



साहित्य अकादेमी  
Sahitya Akademi  
Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi

SA.16/14/

24 January 2019

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Festival of Letters 2019

January 28, 2019 – February 2, 2019

Sahitya Akademi, India's premier literary institution will be organizing annual **Festival of Letters from January 28, 2019 to February 2, 2019** at Rabindra Bhavan, 35 Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi 110 001.

More than 250 eminent writers, scholars, poets, critics and translators including women tribal writers are participating in this weeklong Festival.

The Festival will commence with the inauguration of **Sahitya Akademi 2018 Exhibition on 28 January 2019 at 10.00 a.m.** This Exhibition will showcase Akademi's activities, achievements and highlights in the previous year. The Exhibition will be inaugurated by Padma Bhushan **Prof Mrinal Miri**, eminent writer, philosopher, educationist, former Director of Indian Institute of Advanced Study and former member of Rajya Sabha. A special Gandhi corner to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi featuring 700 books by and on Gandhi is an added attraction of this year's Exhibition.

The Exhibition will be followed by the conferment of **Bhasha Samman** on 8 eminent scholars from different fields. Bhasha Samman is conferred on scholars who make outstanding contributions either in the field of Classical and Medieval Literature or to the enrichment of unrecognized languages and oral traditions of India.

For the first time, Akademi will be organizing a two-day **Women Tribal Writer' Meet on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of January. 43 eminent women tribal writers and poets representing 36 tribal languages** of the country will be participating in the Meet.

Prestigious **Sahitya Akademi Awards** will be conferred on 24 distinguished writers at a ceremony on **29<sup>th</sup> at 5.30 p.m. at Kamani Auditorium** and **Prof Manoj Das**, distinguished writer, scholar and Fellow of Sahitya Akademi will be the Chief Guest. Of the 24 Award winning titles, 7 are poetry collections, 6 are short story collections, 6 are novels, 4 are works of criticism and 1 is a collection of essays. Of the 24 Award winners this year, 3 are women writers. Sri Ma. Su. Patil is the oldest Awardee this year at 83 years while Budhichandra Heisnamba and Sri Rajesh Kumar Vyas are the youngest at 46 years. The Award winners in Sanskrit and Telugu are Padma Shri Awardees while Sindhi Award winner is also a winner of Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar and Translation Prize whereas Awardees in Gujarati and Marathi are winners of Akademi Translation Prize.



साहित्य अकादेमी  
Sahitya Akademi  
Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi

This year's **Samvatsar Lecture** will be delivered by **Prof Gopi Chand Narang**, distinguished writer, scholar, former President and Fellow of Sahitya Akademi. He will be talking about "Faiz Ahmad Faiz: Thought Structure, Evolutionary Love and Aesthetic Sensibility" at 6.00 p.m. on 30 January 2019.


This year's main focus will be a **three-day national seminar on Gandhi in Indian Literature** in which around 50 distinguished Gandhian scholars and writers will be participating. The Seminar will cover many aspects of Gandhi and Gandhian Thought such as the Gandhi's Economics, Gandhi and Fiction, Gandhi and Ambedkar, Gandhi's Concept of Ecology, Gandhi and Women Empowerment, Gandhi and Journalism and much more. The Seminar will be inaugurated by the distinguished poet Sri **Jayanta Mahapatra** and the keynote address will be delivered by Sri **Sudhir Chandra**, eminent historian. The seminar will be organized at the Akademi Auditorium, first floor, Rabindra Bhavan from **31 January to 2 February 2019**.

Another unique feature of this year's Festival is **Transgender Poets' Meet** which the Akademi will be organizing for the first time during the Festival. 15 transgender poets will be participating in the Meet which will be inaugurated by **Prof Manabi Bandyopadhyay**, eminent scholar and academician, who is also the first transgender Principal of a college.

Another addition to this year's Festival will be a panel discussion on **Present Scenario of Playwriting** in which distinguished Theatre personalities will be discussing the challenges and possibilities before the playwrights of current times.

Other regular features like **Purvottari** (North East and Northern Writers' Meet), **Yuva Sahiti** (Young Writers' Meet), **Spin A Tale** (Children's programme), **Panel Discussions on Translation, Media and Literature and Publishing in India** will take place during the Festival.

On the evening of 28 January, there will be Baiga Dance a cultural performance by Gopal Krishna Soni's Baiga Yuva Nrityadal, Chhattisgarh. On 29<sup>th</sup> evening at Kamani auditorium, distinguished dancer and Padma Vibhushan **Sonal Mansingh** along with her troupe will be performing Natya Katha. On 30<sup>th</sup> evening there will be a cultural performance Gayan-Bayan, Mati Akhora and Ram Bijoy Khondan Drisya. Finally on the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> February, eminent violinist and vocalist, **Sunita Bhuyan** along with her troupe will be performing Indo Fusion Music.

  
(K. Sreenivasarao)  
Secretary