

BOOK REVIEW

VOICES FROM GUJARAT

by Anita Goyal MBE

Empowering and Inspirational

Anita Goyal's *Voices from Gujarat* is the second book in a trilogy which follows on from the first book, *Voices from Punjab*. There are plans for a third book which focuses on Rajasthani women.

Empowering and inspirational, *Voices from Gujarat* captures the stories of twenty-one prominent and influential Gujarati women.

Speaking to Asian Voice Anita said, "After the tragic loss of my husband back in 2011 when I was just thirty-eight-years old, I am no stranger to grief. During that period of my life, I could never have foreseen the achievements that I have made in the past decade or that I would have had the honour of interviewing great women with phenomenal rich heritage.

"As the CEO of the Hemraj Goyal Foundation, I have always been passionate about celebrating the strength and voices of women. Despite my hopes to avoid the mention of COVID-19, the disproportionate impact that the pandemic has had on the BAME community is unavoidable."

Voices from Gujarat recognises the phenomenal stories of twenty-one Gujarati women. From OBEs, to pioneering broadcast journalists, through to doctors, chefs and authors, this range of prominent women are brought together through their shared values of culture, language and upbringing. They are women who take charge of their happiness, recognise the power of resilience and hard-work, and who strive to overcome the expectations placed upon them by society to achieve their dreams.

In a collection of interviews, these prominent women share stories of their careers and achievements whilst reflecting on their upbringing within the Gujarati community in the UK. Although each story is distinct and personal, as readers follow the extraordinary lives of each of these women, they will come to see that they are in fact united in many ways. Many of the stories touch on the expectations of women within the Gujarati community, whether that is in their career or their personal life. The women reflect on the values instilled by their families and how their upbringing in a mixed Gujarati-British culture has shaped their approach to life, empowering them to break new ground and encouraging others in the process. Dealing with the complexities of a dual identity and maintaining a work-life balance, their stories also serve to show the sacrifices made by these women and those who came before them to pave the



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way for future generations.

Opening a window into their lives, the reader will accompany each woman on their journey as they prevail over gender stereotypes, cultural differences and the limited narratives written for them by stereotyped cultural attitudes in the Gujarati community. *Voices from Gujarat* will leave you with twenty-one new role models and the self-belief that you need to drive change, succeed against the odds and defy expectations.

About the author

Anita Goyal is the CEO of the Hemraj Goyal Foundation as well as a renowned author, award-winning philanthropist, a chair and trustee of many charitable organisations and foundations and the host of the podcast *Relight Your Fire*.

Married to Avnish Goyal who is the Chair of Hallmark Care Homes, Anita's work in the third sector extends beyond the Hemraj Goyal Foundation. She sits on the Board of Trustees of the Hallmark Care Homes Foundation, holds the position of Vice President of Barnardo's and is an ambassador of the Alzheimer's Society alongside her involvement with a number of other related charities. In 2014, she launched *Ultimate You*, an organisation delivering educational workshops and seminars, with her husband.

Anita is continually looking for new ways to empower and educate communities all over the world and, under her guidance, the foundations she runs have had a huge impact in the charity and social care sectors. Her passion for helping people has helped shape and deliver countless initiatives and programmes and her vision for social change is set to drive many more.

The book will be released in December 2021 and will be available on Amazon.