

The Literature Today

Volume 3 Issue - 4

cover story



A Business woman, Award
Winning Author, Motivational
Speaker and a Beloved
Daughter. ”

Divya Gupta Kotawala



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FROM THE *Editor-in-chief*

With the inception of The Literature Today, we embarked on a journey filled with anticipation, embracing each edition as an opportunity for growth, learning, and evolution. Our Quarterly E-Magazine has transformed into a dynamic platform that not only celebrates literature but also effectively integrates with the ever-evolving landscape of technology.

In Volume 3, Issue 4, we have widened our scope, delving into diverse topics to engage a broader audience. In addition to book reviews and author interviews, we present articles encompassing technology, lifestyle, fashion, and other influential aspects of daily life. Moreover, our content addresses timely and pertinent subjects within the current topics section, with exciting surprises in store for our readers.

As we move forward, our commitment remains unwavering in striving for excellence and growth with each edition. Your feedback and suggestions are highly valued; please do not hesitate to share them at theliteraturetoday@gmail.com. We sincerely thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Happy Reading!



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Best Regards,

M. M. Solanki



INTRODUCING THE DISTINGUISHED BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE BOOK “MY DAD’S DAUGHTER,” DIVYA GUPTA KOTAWALA

Divya Gupta Kotawala is a multifaceted individual whose life journey has been as diverse as it has been inspiring. A bestselling author, she has etched her name in the literary world with her heartfelt work. However, Divya’s story is one of resilience and achievement that spans beyond her writing. Born and brought up in Delhi, Divya’s life is a testament to the power of confidence instilled by her background. Her strong belief in the value of education has been a guiding force in shaping her personality and fortitude.

Divya dons many roles with grace and dedication. She is a loving wife and a devoted mother to her 15-year-old daughter, Manya. Additionally, she is the co-owner of “House of Kotawala,” a renowned Delhi-based jewelry brand specializing in high-quality diamonds and precious stones at wholesale prices. The legacy of this business spans an impressive six generations. Yet, among her many roles, Divya holds the cherished title of being her father’s daughter – Shri Suresh Gupta. Tragically, Divya lost her father to the challenges posed by COVID-19 in 2021, an experience that deeply moved her.

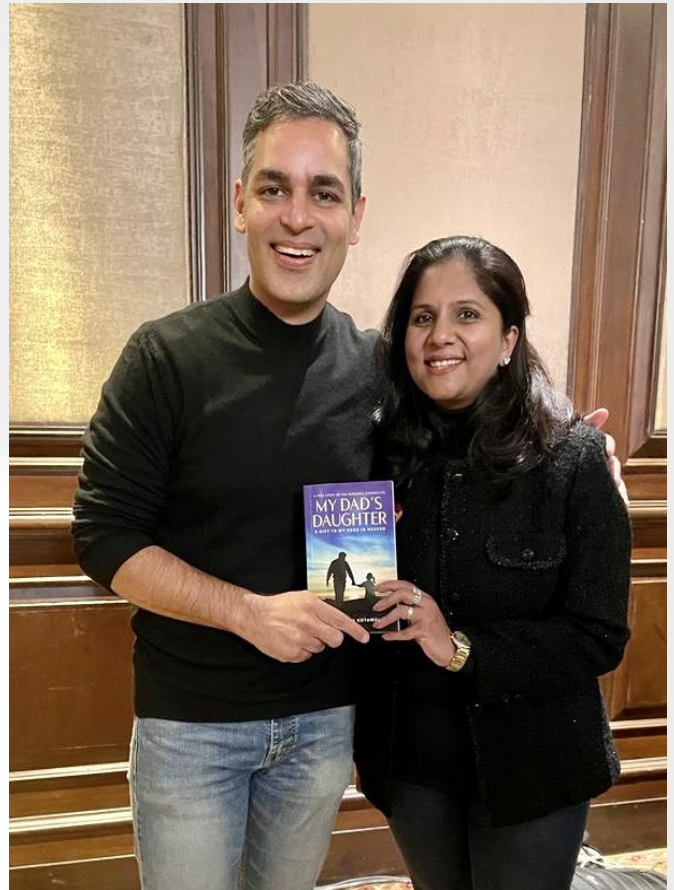
In honor of her father and as a means to find closure amidst the unfathomable loss, Divya embarked on a new journey as an author. She recently launched her book, ‘My Dad’s Daughter,’ on the first anniversary of her father’s passing.

In “My Dad’s Daughter,” Divya Gupta Kotawala crafts a heartwarming narrative that explores the enduring bond between fathers and daughters. Through poignant storytelling, she delves into the complexities of family dynamics, personal growth, and the special connection shared between a father and his child.

This book is a touching portrayal of the universal theme of fatherhood and the unique journey of a daughter navigating life’s challenges. Divya Gupta Kotawala’s work captures the essence of love, resilience, and the enduring power of family, making it a must-read for those who cherish the precious relationships in their lives.

