



SA./16/14/

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PRESS RELEASE
National Seminar on
70 Years of Indian Independence: Literary Portrayals

The National Seminar on '70 Years of Indian Independence: Literary Portrayals', which was organized by the Sahitya Akademi as part of Festival of Letters continued for the third day at the Akademi auditorium in New Delhi on February 17, 2018.

In the seventh session of the Seminar which was devoted to 'Seven Decades of Freedom: Feminist Perspectives' and chaired by Dr Mridula Garg, four eminent scholars, Prof. Maya Pandit, Ms. Savita Singh, Dr C. Mrunalini and Ms. Jaiwanti Dimri, presented their papers. In her speech, Prof. Maya Pandit said that even the Panchatantra has referred to women as the treasure house of everything that is bad. She questioned the role models and familial ideologies carved out by society for women, and how through fiction women have been trying to defy such models and norms. Ms. Savita Singh, calling herself a feminist, asserted that there should be no space for discussion on masculinity in feminism and that feminism as a discourse has become central to all other discourses. Dr C. Mrunalini mentioned how in the pre-independence days the Victorian moral values banned many Telugu books, and how today India is again doing the same thing. Ms. Jaiwanti Dimri talked about how the intra-country migration of women in India is in no way less significant than that of their male counterparts. Dr Mridula Garg, in conclusion, said that the fight for values that men and women alike have put up, is real feminism, and feminist writers have started to deconstruct the roles of women to show the varied perspectives of womanhood.

The eighth session devoted to 'Evolution of Children's Literature through Seven Decades' was chaired by Smt. Deepa Agarwal. Dr Dinesh Goswami, Smt. Deepa Agarwal and Sri Era. Natarasan presented papers. Smt. Deepa Agarwal said that during the last 70 years in India, writers, teachers, librarians and parents have gradually begun to understand the importance of the 'child's eye view' in literature. Well-known science fiction writer Dr Dinesh Goswami stated that every successful and experienced writer of children's literature will stand by the truth. Sri Era. Natarasan while elaborating on the evolution of children's literature in Tamil language said that Tamil children's literature can be traced back to the ancient age. India, he said, is considered the birth place of children's literature.

The valedictory session of the Seminar was chaired by Dr S.L. Bhyrappa and Dr C. Radhakrishnan, Sri Damodar Mauzo and Prof Sukrita Paul Kumar presented their papers. Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, briefed everyone on all the sessions of the Seminar and introduced the chairperson and the speakers. Dr C. Radhakrishnan said that unfortunately, any answer to the question if we are free today will only have political implications; saying yes will stamp one as a right winger, saying no will mark one out as left-of-centre. Sri Damodar Mauzo believes that there can be no literature without freedom and vice versa. Prof Sukrita Paul Kumar raised the question if we are mature enough to handle freedom and that while the writer has a lot of space, she/he doesn't really have un-reined freedom, freedom of creativity on a deeper level. Dr S.L. Bhyrappa captivated the audience with his oration. He spoke about how people had to go out of their way to speak the truth, how Salman Rushdie was protected by the British government while his book was banned in India even before it landed on Indian's soil. Dr S. Rajmohan, Deputy Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, coordinated the programme and proposed a vote of thanks.

K. Sreenivasarao

डॉ. के. श्रीनिवासराव
सचिव
Dr. K. Sreenivasarao
Secretary

साहित्य अकादेमी
(नेशनल अकादमी ऑफ़ लेटर्स)
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Sahitya Akademi
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PRESS RELEASE SPIN-A-TALE

Sahitya Akademi organized a children's programme, 'Spin-a-Tale' at the Rabindra Bhavan Lawns in New Delhi on February 17, 2018 featuring poetry and story writing competitions for children.

The programme commenced with a Ghoomar dance performance by child artist, Shamia Begum, Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya, New Delhi and prayer to Lord Ganesh by Master Karan Gautam. Sri Rajnikant Shukla, well-known children writer and Sri Abid Surti, eminent author, cartoonist, journalist, playwright and screen writer, were the chief guests in the programme.

Sri Rajnikant Shukla introduced Ms. Nazia Khan, the National Bravery Awardee. Sri Shukla told the children how inception of National Bravery Awards began in 1957 when a child saved the life of our first Prime Minister, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru. He also told that he has collected and published the stories of all these brave children. Sri Shukla also shared the story of Nazia, how she had rescued a girl from being kidnapped by two motor-bikers. The act got her recognition and awards at state level, which later encouraged her to end a drug-liquor mafia running in her neighborhood. This act of bravery won her the National Bravery Award.

