

साहित्य अकादेमी  
महत्तर सदस्यता

SAHITYA AKADEMI  
FELLOWSHIP



एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर  
M.T. VASUDEVAN NAIR





## एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर M.T. VASUDEVAN NAIR

एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर, जिन्हें साहित्य अकादेमी आज अपना सर्वोच्च सम्मान महत्तर सदस्यता प्रदान कर रही है मलयाळम् के उत्कृष्ट उपन्यासकार, कहानीकार, पटकथा लेखक एवं फ़िल्म निर्देशक हैं।

श्री वासुदेवन नायर का जन्म 1933 में ग्राम कुदाल्लूर, ज़िला पलक्काड में हुआ। उन्होंने कुमारनेल्लूर हाई स्कूल से शिक्षा प्राप्त की तथा गवर्नमेंट विक्टोरिया कॉलेज, पलक्काड से विज्ञान में स्नातक की उपाधि प्राप्त की। उन्होंने कुछ समय तक एक शिक्षक के रूप में कार्य किया, तत्पश्चात् 1957 में पत्रकारिता की ओर रुख किया तथा 1997 में 'मातृभूमि' पत्रिका के संपादक के पद से सेवानिवृत्त हुए। संप्रति, वे तुंचन मेमोरियल ट्रस्ट, तिरूर के अध्यक्ष हैं। वे केरल साहित्य अकादमी के अध्यक्ष रह चुके हैं तथा फ़िल्म फाइनांस कॉर्पोरेशन, एन.ए.डी.सी. तथा केन्द्रीय सेंसर बोर्ड से भी जुड़े हैं, इनके अलावा उन्होंने इंडियन पैनोरामा के अध्यक्ष के रूप में भी अपना योगदान किया है।

उनके 21 कहानी-संग्रह, 9 उपन्यास, 4 यात्रावृत्त, 3 साहित्यिक समालोचना कृतियाँ : 7 निबंध-संग्रह, 1 नाटक, 4 बाल पुस्तकें तथा 2 भाषण-संग्रह प्रकाशित हैं तथा इसके अतिरिक्त उन्होंने 58 पटकथाएँ भी लिखी हैं। उन्होंने फ़िल्म *वलारथु मृगंगळ* के लिए गीत भी लिखे हैं।

उन्होंने अपने कॉलेज के अंतिम वर्ष में *वलारथु मृगंगळ* (पालतू जानवर) कहानी लिखी तथा विश्व कहानी लेखन प्रतियोगिता के भाग के रूप में कहानी प्रतियोगिता जीती। आपके प्रथम उपन्यास *नाळुकेतु* (पैतृक आवास) को 1959 में केरल साहित्य अकादमी पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया। एक दशक पश्चात् एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर के अविस्मरणीय उपन्यास *कालम* को 1970 में साहित्य अकादेमी पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया। मलयाळम् साहित्य के क्षेत्र में दिए गए उनके योगदान हेतु 1995 में उन्हें ज्ञानपीठ पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया।

सन् 2005 में भारत सरकार ने भी श्री वासुदेवन नायर को पद्मभूषण से सम्मानित किया। इसके अतिरिक्त उन्हें वल्लतोल पुरस्कार, वायलार पुरस्कार, ओषक्कुटल पुरस्कार, केरल राज्य सरकार का प्रतिष्ठित सम्मान एषुचात्तन पुरस्कार तथा अन्य कई सम्मानों से भी सम्मानित किया जा चुका

Sri M.T. Vasudevan Nair, on whom Sahitya Akademi is conferring its Fellowship, is a prolific and outstanding Malayalam novelist, short story writer, screen-play-writer and film director.

Born in 1933, at Kudallur village in Palakkad District, Sri Vasudevan Nair was educated in Kumaranellur High School and graduated in science from the Government Victoria College, Palakkad. After a brief stint as a teacher, MT, as he is affectionately known, Sri Vasudevan Nair moved to journalism in 1957 and retired as the editor of *Mathrubhoomi* periodicals in 1997. At present he is the chairman of Thunchan Memorial Trust, Tirur. He was the President of Kerala Sahitya Akademi and also served on the boards of Film Finance Corporation, NFDC and Central Censor Board besides being the Chairman of Indian Panorama.

