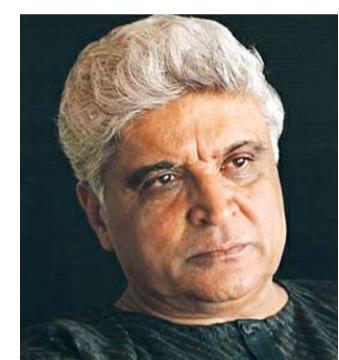


Jaipur Awaits Another Season of Ideas

Kiran Desai, former C J, D Y Chandrachud, Javed Akhtar, Stephen Fry, Sudha Murty, Vir Das, Vishwanathan Anand, Richard Horton, attending among others



Javed Akhtar.



Stephen Fry.

Fvery winter, Jaipur seems to pause and listen. The city's sandstone walls, familiar with centuries of stories, make room for new ones. Mornings begin not with haste, but with quiet anticipation, as readers, writers and wanderers move towards shared spaces where ideas wait to unfold. As the Jaipur Literature Festival returns for its 19th edition this January, the city once again prepares for five days when words take centre stage.

From January 15 to 19, 2026, the festival finds its home in Jaipur, continuing a journey that was never designed to become monumental, yet grew naturally into one of the world's most recognizable literary gatherings. What began as an intimate space for conversation and ideas, over time, evolved into a living, breathing exchange of thoughts, where disagreement is welcome, curiosity is rewarded, and listening is as important as speaking.

This year's programme mirrors the complexity of the world we inhabit. Writers, thinkers, policymakers and artists from India and beyond arrive carrying different histories and perspectives. Voices such as Kiran Desai, former Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, Javed Akhtar, Stephen Fry, Sudha Murty, Vir Das, Vishwanathan Anand, Richard Horton and several others will take part in conversations that move effortlessly between literature, law, politics, science, humour and personal memoirs. No single discipline dominates, instead, ideas overlap and enrich one another.

In a time when opinions are often loud and attention is fleeting, the Jaipur Literature Festival offers something increasingly precious: space to think, listen and reflect. For five days, Jaipur becomes more than a host city. It becomes a meeting place of minds, where words feel close to life, and ideas, once heard, travel far beyond the festival grounds.

Perhaps the festival's most distinctive feature is its audience. Young readers form its backbone, students, first-time attendees, and eager lis-



Why this date matters

Army Day is marked on 15 January because it commemorates the day in 1949 when K. M. Cariappa took over as the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from the last British C-in-C, Francis Roy Bucher, a handing over that became a yearly reminder of sovereignty, command, and institution-building.

So, the symbolism is baked in: Army Day is about who holds the reins. And Jaipur 2026 adds another layer: where the nation chose to watch its pride stitched into it.

Jaipur Goes "At Home": When Army Day Leaves the Cantonment

Jaipur understands that kind of memory in its bones. A city that grew around forts and courtyards also grew a habit of watching uniforms with a particular attention, half respect, half recognition. In my case, that attention has a personal origin: my father was a Wing Commander, and as a teenager, I learned that the armed forces aren't theatre. You feel them first as atmosphere, step into an army area and the air itself seems to watch straighter: stiff, upright, regimental.

Operation Sindoor as the framing theme

In the programme language and public messaging around the 2026 celebrations, "Operation Sindoor" appears as a thematic tribute, an emblem of capability, coordination, and strength.

For Rajasthan's border belt, the memory of sudden alerts and contingency measures during India-Pakistan tension is not abstract. It

is lived. That proximity shapes the mood: excitement, yes, but with seriousness underneath.

The week leading to 15 January: Jaipur as a living campus

This isn't a one-day spectacle. It's a week-long civic build-up with three major public touchpoints.

Know Your Army (8-12 January)

Listed in the program, from 8 to 12 January 2026, the "Know Your Army" exhibition at Bhawan Niketan College (Sikar Road), described as a mobile showcase of artillery equipment, and an open window into how the Army operates across terrains.

The exhibition featured an extensive static and dynamic display of weaponry and technology; offering visitors a close look at the Indian Army's modern capabilities. Highlights include displays of tanks, missile systems, and advanced defence technologies, along with interactive missile and bomb simulators that allow visitors to better understand army operations across diverse terrains. A special showcase titled "Operation Sindoor" presented the very military hardware used during the operation, illustrating how everything from the simplest ammunition to the most advanced air defence systems functioned together as one unified force with precision and purpose.