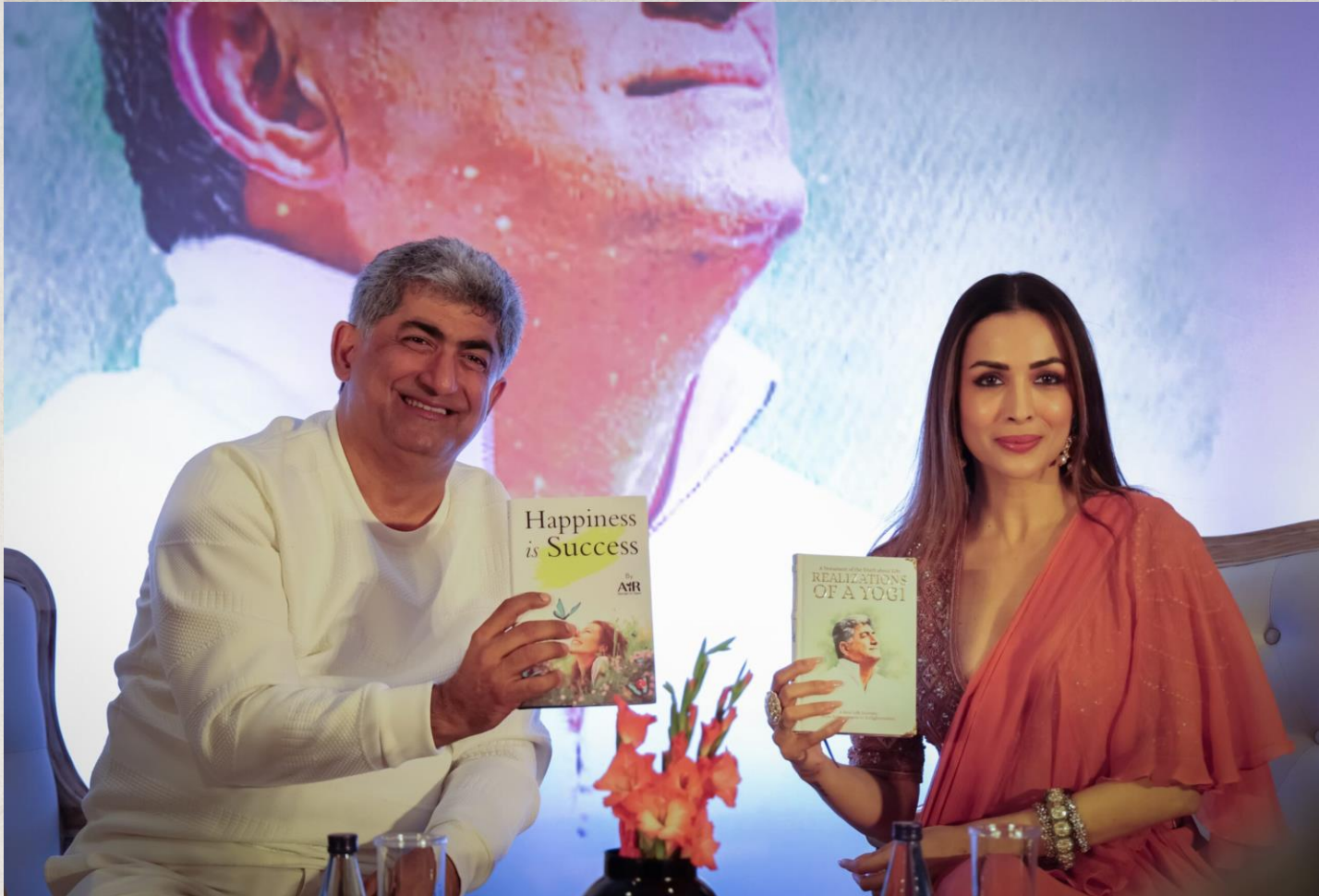
Divya's educational background is equally impressive. She excelled in her schooling at Modern School, Barakhamba Road, earning accolades and recognition for her numerous extracurricular achievements. Her academic journey continued at the prestigious St. Stephen's College, Delhi University, where she pursued an Honours degree in History. Subsequently, fueled by her passion for design and creativity, she joined the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) for a course in fashion designing. Her quest for personal fulfillment led her to engage in various freelance projects and collaborate on a children's development and enhancement project called Yellow Bumble with a friend.

Divya Gupta Kotawala's story is not only about literary success but also about the resilience and multifaceted nature of the human spirit. Her journey from a diverse educational background to a successful jewelry business owner and now a bestselling author is a testament to her unwavering determination and the profound influence of her background and experiences.



Author Interviews

EXPLORING INSIGHTS WITH AIR ATMAN IN RAVI: A CONVERSATION WITH A SPIRITUAL GUIDE



AiR – Atman in Ravi, is a Realized Soul whose mission in life is to ‘Help People Realize the Truth about Life and be Enlightened’. AiR's journey of material achievements lasted for a good 25 years, as he went from one peak of success to another. He had revolutionized retailing in India with the iconic megastores - KidsKemp, Big KidsKemp and Kemp Fort. But after making millions, he realized that life is not about making money, attaining fame and success. He shut down his business when he was 40 and started making a difference doing - Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work. AiR opened three destitute homes spread across Bengaluru, that today, take care of over 800 homeless and needy people - their food, clothing, medicines and hospitalization. They are a part of the AiR family!

