

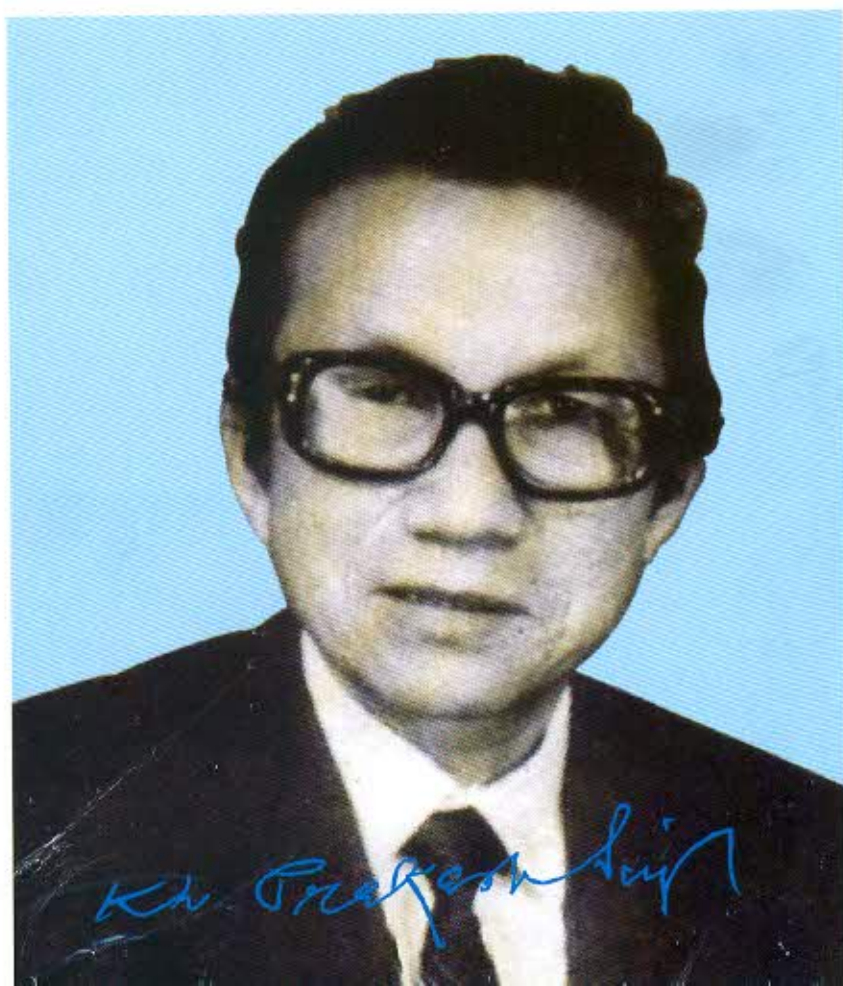
11 February 2010



Sahitya Akademi

meet the author

Khumanthem Prakash Singh





A man of immense cultural influence with a creative potential, Sri Khumanthem Prakash Singh is one of the prominent authors of Manipuri literature. His works can be distinguished for their realism and aesthetics. The last son of Sri Kh. Kaomacha Singh and Smt Nilamani Debi, Sri Prakash was born on 27 March 1931 at Sagolband Meino Leirak, Imphal. Beginning his educational career at Tera L.P. School, Imphal, Sri Prakash entered Johnstone High School for further studies. He completed matriculation from Bengali High School in 1953 and graduation in Commerce from Gauhati University in 1959. He started his service career as a teacher at Kohima Government High School on regular basis. In

1959, he joined All India Radio, Gauhati as a staff artiste, and then served as Producer, All India Radio, Imphal in 1969 and as Programme Executive, A.I.R. in 1974. Later he rose to the rank of Assistant Station Director of All India Radio, Imphal. Sri Singh was then deputed to Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi in 1982. He retired from Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Akademi as its first Director in 1996.

