Vajpayee** the mountaineering youth icon, who constantly seeks to be one with the young mountains. **Stephen Alter & Akshaye Shah's** compilation of Uttarakhand voices from writer **Namita Gokhale** works, Historian **Shekar Pathak** on Chipko Movement, Anthropologist **Lokesh Ohri** on the hidden history of Mussoorie, **Dr D R Purohit**, Folklorist from Garhwal on age-old rituals of Mahabharat and **Pushpesh Pant**, Food Critic. **Anjal Prakash**, on the impact of climate change on the Himalayas with **Mandakini Kaul**, South Asia Regional Coordinator at World Bank. Renowned journalist **Kaveree Bamzai** in a revelation by Prof. **Neerja Mattoo** on her work on women poets of Kashmir. **Asiya Zahoor's** powerful readings from her works of poetry. The **Queen Mother of Bhutan** **AshiDorjiWangmoWangchuck** with powerful Bhutanese literary voices of **Lopen Karma Phuntso**, **KunzangChoden**, **Kezand Dechen Choden's** heart-warming poetry – curated by the Drukylul's Literature Festival: Bhutan Echoes.

Mountain Festival Partners representing Himalayan Echoes: C.A.L.M. from their regions:

SPEAKERS: HIMALAYAN ECHOES : KUMAON FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE & ARTS :

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UTTARAKHAND

**Arjun Vajpayee**, is the youngest Indian (16 years) to summit Mt Everest in 2010 – Uttarakhand. On 20 May 2011, he became the youngest person ever to summit Lhotse, aged 17 years, 11 months and 16 days. Arjun also became the youngest to summit Manaslu on 4 October 2011. After 3 failed attempts on Makalu, he became the youngest Indian to summit it in his 4th attempt on 22 May 2016.

**Mandakini Kaul**, Regional Coordinator for South Asia, World Bank works on issues of regional cooperation, economic connectivity, and engendered approaches in traditionally gender-blind sectors among countries in Asia. She leads high-level policy-influencing dialogue and knowledge platforms with government and non-government, and manages regional relationships with key counterparts in government, civil society, development agencies, private sector institutions and chambers of commerce, and think tanks.

**Dr Anjal Prakash**, Research Director and Adjunct Associate Professor, Bharti Institute of Public Policy, Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad was the coordinating lead author for the IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC). Recently he was nominated as a member of the Gender Task Group of IPCC to develop a framework of goals and actions to improve gender balance and address gender-related issues within the IPCC. Dr Prakash's work focuses on water and climate change, urban resilience, gender and social inclusion issues covering South Asia.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

**Mamang Dai** is a poet and novelist from Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh. A former journalist, Dai also worked with WWF in the Eastern Himalaya Biodiversity Hotspots programme. Her first publication Arunachal Pradesh -The Hidden Land received the State Verrier Elwin Prize. In 2011, Dai was awarded the Padma Shri (Literature & Education), and the Sahitya Akademi Award, 2017, for her book The Black Hill, in English. Dai lives in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

**Mukul Pathak**, is a journalist with Channel DY365, Itanagar. He began writing for newspapers at an early age and later went on to join the Assamese Daily newspaper as a correspondent in 1997. He has worked for All India Radio in Nagaon, Guwahati and Itanagar and for Itanagar Radio(Casual) as News Editor . He is a literary activist and discharged his duty as AGS of Arunachal Pradesh Literary Society. He dabbles with writing poetry and short stories.

**Zirois** held in the Ziro valley in the Northeast Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. It showcases the independent music scene in India. The festival was founded in 2012 by Bobby Hano and Menwhopause guitarist Anup Kutty, and has featured artists like Lee Ranaldo, Steve Shelley, Damo Suzuki, Shye Ben Tzur, MONO, Divine, LouwMajaw, Shaa'ir n Func, Indus Creed, Peter Cat Recording Co, Menwhopause, Guru RewbenMashangva, and Barmer Boys among others. A four-day affair, it is hosted by members of the Apatani people at Ziro. The festival is noted for its eco-conscious value chain. It employs locally sourced material for the infrastructure, local artisans who create everything out of bamboo inspired by the animist Donyi Polo faith prevalent in the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.