

## To Write From your Soul You've To Lose Some Language!

His example of the word 'soft,' expressed as *mulayam* or *narm* in Hindi, perfectly illustrates this point. While both words convey softness, their usage in different contexts can evoke distinct feelings. This highlights how language is not just about literal meaning but also about tone, culture, and perception.



It seems that Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) has had a phenomenal start! The crowd participation was a sight to behold. Possibly, the organizers had not anticipated this surge back, since the challenges posed by COVID-19 in previous years, this bounce back makes you wonder, *Kisine kuch phoonk diya hai kya?*

With venues like the Front Lawn, Durbar Hall, and Baithak filled to capacity, it's clear that literature lovers were eager to immerse themselves in the festival's rich discussions and cultural experiences. Javed Akhtar's pres-



#TWISTS AND TURNS @ JLF

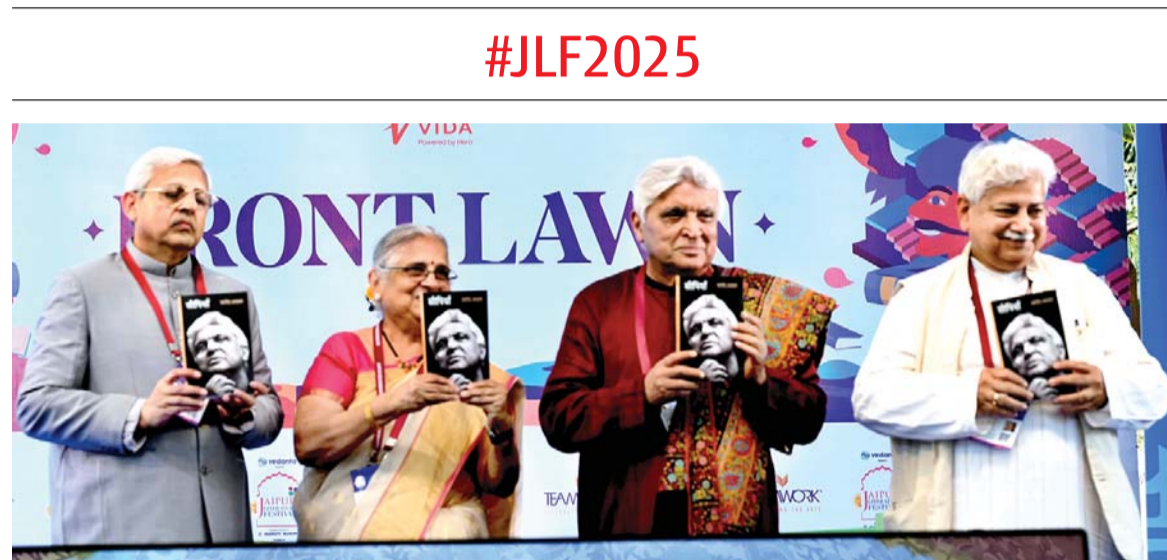
ence at JLF was undoubtedly one of the major highlights of the festival's opening. A literary giant in his own right, he once again proved why his words resonate across generations. The sheer size of the crowd at the Front Lawn, unable to contain his vast fan-base, speaks volumes about his impact.

Rajya Sabha MP Sudha Murty, although was scheduled for her own session, was at Javed Akhtar's book launch.

### Gyan Seepiyar: Pearls of Wisdom

At the launch of his book *Gyan Seepiyar: Pearls of Wisdom*, Akhtar transcended barriers, be it religion, language, or ideology, delivering insights that left the audience spellbound. His conversation with Atul Tiwari was a masterclass in storytelling, where he unravelled the delicate craft of weaving profound thoughts into concise poetic expressions.