MT has published twenty one volumes of short stories, nine novels, four travelogues, three works of literary criticism, seven essay collections, one drama, four books for children and two collections of speeches besides having penned fifty eight screen plays. He has also written songs for the film *Valarthu Mrigangal*.

During his final year in the college, he wrote the story *Valarthu Mrigangal* (Domestic Beasts) and won a short story competition as part of World Short Story Contest. His very first novel *Nalukettu* (The Ancestral House) won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1959. A decade later, another memorable novel *Kalam* (Time) won MT the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1970. In 1995, he was awarded the Jnanpith Puraskar for his contributions to Malayalam literature.

In 2005, the Government of India honoured Sri Vasudevan Nair with Padmabhushan. Besides these, he has also won Vallathol Award, Vayalar Award, Odakkuzhal Award and the prestigious Ezhuthachan



है। श्री वासुदेवन नायर को पटकथा लेखन के लिए 4 राष्ट्रीय पुरस्कार प्राप्त हैं तथा निर्देशक के रूप में उनकी प्रथम फ़िल्म 'निर्माल्यम्' को 1973 में राष्ट्रपति स्वर्ण पदक से भी सम्मानित किया गया।

श्री एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर को मलयाळम् कहानी के पुनरुत्थान तथा उसके मनोवैज्ञानिक एवं गीतात्मक स्वरूप को बदलने का अगुवा माना जाता है। जब उन्होंने मलयाळम् साहित्य की दुनिया में पदार्पण किया, तब प्रगतिशील लेखकों का प्रभुत्व था तथा सामाजिक यथार्थवाद उस समय का प्रमुख विषय था। उस समय यथार्थवादी दुनिया, वर्ग तथा जातिगत दमन पर आधारित विषयों को मुख्यतः केन्द्रित कर लेखन किया जाता था।

एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर ने इस परिपाटी को जीवन के 'आत्मपरक' दृष्टिकोण की ओर मोड़ दिया। ऐसा नहीं है कि ऐसा करनेवाले वह पहले व्यक्ति हैं — उनसे पूर्व प्रख्यात वैक्कम मुहम्मद बशीर ने अपनी असाधारण क्षमता से गहराई में जाकर स्व की खोज की तथा एम.टी. जैसे लेखकों को गहन संधान के लिए अज्ञात अंतर्दृष्टियाँ प्रदान कीं।

किन्तु एम.टी. मालाबार तट से आती वह मृदु बयार हैं, जो बीते युग के क्रुद्ध एवं उन्मादभरे दागों को मिटा देती है। उनका 'मनुष्य' निराकार तथा दार्शनिक 'जीव' नहीं है, वरन् वह एक हाड़-मांस का वास्तविक मनुष्य है, जो खोज करने की इच्छा से परिपूर्ण है।

एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर तत्त्वतः एक अस्तित्ववादी हैं, किन्तु यह सत्य उनके द्वारा बताए गए संबंधों द्वारा ही जाना जा सकता है। समुदाय और समाज कहीं लुप्त नहीं हुए हैं, किन्तु उन्हें परिशुद्ध रूप में प्रस्तुत किया गया है तथा उन्हें व्यक्तिगत स्थान की दृष्टि से देखा गया है।

एम.टी. द्वारा लिखित कहानियों में हाशिए पर खड़े एवं उत्पीड़ित वर्ग के प्रति वृहद एवं गहन संवेदना प्रकट होती है, किन्तु उन्होंने स्वयं को कभी विशेष राजनीतिक विचारधारा या आंदोलन से नहीं जोड़ा। उनकी कहानियों के नायक स्वयं से जूझनेवाले योद्धा रहे हैं।

