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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Sahitya Akademi's Annual Festival of Letters 2020 Commences on**  
**24 February**  
**Gulzar will be the Chief Guest at the Sahitya Akademi Award Presentation**  
**Ceremony**  
**Mannu Bhandari will Inaugurate the Akademi Exhibition**  
**Sri Pranab Mukherjee, Eminent Thinker and Former President of India,**  
**will Deliver the Samvatsar Lecture**

**All India LGBTQ Poets' Meet for First Time**

For celebrating Indian literature, following its rich tradition, Sahitya Akademi has keenly included all-inclusive and variety of programmes during its week-long **Annual Festival of Letters 2020** which is scheduled to be held from 24 February to 29 February, and is dedicated to preservation of environment this year. The Festival will be opened up with the Inauguration of the Akademi Exhibition at the hands of Ms Mannu Bhandari, eminent Hindi writer, on 24 February 2020, 10.30 a.m. Glimpses of Sahitya Akademi's various activities in connection with publications and programmes across the country and even abroad in 2019 will be displayed at the Exhibition. On the same day commences All India Tribal Writers' Meet at 2.30 p.m. Ms Anvita Abbi, distinguished Linguist and Scholar, will inaugurate the Meet.

On the next day, at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi, 25 February 2020, 5.30 p.m., the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Awards will be given away to the writers in 24 Indian languages by Dr Chandrashekhar Kambar, President, Sahitya Akademi, and Sri Gulzar, distinguished poet, fiction writer and director, will be the Chief Guest at the function. The Award winning writers will speak at the Writers' Meet, on 26 February 2010, at 10 a.m., about their life and works. The Akademi's hallmark – the Samvatsar Lecture, will also be part of the Festival. Sri Pranab Mukherjee, eminent thinker and Former President of India, will deliver the Samvatsar lecture on 26 February 2020, at 6 p.m.

The innovative and distinctive programme of the Festival will also have the Award winning writers in conversation with the Media on 25 February, at 11 a.m., a three

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day All India Tribal Writers' Meet, a daylong Purvottari – a North-Eastern and Northern Writers' Meet, four Panel Discussions – Present Scenario of Playwriting, Art of Translation: Cultural Responsibility, Media and Literature: Information and Sensibility, and Publishing in India, on 28 and 29 February , Face to Face where conversational sessions will include eminent writers/scholars talking to a select Award 2019 winning writers, on 27 February at 10 a.m. The Festival will also have All India LGBTQ Poets' Meet which will be inaugurated by Prof. Hoshang Merchant, eminent poet in English, on 27 February, at 2 p.m., and Dr S.L. Bhyarappa, distinguished Kannada writer and Fellow, Sahitya Akademi, will inaugurate the three day Seminar on Regionality, Environment and Literature, on 27 February , at 10 a.m., which we will also have Sri Amit Chaudhuri, eminent writer in English, for delivering keynote address. Moreover, a daylong programme specially chalked out for young writers – New Harvest – will also be there on 29 February, Spin-a-Tale – a programme for children on 29 February, and Cultural Programmes such as Shrikrishna Parijat, a traditional folk-musical drama, Taal Vadya Kacheri, an ensemble of Indian Percussion Instruments, Dastangoi by Sri Mahmood Farooqui, celebrated writer, director and performer, on the alternate evenings.

On this occasion, Sahitya Akademi will also hold its Book Exhibition and Sale from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily all through the week offering special discount.

Kindly find attached invitation card of the Festival.



(K.Sreenivasarao)