



2016 साहित्योत्सव  
festival of letters

15-20 February 2016

**SAHITYA AKADEMI** *Newsletter*

Daily News Bulletin

Friday, 19 February 2016

**National Seminar on GANDHI, AMBEDKAR, NEHRU  
Continuities and Discontinuities**

Every year Sahitya Akademi organizes a national seminar with relevant themes as part of the annual Festival of Letters. This year's focus is on the three prominent makers of modern India.

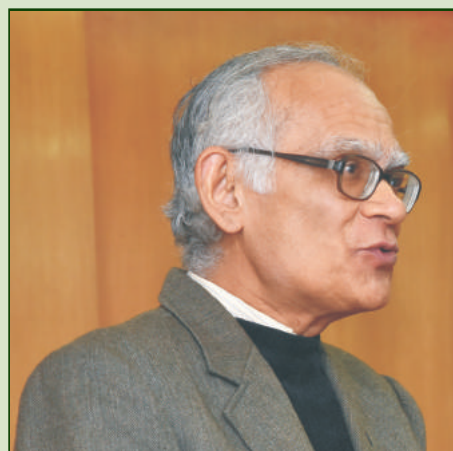
In the inaugural session, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the dignitaries, participants and audience and spoke briefly about the scope and objectives of the seminar. He stated that the seminar is one of the steps that Akademi is initiating in highlighting the importance and relevance of these doyens to the 21st century India.

Dr Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari, President, Sahitya Akademi, talked about how Gandhi Nehru and Ambedkar, though each one different and pursued different ideology and path, influenced each other in direct or indirect ways. He pointed out the ways in which Gandhi influenced Nehru and also pointed out that differences between Gandhi and Ambedkar on the issue of caste led to a full length discussion on the nature of the institution itself.

In her inaugural address, Dr Kapila Vatsyayan, eminent scholar, talked about how great leaders like Gandhi and Nehru occupied the mental space of the masses. Dr Kapila



Vatsyayan highlighted the spiritual dimension of Gandhi which Nehru and Ambedkar did not share and observed that unlike the current times where all the three leaders occupy our mental space, in the 1950's and 1960's only Gandhi and Nehru dominated the memory of the public. She wanted to find out from the Akademi experts if 'adivasis' can be equated with dalits and congratulated Sahitya Akademi for organizing such a wonderful seminar.



**Today's Programme**

**Symposium** on Unwritten Languages of India • **National Seminar** on Gandhi, Ambedkar, Nehru : Continuities

**Cultural Programme** : Performance of 'Kathakali'



In his speech, Dr Krishnakumar, eminent scholar and educationist, highlighted the major distinctions among Gandhi, Nehru and Ambedkar and observed that while Gandhi's vision (at a fundamental level) centered around man, revolution and evolution of man and his relationship with the state. On the other hand Ambedkar's vision and contributions centered on the State and how to streamline social institutions. He also highlighted how Gandhi and Ambedkar differed in their approaches on abolition of caste system.

In his keynote address, Dr Manoj Das, eminent scholar and Fellow of Sahitya Akademi, talked about how and why all the three leaders should be treated as agencies for change for which India was ready. He said spiritual understanding of movement of this type is necessary, for, otherwise it would be impossible even to conceive how was it possible for one or two persons to galvanize the entire country at a time when there were no means of fast communication or travelling.

In his concluding remarks, Dr Chandrashekar Kambar, Vice President, Sahitya Akademi, highlighted the changes that took place in almost all the spheres of human activity and how Gandhi, Nehru and Ambedkar were responsible for it.

In the first session devoted to 'Freedom and Non-violence' and chaired by Prof Sitanshu Yashaschandra, three eminent scholars, Sri Nand Kishore Acharya, Sri Pundalik Naik and Ms. Anuradha Roy, presented their papers 'Himsa se mukti hi swatantrata,' 'Gandhi Nehru aur Ambedkar: Saatatyā aur asaatyā' and 'Gandhian social ideology coming to terms with Nehruvian state: Thoughts and Experiments in Bengal' respectively. In the second session devoted to 'Response to the West' and was chaired by Dr Bhalachandra Nemade, two eminent scholars, Malchand Tiwary and Kunal Chattopadhyay, presented their papers focusing on the impact of the three leaders in Rajasthan to boycott western things and Ambedkar & Indian Nationalism, respectively.

## PURVOTTARI : North-East and Northern Writers' Meet

Sahitya Akademi organized a programme 'Purvottari' featuring eminent writers and poets from North-East and Northern regions of India. In the inaugural session, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the dignitaries and participants of the event. He observed that despite beautiful landscape, wonderful languages though mostly oral some time ago and vast amount of literature, almost all of literature from the region was not reaching other parts of India. He informed the audience that to remedy this situation and restore the balance with reference to relationship between various literary traditions, Sahitya Akademi has been promoting literature from North-East by way of organizing a number multilingual writers/poets' meets connecting writers/poets from North-East and different parts of India and also publishing tribal and oral literature from the region.



