



साहित्योत्सव Festival of Letters

28 January - 2 February 2019

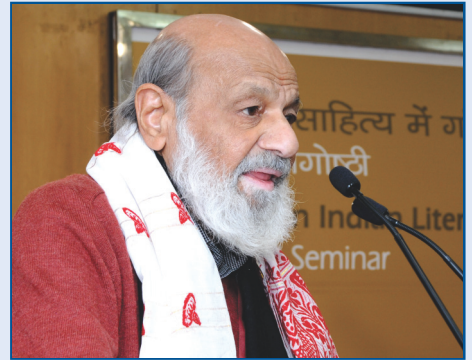


भाषाएँ अनेक • देश एक

Daily News Bulletin

Friday, 01st February, 2019

National Seminar on “Gandhi in Indian Literature”



Following the tradition of organizing a national seminar on an important theme during the Festival of Letters, this year Sahitya Akademi organized a three-day national seminar on “Gandhi in Indian Literature,” starting from 31st January at the Akademi Auditorium, New Delhi.

The inaugural session saw some outstanding personalities, like Sri Jayanta Mahapatra, distinguished poet and writer in English, and recently selected as Fellow of Sahitya Akademi; Mr Armoogum Parsuramen, former Education Minister of Mauritius Government, former Director of UNESCO, present Chairman of International Thirukkural Foundation, and the Guest of Honour at the Seminar; and Sri Sudhir Chandra, eminent historian and writer in English. Welcoming the guests and audience, Dr. K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, said that it is not very often that one comes across a personality like Gandhiji whose thoughts and actions guide and change the destiny of a nation of millions within a short span of time.

Sri Armoogum Parsuramen stated that Gandhiji was a man of great vision, but his vision was not about an industrialized India with high technology. He further said that the life of Gandhiji has become a theme of art—whether in the form of literature, painting, sculpture or drama or dance. Sri Jayanta Mahapatra observed that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi has been a part of his story all along. He felt he was having a kind of quiet conversation with the deeds of this long-dead man who was dedicated to his country, in whatever he had been doing all his life, whether as a teacher and researcher in Physics, or as a writer of some sort. Sri Sudhir Chandra, in his Keynote Address, rued that Gandhi has become a forgotten figure so far as his ideas are concerned. We have resorted to remembering him as a great leader who showed a new way to humankind, and complement ourselves for having made Gandhi's historic experiment possible. Prof. Chandrashekhar Kambar, President, Sahitya Akademi, observed that today some might even argue that Gandhi's ideas and his mission in

Today's Events

National Seminar :

Gandhi in Indian Literature

Sahitya Akademi Auditorium, 10.00 a.m

Panel Discussion : Media and Literature

Rabindra Bhavan Lawns, 11.00 a.m

Panel Discussion : Present Scenario of Playwriting

Rabindra Bhavan Lawns, 2.30 p.m.

Indo Fusion Music

by Sunita Bhuyan and Troupe

Rabindra Bhavan Lawns, 6.00 p.m.





life was impossible to emulate in the real world. Yet, we still feel a little nudge of conscience telling us that something is not right in this kind of easy dismissal. Gandhi still haunts us as his was a transforming presence.

A book release function followed the inaugural session, in which Sri Jayanta Mahapatra released three books-- *Prasnottara Ratna Malika*, in Sanskrit, by Adi Sankaracharya, translated into 23 Indian languages, *All Men Are Brothers* compiled and edited by Krishna Kripalani, translated into 10 Indian languages and *Mahatma Gandhi in his Gujarati Writings* by C.N. Patel.

In the first session of the Seminar, chaired by Prof. Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari, former President and Fellow of Akademi, four eminent scholars—Prof. Nand Kishore Acharya, Hindi poet, playwright and critic; Prof. Avadhesh Kumar Singh, the Vice-Chancellor of Auro University, Surat; Prof. Neera Chandhoke, writer on civil society, violence, democracy and secularism; and Dr Mini Prasad, writer on eco-criticism and eco-feminism, presented their papers.

Prof. Nand Kishore Acharya in his paper on “Gandhi's Economics” said that when in 1931, Mahatma Gandhi addressing a gathering of Indian students in London said, “I am more concerned about the barbarization of human nature instead of getting rid of the pain of my countrymen-- It is the barbarization which is the result of this modern civilization.” He believed in the economic freedom of the smallest unit, that is the village.

