

PRESS RELEASE
PRESS AND COMMUNICATION SECTION

H.E. Mr Emmanuel Lenain, Ambassador of France to India
releases the novel *Jaya Ganga* by Vijay Singh
published in Hindi by Rajkamal Prakashan and in English by Rupa Publications

New Delhi, 13 October, 2021

New Delhi, 13 October, 2021. The Ambassador of France to India, H.E. Mr Emmanuel Lenain, author and film-maker, Vijay Singh, the Head of Copy Editorial at Rupa Publications, Nishtha Kapil and the Managing Director of Rajkamal Prakashan, Mr. Ashok Maheshwari, jointly released the Hindi and English publication of the novel *Jaya Ganga* at the Residence of France.

Present for the occasion, journalist and reporter of NDTV, Ms. Anjilee Istwal, interviewed Vijay Singh about his book and its translations.

Welcoming the publication, Ambassador Emmanuel Lenain said “*I was glad to host the launch of the translation in Hindi and the re-print in English of Jaya Ganga, and proud that the French Institute in India could support this endeavor. Vijay Singh is a true friend of France and through his career as writer, film director and journalist, he has played a major role in the cultural relationship between our two countries. France and India are two nations with exceptional literary traditions, and we are keen to boost ties between our authors, publishers and readers. I look forward to next year’s New Delhi World Book Fair, where France will be the guest of honour.*”

About the author

Vijay Singh is an Indian film-maker, screenplay-writer and novelist living in Paris.

After studying History at St Stephen's College, Delhi, and the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, he moved to *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales*, Paris, for his doctoral work. Before commencing it Vijay Singh followed French classes at the University of Bordeaux and Alliance Française, Paris. However, Vijay claims that his real French learning took place in the streets and cafés of Paris and, later, in the corridors of the French newspapers *Libération* and *Le Monde Diplomatique*, for which he has written extensively since the early eighties.

He has also written for several other international newspapers like *the Guardian*.

Vijay Singh is the author of internationally-acclaimed books such as: *Jaya Ganga*, *In Search of the River Goddess*, *La Nuit Poignardée*, *Whirlpool of Shadows* and *The River Goddess*. His books have been translated into French and other European languages.

He is now working on his next feature film, *The Palace Symphony*, which is adapted from his novel *Whirlpool of Shadows*.

About the book

Nishant, a young Indian writer living in Paris, journeys down the Ganges, from its source in the Himalayas to the sea. Haunted by the memory of a beautiful Parisienne called Jaya, he plans to write a book around this voyage. On the banks of the Ganges, he chances upon Zehra, an irresistible dancing woman in the tradition of the great tawaiffs, who performs in a nearby brothel. Zehra resurrects the memory of Jaya.

With Jaya and Zehra inhabiting his mind, Nishant undertakes an entrancing journey down the Ganga replete with unexpected encounters with Sadhus, boatmen, engineers, vernacular journalists, tawaiffs, pimps, administrators, Bollywood stars like Amitabh Bachchan on his election campaign, and the omnipresent pandas...

The book was first published in French in 1985 by Editions Ramsay, Paris. In 1996, the author adapted the book into his first feature film by the name *Jaya, Fille du Gange* (Jaya Ganga). This was selected in the official competition at the Montreal World Film Festival.

About the Hindi translator

Mangalesh Dabral, the late renowned Hindi poet and writer, has translated *Jaya Ganga* from French into Hindi. *Jaya Ganga* will sadly be listed as one of those books whose translator succumbed to Covid almost soon after the translation was completed.

About Rajkamal Prakashan

Jaya Ganga has been published in Hindi in 2021 with the support of the PAP Tagore Programme by Rajkamal Prakashan.

Established in 1947, Rajkamal Prakashan is a renowned publishing house of Hindi and English literature in India. It has published more than 7000 titles, of which 16 notable works in 8 different languages were presented with the Sahitya Academy Awards. Its list includes 26 Jnanpith award winners and 8 Nobel Prize winners. Currently, the group is publishing on 45 diverse themes across 21 genres. Rajkamal Prakashan has also published the French title *Les identités meurtrières* in Hindi.

Ashok Maheshwari is the Managing Director of Rajkamal Prakashan

About Rupa Publications

Jaya Ganga has been published in English in 2021 with the support of the PAP Tagore by Rupa Publications.

Rupa is one of India's largest book publishers and distributors, based in New Delhi. It was founded in 1936 by D. Mehra and R.K. Mehra at College Street in Calcutta. It has published all of Chetan Bhagat's books, *My Country My Life* (the autobiography of L. K. Advani), some of Ramendra Kumar's and Ruskin Bond's books and Pranab Mukherjee's autobiographical title the Presidential Years.

Kapish Mehra is the Managing Director of Rupa Publications

About PAP Tagore

The Publication Assistance Programme (PAP Tagore) has enabled over 25 000 titles by French language writers to be translated and published in 80 countries. These programmes have been a major tool for the development of the influence of French literature and thought around the globe. The provisions of this programme have benefited foreign publishers willing to add French-language writers in their catalogue via translation (or in certain cases local editions in French). The Publication Assistance Programme in India, called PAP Tagore, is a support programme for Indian publishers who wish to publish a French book translated into any Indian language including English.

For more information on PAP Tagore: <https://www.ifindia.in/publication-assistance-programme/>