Like anybody else, AiR started his life being religious and he founded a Shiva temple in 1995. Subsequently, he realized that God lives in the temple of our heart and he changed the name of the temple to Shivoham Shiva temple. Now he doesn't pray TO Shiva, but prays THROUGH Shiva, to SIP, the Supreme Immortal Power that is nameless and formless, birthless and deathless. The Power of the Divine that is everywhere, in everything.

AiR has only one mission in life - to help people realize the truth, to be enlightened, by overcoming the ignorance that we all grow up with. Based on his Realizations, AiR has written over 65 books, composed and sung about 1400 Bhajans, and written several blogs, quotes, and poems.



AiR conducts Spiritual Retreats and organizes talks to help people evolve on their spiritual journey. He is a TEDx speaker, and is also invited to speak at several organizations, corporates and universities. He conducts webinars every day on Zoom, Facebook, and Insta Live to help people realize the ultimate purpose of life. AiR talks about how success cannot lead to happiness; only happiness can lead to success. To him, happiness has three peaks – Achievement, Fulfilment and the ultimate peak of Enlightenment where one is liberated from all misery and sorrow. In AiR's own words,

Started with Nothing,
Became Something...
Achieved Everything,
Only to Realize, we are Nothing!

TLT: Firstly, Congratulations on your book, 'Realizations of a Yogi'. Well, can you please share your experience about making your work come into the form of a book!

AiR: When there are Realizations, these are rare. Everybody is not blessed to experience a Spiritual Awakening. Each of these Realizations is like a piece of a jigsaw puzzle. When I wrote the book, 'Realizations of a Yogi', I put all the pieces together to reveal the way to Spiritual Awakening, to Enlightenment. Anybody can be Enlightened, provided we live as a Yogi, we follow the steps of a Jigyassu, a seeker, a Mumukshu or the one who has a deep yearning. My experience of writing this book has been one of the most fulfilling ones because I shared my Realizations and the path to Enlightenment.

TLT: What inspired you to write this book? What was the impetus behind this work of yours?

AiR: I write several books on Life, Happiness, Success, Realizations, Enlightenment and Spirituality and this book was probably my 70th book. In this book, I put all my Realizations together, not just that spark of Awakening that happened around 10 years ago but also all those Realizations that have transpired over the last decade. The inspiration is to share the mission of my life, to help people Realize the Truth, to help people overcome ignorance, to help people find a way to Eternal Bliss that comes in Truth Consciousness. It is my mission to help people live with meaning and purpose. This inspires me to write books.

TLT: You've given a very interesting title to your book, which is very catchy too so, what made you go for this title for your book?

AiR: The title of my book is not catchy or interesting. It expresses the true content of this book. This book contains the Realizations of my life, what made me a Yogi, what created that Divine union, how I was able to let go of Bhoga, how I was able to let go of the desire of this Samsara, this world. This book tells the Realization of the Truth of, 'Who am I and Why am I here?' All this together became, what seems to be an interesting book with an interesting title. In reality, it is nothing but the Truth.

TLT: What was your mindset, while working on this book? Is it based on any particular experience of yours?

AiR: There was no mindset while writing this book. This book enumerates my Realizations. My first Realization is that I am not this body that will die. My second Realization is that I am not the mind. A mind that we cannot find. The third Realization is that the ego that says, 'I' is a lie. The Realization that I am a Spark Of Unique Life - SOUL. I am the Soul. These are some of the Realizations. While writing this book, I had to still the mind and kill the mind. That was the only way that this book was possible. This book is not written from the mind. Rather, it is written from the Consciousness. It is written by being inspired by the Soul.

TLT: In the era where humans have become a working machine, what role spiritualism can play?

AiR: No doubt, the current era is that everything is robotic and a human being is no more a human being. He has become a human doing. But we are not human-doings. We are human beings. We have to be in Consciousness. We don't have to be killed by the mind. The mind bombards us, not with AK-47 but with MK-50, the Mind Killer - 50. This weapon MK-50 destroys our peace. This Mind Killer drops our Consciousness. Spirituality is the science of the Spirit. Spirituality plays the role of making us discover that we are not human beings having a Spiritual experience, rather we are Divine Spirits having a human experience. And therefore, this era of materialism needs a book like 'The Realizations of a Yogi' which will take us to the state of Awakening, of Enlightenment.

BRAND CONNECT

TLT: Please explain what is a Yogi in simple words? And differentiate between a Yogi and an Enlightened Yogi?

AiR: The word YOGI comes from the word 'Yoga' or 'Yuj', which means one who is in union with the Divine. So, who is a Yogi? He is one, who is ever-united with the Lord. In simple words, a good SIM card is ever-connected to a satellite. Similarly, a good Yogi is ever-connected to the Supreme, the Divine, that we call SIP or the Supreme Immortal Power. Anybody can try to be a Yogi by living in the different states of Yoga. The world knows of the four forms of Yoga - Dhyana Yoga or meditation, Karma Yoga or action, Bhakti Yoga or devotion and Gyana Yoga or knowledge and wisdom. I discovered the fifth state of Yoga - Prema Yoga or the Yoga of Divine manifestation. Therefore, by living in Yoga, you can be a Yogi. But an Enlightened Yogi is the one who is Awakened, who has become a Buddha and who has Realized the Truth. The one who is not living in the Yoga and Bhoga state alternatively, rather, he is always consciously living in the state of Yoga.

