

डॉ. के. श्रीनिवासराव
सचिव
Dr. K. Sreenivasarao
Secretary

साहित्य अकादेमी
(नेशनल अकादमी ऑफ़ लेटर्स)
संस्कृति मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार की स्वायत्तशासी संस्था
Sahitya Akademi
(National Academy of Letters)
An Autonomous Organisation of Government of India



SA.16/14/

February, 2018

PRESS RELEASE

Seminar on Oral and Tribal Literature and Tribal Poets' Meet

Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, organized a National Seminar on Oral and Tribal Literature on February 13, 2018 at Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi. The inaugural session began with a welcome address by Dr. K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary Sahitya Akademi. The session was conducted by Dr. Devendra Kumar Devesh, OSDP, Sahitya Akademi. The Secretary described the efforts of the Akademi to promote tribal literature throughout the country and said that no other nation is as linguistically rich as India is but over time these tribal languages have been marginalized. He reiterated the commitment of the Akademi towards the development of tribal languages. The inaugural address was delivered by Professor Mrinal Miri. According to him, "To have a world view is to be a part of that world; meanings constitute worldview and languages are home to meaning. So the tribal language makes up the tribal world. Each language has developed a sort of autonomy which must be recognized." The Chief Guest of the occasion was Prof. Temsula Ao, eminent English writer. She said that when we write tribal poetry, we are not competing with the poetry of other languages; rather, we are retrieving material from old singers and storytellers and putting them into other more recognizable and accessible forms. The keynote address was delivered by Professor T.V. Kattimani, Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University. While the presidential address was delivered by Dr. B.B. Kumar, eminent linguist and Chairman, ICSSR, who chaired the session. The first session was chaired by Professor Desmond Kharmawphlang, and the papers were presented by Dr. Zothonchhingi Khiangte, Dr. D. Kuoilie and Sri Ashwini Kumar Pankaj. Dr. Devendra Kumar Devesh, OSDP, Sahitya Akademi conducted the Tribal Poets' Meet, which was the second session of the seminar. The following poets recited their poems during the programme-- Arjun Singh Dhurve (Baiga), Rajkishore Nayak (Bathudi), Kulin Patel (Dhodia), Colnat B Marak (Garo), Roop Singh Khusram (Gondi), Rudra Narayan Panigrahi (Balbi), Kairasingh Bandia (Ho) and Kalachand Mahali (Mahali), Kuldeep Singh Bampal (Bhotia), Sudarshan Bhumij (Bhumij), Rafiq Anjum (Gojri), Veera Rathod (Gormati), On Teran (Karbi) and Minimon Laloo, recited their poems. Zohmig Thanga (Songchar), Riquoma Rq. Laloo (Jayantia) and Saroj Kerketta (Kharia) could not attend the programme. The poets recited their poems in their own languages as well as the English/ Hindi translation of the same for the convenience of the audience. Dr. Devendra Kumar Devesh summed up the meet and expressed gratitude on behalf of Sahitya Akademi to the participants and the audience.

(K. Sreenivasarao)

