



Press Release

**Sahitya Akademi Award 2020 Presentation
Saturday, 18th September 2021, Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi**

The Sahitya Akademi Award 2020 were presented to 22 writers at an august function on 18 September 2021, at Kamani Auditorium, Copernicus March, New Delhi.

The function began with the invocation. Dr. K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed Prof. Chandrasekhar Kambar, the President and Sri Madhav Kaushik, Vice President of Sahitya Akademi, Prof. Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari, the Chief Guest, Award-winners, dignitaries and the present literature lovers. He applauded the Award winners for their contribution to Indian literature through their languages. He said that progressive society always celebrates literature, and the one that does not celebrate literature cannot be identified as progressive. Writers, writings and literary translations have several goals in the society. Literature builds up and culture the conscience of human being. He further informed that during lockdown Sahitya Akademi's activities were possible only because of literature lovers and friends of the Akademi. Concluding his speech Dr. K. Sreenivasarao, thanked the Indian writers' community for their continued patronage and support through the inception of the Akademi.

Dr. K. Sreenivasarao read out the citations and Dr. Chandrasekhar Kambar, President, Sahitya Akademi, conferred the Awards on the awardees. Sri Dipak Owari, son of (Late) Sri Dharanidhar Owari (Bodo), Smt. Asha Koul, wife of (Late) Sri Hirday Koul (Kashmiri) and Smt. Deepti Bhalla, daughter of Sri Omchery N.N. Pillai (Malayalam) received the Awards on their behalf.

Dr. Chandrasekhar Kambar in his presidential address said that it is indeed a momentous occasion and that he was extremely happy to be there at this prestigious Akademi Award Presentation function. He added that the Akademi presents the awards for the best works in plural Indian languages and at the Akademi he had been able to find and felicitate the brilliant literary talents of this country. We need to make our heterogeneous literatures in many Indian languages including English. It is important to note that the Akademi award-winning works will be translated and will enter the national and the international literary spaces. Concluding his speech, he heartily congratulated all the award-winning writers.

Prof. Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari, eminent Hindi poet, scholar, writer, former President and Fellow of Sahitya Akademi, in his address said that the soul of the writer is always alive and the ability to express his/ her inner being is actually a blessing of him/her. It is the writer's pure sensitivity that connects his/ her self to the other. That is why the writer could internalize the pain and suffering of the others. Violence prevails in our times and

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सचिव
Dr. K. Sreenivasarao
Secretary


साहित्य अकादेमी
(राष्ट्रीय साहित्य संस्थान)
संस्कृति मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार की स्वायत्तशासी संस्था
Sahitya Akademi
(National Academy of Letters)
An Autonomous Organisation of Government of India, Ministry of Culture



the writer has invariably been against violence. It is non-violence, peace, harmony and purity of human conscience that is the foundation of Indian Literature.

Sri Madhav Kaushik. Vice President, Sahitya Akademi, in his concluding remarks said that We can imagine the intensity of Indian sensibility which is at once united and upto the brim with diversity. We are the society that can surmount any obstacle. He concluded his speech saying that it is all of us that are felicitated in awarding such versatile writers of India. Sri Sankar (Bengali), Sri Omchery N.N. Pillai (Malayalam) and Sri Gurdev Singh Rupana (Punjabi) could not attend the function.

Names of the Award-winners: Apurba Kumar Saikia (Assamese), Sankar (Bengali), (Late) Dharanidhar Owari (Bodo), Arundhati Subramaniam (English), Harish Meenashru (Gujarati), Anamika (Hindi), M. Veerappa Moily (Kannada), (Late) Hirday Koul Bharati (Kashmiri), R.S. Bhaskar (Konkani), Kamal Kant Jha (Maithili), Omchery N.N. Pillai (Malayalam), Irungbam Deven Singh (Manipuri), Shanker Deo Dhakal (Nepali), Yashodhara Mishra (Odia), Gurdev Singh Rupana (Punjabi), Bhanvar Singh Samaur (Rajasthani), Mahesh Chandra Sharma Gautam (Sanskrit), Rupchand Hansda (Santali), Jetho Lalwani (Sindhi), Imaiyan (Tamil), Nikhileswar (Telugu) and Hussain-ul-Haque (Urdu).


(K. Sreenivasarao)



Press Release

Writers' Meet

19 September 2021, Sahitya Akademi Auditorium, New Delhi

The Sahitya Akademi Award-winners participated in the Writers' Meet at which they shared their creative experiences. Sri Madhav Kaushik, Vice President, Sahitya Akademi, presided over the function.

Dr Apurba Kumar Saikia, Sahitya Akademi Award-winner in Assamese, said "I consider language to be a double edged weapon empowered to laud and sully, to oppress and liberate, to clarify and cloud, and to both compute and at times be incapable of capturing a delicate human experience."

Sri Sankar, Sahitya Akademi Award-winner in Bengali, could not attend the function. His paper stated that writing is a great profession, but none of your near and dear ones wants you to be a writer, it is full of uncertainties, a difficult and lonely journey.

