

festival of letters

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YEARS

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Sahitya Akademi NEWS BULLETIN

Wednesday, 11 March 2015

Sahitya Akademi Writers Meet

Festival of Letters continued at Rabindra Bhawan Lawns on Tuesday, March 10, 2015. The day started with the **Writers' Meet** in the morning. Twenty Sahitya Akademi Award 2014 winners read out their papers on various aspects of creative writing and also shared their own experiences as writers and one Award winner sent in his paper as he could not be present.



Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the award winners and observed that writers' meet of this type have been envisaged to enable young writers to interact freely with the established ones and in the process learn from them. He then invited Dr Chandrasekhar Kambar, Vice-President, Sahitya Akademi, to chair the session. Dr Kambar spoke briefly about the awards, the writing process and leading a creative life before inviting the Award winners to present their papers.

Ms. Arupa Patangia Kalita, Award winner in Assamese, thanked the Akademi for choosing her work for the award and spoke briefly about her childhood and her life. She also talked about

feminist perceptions, impact of literature on society and communication in literature. She observed that the effective use of translation and technology has resulted in that writers like her are now heard in many parts of the country.

Sri Urkhao Gwra Brahma, Award winner in Bodo, talked about the antiquity of tribal dialects and languages, including Bodo, across India and the vast amount of literature contained therein waiting to be tapped. He said that though a language like Bodo is very ancient, the history of formal literature is barely a century old. He appealed to Sahitya Akademi to consider setting up of a Tribal Language and Literature Promotion Bureau.

Sri Shailender Singh, Award winner in Dogri, talked briefly about his life and at length about his award winning work, *Hashiye Par*. He enumerated the hues and varieties of cultural and social milieu portrayed and contained hidden in the work and the work's relevance and importance.

The paper of Adil Jussawala, Award winner in English and received in absence, talked about the role of a writer in any given society and ontological antinomies of a writer, especially a poet.

Sri Ramesh Chandra Shah, Award winner in Hindi, talked about his own life as a writer and what writing means to him. The expressible and communicable facets of writing are very important, without which writer and writing have no use and relevance.



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Sri G.H. Nayak, Award winner in Kannada, talked at length about the polemics in Kannada literary milieu, especially his own literary productions.



Sri Shad Ramzan, Award winner in Kashmiri, gave a neat, detailed and yet precise overview of Kashmiri literature, before and after the advent of Islam in the valley.



Marathi, talked about the process of him writing an autobiography, the challenges he faced and the contentment derived from the completion. He also talked about the various places he had lived in and their contribution to his autobiography.

Ms. Asha Mishra, Award winner in Maithili, talked about her own life as a creative writer and appealed to SahityaAkademi to collect and publish Writers' meet papers so that the coming generation of writers can benefit from it.

Sri Nanda Hangkhim, Award winner in Nepali, talked about the nature of Nepali language and dialects, their close relationship to Sanskrit, his own writings and observed that creative writing is somewhat akin to enlightenment of any kind.

Sri Subash Chandran, Award winner in Malayalam, talked about his early life, his work and his journey as a creative writer.



Sri Gopal Krishna Rath, Award winner in Odia, talked about the art and process of writing poetry and observed that poetry cannot merely be visualized and written or sung, but has to be lived. He urged fellow poets to lead a poetic living.

Sri Naorem Bidasagar Singha, Award winner in Manipuri, talked about the craft and techniques of writing poetry, influences of and interactions with the society in the process and the need for writers to possess deeper grasp of the sound and word.

Sri Jaswinder, Award winner in Punjabi, talked about the antiquity of Punjabi civilization, culture

and literature and observed that truthful living is essential to be a good poet.

Sri Jayant Vishnu Narlikar, Award winner in

Rajasthani, thanked the Akademi for honouring





him and his work, but more importantly felt this is a recognition for Rajasthani literature.

Sri Prabhu Nath Dwivedi, Award winner in Sanskrit, talked about the beauty of Sanskrit language, the power of literature, especially poems and stories, and the art of representation of reality and imagination.

Sri Jamadar Kisku, Award winner in Santali, thanked the Akademi for choosing his play 'Mala Mudam' for Award and talked about his literary experiences. He also spoke about the nature of Santal societies and their influences on writing.

Sri Gope Kamal, Award winner in Sindhi, talked about his journey as a creative artist, as a poet and a fiction writer and observed that poetry is an art of finding the inner self.

Sri Poomani, Award winner in Tamil, talked about the process involved in an Epic that is *Ajnadi*, award winning Tamil novel, the challenges he faced, difficulties he overcame and the ultimate satisfaction derived from the completion of the project.