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PRESS RELEASE Writers' Meet

Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, organized a Writers' Meet program as part of the Festival of Letters, featuring presentations by the Sahitya Akademi Award Winners, on February 13, 2018 at Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi. Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi welcomed Dr. Madhav Kaushik, Vice President, Sahitya Akademi, the Award winners and the audience. He stated that the Writers' Meet enabled the audience to understand firsthand the making of an award-winning book. Dr Madhav Kaushik, Vice President, Sahitya Akademi, invited the Award-winning authors to share their experiences while penning the book and the process of creative writing. Sri Jayanta Madhav Bora, Award winner in Assamese, talked about his novel, *Moriahola*, which deals with lost villages and how he compared the erosion of the Brahmaputra and the erosion of life's values. Sri Afsar Ahmed, Award winner in Bengali, talked about his novel, *Sei Kikhonj Manusta*, which deals with a missing person who reappears after four years and touches the lives around him by his mantra to survive life day-by-day. Smt. Rita Boro, Award winner in Bodo, talked about how she took up serious literature and how literature helps to overcome stereotypes and patriarchal taboos. Sri Shiv Mehta, Award winner in Dogri for *Banna*, a collection of stories, talked about his journey as a creative writer, playwright, actor, painter, designer, etc. Ms. Mamang Dai, Award winner in English for her novel, *The Black Hill*, said, "[*The Black Hill* is] Essentially the story of a French Jesuit priest, Father Nicolas Michel Krick and Kaheesha, a legendary figure of the Mishmi tribe who was captured by the British authorities and hanged in Dibrugarh Jail, Assam, for the alleged murder of Father Krick and his colleague Augustine Bourry." Sri Urmi Ghanshyam Desai, Award-winner in Gujarati, for his work of Criticism, *Gujarati Vyakaranna Baso*, discussed his book with the audience and said that through this book "an attempt has been made to present 200 years of Gujarati grammar from 1808 to 2006." Ramesh Kuntal Megh, Award winner in Hindi for his work of literary criticism *Vishw Mithak Sarit Sagar*, talked about fantasy in literature and shared his views about the much talked about proto language. Sri T.P. Ashoka, Award winner in Kannada, for his work of literary criticism, *Kathana Bharathi*, said, "I have always believed that literary criticism is basically an attempt to understand and appreciate a literary work before me... A critic should be ready to recognize what he has missed in his own reading, in the light of others' readings. Only then literary criticism gains sharpness and credibility." Sri Autar Krishen Rahbar, Award winner in Kashmiri for his collection of short stories *Yeli Parada Woth*, said that his first collection of stories was published in 1958 when he was doing MA and at that time his interest towards research grew. Sri Gajanan Jog, Award-winner in Konkani for his collection of short stories *Khand Ani Her Kathadwelt* on the themes of stories ranging from mental derangement, a schizophrenic person dismissed from service, classical misers coming from different social backgrounds, modern white-collared wage earners being constantly pressed by their higher-ups, lovers, artistsetc. . Professor Udaya Narayana Singh 'Nachiketa', Award-winner in Maithili, for his collection of poetry *Jahalak Diary* (The Prison Diary), stated that his poetry "shows a rare thematic congruence; the poems are written from the perspective of someone trapped in a jail cell." Sri K. P. Ramanunni, Award-winner in Malayalam, for his novel, *Daivathinte Pusthakam* (God's Own Book), said, "No novel in any language of the world has so far had Prophet

Muhammad featured as the protagonist—except now in *Daivathinte Pusthakam*. In it, the Prophet calls Krishnan "ikka" (elder brother) and Krishnan affectionately calls the Prophet "muthe" (precious dear)." Sri Rajen Toijamba, Award-winner in Konkani, for his play, *Chahee Taret Khuntakpa*, depicted a very crucial period in the history of Manipur. In his speech he said, "I had always wanted to pen down this tragic episode of the 'Burmese Invasion' of 7 years (1819-1825) to awaken today's politics in the state and its people, not for the purpose of lamenting the tragedy but to regain political consciousness as it is the need of today." Sri Shrikant Deshmukh, Award-winner in Marathi, for his collection of poetry *Bolave Te Amhi*, said that a poet is a sensitive representative of present--by scratching himself he connects himself to the social and cultural environment. Smt. Bina Hangkhim, Award-winner in Nepali for her work of literary criticism *Kriti Vimarsha*, said, "Man being a social creature never stops learning from each other and from the society one lives in. It also plays a vital role in encouraging the outcome of his/her emotions. The ups and downs in man's life invariably leaves an everlasting impression on one's emotions." Smt. Gayatri Saraf, Award-winner in Odia, for her collection of short stories *Etavatira Shilpi*, while talking about the plight of child-labours in the kilns, said, "I am amazed at observing their will to live, their loyalty in love and human relationship. That led me to write *Tathapi Jibana*. What can I do for them, I ask myself and feel like writing" Sri Nachhattar, Award-winner in Punjabi for his novel *Slow Down*, which is based on the tragic turns of lives consequent to economic slow-down, sharing his views with the audience said that he has centred his writings around members from all spheres of the society, who face injustice while striving for a good life. Sri Neeraj Daiya, Award-winner in Rajasthani for his work of criticism *Bina Hasal Pai*, stated that his first duty is to save the trust of those who believe in criticism; he believes every creative work has its own filaments of criticism, thus making the writer the first critic of his own work. Sri Niranjan Mishra, Award-winner in Sanskrit for his collection of poetry *Gangaputravadanam*, an epic on the life of Swami Shri Nigmanandji, stated that he believed that poetry is expression of inner emotions of poets. Sri Bhujanga Tudu, Award-winner in Santali for his collection of poetry *Tahenan Tangi re* (I will be on Wait), informed the audience how he started writing poetry after getting inspired by a poem of Rabindranath Tagore. Jagdish Lachhani, Award-winner in Sindhi for his collection of essays *Aachhende Laja Maraan*, said, "Creative writing is not an easy task. A writer has to meet head-on with severe hardships. Just as a mother has to bear the pains while giving birth to a child, similarly the writer has to bear the pains of emotional extremes during the creation of a literary work." Devipriya, Award-winner in Telugu for her collection of poetry *Gaali Rangu*, said, "Ever since I fell in love with this heady labour of writing poetry some forty years ago, there was hardly any respite. Neither was there a moment of true peace. If your mind is not pathologically restive, you are not a poet." Baig Ehsas, Award-winner in Urdu for his collection of short stories *Dakhma*, said that the collection touches on the contemporary themes like gradual extinction of minorities, everything having its price-tag, hunger for power, displacement from ones own land, lack of patience, intolerance etc.