Parade day on Mahal Road: A Pink City Week with Olive Green Army Day

On 15 January 2026, the 78th Army Day Parade steps onto Jaipur's public roads for the first time. Here's the build-up, exhibition, rehearsals, Shaurya Sandhya, and the local pride stitched into it.

Why Jaipur feels like a homecoming

There are official reasons for choosing Jaipur, and then, there are cultural ones. Mornings begin not with haste, but with quiet anticipation, as readers, writers and wanderers move towards shared spaces where ideas wait to unfold. As the Jaipur Literature Festival returns for its 19th edition this January, the city once again prepares for five days when words take centre stage.

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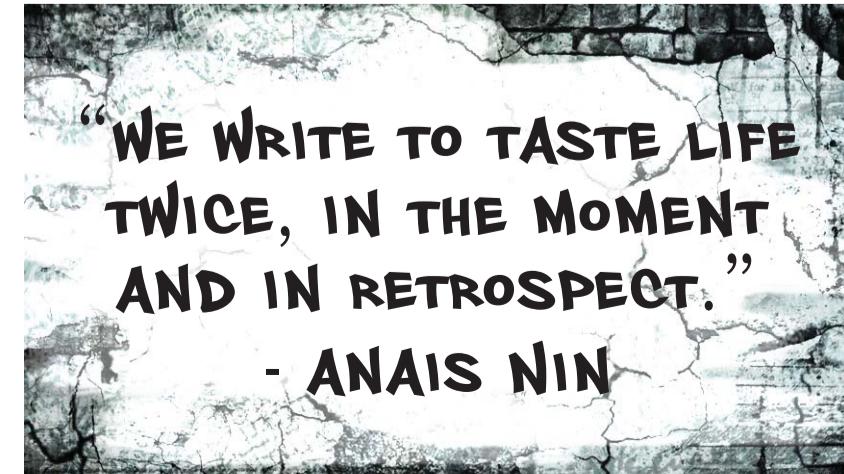
teners who arrive early, stay late, and ask difficult questions. Nearly two-thirds of the festival's audience is under the age of 27, turning JLF into a rare democratic space where literature is not distant or intimidating, but alive and immediate. It is here that a poet may find themselves followed by a physicist, or a historian listened to with the same intensity as a stand-up comic.

The themes shaping this edition are rooted firmly in the present. Conversations around global conflict, shifting economic realities, and the growing influence of technology and artificial intelligence reflect shared anxieties and hopes. At the same time, an unexpected current runs through the programme, the supernatural. From folktales and myth to the latest science fiction, the festival's programming is a tapestry of shared stories, this strand suggests that even in an age driven by logic and innovation, humans remain drawn to mystery and the unknown.

Beyond the sessions, the festival exists in its quieter moments. At Jaipur BookMark, publishers, translators and writers exchange ideas about the future of storytelling. At the Jaipur Music Stage, melodies drift through the air, blurring the line between performance and conversation. In between, people linger in corridors, on lawns, under winter sunlight, continuing discussions long after sessions end.

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THE WALL



BABY BLUES



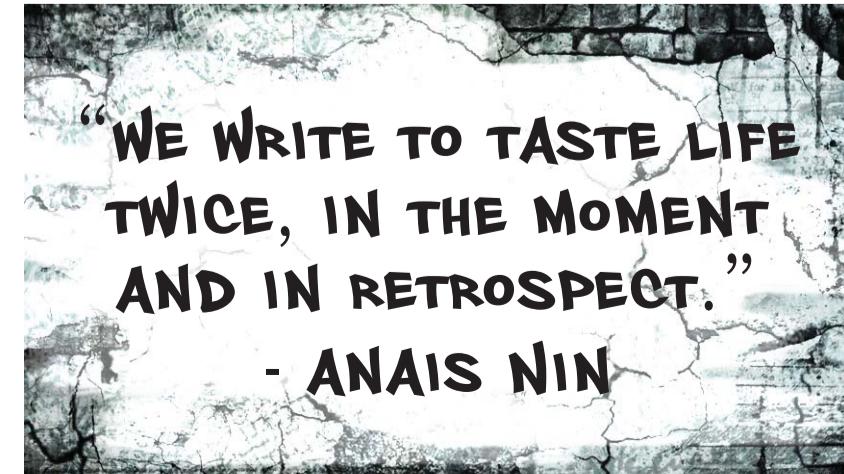
By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