Sri Prakash Singh has long been associated with many cultural and literary organizations of the nation. He was President of the Cultural Forum, Imphal (1984), of Writers' Forum, Imphal (2000), of Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Imphal (2002), Member of Executive Committee, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi (2003-2007), of the Indian Council for Cultural Relation (1982-1999), Azad Bhavan, New Delhi, of its Governing Board (1986-1988), of E.Z.C.C., and also of Manipur State Kala Akademi, Imphal. He also worked as Editor of 'The Ritu' (a literary journal of Cultural Forum, Manipur), 'Sahitya' of Manipuri Sahitya Parishad and 'Kangla' of Atombapu Research Centre.

He has extensively travelled in almost all major countries of Europe and South-East Asia

including France (1985), Italy (1986), South Korea (1986), Philippines (1986), Thailand (1986), The Soviet Union (1987), The U.K. (1989), Germany (1991), Myanmar, Bangkok, Rangoon (1995), Moscow (1996) etc. Needless to say, all his travels were associated with his contribution to and propagation of culture and literature to the ever-widening horizons. He participated in national and international seminars, workshops and conferences on literary and cultural issues. He also presented poems in the All India National Symposium of Poets at the inaugural function of The Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal in 1982. Sri Prakash also took part in the Round Table Literary Conference in Moscow in 1996.

Sri Singh started writing short stories and poems since his college life. In 1954 he won a prize in the Short-Story Writing Competition organized by D.M.College for his 'Cha Glass Ama' (a glass of tea) written on a revolutionary theme. He won the Best Lyrics Award in the First Manipur State Film Festival, 1984, for the film *Olang Thegi Wangmadasu*. So far, he has published three books viz. *Ichehi Sam* (Sister's Hair, short story, 1965), *Mangi Eshei* (Songs of Dreams, short story, 1984) and *Eshei Pareng* (Garland of Songs, a collection of lyrics, 1997). He received Sahitya Akademi Award in 1986 for his book of short stories, *Mangi Eshei*.

The writing of Sri Prakash Singh deals with many new and radical



Receiving Sahitya Akademi Award



At a poetry festival in Myanmar

issues, particularly in human and personal relationships, such as issues of moral bankruptcy as reflected in *Ichegi Sam*; corruption as in 'Wakat' (Complaint); social taboo and superstition as in 'Pukhri Macha'

(Small pond); hypocrisy as in 'Wakat Sareng' (The bribing fish) etc. He is primarily anxious about the emerging symptoms of depersonalized relations as depicted in the illicit affairs of Sana and the mother-in-law in his



Attending a literary function



On a foreign tour

story, 'Manorama' the nasty activities of woman for begetting a child as in his 'Icha' (My child); a woman's casual relation with her husband's friend as in his story 'Mama' (Mother) etc. Besides satires and acid ironies in his outlooks on the degrading human relationships, there are also romantic overtones of the poet-lyricist in Sri Prakash. The title story of his Sahitya Akademi Award-winning book *Mangi Eshei* itself is projected around

the contours of reminiscences of Tomba Babu for his parted beloved, Malati and when Malati is destined to get married with another man, Tomba Babu's heart remains filled with echoes of fond memories.

Approaching his seventieth birthday now, Sri Kh. Prakash Singh is still active in the pursuit of literary activities. The publications of a travelogue and another collection of short-story are quite at hand.



Attending a poetry session at Bhopal with other poets

Bibliography

SHORT STORIES

Ichegi Sam, 1965, Imphal

Mangi Eshei, 1984, Imphal

LYRICAL COMPOSITION

Eshei Pareng, 1997, Imphal

A CHRONOLOGY

1931 Birth at Sagolband Meino Leirak, Imphal

- 1953 Matriculation from Bengali High School, Imphal
- 1957 Commerce Graduation from Gauhati University
- 1957 Started teaching career
- 1959 Joined All India Radio, Imphal
- 1960 Married with W. Bimola Devi
- 1982 Joined Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi
- 1984 President, Cultural Forum, Manipur
- 1985-86 Foreign travels including France, Italy, South Korea, Thailand, Phillipinse etc.
- 1986 Won Sahitya Akademi Award for *Mangi Eshei*
- 1987-89 Tours to Soviet Union and U.K.
- 1996 Retired from service as Director, Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Akademi, Imphal
- 1996 Travel to Moscow (Russia)
- 2000 President, Writers' Forum, Imphal
- 2002 President, Manipuri Sahtiya Parishad, Imphal