Ms. Arundhathi Subramaniam, Sahitya Akademi Award-winner in English, shared her views saying, if she was to return to the question 'why poetry', she would say just this: 'In a world of information overload, poetry reminds us of the importance of mystery and the needed poise'.

Sri Harish Meenashru, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Gujarati, said that it is misbelief that a poet composes a poem, in fact a poem 'composes' a poet in all possible meanings. A sculptor himself is being sculpted in the process of sculpting. The process of creation, the process of writing pushes a poet centripetally towards the core of being.

Smt. Anamika, Sahitya Akademi Award-winner in Hindi sharing her experiences said that by learning from the mistakes of the history, we can easily say that structural changes will also not be permanent, but if humanity is alert, then they can definitely be made long-lives.

Sri M. Veerappa Moily, Sahitya Akademi Award-winner in Kannada, referring his awarded book, said that this epic *Bahubali* is the story of one who rejects everything after winning, and who, possessing everything that people desire, renounces all that, including his clothes. His story proclaims what should be the *dharma* of the entire world – to root out 'Desire' of all kinds and to seek Truth.



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Sri R.S. Bhaskar, Sahitya Akademi Award-winner in Konkani, said that my poetry portrays pictures of everyday life. I try drawing the subject matter for my poetry from familiar and easily identifiable surroundings and all that is going on around me.

Sri Kamal Kant Jha, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Maithili, referring to his awarded book, said that this book is a collection of 27 short stories, and each story of this collection expresses different aspects of the relationship between the human being, environment and the Nature.

Sri Omchery N.N. Pillai, Sahitya Akademi award-winning in Malayalam, could not make it in person. His written speech discussed his awarded work. It said "*Akasmikam* is my reminiscences from early boyhood, through the span of about eight decades, which would inspire the readers to share the experiences - to face the challenges and turn them into opportunities".

Dr. Irungbam Deven Singh, Sahitya Akademi award-winning in Manipuri, said that poetry is unpredictable—you could start somewhere and land somewhere else. The poets' journey is never static. They move forward and also engage themselves in retrospection. They always look for new frontiers, he added.

Sri Shanker Deo Dhakal, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Nepali, in his speech said that as an author he tries to be the character and live that story. Then, I immediately detach myself and write and this came naturally to him.

Smt. Yashodhara Mishra, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Odia, sharing her views with the audience, said, "I don't think a writer ever asks himself as to why and for whom he is writing. At least I never did. As far back as I can remember, it was fun to make two lines rhyme, and funnier still if you could sing it before your friends and make them want listen to it more."

Sri Bhanwar Singh Samaur, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Rajasthani, said that culture is the recollection of the meaningful moments of the past, the inspiration of the present and the vision of the future. It takes the society from the negativity to the positivity. This is the power of culture which is manifested in the literature through language.

Sri Mahesh Chandra Sharma Gautam, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Sanskrit, in his speech expressed that it was in fact the characters in his works that made him write and he was merely a medium. While writing he knew that it was imaginary world but still when any of the character wept he also began to weep.



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Sri Rupchand Hansda, Sahitya Akademi awarded-winner in Santali, discussing his awarded book said that the poems in *Gur Dak Kasa Dak* are of different taste and composed in modern style. 'Gur Dak Kasa Dak' means 'Good Water Bad Water' or 'Khatta Pani Mitha Pani'. The poems meandering through varied themes ranging from life and love, dream and hope to the pain and agony of life, helplessness and loneliness of the human being.

Sri Jetho Lalwani, Sahitya Akademi Award-winner in Sindhi, said that he believes that a writer belongs to every flutter of the outer world, and this belonging is not only intellectual and emotional but biological too. It is the happenings in the outer world that shapes up the sensibility of a writer and it is the writer's conscience that balances his/her response to the outer world.

Sri Imaiya, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Tamil, in his speech said that the purpose of his writing is to make an attempt to comprehend all the greatness and shames associated with human life and the moments when human beings lose vis-à-vis nature and the emptiness surrounding life.

Sri Nikhilswar, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Telugu, said that the poetry which sprouts out of anguish and protest is naturally linked to the poet's life and experiences.

Sri Hussain-ul-Haque, Sahitya Akademi award-winner in Urdu, said that *Amavas Mein Khwab* is the mouthpiece of Indian society. The characters presented in this do not belong to any particular religion or any region. The characters in this book are custodians of the changing political and cultural heritage of India. He shared that entire India is felt on a creative level in this novel.

Sri Sankar (Bengali), Sri Omchery N.N. Pillai (Malayalam) and Sri Gurdev Singh Rupana (Punjabi) could not attend the Meet. Their speeches were distributed among the audience.

Sri Madhav Kaushik, Vice-President, Sahitya Akademi, concluding the Meet, thanked all the awardees and the present literature lovers.


(Dr. K. Sreenivasarao)