An Enlightened Yogi realizes that he is not the body, mind and ego. He is the Divine Soul. He realizes that he himself is a manifestation of the Divine. He has crossed all steps and has achieved what is called as Mukti and is ready to reach the state of Nirvana, Moksha or Salvation and in the moment of death, he will be liberated and united with the Divine.

TLT: Can a person become Yogi while being in the materialistic world and following his duties as a family man? If yes, then how?

AiR: For a person to be a Yogi, he has to live in the material world. There is no other world that he can live in. And therefore, by being in the material world, if we can be in Yoga or in union with the Divine, then yes, we can become a Yogi. However, there is a difference between doing our Dharma, our duty and being caught in this worldly Samsara and becoming a prisoner of people, pleasures and possessions. If we are Awakened and Spiritually Enlightened, we can be a Yogi who lives in the material world but lives a Spiritual life.

This is possible. For doing this, one has to follow what is written in the book - Realizations of a Yogi - One has to go through the five stages of becoming Awakened - Mumukshu, the one having the Divine desire, Jigyaasu or the one seeking the Truth, Gyaani or the one who has accumulated wisdom, Yogi or the one who is ever-united with the Divine and the Buddha or the Awakened one. These five stages would take us to the next three stages of Sthitpragya or the one with a steady intellect, Jivanmukta or the one liberated from the sufferings when alive and SatChitAnanda Atman or the one who lives in Eternal Bliss in Truth Consciousness. Therefore, someone who is living in the material world can achieve the state of a Yogi and be united with the Divine if they follow the prescription of being a Yogi.



TLT: What are some of the learnings that you gained from writing this book of yours?

AiR: While writing this book, what I learnt is that Realization is a niche subject. Only one out of hundred people in this world go on a quest and of those 1 per cent, only 1 percent are blessed to realize the truth. Thereafter, 1 percent amongst them are liberated and united with the Divine. I realized that although there is a niche market for the subject of Enlightenment, for Spiritual Awakening and Realization, I should not desist or be discouraged in writing such books because this is the purpose of my life and I learnt that such a book has been able to touch, trigger and transform people's lives. Therefore I am inspired while writing this book and the response that people have given me, including many celebrities and who-is-who who have read the book and who have been inspired, influenced and transformed. I have realized that the information in this book could to a Transformation, to Realization, Liberation and Salvation.

TLT: How literature has helped you in your yogic journey?

AiR: Literature is the raw material that we need to be able to put together the Realizations of the Yogi's journey into a book. If there was no literature, if there was no tool to communicate, how could one be able to communicate the Realizations of a Yogi's journey? Therefore, using literature in a non-impressive manner, in a manner of simple communication is the way for a person to use their Yogic journey and literature to communicate effectively to the world. Something that looks so impossible as Enlightenment but which is easily do-able is because the path is followed.

EMPOWERING WOMEN AND ENRICHING LIVES: A CONVERSATION WITH MARY STELLA MICHAEL

Mary Stella Michael is a social worker, educationalist and entrepreneur devoted to advancing women in all walks of life. She has recruited more than 200 women by offering them numerous seminars and skill trainings since she believes that knowledge may liberate the mind. She is also the founder of StreeOne India, a group that works to support women and young girls across the nation. Her organisation is presently involved in an initiative called "कन्या" that aims to raise awareness about fundamental topics including good touch and poor touch, menstrual health, and career-oriented attitude for females.

In addition, Mary Stella Michael founded the Louisa School of Hope under the Louisa Foundation, which offers free education, transportation services, and medical support while promoting routine medical check-ups for the kids. Her TedX talk received a lot of positive feedback. She speaks with assurance and knowledge, and her remarks have the power to transform lives.





TLT: When did you think of becoming a teacher?

Mary Stella Michael: Being raised by teachers, most of my life has circulated in and around education. My parents definitely played a pivotal role in igniting the passion of learning and teaching in me and hence you can say that becoming a teacher was destined for me since birth. Becoming a teacher for me, was by choice and not by chance.

TLT: What is your teaching philosophy?

Mary Stella Michael: According to me children learn through varied experiences around them and hence my primary basis of teaching has always been keeping them connected to their areas of interest by helping them engage in a wide range of activities and experiments. My focus is to imbibe in them moral values that becomes a strong foundation for learning. Along with that I am a firm believer that education comes through practice and one needs to inculcate practice in their daily life.

TLT: You are known as an educationist, what do you consider yourself and why?

Mary Stella Michael: If given an occupation to choose, being an educator would always top the list but other than that I also consider myself as a social worker. I see myself uplifting the marginalized and the needy especially the women and the people belonging to the tribal communities, who deserve to be treated as equals. I want to keep working towards the betterment of the society until the society becomes a place worth living in.