उनकी कहानियों का परिदृश्य ग्रामीण रहा है, जिसमें मध्यम एवं निम्न मध्यम वर्ग, उनका एकाकीपन, गरीबी, संघर्ष तथा उनके ग्राम्य जीवन के द्वंद्व तथा बाहरी दुनिया की नई शक्तियों के आगे लड़ाई में मिली हार दर्शाई जाती रही है। इस फ़लक पर एम.टी. ने प्रेम, हार और एकाकीपन का रंग भरा।

इस प्रकार से लयात्मक बोली में एम.टी. का कथा-कथन, जो पड़ोसी राज्य तमिलनाडु के ला.सा.रा. से काफ़ी मिलता-जुलता था, ने आख्यानपरक मुहावरों को बताने की एक सूक्ष्म शैली विकसित की, जो उन्हें अन्य लेखकों से अलग करती है। इसके अतिरिक्त कथा लेखन शिल्प और उसकी संरचना की समझ ने एम.टी. को एक विशेष ऊर्जा प्रदान की है, जो उनकी पीढ़ी के चंद ही लेखकों के पास है।

Puraskaram given by the Kerala State Government, among many others. Sri Vasudevan Nair has also won four national awards for screen plays and his very first film as a director, *Nirmalyam* won the President's Gold Medal in 1973.

Sri Vasudevan Nair is widely considered a pioneer of the resurgence of short fiction in Malayalam and its psychological and lyrical turn. MT entered the Malayalam literary scene when it was dominated by the progressive writers and social realism was the 'in-thing.' The focus was chiefly on the objective world and class and caste oppressions were the dominating themes.

MT tilted the focus to the 'subjective' aspect of life. Not that he was the first to do so — before him the legendary Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, with his extraordinary ability to dive deep into self and offer hitherto unknown insights had paved the way for writers like MT.

But, as it were, MT was a gentle breeze from the coast of Malabar, out to soothe the scars of rage and fury of the era gone by. His 'man' was not an abstract, philosophical 'being,' but a real being of flesh and blood, filled with the angst of quest.

MT is essentially an existentialist, but this truth could only be derived from the relationships he portrays. Communities and societies were not lost sight of, but were rather sublimated and viewed through the individual's place in them.

MT's stories bring out his broad and deep sympathy for the marginalised and oppressed, but he has never identified himself with any particular political ideology or movement. The protagonists of his stories are men at war with themselves.

His landscape was rural. Into that setting were cast the middle and lower middle class, their loneliness, poverty, struggles and conflicts of a country side living and seemingly losing its fight against the new forces of the urban world. In this canvas, MT painted love, loss and loneliness.

In this poetic motion of story-telling, MT, much like La. Sa. Ra from the neighbouring Tamil Nadu, developed a highly nuanced narrative idiom that set him apart from other writers. More than all these, his knowledge and understanding of fiction writing and its structure gave a special power to MT that a very few writers of his generation had at their disposal.



किन्तु एम.टी. को उनके साहित्यिक कार्यों की उत्कृष्टता के लिए याद किया जाएगा। जिन फ़ीचर फ़िल्मों की उन्होंने पटकथा लिखी एवं निर्देशन किया है, उसने एक लोकप्रिय मिथक को जन्म दिया कि यह आवश्यक नहीं कि अच्छे लेखक और पुस्तकें अवश्य ही अच्छे निर्देशकों और फ़िल्मों को जन्म देंगे। यदि 'निर्माल्यम्' ने श्री नायर को फ़िल्मी दुनिया में भव्य रूप से प्रस्तुत किया तो वहीं दूसरी ओर उनकी 'ओरू वडक्कन वीरगाथा' मलयाळम् सिनेमा की यादगार फ़िल्म है। उनकी लगभग प्रत्येक फ़िल्म की फ़िल्म समीक्षकों ने प्रशंसा की है, कुछ फ़िल्मों को राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर महत्त्वपूर्ण पुरस्कार तथा 'कदावु' को अंतर्राष्ट्रीय फ़िल्मोत्सव में पुरस्कृत किया गया।