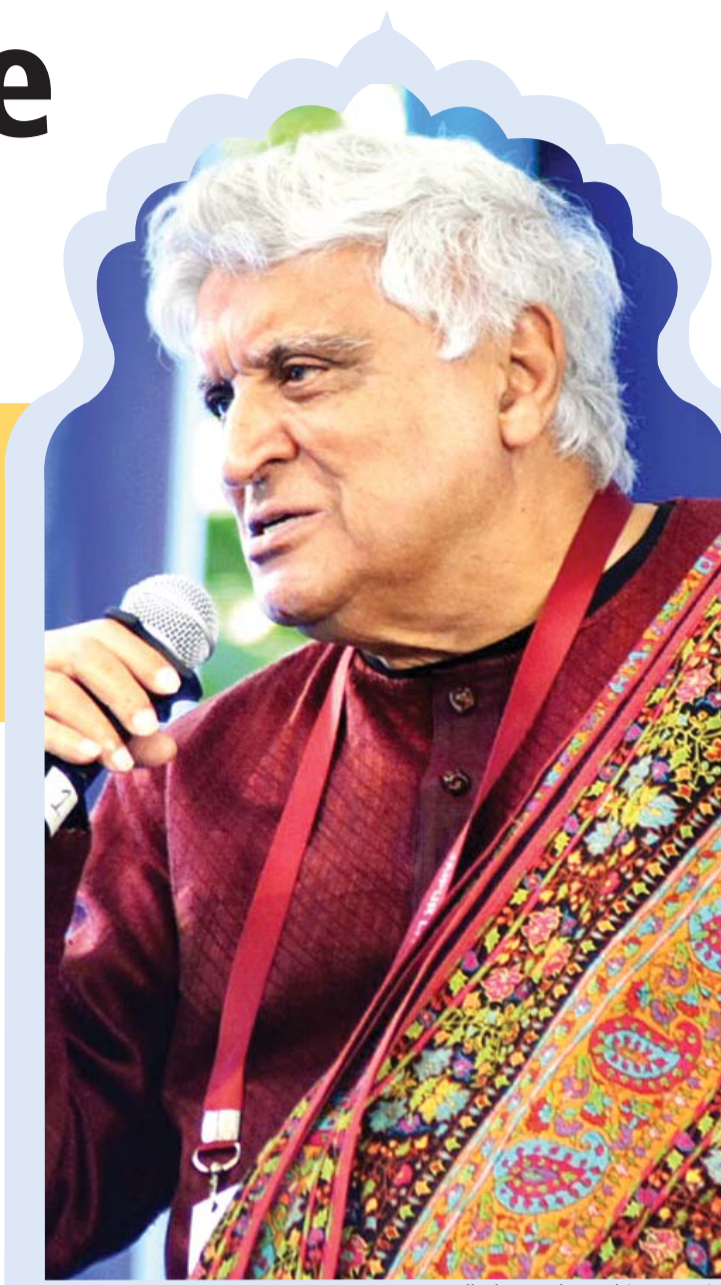
The ability to express vast emotions and complex ideas



through *dohas* and poetry is an art, and Akhtar's explanation of this intricate process was nothing short of mesmerizing. Javed Akhtar's session at JLF was deeply thought-provoking, touching on themes that resonate with many in today's fast-paced, globalized world. His emphasis on language, education, and cultural heritage highlights a growing concern, the gradual detachment from one's roots due to urbanization and modern education systems. He further expressed, "Writing this book 'Seepiyar' was not my idea. A friend of mine suggested it, and the idea resonated with me. Today's parents focus heavily on English-medium schools, which is a good thing, but it is essential that we don't forget our roots in the process."

is passionate advocacy for preserving one's mother tongue is especially significant. In an era where English and other global languages dominate professional and academic spaces, native languages often take a backseat. Akhtar's words likely served as a reminder that language is not just a means of communication but also a carrier of history, identity, and tradition.

