



SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS 2016 AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY



TODAY'S EVENTS

YUVA SAHITI : THE NEW HARVEST

Black Box Megdhoot-III, 10.00 a.m.

WRITERS' MEET

Rabindra Bhavan Lawns, 10.30 p.m.

SAMVATSAR LECTURE BY RAMCHANDRA GUHA

Rabindra Bhavan Lawns, 6.00 p.m.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME LAI-HARAوبا, MAO & KABUI DANCE BY JAWAHARLAL NEHRU DANCE ACADEMY, MANIPUR

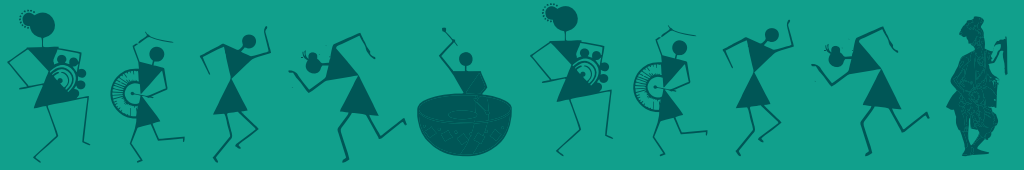
Megdhoot Theatre, 7.30 p.m.

The Sahitya Akademi Awards for 2016 were presented to 24 writers at a glittering ceremony on 22 February 2017 at Kamani Auditorium in New Delhi.

The ceremony began with the invocation. Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the President and Vice President of Sahitya Akademi, the Chief Guest, other dignitaries, Award winners and the audience. He congratulated the Award winners for their stupendous contribution to literature in all the languages of India and stated that it is writers who make Sahitya Akademi and hence Sahitya Akademi is the Writers' Home. He observed, it is true in a sense that the Akademi Awards are in recognition for a particular title, it is also true that the Akademi Awards are recognition of the long standing literary tradition and the lineage in which the author and awarded title exists. He also shared, for the benefit of the larger audience, the highlights and achievements of Sahitya Akademi in the year 2016.

Dr K. Sreenivasarao read out the citations and Dr Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari, President, Sahitya Akademi, conferred the Awards on the awardees. Sri Jerry Pinto (English), Dr Sitanath Acharya (Sanskrit), Sri Chhatrapal (Dogri) and Sri Nandlal Javeri (Sindhi) could not attend the Awards presentation ceremony due to some personal reasons. In his Presidential address he observed that Sahitya Akademi Award is not a prize but an honor given to the writers and stated that the writer or poet does not belong to any one region or any other human stratification, rather it is a humanness of the writer and human values of his / her writings that earmark one. In our country there are millions of talented litterateurs in the countryside but talent alone cannot make one a good writer or poet but it is practice that makes a man perfect. Dr Tiwari appealed to all the



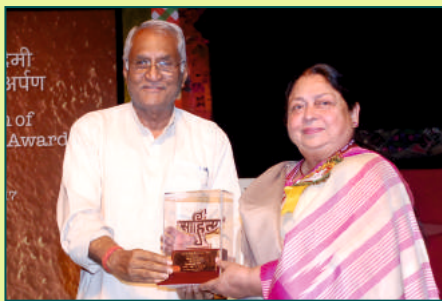


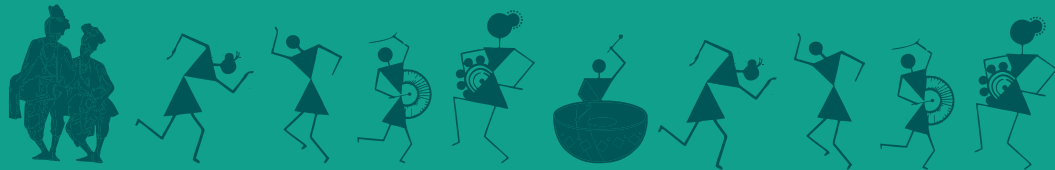
writers of India to possess the quality of fearlessness and equanimity in outlook – to face any problem in life and to portray the evils and injustice in society.



Dr Jayant Vishnu Narlikar, distinguished physicist and eminent Marathi writer was the Chief Guest. In his speech, Dr Narlikar said that though he does not have depth of literary knowledge, he is well acquainted with science and technology and added that literature can

be expressed through technology in a better way and coupled with the concepts of science. He observed that the present-day technology-filled societies should think of the future generations and try to preserve literature of the time as it is literature that reflects values and culture of the society but not technology. Dr Narlikar stated that the effects of science can be best described only through literature and only by litterateurs. This is the biggest relevance of literature, even the classical one, in the digital era and appealed to the writers to pen more science-based stories and poems. Dr Chandrashekhar Kambar, Vice President, Sahitya Akademi, delivered the concluding remarks.





Seminar on Protecting Mother Tongues

Sahitya Akademi's annual Festival of Letters continued for the second day on Wednesday, 22 February 2017 at Rabindra Bhavan Lawns in New Delhi with the national seminar on Protecting Mother Tongues continuing through the day.

In the second session of the seminar (first of the day), Ms. Gitanjali Chatterjee, Deputy Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the chair and speakers of the session. In this session chaired by Prof Indra Nath Choudhury, eminent Hindi scholar and writer, three scholars, Sri Rahul Dev, Sri Chandra Prakash Deval and Sri Anisur Rahman, presented their papers.