In his inaugural address, Sri Lakshmi Nandan Bora, eminent Assamese writer said he is very happy that more and more writers from North-East are getting to interact and learn from the writers and poets of rest of India. He said he is very happy that because of Sahitya Akademi, more and more translators from the North-Eastern region are getting to know nuances and techniques from translators of other regions and languages.

In his Presidential speech Dr Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari said 'Jitini vividhta uttar-purvotri bhashaon aur Sanskrit mein pai jati hain utni vividhta aur kahin nahi hai.' He also expressed his deep concern about the future of marginal languages which are in danger because of the electronic and print media. He also said that the promotion of North-Eastern literature is on the top agenda of the Sahitya Akademi.



In the first session that was devoted to ‘Why do I write?’ and chaired by Smt. Rita Chowdhury, five noted writers, Sri Aurobindo Uzir (Bodo), Sri Virendra Jain (Hindi), Sri Vikram Sampath (English), Ms. Lairenlakpam Ibemhal Devi (Manipuri) and Krishna Kumar Toor (Urdu), talked about why they write. Sri Uzir said despite lot of efforts he is not able to trace the reasons for his writing and stated that writing came to him naturally and at a very early age. Sri Virendra Jain said a number of unsavory incidents in his life forced him to look for ways of catharsis and writing provided him best platform to express himself and free his mind. Sri Vikram Sampath said he would agree with Orewell and give four reasons of the former – sharing ego, aesthetic enthusiasm, historical and political purposes. Ms. Lairenlakpam Ibemhal Devi said her love for nature and her gregarious nature ensured she opted poetry writing. Krishna Kumar Toor said his craving to share his feelings took him to writing.

In the second session that was devoted to story reading and chaired by L. Joychandra Singh, two noted fiction writers, Ms. Manika Devee (Assamese) and Sri Roop Singh Chandel (Hindi) presented their papers. In the third session devoted to poetry reading and chaired by Leeladhar Mandloi, ten noted poets, Sri Pranjit Bora (Assamese), Sri Sushil Begana (Dogri), Sri Abdul Rashid Shad (Kashmiri), Sri Ajit Kumar Azad (Maithili), Sri Longjam Ibotombi Singh (Manipuri), F. Lalzuithanga (Mizo), Ms. Kritimani Khatiwada (Nepali), Sri Satish Gulati (Punjabi), Sri Chandra Bhushan Jha (Sanskrit) and Ms. Yashoda Murmu (Santali).

## Face-to-Face

Face-to-Face is a programme that takes place during the Festival of Letters every year. In this programme an eminent scholar from a particular language is invited to interview the Award winner in that language for that year. Every year select Awardees get to interact with scholars and the objective of this programme is to provide opportunities to other people to know more about the Award Winner.

The first Award Winner to take part in the day was Marathi’s Arun Khopkar. Sri Kumar Ketkar, well-known journalist interacted with Sri Khopkar. The questions ranged from the polyglot perceptions of Sri Khopkar to film aesthetics of Eisenstein to inspirations for making film on painting art and music for which Sri Khopkar said everything that is connected with art has a symbiotic relationship and in the whole parts just play a role of adding particulars.

Meena T. Pillai engaged Ms. K.R. Meera, and the conversations veered around women’s status, countering male hegemony, patriarchal resistance to women writing in Kerala and feminist literature and women in journalism. Ms. Meera said she wanted to reclaim the lost lives of women in Kerala and also she wanted to venture into where other women have not ventured before.

Stuti Goswami was in conversation with Kula Saikia, Award Winner in Assamese, and the conversation centered around being a public servant and Saikia said like being a public servant writing is also a public endeavor. The conversation then moved towards and revolved around social reality, science fiction and writing in general.

Vivek Shanbag was in conversation with K.V. Thirumalesh, Award Winner in Kannada. Conversation revolved around Thirumalesh’s writing journey, his translations, his experiences as a reader and also as a writer.

Arshia Sattar was in conversation with Cyrus Mistry, Award Winner in English. Conversation revolved around presence of dreams in his narrative, common themes in his early works, his research on parsi corpse bearers.





J.L. Reddy was in conversation with Volga, the Award Winner in Telugu. Conversation centered around Volga's writing career, feminism in her writings, work done by Asmita and feminist writing in telugu region etc

Suresh Rituparna was in conversation with Ramdarash Mishra, Award Winner in Hindi. The conversation revolved around Mishra's writing journey, movement into urban spaces and future of literature in 21st century.

In the evening a cultural event, Qawwali by Nizami brothers, was organized



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)

## SCHEDULE OF FESTIVAL OF LETTERS 2016

**20 February 2016 (Saturday)**

Seminar on Translational Consciousness and Literary Traditions in India  
National Seminar on Gandhi, Ambedkar, Nehru : Continuities and Spin-a-Tale : Children Activities

**Book Exhibition : 10 am to 7 pm daily at Rabindra Bhavan Lawns**



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