Prof. Avadhesh Kumar Singh in his paper on “Gandhian Values in 21st Century” said that he was not a Gandhian not because he does not want to be so but because of the fact that he cannot be a Gandhian as the person called Gandhi was too simple to be followed sincerely. He further said that Gandhi valued values because they write the destiny of an individual, society and culture.

Prof. Neera Chandhoke in her paper on “Swarajya in a Globalized World” said that Gandhi's considered rejection of violence was, as a matter of course, grounded in familiarity with this particular mode of doing politics. She further said that Gandhi rejected violence for a second

reason also, which was purely epistemological. Violence according to him, stems from the conviction that we as the perpetrators of violence are right, or that we know the truth, and that our notion of truth has to be imposed on others who must necessarily be short of the truth or even wrong.

Dr Mini Prasad in her paper on “Gandhi's Concept of Ecology” said that Gandhi aspired for a developmental approach that would aid the permanent sustenance of Indian villages. His famous words, “The world has enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed” point to his visions.

The second session was devoted to 'Gandhi and Dalit Movement'. The speakers were Prof. Gopal Guru and Sri Sheoraj Singh Bechain. Prof. Gopal Guru presented his paper on “Gandhi and the Concept of Harijan”. He discussed in brief how the word 'Harijan' has come. He said that the term 'Harijan' is not for the untouchables; it was for caste Hindus; the word has since been banished from use. It was considered that the word Harijan is close to truth and therefore God.

Sri Sheoraj Singh Bechain spoke on “Gandhi's influence on the Dalit Movement and Literature”. As regards the subject, he said that the people who believe that Gandhi ji used to call 'Harijan' those who were discriminated and boycotted on the basis of their caste, and on the other hand, Ambedkar and Swami Achutanand considered it insulting, will feel awkward and contradictory. The subject will also sound impractical and imaginary to those who believe that Gandhi, instead of standing for the cause of the legitimate rights and honour to dalits, wished to keep them at the mercy of Hindus. He then discussed in detail the gradual change of scenario after Independence.

Sri Narendra Jadhav, as Chair, talked about the two papers presented and gave his own views. While speaking on the relation of Gandhi and Ambedkar, he said that they understood the need to work together. He gave an interesting account of how Ambedkar was inducted in the Nehru cabinet after India gained Independence and also about his induction into the Constituent Assembly that drafted the Indian Constitution.



FACE-TO-FACE



Sahitya Akademi also organized a 'Face-to-Face' programme at Rabindra Bhawan Lawns in New Delhi featuring select Award winners in conversation with eminent writers from their languages.

Dr. K. Vanaja interviewed Smt. Chitra Mudgal. Smt. Mudgal said that she writes for the common man. While answering the question as to how she chooses the subject of her novels or stories, she said that the lessons she learns from the varied experiences of her life form the subjects of her literary work. Talking about the story of *Post Box 203 Nala Spoara*, she said that once in a train compartment she got a chance to meet a young transgender. After listening to his story she felt extremely guilty that being a social worker she had been ignoring this deprived community. To overcome that guilt she wrote this novel in order to show the plight and agony of the transgender community.

Dr. Mohanjit, Award winner in Punjabi, was in conversation with Dr. Rawail Singh. The conversation mainly focussed on the award-winning book *Kone da Suraj*. In reply to a question whether poetry is a spontaneous flow of imagination, Dr Mohanjit said that while it is true that poetry comes spontaneously, it always needs to be framed and structured to make it presentable and readable. While writing *Kone da Suraj*, the biggest challenge before him was how to transpose the geometrical design of the temple at Konarak into poetry, which, for him, was true poetry.

Sri. A.R. Venkatachalapathy interviewed Sri S. Ramakrishnan, Award winner in Tamil. Sri Ramakrishnan observed that fiction is truth, told in different ways, and fiction is not fictitious. He stated that he took up the novel *Sancharam* (Tamil award-winning novel) because Nadaswaram is an instrument connected with the Tamil identity which is fast disappearing due to general apathy

and ignorance of the masses. To a query, Sri Ramakrishnan answered that he wants to take up a novel based on "Sangam" cultural milieu. He also shared his thoughts on the creative process of writing a novel and commented that it is not a predetermined process and the writer should allow the free flow of thoughts.

Sri J.S. Murthy interviewed Sri Kolakaluri Enoch, Award winner in Telugu. He talked about his fight against the exploitation of people belonging to backward classes, minorities and tribals. He also emphasized that his writings mostly reflect the struggles of the dalits, women, poor and the humiliated class.