Kids asked many questions to Nazia, regarding the challenges she faced, her inspiration and support in life, and what message she had for the kids. Nazia told that she receives her inspiration from her mother and her teachers at school. She said if one keeps on thinking about consequences, one will never have the courage to help others. She said if a person dies doing a good deed, the death becomes meaningful.

Sri Abid Surti told the kids how the journey of story started among the early men using gestures, which later became the word. He told the kids about the oral tradition of India. He gave reference to the work of Giju Bhai, who collected the stories from grandmothers and published them in pre-independent India, which were later translated by Sri Abid Surti and published as 'Gijubahi Ka Guldasta'.

About 300 students from the following Delhi schools participated in the programme: Kendriya Vidyalaya, N.F.C. Vigyan Vihar, Sardar Patel School, Lodhi Estate, Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya, Daryaganj, Millennium Shriram School, Greater Noida, Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya, Dallu Pura, D.A.V. Public School, Shreshtha Vihar, Modern School, Barakhamba Road and Sarvodayaya Vidyalaya, Shakarpur.

The programme concluded with distribution of prizes and certificates to children.

K.Sreenivasarao



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Symposium on The Role of Publishers in Indian Literature

Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, organized a Symposium on 'The Role of Publishers in Indian Literature' on February 17, 2018 at Rabindra Bhavan Lawns in New Delhi. In the inaugural session, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the participants, dignitaries and audience. In his welcome address he talked about the stellar role which Indian publishers played in disseminating Indian literature in the past seven decades and addressed the issues of impact of technological advancements and changing roles of publishers. The inaugural address was delivered by Prof Dhruba Jyoti Borah, eminent scholar and writer, who stated that the writers would not have existed without publishers and in the modern world, reaching out to the global audience is not possible without publishers. Sri Madhav Kaushik, Vice-President, Sahitya Akademi, compared the relationship between the authors and publisher to that of a jeweller and diamonds, and how the publisher helps the authors achieve their full potential. The first session was chaired by Sri Bikas D. Niyogi and papers were presented by Arun Maheshwari, Arun Jakhade and Vaishali Mathur. In his speech, Bikas D. Niyogi said that if we look at the history of publishing, both in the West and in India, we'll find how an author grows along with his publisher. Sri Arun Maheshwari, in his speech, talked about the history of publishing. Sri Arun Jakhade, said that the publisher is an important element in publishing across the globe, especially in India because of its linguistic diversity. Smt. Vaishali Mathur talked about how the sale of ebooks has not hampered the sale of physical books but actually added to it. The second session of the symposium on 'The Role of Publishers in Indian Literature' was chaired by Sri Leeladhar Mandloi, former Director, Bharatiya Jnanpith. He stressed about the network of Indian publishers across the country. The paper presenters in this session were Sri Ramesh K. Mittal, Sri Ravi D.C., Sri Vijay and Sri Haqqani Al-Qasmi. Sri Vijay from EMESCO, one of the oldest publishing houses in Vijayawada, in his presentation shared his experiences as a publisher. Sri Ramesh K. Mittal in his presentation discussed the history of Indian literature since ancient and medieval periods to the present period, and the role of publishers in the contemporary scenario. Sri Haqqani Al-Qasmi discussed the existence of books in danger in present scenario with a famous poem by Gulzar: "kitaben jhakti hain band almari ke shishon se/ barhi hasrat se takti hain/ mahino ab mulakaten nahin hoti/ jo shamen unki sohabat mein kata karti thin/ ab aksar guzar jati hai kamputer ke parton per/ barhi baichain rahti hain kitaben/ unhe ab nind mein chalne ki adat ho gai hai/ jo kadren vo sunati thi ki/ jinke jo rishte vo sunati thi vo sare udhre-udhre hain. Koi safa palatta hun to ek siski nikalti hain..." Concluding his paper he stated that he presented this paper as a reader and not as a publisher. Sri Ravi D.C. who also belonged to a publishing house called D.C. Books, in his paper said India is a land with diverse cultures, landscapes and nuances which is unique and the publishers' duty is to influence the society through literature. Sri Ravi also very beautifully narrated the 1945 Kerala Revolution which happened in Kerala, when 8000 libraries were established. Sri Anupam Tiwari, Editor, Sahitya Akademi, coordinated the programme.

K. Sreenivasarao