It is a vehicle in which tradition, culture, and continuity travel," he said. Akhtar stressed that learning English or some other language should not be at the cost of one's mother tongue. He explained, "English is undoubtedly the international language of the present time, and learning it is essential. Being multilingual is important. However, focusing exclusively on English, at the expense of learning our own language, is like planting a tree and cutting off its roots. It disconnects us from our culture, history, and the core of our identity." He added, "I am not saying that we should abandon English,



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### Preserving Culture

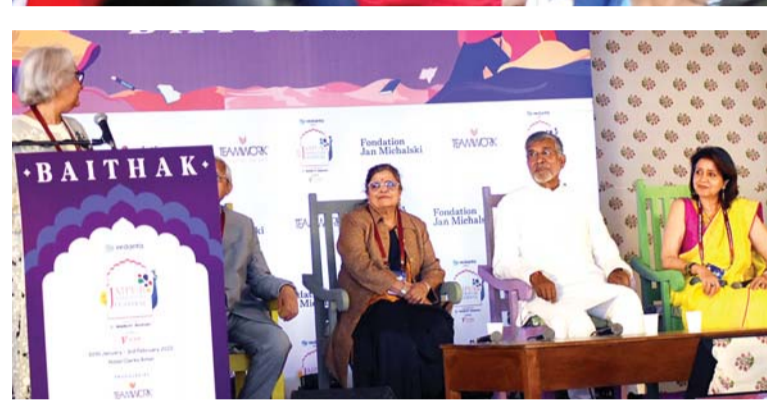
it is crucial for progress. But I am advocating for the preservation and promotion of our own languages, as they are integral to our cultural and emotional identity." Rajya Sabha MP Sudha Murty also joined Javed Akhtar and session moderator Atul Tiwari to launch the book.

Javed Akhtar's perspective on writing beautifully captures the delicate balance between technical mastery and creative freedom. His insight, that a writer must first learn the rules of grammar and structure but then unlearn them, to allow

imagination and emotions to flow, speaks to the essence of artistic expression. This paradox is what separates good writing from great writing. Mastering grammar provides the foundation, but true creativity comes when a writer dares to bend or break the rules to craft something unique and impactful. Akhtar's words are especially relevant for aspiring writers, who often struggle between adhering to formality and embracing artistic liberty. Javed Akhtar's deep understanding of language and its nuances truly sets him apart as a master wordsmith. His assertion that no two words hold the exact same meaning is a powerful

### International Zebra Day

Zebras are incredible creatures that are some of the most uniquely recognizable animals on the planet. With their contrasted stripes in black and white, zebras belong to the same equine species as horses and donkeys, but they are native only to Africa and have some distinct characteristics. As their habitats grow smaller and populations diminish, zebras have been placed on the endangered species list by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). International Zebra Day is here to increase public awareness about the plight of the zebra, encouraging humans to take action to save them!



### Success Mantra

Javed Akhtar's perspective on success is both thought-provoking and inspiring. His belief that we have set the bar of success too low challenges conventional thinking, especially in a society where material achievements, like owning a house, a car, or securing a stable job, are often seen as the ultimate goal. His advice, "Never settle down. Don't be satisfied with your work. Keep working, keep

learning," is a powerful mantra for anyone in the creative field. Stagnation is the enemy of growth, and Akhtar's words emphasize the importance of continuous improvement and self-challenge. True success, in his eyes, goes beyond basic comforts. It lies in pushing one's boundaries, striving for excellence, and maintaining self-esteem above all. This mindset is particularly relevant for writers, artists, and professionals, who risk becoming complacent once they achieve a certain level of recognition.

Javed Akhtar's session at JLF seems to have set a high benchmark for the rest of the festival. The interactive nature of the session, coupled with enthusiastic crowd participation, shows how deeply engaged the audience was. The fact that there was ample time for Q&A suggests that the session was not just a lecture but a true exchange of ideas.

Akhtar's witty humour and patient responses made the discussion both insightful and entertaining. His ability to blend wisdom with lightheartedness is one of the reasons he connects so effortlessly with audiences.

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## The Gastronomic Chronicles of JLF

### Fuel for Thought (and the Stomach)

At JLF, intellectual nourishment is not complete without culinary indulgence. From artisanal coffee to Sindh street food, gourmet popcorn to decadent desserts, the festival serves up a feast as rich and diverse as the conversations it hosts. Because great literature deserves an equally great bite.



