



TODAY'S EVENTS

**NATIONAL SEMINAR ON FOLKLORE:
Tellings and Retellings (contd.)**
Sahitya Akademi Auditorium, 10.00 a.m.

TRIBAL WRITERS' MEET
Rabindra Bhavan Lawns, 10.30 a.m.

SPIN-A-TALE
Rabindra Bhavan Lawns, 11.00 a.m.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME
**Santali Dance by Badoli Santali
Cultural Team**
Meghdoot Theatre I, 6.00 p.m.

**NATIONAL SEMINAR ON FOLKLORE:
TELLINGS AND RETELLINGS**

Continuing with the tradition of having a national seminar on an important theme during the Festival of Letters, the Sahitya Akademi organized a three-day national seminar on Folklore: Tellings and Retellings between February 24 and February 26, 2017 at the Akademi auditorium in New Delhi.



In the inaugural session on the first day, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the participants and audience and spoke at length about the importance and relevance of folklore in preserving cultural traditions of a society, their function as bridges between the past and present, their uniqueness, the role of folktales, folksongs and folk art forms as recorders of history, the ways and means to preserve folklore and folk art from becoming extinct. In his Presidential address, Dr Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari, President, Sahitya Akademi, talked about the presence of folklore in all the regions and languages of India and informed that most of the earlier work on Indian folklore was done by foreigners. He also said that globalization and its impact have created a disconnect with the folk literature. India is an oral tradition-based country and stated that even Buddha imparted his teachings through folktales. In his inaugural address, Prof Manoj Das, eminent writer and Fellow, Sahitya Akademi, stated that while folklore occupied the largest area of literature, it is very difficult to separate folktales from myths and legends. He said that the Epics were adopted into local traditions and folktales and folksongs were incorporated into those epics thus elevating their status and that is how indigenous knowledge systems were formed, but in the rapidly changing world this ancient tree of knowledge is fast disappearing. Folktales are to be told and re-told and he appealed to all the writers to preserve the folklore and folk art forms immediately before it is too late. Prof Tabish Khair, eminent English writer was the guest of honor and in his speech stated that the stories are the most common, most pervasive





and the oldest way of expressing human thought and humans could be the only animals who can think in stories. He stated that retellings of folklore is very essential and as pointed by A.K. Ramanujan, the Epics of our country have been told and retold and will continue to be retold. In his keynote address, Prof Jawaharlal Handoo, eminent folklorist, talked about folklore, orality and discourse of power and pain. He stated that the orality of folklore is its strength and not its weakness as is assumed commonly and oral traditions of the country have ensured successful survival of indigenous knowledge systems through thousands of years but the essence of folklore is a discourse on pain. In his concluding remarks, Dr Chandrashekhar Kambar, Vice President, Sahitya Akademi, said that the folk tradition is facing a crisis, which has threatened its continuity. The crisis is not due to industrialization or the growth of mass media. Folk tradition can face all these hostile conditions and survive. But, the crisis is in another form, that of self-consciousness. The folk artists, especially actors, are re-absorbed into the fold. The actor returns as a farmer or a carpenter. But in the middle-class culture, an actor, both on and off the stage, remains an actor. He is condemned to be an actor. As long as the folk-culture needs art and as long as it continues to be folk-culture art will continue.”

In the first session chaired by Dr Pratibha Ray, eminent writer and scholar, three eminent scholars, Sri Prakash Premi, Prof H.S. Shivaprakash and Sri Hasu Yajnik, presented their papers. Sri Prakash Premi talked about folklore from the perspective of modern Dogri literature and adaptations into Dogri plays. Prof H.S. Shivaprakash talked about varied adaptations of folklore in the pan-Indian scenario with the infusion of local flavors and traditional knowledge. He said, thus, folklore of one region gets adapted into another and this free interplay of folklore of different regions makes folklore of India a very unique phenomenon and amplifies the country’s central character. Sri Hasu Yajnik presented his paper on the modern adaptation of folklore in Gujarat and contrasted method based knowledge systems of modern era with the folklore and observed that archived folklore has its own purpose of either creating a new modern lore or helping retelling the ancient folklore. In the second session chaired by Prof P. Raja, eminent Tamil writer, three eminent scholars, Prof. Surya Dhananjay, Prof. A. Achutan and Dr. Ratan Hembram, presented their papers. Prof. Surya Dhananjay presented her paper on Preservation of Folklore in Telugu Areas with Special Focus on Banjara Tribe. Prof A. Achuthan presented his paper on ‘Kerala ke Loknatya – ‘Pottan Thaiyyam’ aur Pratirodhi Samskar. He focused his paper on two types of drama forms of Kerala – Dravidian form and Classical form. He then dwelt on the traditional knowledge of the dalit songs in which their life-visions and customs are discussed. Prof. Ratan Hembram presented his paper on ‘Preservation of Folk Literature’.