Sri K.G. Nagarajappa, Award winner in Kannada, in his conversation with Ms. Asha Devi, spoke about the religious movements, which, while on the one hand organize the society, on the other, divide it. When asked about his rebellious writings he said that as he was born in a poor and illiterate family of a small village, he had the first-hand experience of witnessing discrimination on the basis of class, caste and creed. He was moved when he saw a weaver weaving clothes for the rich but was not able to provide clothes for his own family. There were sights like this that moved him and made him the voice of the voiceless.

Sri Dinkar Kumar interviewed Sri Sananta Tanty, Award winner in Assamese. When asked about his works, Sri Tanty replied that poetry for him is an art. Just as an artist highlights the contemporary world in his paintings with colour and imagination, he, too, tries to enrich his poetry with words, emotions and experiences. He writes for humanity and tries to give it a touch of beauty. He has been suffering from cancer since 2010, and while fighting this deadly disease he composed better poems, which, in turn, gave him the strength to live strongly.



YUVA SAHITI: THE NEW HARVEST



Sahitya Akademi organized 'Yuva Sahiti: The New Harvest' at Rabindra Bhawan Lawns on Thursday, 31 January 2019, in New Delhi featuring readings and discussions by well-known young litterateurs representing 23 Indian languages. In the inaugural session, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcoming the participants and audience, spoke briefly about the value of youth, the importance of writings by young authors, not only in Indian traditions but in traditions all over the world. He delineated various initiatives of the Akademi to promote young authors in all the languages of India. In his inaugural address, Prof K. Satchidanandan, distinguished poet and scholar, talked



about the emergence of young writers in various literary traditions of India. He observed that in societies where young authors are promoted there is better balance and much progress. In his Presidential address, Dr Chandrashekhar Kambar, President, Sahitya Akademi, observed that all institutions of society should encourage and promote young writers. He stated that Yuva Sahiti is a wonderful platform, especially the multilingual ones such as this, for the young writers to express themselves. In the first session chaired by T. Devipriya, nine noted young poets, Brahm Dutt Magotra, Neha Bansal, Anant Rathod, Ghanshyam 'Devansh', Parvaiz Gulshan, Sreejith Perumthachan, Amrut Telang, Ali Rajpura and Avishek Shukla, recited their compositions. In the second session devoted to 'Literature Today' and chaired by Sri Nirmal Kanti Bhattacharjee,

four well-known young writers, Deba Bhuson Borah, Sangita Sanya, Jagdish Giri and M. Narayana Sharma, discussed the current scenario of literary milieu in various traditions. Summing up, Sri Nirmal Kanti Bhattacharjee pointed out that the strength of our literature is the plurality and diversity of cultures. In the third session devoted to story reading and chaired by Dr Gourhari Das, five noted short story writers, Momita, Shrikant Dubey, Shridhar Banvasi, Jayesh A. Raut and Rabinarayan Dash, read out their stories. In the fourth and concluding session devoted to poetry reading and chaired by Shri Pankaj Rag, nine well-known young poets, Jwishri Boro, Sufia Khatoon, Narayan Jha, R.K. Master Boy, Raju Chhetri, Manoj Chawla, Sanjay Kumar Choubey, Shyam C. Tudu and R. Boobalan, recited their compositions.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME: GAYAN-BAYAN, MATI AKHORA AND RAM BIJOY KHONDAN DRISYA



Programmes of Festival of Letters

2 February 2019

NATIONAL SEMINAR : GANDHI IN INDIAN LITERATURE
(10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.) Sahitya Akademi Auditorium

SPIN-A-TALE : PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN
(10.30 a.m. - 2.00 p.m.) Rabindra Bhavan Lawns

PANEL DISCUSSION : PUBLISHING IN INDIA
(11.00 a.m. - 1.30 p.m.) Rabindra Bhavan Lawns

TRANSGENDER POETS' MEET
(2.30 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.) Rabindra Bhavan Lawns



SAHITYA AKADEMI

Rabindra Bhavan, 35 Ferozshah Road, New Delhi 110001
Phone No. : 011-23386626/27/28 Fax : 011-23382428

Email : secretary@sahitya-akademi.gov.in

Website : <http://www.sahitya-akademi.gov.in>

Facebook : <http://www.facebook.com/Sahityaakademi>