At the *Kumbh of literature*, where words flow like rivers and ideas spark like bonfires, one thing remains non-negotiable, sustenance. Because let's face it, even the most erudite discussions on geopolitics, war and conflict are hard to digest on an empty stomach. And so, while the literary heavyweights battle it out in panel discussions, the gourmands embark on their own journey of taste and discovery.



### Brewing Intelligence, One Sip at a Time

Nothing fuels intellectual discourse quite like caffeine. It is the life raft for the sleep-deprived and the elixir for the book-weary. Sutra Coffee, a seasoned veteran of the fest, continues to keep conversations caffeinated with its lineup of lattes, cappuccinos, and the ever-popular Vietnamese Cold Coffee and Spanish Latte. But the real show-stoppers? The Honey Sun-Dried and Whiskey Barrel Aged Cold Brew because nothing says 'literary rebel' like a coffee that's been aged like fine whiskey. For those who like their coffee with a side

of lactose-free conscience, options in soy and almond milk are also available. And if hunger strikes mid-sentence, a flaky almond croissant or a classic chicken puff is never a bad idea. New this year is The Alchemist Coffee Company, a roastery from Ajmer that has made its way to Jaipur's caffeine scene. Stationed at Baithak, they're pouring more than just coffee. Expect a spread of banana walnut cake, sweet potato chips with sriracha, burrito bowls, sliders, and sandwiches, essentially, fuel for the literary warrior.

### Comfort Food, But Make It Gourmet

For those who prefer the familiar embrace of Indian comfort food, Milk & Meadows is where you'll find solace. Their thick lassis, chaach, and thandaai make for perfect thirst-quenchers, but the real magic lies in their hand-churned white butter, generously slathered over a variety of fresh paranthas. From Masala Lachcha to Garlic Green Chilli and even a sweet Meetha Parantha, there's a carb-laden delight for every mood. They also serve Paneer Tikka, made from their pure A2 milk, along with hot chai and coffee for that perfect winter afternoon indulgence. There's also gourmet popcorn, which comes in flavours that might just make Michelin-starred chefs reconsider their menus. Himalayan Salt Caramel, Hawaiian Barbecue Cheese, Sour Cream and Onion Cheese, and Nutty Tuxedo Chocolate because nothing complements an intense discussion on postmodernism like a handful of fancy popcorn.



Lachcha Matara Tikiya, Sindh Shahi Dahi Bada, Dal Pakwaan, and Bhugal Chaat are just some of the gems on offer. It's nostalgia on a plate for those who grew up with these flavours, and an initiation into Sindh gastronomy for those who haven't.

Some food stalls at JLF believe in the power of taste, others let their décor do the talking. Vibrant and unapologetically eye-catching, these stalls lure festival-goers in for more than just a photo-op. Adorned with a riot of colors, they boast whimsical hangings, cascading tassels, upturned umbrellas, painted kettles, and a medley of other decorative elements, ensuring that they remain unmistakable amidst the literary hustle.

### The Global Palate



JLF isn't just about Indian flavours. For those seeking an Asian escape, The Lama is rolling out sushi and dim sums, with options like Salmon Rolls, Chicken Tibetan Momos, and Dragon Prawns Avocado Rolls. Meanwhile, London's Chocolate Strawberry dessert is proving to be the festival's sweet-heart, with its rich, indulgent flavours drawing in the sweet-toothed literati.

Of course, some classics never lose their charm. The ever-reliable chaat stalls continue to dish out Bhel Puri, Chana Zor Garam, and Vada Pav, while dosa remains the safe bet for those who either cannot decide what to eat or simply refuse to experiment. And in what might be the most poetic addition of all, a Churan-wala has set up shop, serving up digestives to help attendees process not just the food, but also the avalanche of ideas and insights that they've consumed through the day.

At the Jaipur Literature Festival, where words and ideas nourish the mind, the food scene ensures that the stomach doesn't feel left out. After all, what's a festival without some serious feasting?