श्री एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर से पूर्व कई महान लेखक हुए हैं तथा भविष्य में भी कई महान लेखक होंगे। किन्तु नायर एक श्रेष्ठ इंसान भी हैं। लेखकों के बीच वह असाधारण गुणों से संपन्न लेखक हैं। वह एक ऐसे लेखक हैं, जिन्होंने न केवल कई पीढ़ियों के लेखकों को प्रेरणा प्रदान की; वरन् उन्होंने कई अद्भुत प्रतिभाओं की खोज करते हुए उनकी सहायता भी की है। उन्होंने ईर्ष्या भाव न रखते हुए बहुतों में स्वयं का अनुकरण करने की गहन इच्छा शक्ति का आह्वान किया है। यदि हमारे पास एम.टी.—जैसे और अधिक व्यक्ति हों तो भारतीय साहित्य कभी भी रीता नहीं रह सकता।

श्री वासुदेवन नायर पर लगभग 15 पुस्तकें लिखी गई हैं। एम.टी. के जीवन और कार्यों पर 5 फ़िल्में/वृत्तचित्र बनी हैं, उनके लगभग 2 दर्जन से अधिक कृतियों का अन्य भाषाओं में अनुवाद हुआ है, इसके अतिरिक्त उनकी कई कहानियों का विभिन्न विदेशी भाषाओं में भी अनुवाद हो चुका है। तीन विभिन्न विश्वविद्यालयों ने श्री वासुदेवन नायर को डी.लिट्. की मानद उपाधि से विभूषित किया है।

एम.टी. की साहित्यिक विरासत सचमुच अनुकरणीय है।

श्री एम.टी. वासुदेवन नायर को उनके उल्लेखनीय साहित्यिक योगदान के लिए अपना सर्वोच्च सम्मान 'महत्तर सदस्यता' प्रदान करते हुए साहित्य अकादेमी स्वयं को गौरवान्वित महसूस कर रही है।

But MT will be remembered for more than just the quality of his literary works. The feature films he has scripted and directed have exploded a popular myth – that good authors and books do not necessarily make good directors and films. If *Nirmalyam* launched Sri Vasudevan Nair in the film world in a grand way, his *Oru Vadakkan Veeragatha* is one of the all-time block busters of Malayalam cinema. Almost all his movies have won critical acclaim, some have fetched him important awards at national level and some like *Kadavu* won awards at International film festivals.

There have been great writers before Sri Vasudevan Nair and in future too there will be number of great writers. But he was also a great human being. Among the writers he was a genial giant, the giant who not only inspired generations of writers, but also identified wonderful talents and helped them to grow. He evokes immense desire among one and all to emulate him but not jealousy. Indian literature will never be poorer if we had more people like MT.

About fifteen books have been written on Sri Vasudevan Nair; five films / documentaries have been produced on the life and works of MT; nearly two dozen of his works have been translated other languages in addition to numerous short stories that have been translated into various languages around the globe. Three different universities have conferred Honourary D.Litt. on Sri Vasudevan Nair.

Indeed, the literary legacy of MT is the one worth emulating.

Sahitya Akademi is extremely proud to confer its highest honour of Fellowship on Sri M.T. Vasudevan Nair.



## Acceptance Speech

I remember that afternoon in Delhi way back in 1971 when I received the Akademi Award from President Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee. It was a small hall with a moderate crowd. There was no festive atmosphere as we see in present times. Yet it was a great event for a young writer. I was nervous as all other recipients on the Dias were elderly writers from different languages of the country.

Later I became close to the Akademi. I have handled several assignments made to me from time to time with pride and pleasure.

Today when I am receiving this honour to join the great pantheon of Akademi's celebrated Fellows, I do it with total humility and a deep sense of gratitude. I am thankful to all the distinguished members of the Akademi, who made it possible.

When I stand before you to accept this honour, I remember the struggles of many writers of my previous generation in my language.