TLT: You got married at the age of 18 and became a mother at the age of 19, how tough was it to pursue your career and handling the kids at the same time.

Mary Stella Michael: It wasn't easy, but I found strength within. Countless obstacles could have deterred me, but I was resolute. I vowed to live life on my terms, educate myself, and support women with limited choices. My inner strength, fueled by the love for my children, empowered me to balance it all.

TLT: Today we observe educational institutions chasing after money rather than concentrating on providing high-quality and practical education. What is the cause and what do you think about this?

Mary Stella Michael: Absolutely! Corporate influence has permeated education, rendering it devoid of worth and substance. It's disheartening that our youth are groomed to join the rat race, prioritizing deadlines, submissions, and scores as the essence of their education. Instead of preparing them for real-life challenges and embracing failure as a part of growth, modern schools are churning out automatons trained to follow orders mechanically. Creative thinking is sorely lacking.

TLT: The new education policy, 2020 has been introduced last year. What kind of impact can it create on the education system?

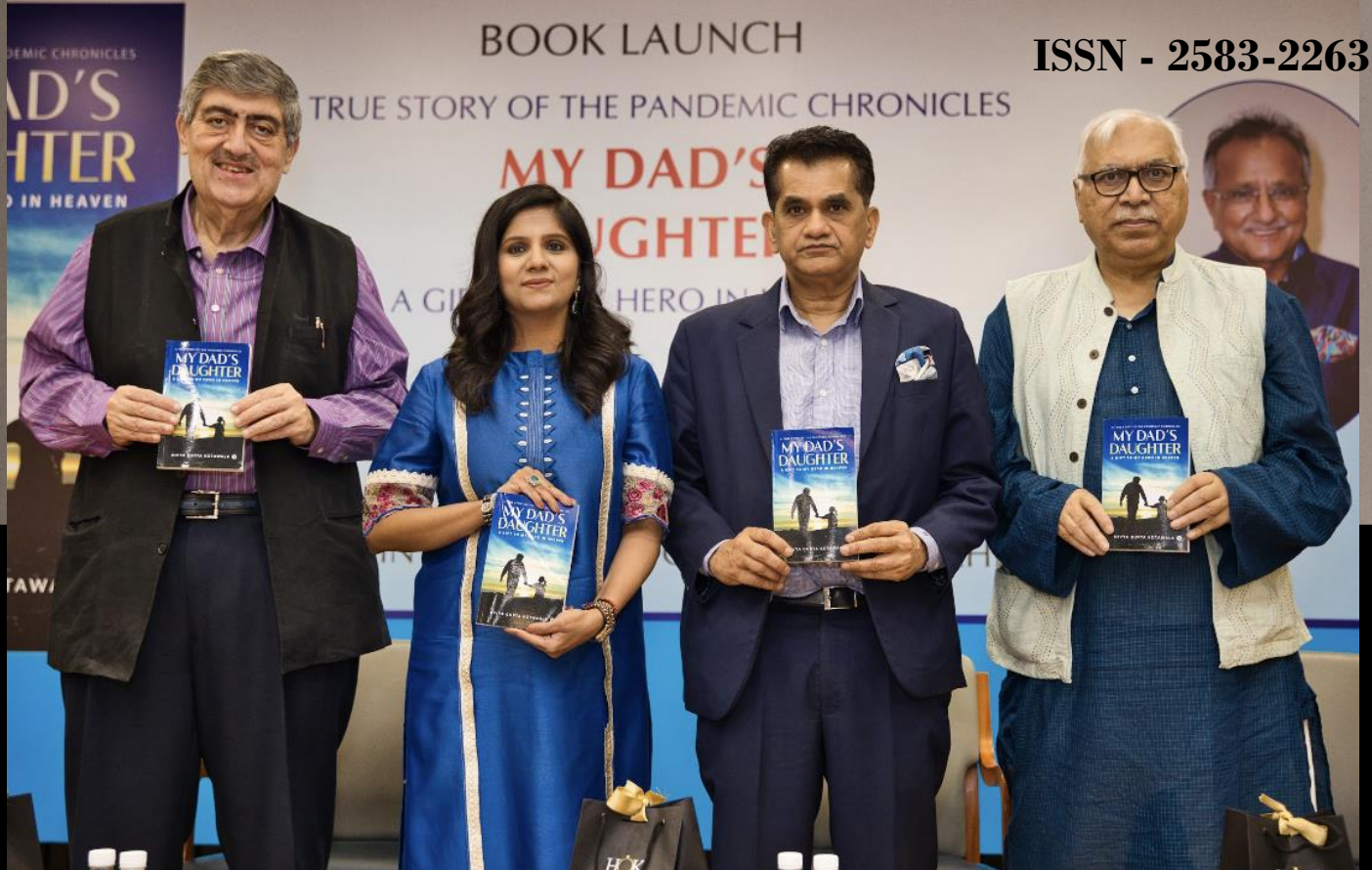
Mary Stella Michael: The NEP, 2020 no doubt would bring us back to our roots inculcating within us a sense of pride towards our country's rich culture. The new forms of assessment, no-stress on students, the change in the pattern of school education and several other factors of the NEP would surely pose beneficial only if it is used judiciously and not mistook for "easy education". According to me the use of NEP would also be slightly burdensome for the teachers, that could directly effect the quality of education they wish to render to the children at school leading them to be unprepared to embrace the changes in world of continuous globalization.