FACE-TO-FACE



Sahitya Akademi organized a Face-to-Face programme featuring eminent scholars in conversation with the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2016 winners at the Rabindra Bhavan Lawns in New Delhi on 24 February 2017. Some of brief excerpts from the conversations:

Smt. Nasera Sharma, the awardee in Hindi, who was in conversation with Ashok Tiwari, talked about her literary life. “I have faced so many ins and outs, ups and downs that my lap is full of experiences”. And these experiences motivate her to write on the

different aspects of life. When she was asked a question on Partition, she said that there were two types of people who faced violence at the time of Partition— One, who faced it directly and two, who faced it mentally.

Sri Aasaram Lomte, the awardee in Marathi, who was in conversation with Dr. Randhir Shinde, shared that his short story dealing with rural life, in the earlier phase, was merely entertaining. The rural life depicted in his short stories now is terribly agonized and hopeless. He also observed that the politics in our villages has terribly changed and has lost human values. He also fiercely spoke of the exploitation and suppression of women in our villages.

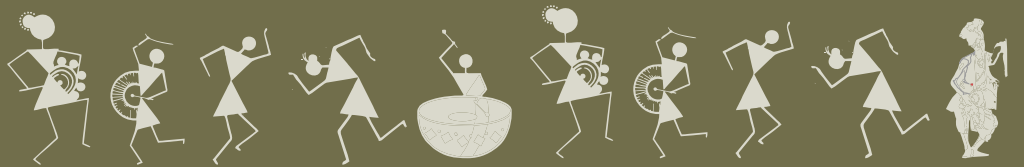
Sri Kamal Vora, the awardee in Gujarati who was in conversation with Dr. Dileep Jhaveri, said, “To me poetry is not a means to explore myself but an attempt to explore the language that contains all the manifestation and offer an aesthetic experience. Poetry allows me to keep all the intentions temptations and provocations of life at an arm’s length.”

Dr Papineni Sivasankar, the awardee in Telugu, who was in conversation with Sri Amarendra Dasari, talked about his own literary creations, the moods he underwent, influences on his writings and the preferences that a writer will have to make on his / her creations. He stated that the content of any genre of writing first sprouts in his mind and later he decides whether to write poetry, short story or an essay.

Smt. Paramita Satpathy, the awardee in Odia, who was in conversation with Rajendra Prasad Mishra, emphatically said that politeness of woman should not be mistaken as their weakness. “My writings are an attempt to explore womanhood. I was born in a family of writers and brought up with books around me. I have indeed been influenced by Indian writers as well as foreign writers. She shared that a writer is like a mother, and as the mother takes more care of her weakest child the writer deals with the issues that are more difficult.

Dr. Aziz Hajini, the awardee in Kashmiri who was in conversation with Farooque Fayaz, said that he was born in a family of farmers. The place where he was born, he said, was not royal but was aesthetically rich. Here he came into contact with Mohiuddin Hazin, the Arabic scholar, for which he feels proud. He said that the river Vitasta and the life on the banks of it have deeply influenced his life and his writings.





PURVOTTARI (North-East and Northern Writer's Meet)



Sahitya Akademi organized a 'Purvottari' programme featuring eminent Northern and North-Eastern writers and poets at the Rabindra Bhavan Lawns on 24, February 2017.

In the inaugural session, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, while welcoming the participants and the audience spoke briefly about the Akademi's initiatives to preserve and promote literature of North-East and the principle behind organizing various North-Eastern and regional meets across the country throughout the year. In his inaugural address Dr Robin Ngangom, eminent English poet and translator, talked about the linguistic and literary diversity of the North-Eastern regions of India and hoped that today's seminar will definitely transmit the values and culture of the North-East to North and vice versa. He stated that the literature of North-East is very alive, has been motivating the readers for a long and it does not carry any fear or terrorism inside it instead it carries peace and nature with it. He said that despite the diversity of languages, cultures and religions in North-East, its literature accepts others too wholeheartedly. He further said that the poetry of the new generation who is living in the modern cities express deep pain they are facing due to displacement. He concluded his address by saying that today's poetry of North-East is reflecting the folklore and folk-literature in a new flavor to the reader.

In the inaugural session, four noted fiction writers, Baig Ehsas (Urdu), Chaman Arora (Dogri), Anso Brahma (Bodo) and Rishi Bashistha (Maithili), under the chairmanship of Sri Kula Saikia read out their stories.

In the first session devoted to "My Creation, My World" and chaired by Ms. Uma Vasudev, four noted writers, Sriprakash Mishra (Hindi), Maharaj Krishan Santoshi (Kashmiri), Kshetri Rajen (Manipuri) and Devkanta Ramchiary (Bodo), talked about varied perceptions, representations and portrayals of their creative journey, the world around them and its influences on their writings.

In the second session devoted to poetry reading and chaired by Darshan Darshi, twelve noted poets, Madhu Acharya Ashavadi (Rajasthani), Amitabh Devchoudhury (Bengali), Yuyutsu Sharma (English), Irshad Magami (Kashmiri), Sudha M. Rai (Nepali), Madan Mohan Soren (Santali), Brajesh Kumar Shukla (Sanskrit), Tulika Chetia Yein (Assamese), Ramesh (Maithili), Jyotish Payeng (Hindi), Narendra Debbarma (Kokborok), Hiramoy Chakma (Chakma) and Ghanshyam Bodra (HO), recited their compositions.



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Baul Songs by Raja Hassan