A young poet who had already published two collections of poetry was finding it difficult to continue his postgraduate studies in Thiruvananthapuram due to financial problems. A well-wisher decided to take him to some rich households. The poet was carrying a bundle of his books with him. The first house they visited was that of a Police Commissioner. The friend introduced the young poet and explained his predicament. The Commissioner received them courteously and bought one book for a rupee saying that there were not many people in his department who were interested in poetry or literature. It was so embarrassing to the poet that he refused to visit the other houses in the well-wisher's list. A few years later when his long narrative poem 'Ramanan' was published, editions after editions were sold out in three years. Those who could not get copies borrowed the book and copied by hand. The fame of the book reached even my remote village. My people sent messengers to buy a copy from Thrichur where there was a flourishing publishing house. However the book was

always out of print. Then we heard there was a copy in the neighbouring village. I was the boy to run errands and was promptly sent to that house. They lent the book with strict instruction that it should be returned the very next day evening. My brother and sister-in-law spent the whole night copying the book. What a surprise it was!

Not only this book but other anthologies of Changampuzha Krishna Pillai were also best sellers. Even though he was earning a lot of royalty he never bothered to manage his money. His life as a whole was indiscipline. So when he fell ill, he had financial problems.

The poet never complained about the situation but another writer wrote in a periodical that the poet was in an advanced stage of Tuberculosis and his financial condition was far from good. Money orders for small amounts started pouring in from all parts of the country, especially the Military camps, and the village Post Office had to open a new branch to handle the situation.

The renowned fiction writer Kesavadev narrates in his autobiography how he got his early books printed and visited college hostels to sell them. The great poet P. Kunhiraman Nair sold the copyrights of many of his early works for very small amounts when he was starving, which was not infrequent. Vaikom Muhammed Basheer also printed his books and carried the bundles himself and sold in village squares and boat jetties. I remember these ancestors who spend so much life, so much scalding sweat and so much inspiration to create a dwelling place for our language and its literature. My pranams to all of them.

I still wonder how I became a writer. I was born in a lower middle class farmer family in a remote village. Our bus stop was six miles away. You have to walk six miles and cross a river to reach the nearest Railway Station. The High School lay at a distance of almost seven miles.



The villagers believed that if one could read Ezhuthachan's *Ramayana* without faltering, the education was complete.

If you could help elders to drive the cattle to the river without giving them a chance to take a bite from paddy field on either side of the bund, then the family deemed you are fit to enter farm work. As a boy somehow I developed a passion to read books especially poetry. On week-ends I had to walk many miles to borrow books. Then I started writing poetry secretly. Thoroughly dissatisfied with my attempts, I turned my attention to short fiction.

In my adolescence writing was like a game to me - a game I could play alone. During school vacations, I spent every wakeful hour toying with story ideas. I scribbled every day. In the next stage after some recognition from the magazine editors, writing became an obsession and pleasure. If an editor solicited a story I rushed to work and produced one in a matter of hours.

In my forties, I found writing a difficult struggle. So many things signal to you promising creative possibility. But you reject one after the other. Only a few keep the initial enthusiasm alive in their heart.

Later when I became older, the tendency was to postpone writing. Excuses are there in plenty. In the summer I put the blame on the oppressive heat and console myself, "wait, let the rain come, atmosphere cool down and everything will be alright." And when it is the rainy season I say to myself "It is depressive and wait for the weather to cheer-up."

There are distractions around always. Sometimes I go away to remote places. Then I realise that I want undisturbed solitude and at the same time I want to be involved in the bustle of routine life.

After several decades of writing, I am still nervous when I begin to work, like a student in the examination hall.

And there is the question - every writer is compelled to answer on many occasion. Why do you write? I am yet to find a satisfactory reply. I feel I am a little more sensitive than an ordinary individual, to the pains, pleasures, fears, dreams and disillusion of the phenomenon called life. I try to analyse human situation and in the process I rediscover my own self sometimes. I feel guilty if I cannot share my anxieties and concerns with few like-minded people.

Freedom of style and freedom in the selection of material gives the strength to go on. The limits of my craft are established by myself and not dictated by others. I know very well that I do not form a part of the machinery which manipulates the commodisation of culture. And so I cannot aspire for a big material success. Yet I go on. I am trying to put across the uproar of the market place of life a small silent cry from my heart. And I feel happy when I know a few eager souls are responding to it.

I thank all of you once again.

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