Events

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Short stories, long shadows: contemporary Malayalam voices at Fort Kochi

A cat's guide to three days of Malayalam short story talks at the Kochi Biennale Foundation, with NS Madhavan, Paul Zachariah, and Sara Joseph.

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Dates **4 February 2026 – 6 February 2026**

Where

Bastion Bungalow
Historic building · Napier Street, Fort Kochi

Drawn from OpenStreetMap, by its contributors.

Dearest Gentle Reader,

> **Some random human once said that a novel is a marriage—long, arduous, and full of compromise—but a short story? A short story is an affair. It is brief, intense, and if done right, it leaves a mark that lasts a lifetime.**

I am a cat of simple pleasures. Those are a sunbeam on a rug, fresh mackarel, and a narrative that gives me the best return of investment on my valuable reading time. And starting tomorrow, Feb. 4, 2026, the Kochi

Biennale Foundation is serving up exactly that kind of narrative intensity. It happens at the Bastion Bungalow in Fort Kochi.

My cat friends from other states of India have always said that in Kerala, the short story is not merely a literary format. It is a cultural weapon. It is how this humid, vibrant strip of land talks to itself. From the political biting satire to the quiet domestic tragedies, it has done the heavy lifting of history.

Literary geniuses NS Madhavan, Paul Zachariah, and Sara Joseph are descending upon the Pavilion. They will dissect memory, language, and the precise art of saying much with very little.

If you are in Fort Kochi, paws your gallery hopping. Come sit in the shadows of the Bastion Bungalow and listen to how the greatest spin their webs.

The schedule: a 3-day literary feast

For those of you who like your plans as structured as a haiku, here is the breakdown of the 'Let's Talk' series.

Day 1: Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2026

The kickoff. We look back to look forward.

- 10:30 a.m., keynote address by the legendary NS Madhavan on "Echoes in a Small Form: Past and Present of the Malayalam Short Story (and Beyond)". (If you miss this, you are missing the heartbeat of the festival.)
- 11 a.m., in conversation with Paul Zachariah and VS Ajith. A dialogue you can expect to be sharp, witty, and unmissable.
- 2:30 p.m., panel discussion on "Writing the Moment: Shortstory and Contemporary Experience". The panel is Haritha Savithry, Shahina K. Rafiq, Francis Noronha, Hareesh S, and Bonny Thomas. The moderator is Aswathy Gopalakrishnan.

Day 2: Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026

Precision, form, and the feminine gaze.

- 10:30 a.m., in conversation with Sara Joseph and Sangeetha Srinivasan.

- 11:30 a.m., panel discussion on “Form, Language, and Precision”. The panel is M. Nandakumar, R. Shyamkrishnan, and Aash Ashita. The moderator is Priya K Nair. (A topic dear to any cat’s heart—precision is everything.)

Day 3: Friday, Feb. 6, 2026

How we remember and how we travel.

- 10:30 a.m., panel discussion on “Memory, Translation and Circulation”. The panel is C. S. Chandrika, N. S. Madhavan, and E. Santhosh Kumar. The moderator is Shahina K. Rafiq.

Why humans need this now

I feel like my gentle human readers live in an age of noise. Infinite scrolls, shouting heads. To retreat into the short story is to reclaim the power of the paws, err pause. The Kochi Biennale Foundation, along with Kirloskar, has curated a space where words are weighed and cherished, not just counted.

The details

The dates are Feb. 4-6, 2026. The venue is the Pavilion, Bastion Bungalow, Fort Kochi. Entry is open to all art and literature lovers (and discerning felines).

I will see you there. I’ll be the one in the back, pretending to sleep, but listening to every word. ~ naps ~

Did you know? Between Princess Street and Petercellie Street in Fort Kochi there was a tripod-like appliance called “Mukali”, for tying up offenders and whipping them.

Also,

Places in this story 2

Fort KochiPrincess Street
Street