

## Janki Devi Memorial College University of Delhi JDMC-IQAC

English Department Association organizes an International Symposium on Indian English Poetry: Celebrating Ezekiel and Mapping the Landscape of Indian English Poetry

Name of the event:	International Symposium on Indian English Poetry: Celebrating Ezekiel and Mapping the Landscape of Indian English Poetry
Name of the organizer (s):	English Department Association: Ms Ruchika Bhatia, Mr Tarun Sharma, Dr Madhulika Nirmal
Type of event	International Symposium
Objectives of the event:	Celebrating Ezekiel and Mapping the Landscape of Indian English Poetry
Name and Affiliation of the Resource person:	Professor GJV Prasad Professor Lakshmisree Banerjee Ms Kavita Ezekiel Dr Anjana Neira Dev Dr Achingliu Kamei Professor Radha Chakravarty Prof Anita Nahal Dr Vivek Narayanan Prof B Mangalam

## Report:

The English Department Association of Janki Devi Memorial College hosted the International Symposium on Indian English Poetry, celebrating the centenary of Nissim Ezekiel's birth on 4 April 2024 in the Seminar Hall.

The event began with a warm welcome to all present, with Dr Namita Sethi articulating the intent behind the event. She felicitated Professor Swati Pal, who in turn felicitated Professor GJV Prasad, who gave the keynote address. Professor Pal narrated some anecdotes from her student life and teaching days and gave insight into her bond with Professor Prasad. Prof Prasad, in turn, talked about what poetry means to a poet and about appropriating English as our language because one can't write

poetry unless one owns the language. In this very engaging talk, he discussed why we use the colonizers' language as a nationalist defensive mode and to assert control over it.

The next session titled *Poet Speak* started with Professor Lakshmisree Banerjee, chaired by Dr Jitender Gill. After introductions and felicitation of the guest and the chair, Professor Banerjee talked about her preference for English over her supposed mother tongue, Bangla. She read aloud several of her poems from her latest collections, *Blue Phoenix* and *Dust Decked Rainbow Quilts*.

The third session, *Celebrating 100 Years of Nissim Ezekiel: A Tribute*, began with felicitation of the guests and the chair. Dr Sethi talked about the legacy of Nissim Ezekiel. Ms Kavita Ezekiel could not join us in person; however, a recorded lecture by her was played on the screen. In the lecture, she recounted her father's days as a student and explored how the man and the poet merged in his personality. His unconventional talent and his role as a father, friend, and leader were uncovered.

The next presenter, Dr Anjana Neira Dev, spoke about the importance of negotiating between tradition and modernity. She believes that the language of food and love has a universality that transcends time and space. She believes that English is her mother tongue. Dr Dev also talked about Ezekiel's collections of poetry. After Dr Dev, we had Dr Achingliu Kamei with us, who talked about how Ezekiel's poetry is so powerful that it has influenced Indian poetic culture.

She emphasized how Ezekiel's verses remind one of the diversity and inclusivity in Indian culture. She read Ezekiel's poems *Waking, The Second Candle,* and *The Night and the Scorpion.* Dr Kamei talked about the unconventional imagery in Ezekiel's poems and the relevance of his poetry in the contemporary world.

The session was followed by a lunch break in the canteen. After lunch, we resumed the third session, *Aspects of Indian English Poetry (I)*. The speakers for the session were Professor Radha Chakravarty, present in the session offline, with Professor Pramod K Nayar and Professor Anita Nahal joining us online. Dr Payal Nagpal acted as the chair and felicitated the speakers, with Ms Ruchika Bhatia felicitating her. Professor Nayar began the talk by referencing habitat poetry and the roles and consequences of the loss of habits and habitations in Indian English Poetry. The construction of the home, homeliness, and the unhomely in Ezikeil's poems were thoroughly discussed.

After this, we moved on to Prof Anita Nahal who focused on the theme of poetry and women's consciousness. She used a pre-made presentation to explain the mechanism of dreaming in sleep. Prof Nahal talked about how most poetry by women was autobiographical, observational, or confessional. She discussed the legacy of various female poets like Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Mahadevi Verma, Amrita Pritam, Kamala Das, Laxmi Kanan, Rupi Kaur, etc and how their poems reflect the idea of gender and historicity. She ended the talk by reading aloud her poem, *Greatest Warrior is Metamorphic Earth*.

After Prof Nahal, Professor Radha Chakravarty graced the occasion with her presence. She started by talking about her book Subliminal. She spoke about how media affects our subconscious mind and the hidden and submerged reality that guides our lives. She also talked a little about Ezekiel. Professor Chakravarty talked about women's bodies as a home and the journey of finding comfort within one's body. She read out her poem *Alien*, which deals with the same theme. She emphasized how poetry is not only the art of writing and speaking but also of listening.