Sri Rachapalem Chandrasekhara Reddy, Award



winner in Telugu, talked about his literary productions and his journey as a creative writer and translator.

Sri Munawwar Rana, Award winner in Urdu, talked about various aspects and phases of writing poetry.

Dr Chandrasekhar Kambar, summed up all the papers and congratulated the Award winners.

Interaction of Award-winners with the Media: Open House

Select Award winners interacted with the media persons at the Rabindra Bhawan Lawns in the afternoon of March 10, 2015. The open house witnessed lively interactions between the

writers, the media and the public. A variety of interesting subjects were discussed during the session such as 'Censorship and the role of the writer in the society,' 'Political power and writing,' 'Role of literature and impact of writing on society,' 'Status of literature in south India,' 'Why do writers fear in writing openly?,' 'Should realistic depictions be adopted across the genres and styles of writing to avoid misinterpretations and misunderstandings?' and 'How to protect the readers from mischievous publishers and cunning writers?' and much more. Award winning writers' responses ranged from personal experiences, well known case citations and possible theoretical and logical arguments. Sri Dinesh Mishra coordinated the lively session.



Samvatsar Lecture by Ashis Nandy

Renowned Critic, Social Theorist and Political Psychologist, Dr Ashis Nandy, delivered the annual Samvatsar Lecture as part of Festival of Letters 2015 at Rabindra Bhawan Lawns on March 10, 2015.

Welcoming Dr Nandy and other dignitaries, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, outlined the nature and purpose of Samvatsar lectures, besides listing out the doyens of Indian literature who had delivered Samvatsar lecture over the years. Dr Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari, President, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed Dr Ashis Nandy with a flower bouquet.



Dr Ashis Nandy who holds a Master's degree in Sociology and Doctorate in Psychology delivered a lecture titled 'Do we protect cultural diversity or

cultural diversity protects us? The politics of culture in our times.'

He observed that values change with times, region and groups or communities. Changing values also bring forth contradictions in any given society. Dr Nandy pointed out that the aim of his lecture is to draw attention to various sources or causes of attack on cultural diversity than a deep analytical presentation.

Dr Nandy mentioned that cultural diversity is attacked from various sources and he is just merely listing the sources he knows of and there could be more which a discerning reader or listener can explore and find out.

Dr Nandy observed that contributions of 18th and 19th century Europe with its colonization, mechanization, urbanization with all those attempts to convert the nature of differences between communities and societies from a horizontal or achronic to vertical, perpendicular and diachronic schemas. This has resulted in the perceptions of all events as chronological, than as given in a symmetrical horizontal schema.

Dr Nandy listed development as a second source of

attack on cultural diversity as in this set up a culture is looked at as something waiting for humans to intervene and change it and often leads to arrogant perceptions and claims such as one should leave out bad things out of a culture and absorb good ones only.

Religion which is often defined by the region, language and local mores and customs, is the third source of attack on cultural diversity across the globe. For, religions tend to uproot mobility and this, in a big way affects cultural diversity and also denies freedom. Dr Nandy lamented that because of these religious sensibilities we are fast losing multi-cultural communities and identities.

Nation-State, according to Dr Ashis Nandy, is one of the powerful sources of attack on cultural diversity. For, cultural diversity boosts enhanced interactions between communities, possible eruption of difference and violence and therefore is very difficult to manage and rule. Hence, Nation-States do not promote and encourage cultural diversity of any kind.

Dr Ashis Nandy, observed that people may be surprised to find out the European process of secularization is also one of the causes or sources of attack on cultural diversity. For, diverse cultural entities tend to foster, propagate and promote, at times, in the eyes of European secularism school, pernicious traditions. This again, in turn has turned out to be against human freedom.

Dr Nandy finally said the mentality to reject those parts of the culture that are not marketable as a prime source of attack on cultural diversity in the 21st century.

Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, thanked Dr Nandy for a thought-provoking lecture and for throwing up multiple dimensions of various social processes vis-à-vis cultural diversity. He announced in the end that his speech will be published as a booklet.



Programmes for March 12, 2015

Symposium on Unwritten Languages of India at Rabindra Bhawan Lawns : 10 a.m.

Foundation Day Lecture by Sri S.L. Bhyrappa at Rabindra Bhawan Lawns : 6.00 p.m.

National Seminar on 'The Region and the Nation in Indian Fiction', Akademi Auditorium, 1st Floor : 11 a.m.



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