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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Sahitya Akademi's Festival of Letters – Day 5**

The annual Festival of Letters of Sahitya Akademi continued for the fifth day at the Rabindra Bhavan in New Delhi on February 19, 2016. The day started with the continuation of the national seminar on “Gandhi, Ambedkar, Nehru: Continuities and Discontinuities.”

The four sessions of the day in the seminar were chaired by distinguished litterateurs and critics of the country, Prof S.L. Bhyrappa, Dr Rukmini Bhaya Nair, Prof K. Satchidanandan and Dr Bhalachandra Nemade.

The panelists also included some eminent names like Makarand Paranjape, Faustina Bama, Rakshanda Jalil, K. Enoch and Ramdas Bhatkal. Prof Bhyrappa spoke extensively about caste and communal politics which is creating divisions among the citizens of the country. He said it is pitiable that governments in the country followed the same divide and rule policy of the Britishers. Prof K. Satchidanandan delivered a lecture on the necessity of bringing back the philosophies of Nehru and Ambedkar on the face of increasing caste violence and communal disharmony that the country is witnessing.

The discussions were on the topics ‘Freedom of Expression,’ ‘Women and Equality,’ ‘Caste and Equality’ and ‘Language Question.’ Large number of academicians, research scholars and students from the universities and colleges attended the seminar in large number.

The day also witnessed a daylong symposium on Unwritten Languages of India. Distinguished linguist and scholar, Dr Debi Prasanna Pattanayak inaugurated the symposium, while Dr Mahendra Kumar Mishra, eminent folklorist and scholar, delivered the keynote address. Dr Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari, President, Sahitya Akademi, Dr Chandrashekar Kambar, Vice President, Sahitya Akademi and Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi graced the inaugural ceremony. Dr Pattanayak talked about how that with the advent of the printing press the hegemony of the written word gained supremacy and pushed the indigenous languages were pushed to the background. With this, the unwritten literature got relegated to folk literature and anthropology became a handmade of colonialism he observed. Dr Mishra stated that that inspite of multilingual situation, oral tradition of India fosters unity of thought and knowledge representing a common paradigm in Indian literature.

People can view the live webcast of Sahitya Akademi's Festival of Letters by visiting [http://sahitya-akademi.gov.in/sahitya-akademi/festival/webcast\\_2016.jsp](http://sahitya-akademi.gov.in/sahitya-akademi/festival/webcast_2016.jsp)