



PRESS RELEASE

IK SAFAR SAATH SAATH

House of Lords-London, 14 May 2018: Edited by the eminent author and founder of Vatayan, **Divya Mathur**, the collection, *Ik Safar Saath Saath* (Vani Prakashan-Delhi) was launched by **Baroness Flather, Mr Virendra Sharma, MP, Prof Francesca Orsini** and **Shri Tarun Kumar**, Hindi & Culture Officer of the High Commission of India, London. This collection includes stories of Indian women writers from the UK, USA, Canada, Europe, Scandinavia, China and United Arabs Emirates. The writers, who attended the launch were : **Dr Achala Sharma, Usha Raje Saksena, Shail Agrawal, Arun Sabharwal, Zakia Zubairi, Kadambri Mehra** and **Jai Verma** (represented by Mat Turpin). The Forewords are written by **Prof Francesca Orsini** and **Shri Anil Joshi**, the eminent poet, critic and Second Secretary (Hindi & Culture), High Commission of India, Fiji.



Compered by **Dr Padmesh Gupta**, Founder of the UK Hindi Samiti, Gyan Pratiyogita and Purvai magazine, who felicitated for being recently awarded by the President of India, the programme began with Som Thakur's vandana, Bhasha Sanskriti, sung by **Dr Nikhil Kaushik**, Ophthalmic surgeon, film-maker and poet followed by an introduction by Vatayan's

chairperson and Director of Akademi, **Mira Kaushik, OBE**, who welcomed two new members of Vatayan – **Mr Edward Crask**, senior consultant and advisor to the Labour Party and **Aruna Sabharwal**, Founder member of Sambad and author.

The programme was chaired by **Francesca Orsini**, Professor of Hindi & South Asian Literature at SOAS, Author and researcher, and reviews were presented by **Dr Achala Sharma**, Freelance writer, author and Former Head of the BBC Hindi Service, **Aruna Ajisaria, MBE**, senior Educator, Freelance consultant, Governor of two schools and a well known critic, and **Titiksha Shah**, fashion designer, actor, poet and Director of Oxford Business College.

The programme concluded with the Vote of Thanks by **Shikha Varshney**, author, blogger and Treasurer of Vatayan. The copies of book arrived in the nick of time, thanks to **Arun** and **Aditi Maheshwari** of Vani Prakashan. The distinguished guests included authors, poets, artists, musicians and media personnel including Prof Sham Manohar Pandey, Pervaiz Alam, Jay Viswadeva, Rahul Singh and Niloufer Bilimoria of Khushwant Singh LitFest-London, Mat Turpin from UNESCO-Nottingham, Prof Vijay Vyas, Prafulla Mohanti, Yogesh Patel, Rakesh Mathur, Sathi Ludhianvi, Sue Snell, Antareepa Thakur, Sushma Mehta, and Saroj Srivastava.