## 'You've Got To Get Into Their Heads'

Shruti Kothari

In the first day of the Jaipur Literature Festival, a lively, heart-warming conversation unfolded as Sudha Murty took the stage, and it was expected.

Known for her captivating storytelling and the genuine warmth she radiates, also that she loves to talk to people, the beloved author and social worker drew in a crowd of people from all walks of life. Her bubbly nature, humble personality, and creative insights, especially when she interacted with the audience, was like sitting in a drawing room with your best friend.

Titled 'The Child Within,' the session featured Sudha Murty in conversation with publisher Meru Gokhale. The former Infosys Foundation chairperson shared insights about her life, literary journey, and the importance of embracing a childlike perspective in storytelling.

Murty spoke fondly about her passion for writing and how staying childlike helps her create stories that resonate with young readers. Her books often explore themes of compassion, kindness, friendship, and social issues, making complex ideas accessible to children.

She recounted a heartwarming tale of her beloved dog, Gopi, and how she wrote a book about him by immersing herself in his perspective. "I went into Gopi's mind," she said with a sparkle in her eye, "and tried to understand the world through his paws." This tender, playful perspective touched the hearts of children in the audience, and they were absolutely captivated. In fact, her unique approach to storytelling, embodying the mindset of a dog to convey life's lessons, was met with a sea of eager questions from the kids, each one curious to know how they could use their imagination to view the world in new and creative ways.

The children in the audience



were not just listeners, they were active participants in the discussion. Murty's decision to engage with them directly during the Q&A session made for a wonderfully interactive experience.

But it wasn't just the children who were enchanted. Adults in the crowd found themselves nodding along to her words of wisdom, especially when she emphasized the importance of enjoying life's small victories. In a world

where we often rush towards bigger goals, Murty urged her audience to savor the quiet, everyday moments, whether it's a cup of tea, a book in hand, or the joy of completing a small task with sincerity.

Her message also extended to the world of work. With her signature blend of humility and passion, Murty shared that the key to success in any field is sincerity, creativity, and hard work. She

stressed that success is never handed on a silver platter, and those who work tirelessly, with both their hearts and minds fully engaged, are the ones who truly make a difference. Whether in writing, social work, or any other field, the formula remains the same, approach your work with love, creativity, and authenticity, and success will follow.

What truly stood out about Sudha Murty's session at JLF was the seamless blend of wisdom and joy that she shared. She didn't just impart advice, she inspired everyone in the room to view life with a sense of wonder, to embrace the small, beautiful moments, and to approach every challenge with creativity and heart. In a world that often pushes us to grow up too fast, Sudha Murty's message was a powerful reminder to stay playful, sincere, and open to the magic around us.

Sudha Murty also shared that she had a modest yet inspiring childhood, which played a crucial role in shaping the person that she is today. A bright student from a young age, she grew up in an environment that valued education. Her father, a highly educated man, strongly emphasized the importance of learning, especially for girls, at a time when it was not widely encouraged.

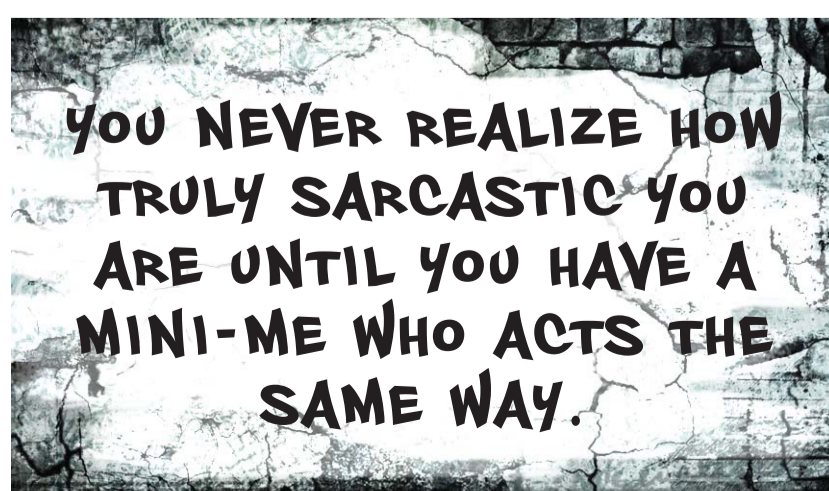
Murty's love for reading and writing developed early, influenced by her grandmother's storytelling and her own deep fascination with books. These experi-

ences nurtured her creativity and laid the foundation for her journey as a writer.

