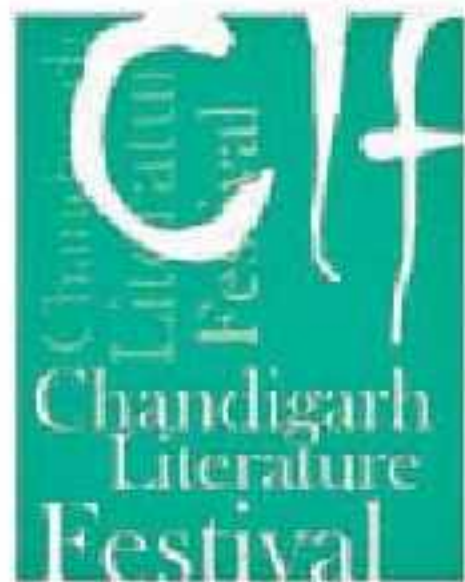


THE CURTAINS COME DOWN

The final day of the Chandigarh Literature Festival saw a celebration of film writing along with a discussion on a book on the trauma of Partition



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The last day of the Chandigarh Literature Festival began with a conversation between Nirupama Dutt and Rita Kothari about the book 'Unbordered Memories', a collection of stories translated from Sindhi into



English by Kothari.

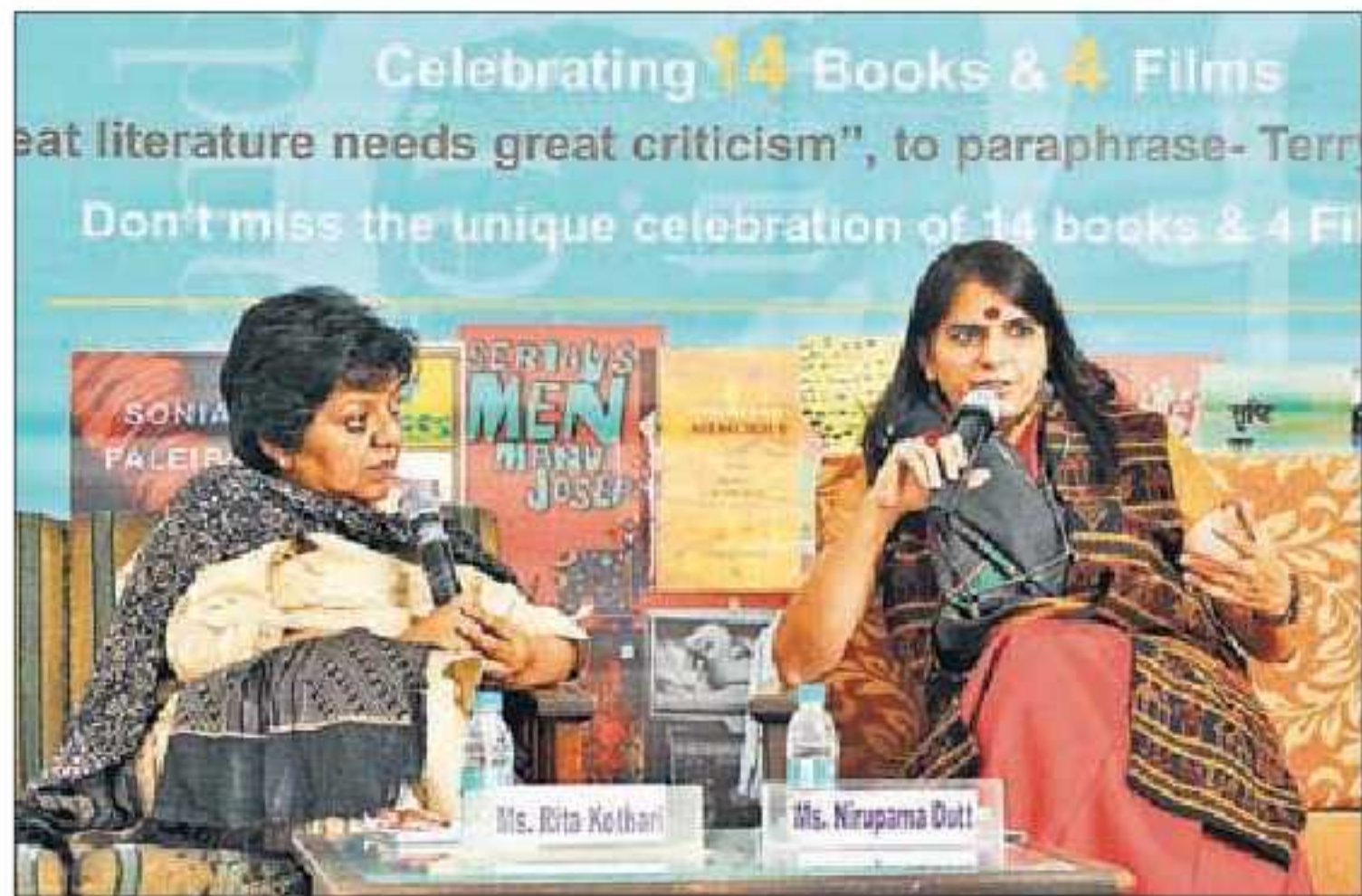
If Partition changed the lives of Sindhi Hindus who suffered the loss of home, language and culture, and felt unwanted in their new homeland, it also changed things for Sindhi Muslims.

Sindhi Muslims had to grapple with a nation that had suddenly become unrecognisable and where they found themselves to be second-class citizens. Not used to the Urdu, the mosques and the new avatars of domination, they were bewildered by the new Islamic state of Pakistan.

Sindh as a nation had simultaneously become elusive for both communities. In 'Unbordered Memories' we witness Sindhis from India and Pakistan making imaginative entries into each other's worlds. Many stories in this volume testify to the Sindhi Muslims' empathy for the world inhabited by the Hindus, and the Indian Sindhis' solidarity with the turbulence experienced by Pakistani Sindhis.

These writings from both sides of the border critique the abuse of human dignity in the name of religion and national borders.

An associate professor at the Indian Institute of Technology in Gandhinagar, Rita talked how over the years she realised that memory did not



Nirupama Dutt and Rita Kothari discussing the book 'Unbordered Memories'; (below) Hansal Mehta

have boundaries, and there was a trauma that was non-physical.

Under one cover, the stories provide a rare glimpse and perspective into the dynamics of migration, without violence. The stories give a glimpse into life in Sindh, just before and after Partition, and capture customs, habits and the inaccessible ways of life of a time gone by.

The festival also screened films like 'Dedh Ishqiya', 'Do Dooni Char', 'Shahid', with the directors of the films in conversation with the audience and the critics. "I am so

happy that CLF has made a space for films and discussions with filmmakers. It's a welcome move, at the end of the day, we are celebrating the craft of writing and I like the fact that fests like these are appreciating the literary quality of film writing," said Habib Faisal, director of 'Do Dooni Char'.

The last day also saw the screening of the movie 'Shahid' followed by a session with its director Hansal Mehta and critic Ajay Brahmattmaj. Mehta delved on how there was too much stereotyping in the film world, of which he was a vic-

tim as well.

"I was disillusioned with my own films and Shahid was an outcome of my own disillusionment because I finally wanted to present the story of the common man."

He elaborated how Shahid was a budget film and that only `85 lakh went after it, adding he had an offer of `10 crore for the movie but with a condition to star another actor, but he refused to do so.

"I admit that I made bad films and didn't take up the issues of the common man in my films but after Shahid I feel I have come out of my repentance.