Prof. Indra Nath Choudhuri said that coming to the Sahitya Akademi was like 'Home Coming' for him and stated that the present topic Protecting Mother Tongues had been discussed for over a hundred years since the colonial days. He recalled the circumstances in which the International Mother Tongue Day came about, highlighted the role languages played in many a movement and recalled Tagore's statement of a child doing well if education is imparted in the mother tongue.

The first speaker, Dr. Chandra Prakash Deval, stated that only through language can people relate to others or communicate with people around or express one's thoughts and feeling or even describe the natural phenomena. If we do not preserve one's mother tongue, we will not be able to even record histories of one's community or even talk about God and mythology. He said of all the inventions of man, language is the most significant one and quoted Ghalib saying that if the language is lost then the identity of the individual as well as culture is lost.

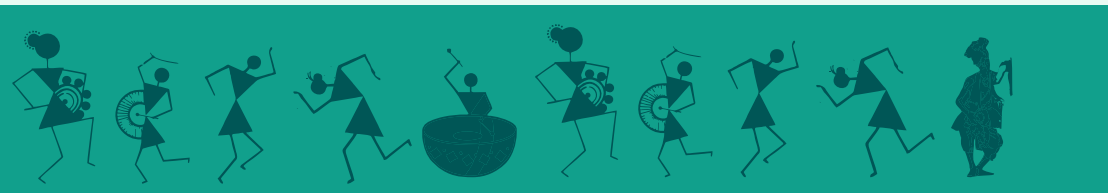
The next speaker, Sri Rahul Dev, began his speech by saying that we can protect the languages only if our society is seriously concerned that our languages are in danger. He stated that not only minor languages and dialects, but even the mainstream languages that are ancient and rich are in the danger zone of becoming extinct in the near future. He informed that UNESCO, after deep research, had setup nine parameters to calculate the liveliness of a particular language in the world. (1) Process of language passing through generation to generation, (2) Total number of people who use that particular language, is it increasing or decreasing, (3) total ratio of the people in a particular society who are using that language, (4) which are the domains in which that language is being used, (5) Whether these domains are increasing or decreasing, (6) what are the new inventions—technique, knowledge etc.— being used in that language, (7) Policies/ attitudes of government and non-government organization towards the language, (8) What are the new systems in relation to provide education in a particular language and (9) the new systems being developed in a particular language.

The final speaker of the session, Prof. Anisur Rahman observed that languages which lived in shrunken linguistic habitats have turned either moribund or fixated, or been mummified as relics of the past. He said that protecting mother-tongue is protecting one's own identity, community and culture. There can be several ways and methods to protect a mother tongue but there is no formula to do so because languages cannot be brought to a formulaic system to help them sustain and survive.

Prof. Indranath Choudhuri concluded the session by reciting two poems—one by Michael Madhusudan Dutt and other a poem by Kuldeep Salil.

In the third session of the seminar chaired by Dr. Chandra Prakash Deval, two noted scholars, Sri Vasdev Mohi and Sri Sa. Kandasamy, presented their papers. Sri Deval initiating the proceedings stated that preservation of mother tongue is an essential ingredient in the efforts to preserve and promote cultural traditions. Sri Vasdev Mohi stated that dwindling languages endanger the identity of the entire community and observed that the thought patterns of children learning in mother tongue is vastly superior to those of children learning in the acquired language. Sri Sa Kandasamy stated that according to socio-linguistic researchers of the 7000 plus languages, 90% would be extinct by the turn of the century. He said that language is not just a sound but the basis of all knowledge about culture, heritage philosophy, literature and civilization. He concluded by quoting the famous Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu "If you have to walk a thousand mile, never mind, begin the first step", which rightly paves the way for initiating steps to safeguard our mother tongues.





Meet the Author with Rupa Bajwa

Sahitya Akademi organized a 'Meet the Author' programme featuring eminent Indian-English writer, Rupa Bajwa at the Rabindra Bhavan Lawns on 22 February 2017. This platform 'Meet the Author' was launched by Sahitya Akademi 30 years ago where eminent writers are invited to talk about their life and works.

Rupa Bajwa is the recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award for her celebrated novel *The Sari Shop*. In the course of her talk she said that her novels mapped the lives of the marginalized individuals and power equations in the society that map their lives. She asks who are the metropolitan socialites to decide who will write? It makes her angry. Extremely fond of Chekhov's books and also of Manto, she said she was influenced by them. She is not in favor of the term small town but referred to them as marginalized places.

She says that English should be brought down from the ivory towers and ordinary people should be able to relate their world in English. She was an engineering student and left Amritsar at the age of 18 and then studied and worked in different cities. She passed her life in great difficulties and after saving Rs. 35000 she started her literary journey. Fame and recognition came with her acclaimed book *The Sari Shop* which won several awards, like Orange Prize for Fiction and Sahitya Akademi Award. It was written in 2004 and explores her home town and the complexities of small towns and class dynamics in India through the life of Ramchand, a shop assistant in a sari shop. Working on her third unpublished novel, she realised how little she actually knew about writing. It was a humbling experience. A lively question and answer session followed.



BHARATANATYAM BY SANDHYA PURECHA



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