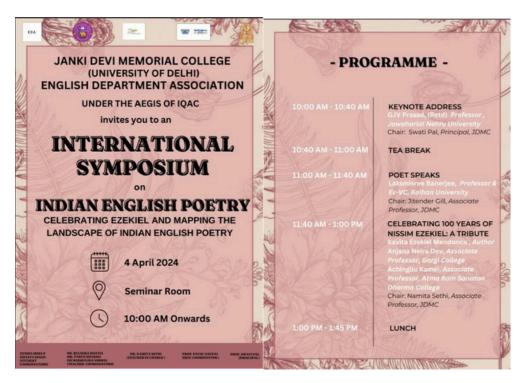
For our next session on *Aspects of Indian English Poetry*, we had Dr Vivek Narayanan joining us online and Prof B Mangalam joining us offline. This session was chaired by Dr Sanjukta Naskar and started with an introduction and felicitation of the panelists and the chair. Dr Narayanan

started with references to the keynote address by Dr Prasad and added to the importance of English poetry in India. He talked about the rich diversity of Indian culture.

Towards the end, Dr Narayanan talked about Dalit poetry in English, which set the momentum for the speech by Prof Mangalam.

Prof Mangalam reflected on her short time as a teacher at JDMC. She talked about her work *Being Dalit, Writing English* and then shifted to Meena Kandasamy and the radical shift in Dalit poetry in English that she brought about. She read Meena Kandasamy's poem *Touch* and talked about a couple of her other poems. Prof Mangalam addressed the struggle faced by Dalit writers in being published even in contemporary times and talked about how caste biases have invaded all spaces.

Following this, Ms Ruchika Bhatia concluded the symposium with a vote of thanks. A short tea break was announced, which was followed by an open mic where the students showcased their poetic capabilities and vigor before the symposium finally came to an end. The one-day international symposium was collectively attended by 148 participants in the offline and online mode.











## Attendance cum feedback sample:

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1849, BA(Hons) EnglishYes	Excellent	Excellent
372, English Hons, 1st Yes	Excellent	Excellent
1353 BA english (hosn) Yes	Excellent	Excellent
1516, BA English Hono Yes	Excellent	Excellent
17- BA(hons) English I Yes	Very good	Excellent
1687 B.A English Hons Yes	Excellent	Excellent
1562 , English hons (1s Yes	Very good	Very good
1681, BA Hons. English Yes	Very good	Very good
1232 , B.A English (hor Yes	Excellent	Excellent
807 Yes	Excellent	Excellent
1726, Ba Hons English Yes	Very good	Very good
1382, Second Year, B./Yes	Excellent	Excellent
Roll no : 268, course: B Yes	Excellent	Excellent
1393, English honours Yes	Excellent	Excellent
1500, BA (H) English, 2 Yes	Excellent	Excellent
1246, BA honours Engl Yes	Excellent	Excellent
402.English honours.1s Yes	Excellent	Excellent
947 , English honours , Yes	Very good	Very good
1042, BA(hons)English Yes	Very good	Excellent
1329, English Hons, 3n Yes	Excellent	Excellent
502, BA English honour Yes	Excellent	Excellent
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811.Ba English Honour Yes	Very good	Excellent
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840, b. A english honor Yes	Excellent	Excellent
628, ENGLISH HONS, Yes	Very good	Good
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1952, BA Hons English Yes	Good	Good
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536,BA(H) English ,1st Yes	Good	Good
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4-4-2024	18:17:57	nsethi@idm.du.ac.in	Namita Sethi	Dr
4-4-2024	18:19:53	ms.indu@jdm.du.ac.in	Indu jain	Dr
4-4-2024	18:22:16	snaskar@jdm.du.ac.in	Sanjukta Naskar	Dr
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842 ba English Hons Yes	Excellent	Excellent
844, B.A.(honours) Er Yes	Excellent	Excellent
514 English honours 1Yes	Excellent	Very good
107, BA english honour Yes	Excellent	Excellent
62. B.A. English (Hon: Yes	Very good	Very good
329, BA English Hono Yes	Good	Good
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443, Ba English Hono Yes	Very good	Very good
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609, BA Honours Eng Yes	Very good	Good
490, Ba English hons Yes	Excellent	Excellent
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514 English honours 1Yes	Excellent	Excellent
682 , BA Hons. Englis Yes	Very good	Very good
547 Ba. English hono: Yes	Excellent	Excellent
559,BA(Hons) English Yes	Very good	Excellent
51, B.A honours Engli Yes	Excellent	Very good
463 Ba hons, English Yes	Very good	Excellent
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91 , BA(HONS) ENG. Yes	Very good	Good
A Hons English, 615, Yes	Very good	Very good
847, BA English hons Yes	Very good	Excellent
3/1947 Eng honours 1 Yes	Very good	Very good
2, BA english honours Yes	Very good	Very good
677, BA(Hons) english Yes	Excellent	Excellent
445: BA Honours Eng Yes	Excellent	Excellent
559.BA(Hons) English Yes	Very good	Excellent
593, B.A. HONS. ENCYes	Excellent	Excellent
91, BA English Hons Yes	Excellent	Excellent
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328, BA Honours Eng Yes	Very good	Very good
66, BA (Hons) English Yes	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
672, 2nd year BA Hon Yes	Excellent	Excellent
786 BA english hons Yes	Excellent	Excellent
56,BA English honour Yes	Excellent	Excellent
IA Yes	Excellent	Excellent
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205, BA English Hons Yes	Excellent	Very good
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37, B.A. English Hono Yes	Excellent	Excellent
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689 BA ENGLISH HO Yes	Excellent	Excellent
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