Dr Madhav Kaushik, Vice President, Sahitya Akademi, thanked all the Award-winners. He said Writers' Meet is a unique event in itself for all, as it provides all the Award-winners to meet each other under one roof, which is not possible in any other programme. He concluded the programme with an Urdu couplet.


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Indo-Israeli Writers' Meet

Sahitya Akademi organized Indo-Israeli Writers' Meet at Rabindra Bhavan Lawns on February 13, 2018. Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the Israeli delegation comprising Mr. Meir Iosef Shalom Ouziel (leader of the delegation), Ms. Dorit Zilberman Ginzburg, Ms. Adiva Kitron Geffen, Ms. Hava Cohen, Ms. Avivit Levy and Ms. Samdar Sidi, The Indian writers represented almost all the 24 languages recognized by the Akademi, media personalities and other dignitaries. In his speech he recalled the long relationship between Indian and Israeli literature, commonalities between India and Israel in reviving ancient languages and similarities between Hinduism and Judaism. Ms. Dorit Zilberman talked about various initiatives of the Israeli Writers' Association, relationship between India and Israel and later shared a story. Mr. Meir Iosef Shalom Ouziel thanked the Akademi and talked about how relationships can promote bonds and reduce the divisions in a society, especially the relationships among institutions. He detailed the role of Israeli Writers' Association in promoting literature through programmes, books and journals. Ms. Hava Cohen recited her poetry and shared her thoughts about a variety of cultures, diverse approaches to life and her own experiences. Ms. Adiva Kitron Geffen talked about her works, her experiences of creative writing among other things. Ms. Samdar Sidi talked about her personal experiences in life and explained the beauty of life, human relationships etc. A lively but brief interactive session followed the presentations. Dr K. Sreenivasarao proposed a vote of thanks.

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13 February, 2018

PRESS RELEASE Samvatsar Lecture

Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, organized Samvatsar Lecture, which was delivered by Dr S. L. Bhyrappa on February 13, 2018 at Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi. Dr.,K.Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, introduced the speaker to the audience. Professor Chandrashekara Kambar welcomed Dr.Bhyrappa, with a bouquet and a set of Akademi publications as gift. In his welcome speech, Prof. Kambar said that Dr.,Bhyrappa is one of the most towering writers of Indian fiction.

At the beginning DrBhyrappa said: "I cannot deliver a learned speech. Even if I try to give a learned talk, my creative mind obstructs me. Whenever, I read a book on physical science, social science like history, economics, sociology or political science in which facts are important, my mind leaves the weight of facts and flies up in the sky of imagination." He further shared experiences of his childhood days, family crises, which made him obsessed with the meaning of death. He also discussed how writing *Vamshavriksha*, (his first novel) turned him to be creative in writing fiction and not in explaining truth or beauty or moral values. Comparing the analyzing concept and theories of different philosophical schools, he further stressed on Indian philosophy, how the essence of the Vedas is in the Upanishads; the essence of the Upanishads is expressed in *Bhagavadgita* and the Brahmasutras of Badarayana. He also discussed the context of Ramayana and Mahabharata using some Sanskrit Shlokas. While concluding, he revealed why he chose the title *Ascent to Vyasa Guha* for his lecture. He said, "At Badrinath there is a cave called Vyasaguha. The Sthalapuraana says that the author of the Mahabharata lived in that cave and wrote (dictated) the greatest epic of humankind... Even though Vyasa was not an active player of the Mahaabhaarata history, he was a participant to the extent he performed Niyoga for the birth of Dritarashtra, Pandu and Vidura. That is, he was a participant and he lived somewhere near the theatre of action and he knew each and every detail of the action. But to sit and write (or dictate) why did he go to that cold place of ten thousand feet height at the age of more than a hundred years? The meaning of the myth is; the vast material that he knew or accumulated or collected took place on the plains – i.e., the lower level and Vyasa was too near the action and the actors. He went to the height of the Himalayas from where he could see the whole story with detachment, with sympathy (Sahridayata) and understand even villainous characters, the mysterious vision of life in the process of writing unfolding ..." He ended his lecture saying, "A writer who fails to understand the full meaning of this myth cannot climb even one foot towards the height of Vyasa Guha."

At the end of the function the compilation of Dr.Bhyrappa's lecture, *Accent to Vyasa Guha*, was released.


(K. Sreenivasarao)