

The Jaipur Jostle

In the George Orwellian language “...the clocks were striking thirteen” on 12.01.2014 as the fifteen Salesians started gathering at the Siliguri campus for Father Principal’s last minute orientation (regarding the trip). We took a trip round Jaipur on 16.01.2014 and came back to our rooms more informed about one of the world’s most beautiful cities, with a rich cultural heritage and a proud tradition of literature. The group was excited and all set to attend the festival commencing the following day. It was on the icy cold morning on Friday, 17.01.2014 we witnessed literature lovers from across the globe made it to the keynote address of the Festival lending their ears to the ‘Argumentative Indian’, Prof. Amartya Sen. The Nobel laureate in a later session titled ‘Choices & Freedoms’ discussed social choices, the workings and consequences of democracy, and the nature of human freedoms. The Festival included a strand of readings and conversations on the survival of languages; a series of session on ‘Crime & Punishment’ dissected the genre of the detective novel; a thought provoking and scintillating session titled ‘Women Uninterrupted’ by Ananda Devi (novelist from Mauritius writing in French); a session titled ‘Democracy Dialogues’ examined the larger issues of political and social evolution. The group gave a patient listening to all the sessions. Among the big names we listened to the much-loved ‘Interpreter of Stories’, Jhumpa Lahiri, the storyteller in the film ‘Life of Pi’, Irrfan Khan, the leading cultural theorist Homi Bhabha, writers Geoff Dyer, William Dalrymple, Kishwar Desai, Amish Tripathi, Manjushree Thapa and many more. It was indeed an enriching experience at the pink city where we tried to make sense of our multiple and changing worlds through the prism of literature.

Vivek Mishra