TLT: We have readers from all part of the world and of every age. What message would you like to convey to them?

Mary Stella Michael: I am truly thankful for the opportunity to share my journey and insights through this wonderful interview. Along my path, I've embraced two profound truths: the importance of self-reliance and unwavering perseverance, and the profound value of gratitude for all life's blessings, whether they be joyous or challenging. I've come to realize that our greatest competition is with ourselves, a daily striving to surpass who we were yesterday. And in this journey, never forget that gratitude is the most precious gift we can possess.

TLT: You run a school for the differently abled children. While there are numerous special schools around us, neither further education nor employment options are present for these kids. How can this be resolved?

Mary Stella Michael: Louisa's School of Hope focused on equipping children with special needs with essential skills for independent, everyday life. Our goal was to ensure their self-reliance. It's a matter of sad fact that due to inadequate resources we had to close it down and we are still hoping that one day with the necessary assistance from the Government we shall be able to resume it. While inclusive education is more common now, according to me continuous follow-up is crucial to track their ongoing growth. Vocational training can provide these children with livelihood opportunities.



AN INTERVIEW WITH DIVYA GUPTA KOTAWALA – BUSINESSWOMAN, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR, MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER, AND CHERISHED DAUGHTER

TLT: I would like to begin by congratulating you on the publication of “My Dad's Daughter: A Gift to My Hero in Heaven.” How has the response to the book been so far?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: Thank you so much for your wishes, just like your warm wishes the response also to a first time author like me has been beautiful for me numbers, sales and ratings never mattered what was most important was that if my book is able to heal anyone who lost a loved one like me then my purpose to write would be achieved and the kind of messages I received after the book was launched has made me feel so grateful for all the love and support from people whom I never even knew and now they feel like a part of my life that's the most beautiful part of this new journey so far and something I am most thankful! Every time a beautiful daughter writes to me to share her love for her father or talk about her pain it all feels so relevant and personal that it just makes me stop for a moment and I just think that I'm on a noble path.

TLT: What led to the idea of writing “My Dad's Daughter: A Gift to My Hero in Heaven”? Were there any events that inspired the work?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: The only reason for which I decided to turn myself as an author at the age of 40 without any experience and knowledge was the pure intention to keep my father's memories alive till I live. The pain I felt that by the time passes his memories are slowly away and that hurts me a lot and this was the only way to preserve his fragrance in the pages of this book forever. Also, it was my special way to say my last goodbye to dad which I was unable to do as we lost him to covid and never found closures which was very heartbreaking. Dad's untimely death during the pandemic gave life to this new identity, Divya the author whom I never knew ever existed. Moreover, I truly believe in 'keeping an account of people's lives whom we love so that they live on forever'.

TLT: The title of your book makes it quite apparent that it is about the amazing relationship between a father and a daughter. How would your summaries your relationship with your father in your own words?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: A father-daughter relationship is not only beautiful but also special. It's pure and full of love n respect so was mine and dad's! He was my pride my hero and I looked up to him for every small and big support he was my walking talking google, my true guide, and losing him suddenly left me shattered. Imagining my life without him left me feel miserable moreover what troubled me the most was how he left. We all know one day we will lose our loved ones no one is immortal in this world but how he went was unbelievable and I failed to accept it even took today leaving me with a question...WHY ME ??

TLT: Writing about someone who is dear to you but isn't physically present anymore is quite challenging. What sort of obstacles did you face on the mental and emotional front while writing the book?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: The journey of writing this book was a challenge for me every single day. I was writing about the thing which I wanted to forget every single day. Every small detail about the book was connected to dad and it gave me so much pain, but eventually I took it as a sign from heaven to even relive the most beautiful memories I had with dad and looked back with gratitude for all the amazing 39 years with him in his shadow of love, shelter and protection that gave me so much courage to keep going on. On several days I went through breakdowns both mental and emotional as it meant revisiting those nightmares all over again but I always felt a very strong divine force pushing me toward the finishing line against all possible odds! Also, I feel 'true legacy is not about leaving something for people it's about leaving something in people' and if my dad chose me as a medium to do this, I should feel grateful enough to accept this love and gift from him from heaven as a sign that he is still with me.

TLT: How would you categorize "My Dad's Daughter: A Gift to My Hero in Heaven" as its appeal seems to be to a broad audience?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: It's a book for everyone, for every single daughter and every father and to all those who fear the emotion of grief or those who have lost a loved one and are struggling to deal with pain! Over all this book is for anyone who has seen pain closely of losing a loved one ever and are still looking for closures! Just like any emotion of love, anger, hate so why run away from grief? That's what my book talks about. Accepting grief and emerging out as a stronger version of yourself! It's about keeping the memories of our loved ones always alive and continuing with their legacy till we live. So, it's for all the parents and all the kids to read and relate to and get inspired to love these beautiful relationships that are very precious even if one person gets benefited reading this book, I'll feel my purpose is achieved and I made my father finally proud!