Sudha Murty emphasized that parents should never discourage children from reading. When asked about the growing preference among kids for foreign authors, such as J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*, over Indian writers, she responded with humility. She shared that as long as children develop an interest in reading, they should be encouraged, regardless of the language or origin of the books. According to her, the joy of reading itself is more important than restricting children to specific genres or authors.

The session wasn't just a lecture, it was a celebration of life, a reminder that joy and fulfillment come from the simplest things, and a call to approach work and relationships with the same enthusiasm that a child brings to a new adventure. Enjoy the little things, stay curious, and never lose the spark of creativity.

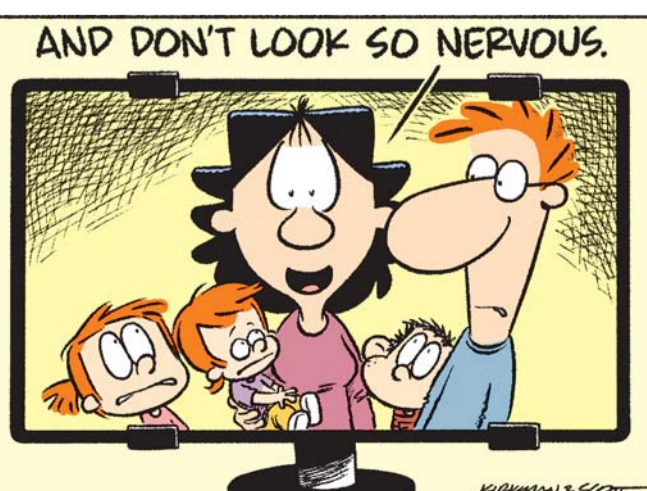
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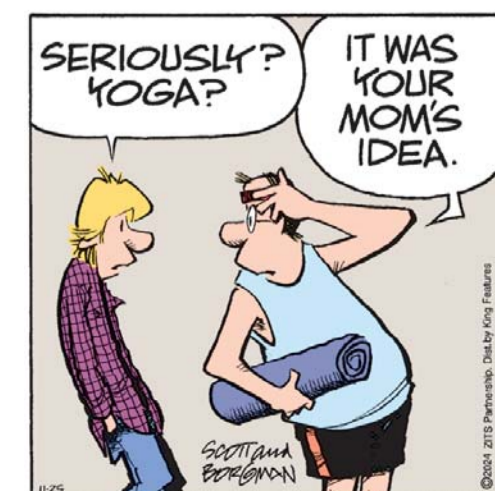
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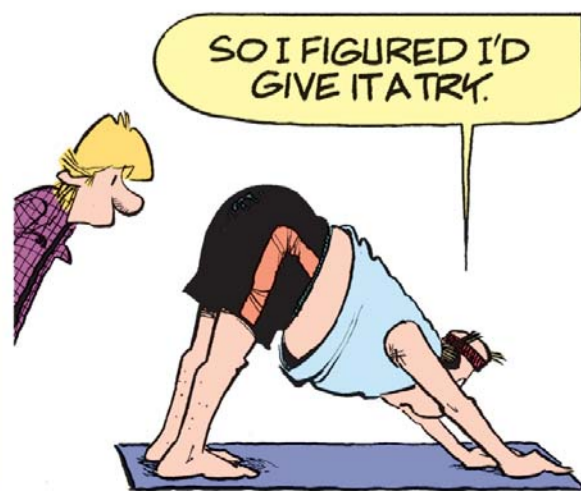
### ZITS



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By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

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