Jaipur Literature Festival 2026 — Dates, Venue, Registration —



Wikipedia Day: Celebrating Free Knowledge for All

Wikipedia Day, observed annually on January 15, marks the anniversary of the launch of Wikipedia in 2001. As the world's largest online encyclopedia, Wikipedia has revolutionized access to knowledge, empowering millions to contribute, edit, and explore information across countless subjects. The day honours the collaborative spirit of volunteers worldwide who ensure that learning remains open, accurate, and free. From students and researchers to curious minds of all ages, Wikipedia continues to foster curiosity, critical thinking, and global understanding. Wikipedia Day is not just about an anniversary, it's a celebration of shared knowledge and collective learning.



Maj Gen Rohit Mehrotra, GOC 61 Sub Area at the Parade Commander's Parade.

Padma Shri Dr. Maya Tandon with a colleague braving the weather but thrilled to be at the Army day Parade rehearsal.

The Pink Turns Olive Green Today!

#MAHAL ROAD, MEMORY ROAD: A PINK CITY WEEK WITH OLIVE GREEN ARMY DAY



Parade day on Mahal Road: The essentials

Listed in the program, from 8 to 12 January 2026, the "Know Your Army" exhibition at Bhawan Niketan College (Sikar Road), described as a mobile showcase of artillery equipment, and an open window into how the Army operates across terrains.

Indian Air Force and Navy

A special emphasis will be placed on Operation Sindoor, featuring a Rajasthani Government tableau, gallantry awardees, and demonstrations of operational equipment, complemented by cultural performances celebrating local heritage.

Parade day on Mahal Road: The essentials

With special three-tier seating for 25,000 spectators and an expected footfall of up to 1.5 lakh, the event promises to be a major public and national spectacle.

A Jaipur heartbeat: 61st Cavalry on home roads

National ceremonies become local when you see your own inside them.

In my interview with Colonel

Tarun Sirohi, reflecting on 61st Cavalry's presence, puts it in a line

that feels like a Jaipur emotion:

"My chest swells with pride knowing that finally the people of Jaipur will have a chance to watch their own Regiment, 61 Cavalry, in the Army Day parade. 61 Cavalry is the only contingent which has remained unchanged in the Army Day parade since 1953. We are always the First contingent on parade in both the Army Day and Republic Day parades, and this year, leading the parade in the hometown of the 61st Cavalry will be a priceless moment. Another point... I have myself had the proud privilege of leading the 61st Cavalry contingent in the Army Day and Republic Day parade of 1996."

W

hatever else the parade includes, this is the simplest bridge for a Jaipur reader: your own regiment, on your own road.

The youth line: NCC as living continuity

Seeing the NCC contingent takes me back to my own NCC days from St. Xavier's School, and to my elder brother Dr. Sandeep Bhargava attending NCC camps.

In my conversations around the NCC contingent preparing for this parade, what stayed with me was not only the discipline, but its earnestness. A band of young girls can be seen marching with purposeful, determined strides, with their own marching bands, standing apart from the Army contingents. Senior Wing NCC cadets holding their line through Jaipur's winter. Two marching bands alongside them, and a wider group of cadets drawn from multiple states.

The biting cold has not daunted their enthusiasm as they march straight and proud with the soldiers. They have been here since the end of December, training daily, holding their own amongst trained troops, waiting for the final day.

Their motivation is simple: to express the solidarity of youth with the Army and the nation.

They deserve a salute too.

The voice that taught India how to watch

As listed on the invite card

1. Major Shaitan Singh Bhati, PVC (P)

2. CHM Piru Singh Shekhawat, PVC (P)

3. Second Lieutenant Punit Nath Datt, AC (P)

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5. Naik Nirbhay Singh Sisodia, AC (P)

"Khar chale hum fida jaan-o-tan satiyan, ab tumhare hawale vatan satiyan." (We have sacrificed our lives and bodies, O comrades; now the nation is in your hands.)

The Army Day is a solemn tribute to our brave soldiers and a recognition of their selfless contribution to the motherland. It is a day to honour those who have made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

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