TLT: Words and literature have the capacity to effect change. You don't write in the traditional sense; what has literature done to alter or influence your life?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: I strongly feel words is a beautiful way to express emotions if conveyed well! As I didn't have any writing or reading background my approach towards this book was very different. It was directly from core of my heart and soul. I wanted almost everyone to be able to read it hence kept the language very basic and simple and very relatable. Also, as it's a true story of my life and I was sharing real facts there was no room for drama or using any context that wasn't correct or exaggerated! Lastly, it was straight from a daughter's heart for her father and therefore a very emotional journey and that essence had to continue throughout the book from the first chapter till the last in fact

now I can say with confidence that words do impact people around you specially when you see the response of people towards my book and now for my thoughts and actions over this path that I have taken I feel very powerful to be able to communicate my feelings to them easily and it feels beautiful and a feeling of so much contentment.

TLT: You are an entrepreneur, motivational speaker, a wonderful daughter, house maker, mother and now an award-winning author. What do you consider yourself and why?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: I can be anything but will always be a woman first who is born with several emotions, dreams and desires! My most beautiful role in this lifetime will always be that of a daughter and most precious will be being an author as that makes me feel special. As it gave a purpose to my life and it is growing every day. I consider myself fortunate to be able to play so many roles and learn so much from them. Every life is a lesson and it totally depends what we learn from an ordinary life and grow every role calls for a sacrifice and comes with so many responsibilities and only if we have the will power and right vision, we can do all possible tasks with ease and happiness.

TLT: Up until now, you have provided us with your definition of a parent from the viewpoint of a daughter. You are now a parent yourself. What lessons would you wish to learn from your adored parents, and how do you picture yourself as a parent?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: Every generation has some similarities and some major differences as we grow, so we weren't different. What I have carried from my parents for my daughter is strong values and a beautiful upbringing with all the love, care and protection. I was blessed with a child but what I do different now is my approach towards the change of lifestyle and culture and I definitely want to mold myself according to new lifestyle and culture for my teenage child! My father was stricter, reserved when it came for his girl child and I never saw it as a bondage and held huge amount of respect for his love but these days kids are a bit rebellious. If we try to mold them strictly then they might get distant from us which I surely don't want as a mother. I want to give her wings to fly but always give her an assurance that her nest is always ready for her come back! Also, during my times being independent wasn't a very big deal. We all grew up with less aspirations and goals and getting married was the ultimate destination of happiness. I educate my daughter to be independent and push her to be able to earn not only money but also love and respect in the eyes of everyone and then only plan to settle once she is ready and confident enough to take the plunge!

TLT: You call yourself an author by chance. You have scored a home run in your debut as an author. What advice will you give to the budding writers?

Divya Gupta Kotawala: Yes, I am definitely an author by chance. I never thought that my dad will open a new path for me and finally I will find my identity at the age of 40 something that I was craved for. This identity has come with so many mixed emotions. Sometimes I wish if Dad was here to see my new journey, success and appreciation that came along with it. But on the other side I feel one worst experience of life can teach you some most valuable lessons and losing dad changed me forever so to all those budding writers all I can say is that keep learning and growing. There is never any end to evolve and be your best version at any stage of life. Listen to your intuition and never lose your originality as you might listen to all but don't get influenced and affected at all. Do what makes you stand apart from the crowd initially it may look tough but if your thoughts and words are special remember you will find the right audience to connect with your vision!!

TLT: "My Dad's Daughter: A Gift to My Hero in Heaven" has given a powerful introduction to your potential as a writer. Can the readers expect more from you in the future? Please share about your future projects.

Divya Gupta Kotawala: Of course I plan to write more, my first book was definitely by chance and a very emotional one but for my second book I want to create something very different that more and more people will be able to connect to! Also, I was very lost during the process of the making of the first one but this time I want to take some time and get it published by a good publishing house as in this journey I realised that no matter how much you try to market your book it's never enough. So, want a good platform to help me on this. For sure this time the amount of love and support this book has received it has put a lot of responsibility on me to deliver something very nice and unique and continue with this beautiful identity of an Author! As far as the topic is concerned, I would like to continue writing about human emotions as I feel I relate to them very well and express them beautifully too so hopefully next should be about it only rest I leave it on God. The almighty will keep guiding me as always! Apart from writing what kept me busy in last 2 years since I completed my first book is Podcasting that I really enjoy as I feel instantly connected to so many people and feel excited to share my feelings and views with them also several opportunities for public speaking about grief, motivational topics has kept me super busy and occupied! And I am very grateful for such beautiful opportunities and would keep looking for many more as they are my best way to connect with more and more people and understand their emotions and express mine too.

AN INTERVIEW WITH V. SHRUTI DEVI, AUTHOR OF 'EARTH REPUBLIC: CHATTER FROM THE CAPITAL'S CAULDRON (AND BEYOND)



Introducing V. Shruti Devi, a multi-talented individual who adeptly balances numerous roles. Notably, she is an accomplished advocate at the Supreme Court of India and holds a prominent position within the All India Congress Committee. This unique combination of legal expertise and political fervor characterizes her professional identity. Her independent publication, “EARTH REPUBLIC: Chatter from the Capital’s Cauldron (and Beyond),” serves as a platform for her perceptive commentary on societal issues.

In addition to her legal and political pursuits, V. Shruti Devi finds joy in various artistic expressions. This includes acting, lending her voice for voiceovers, and skillfully playing the guitar. She is also an avid explorer of new destinations, a voracious reader, and an accomplished writer. With a penchant for folk dances and an active presence on social media, V. Shruti Devi’s diverse interests paint a vivid portrait of her vibrant and dynamic personality.

TLT: How has the response for the book been so far?

VSD: It has generated a lot of interest lately. I joined Instagram recently, and ever since I posted about EARTH REPUBLIC: Chatter from the Capital's Cauldron (and Beyond), there have been enthusiastic responses on a daily basis from a wide spectrum of readers and reviewers whom I might not have otherwise come across. As an indie author, one has a staggered advertising strategy for this book, which was released in 2018. Sales figures would not be the best way for a reader to judge the response. However, I did receive a Certificate of Honour at the Supreme Court on Constitution Day in 2018, for having written the book. I've also been receiving a stream of inquiries for various kinds of promotions and for rights over the book from overseas. This is because the book was at the New York BookExpo New Title Showcase 2018, the World Book Fair, Delhi, and the Chennai Book Fair.

TLT: What gave rise to the concept for "Earth Republic: Chatter from the Capital's Cauldron (and Beyond)"? Were there any incidents that served as inspiration for the piece?

VSD: At the time when I wrote the book in 2017, I identified the areas of policy that the chapters co-relate to as being imperatives in governance. I'm in the habit of writing, and after the publication of my work of fiction, Deep Wood Trance, published by Writers Workshop, Calcutta, I decided I needed to add a non-fiction book to my political CV.

TLT: In our nation, women's rights are a significant issue. Responsibility also comes with rights. Do you believe that India is making progress in granting women's rights?

VSD: Our Constitution speaks of the Right to Equality as a Fundamental Right. These rights already exist, and need to be accessed, not granted. Dealing with what might be considered niche areas in Indian law that require amendment, development, clarification, or interpretation, would further emancipate many lives. Tackling corruption also has a lot to do with ensuring that the criminal justice system can withstand pressure, and thus work to protect women against crime.

TLT: In your book, you covered a range of topics. theatre, cuisine, sports, women's rights, and world peace. How did you manage to incorporate so many dimensions into the single work "Earth Republic: Chatter from the Capital's Cauldron (and Beyond)"?

VSD: It's all about joining the dots. Think of it as one of many reviews of an imaginary world cabinet!

TLT: Do you believe that women are carrying out the obligations associated with those rights?

VSD: While it might be a duty for every woman to access her rights and set an example for how future generations ought to be treated, one needs to look into what the impediments might be. The Legal Aid system ought to be given a quantum impetus, and be enabled to be a source of impartial assistance for all women, to ensure they understand and obtain their rights.

TLT: Mother Earth is suffering due to climate change. The title of your book also alludes to the current state of the environment on Earth. Why are states all around the world unable to reduce it even after so many international accords and regulations?

VSD: I do not think we should underestimate the positive work that has been done, ever since the Declaration on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, right up to the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the Earth Summit, in 1992, and all the other thematic treaties and conventions ranging from Climate Change to Desertification and Biological Diversity. Many disasters have been averted. Timely decisions to steer evolving geo-political situations and global economic and energy planning could provide the planet with solutions for Peace. India has the potential to provide strategic solutions. Many conflicts revolve around the control and use of natural resources. There should be no compromise at all, over the quality of Human Rights, or of Democratic Governance while battling for the environment, or, indeed, the economy. A balance needs to be maintained.

TLT: What is the impact of literature in your life?

VSD: As a school student, I was introduced to many social and political concepts through my extensive reading. Before studying law, I did a BA (Honours) in English Literature at St. Stephen's College at a time when the syllabus included the classical background to English literature. Reading Chaucer, learning of the impact of the oral tradition, and gaining an insight into Greek and Roman literature served to put one's own Indian civilization into a classical civilizational context. Plato's Republic was definitely on that list! Any written matter counts as Literature, and, to that extent, the lyrics from the popular music of the western world have probably influenced one's absorption of usage and syntax in literature.

TLT: What literary endeavors do you have planned for the future? Can we expect you to write a book addressing a number of fresh and crucial subjects?

VSD: After Earth Republic, there's been a book of poetry, Ad Altiora Nitimur, which includes narrative-setting end-notes. I've been published since the 1980s, and plan to continue writing.

TLT: You are a prominent lawyer. What words of wisdom do you have for the younger generations regarding getting a legal education and how it can affect their lives?

VSD: Be alert, make sure Technology serves Justice, and not vice versa!



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