



ATMA RAM SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE (UNIVERSITY OF DELHI)

Aakhyan: Creative Writing Society

Aakhyan, the creative crucible of Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, thrives on the power of multilingual expression. Not bound by one tongue or tradition, it champions the written word in its many forms—prose, poetry, and hybrid possibilities that defy boundaries. Throughout the year, Aakhyan curated intimate talks and workshops where students shared their creative pieces, exchanged thoughts, and nurtured each other's voices in an atmosphere of warmth and reflection.

On October 4, 2024, Aakhyan hosted a seminar with Prof. Gitanjali Chawla exploring the vibrant evolution of Punjabi folk forms—Bhangra and Jugni. The seminar traced Bhangra's journey from diasporic roots to its fusion with Reggae and Rap, shaped by cultural disconnects in the West. Prof. Chawla analyzed how Bhangra's transformation led to the dominance of Jatt narratives and the objectification of women, sidelining marginalized voices. The second half focused on Jugni, unpacking its etymology and feminist origins, later regressed under patriarchal influence.

In a session steeped in literary and cinematic richness, Aakhyan welcomed author and translator Ms. Bhaswati Ghosh on October 18 to explore the layered world of Bengali short stories and their screen adaptations. With lucid storytelling and visual excerpts, she traced the lineage of Bengali literature through icons like Tagore, Sarat Chandra, and Manik Bandyopadhyay before delving into Mahashweta Devi's *Bharyen* and *Rudali*. The emotional cadence of these works found powerful resonance in their cinematic renditions. Ms. Ghosh also introduced participants to Syed Mustafa Siraj's detective fiction, blending intrigue with philosophical undertones.

In a poignant and reflective session held on February 25, 2025, Dr. Gautam Choubey, a renowned translator and novelist, invited the students to look into the forgotten "backyards" of literature. Through the lens of Bhojpur and Maithili traditions, Dr. Choubey addressed the neglect and marginalization of regional voices within mainstream academia. Drawing parallels between the domestic backyards—often overlooked yet integral—and these rich linguistic traditions, he emphasized their historical significance and fading cultural memory. Sharing personal anecdotes from his PhD journey, Dr. Choubey spoke of his decision to fill the void of English translations by translating works like *Phoolsunghi* and *Twelfth Fail*.

On March 28th, Aakhyan hosted eminent travel writer Sanjay Shepherd for a stirring seminar on the craft of travel writing. Dividing his talk into personal narrative and literary craft, Mr. Shepherd recounted his early days in Gorakhpur, his wanderings across India and 24 countries, and the spirit of storytelling that binds every journey. As a chronicler of lived geographies, he spoke of the ethical responsibility of a travel writer—to observe with sensitivity, to represent with nuance. He shared insights from his books *Zindagi Zero Mile*

and Ek Siyah Firdaus, as well as his upcoming work Devtaon ka Desh.

Throughout the year, our students have earned several accolades across various competitions. Nishtha Thukral secured First Position in Fiction Writing at Daulat Ram College, Third Position in Slam Poetry at both Miranda House and Mata Sundri College, and received a Special Mention in Creative Writing at Miranda House. She also achieved First Position in both Poem Writing and Alternate Ending at Shyam Lal College. Additionally, Tanya Ganguly won First Prize in Slam Poetry at Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi.