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संस्कृति मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार की स्वायत्तशासी संस्था

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PRESS RELEASE

Presentation of Sahitya Akademi's Honorary Fellowship  
to Sri Prafulla Mohanti, eminent writer and scholar in English and  
Sahitya Akademi Bal Puraskar Awardees' Meet  
15 November 2022

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 15 November 2022**

Sahitya Akademi conferred its Honorary Fellowship on Sri Prafulla Mohanti, Eminent writer and scholar in English on Tuesday, 15 November 2022, at a splendid function at the Rabindra Bhavan Lawns, New Delhi. The function was organized during *Pustakayan* – Sahitya Akademi Book Fair 2022. In the beginning of the programme, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the audience and dignitaries. He read out the citation of Sri Mohanti's life and works and his contribution to Indian Literature in English. He also appreciated Sri Mohanti's works as a painter. Prof. Chandrashekhar Kambar, President, Sahitya Akademi, in his Presidential Address, heartily congratulated Sri Mohanti and formally conferred the Sahitya Akademi Honorary Fellowship with a shawl and a copper plaque. In his acceptance speech, Sri Prafulla Mohanti said it is a miracle that I am in Delhi when the Sahitya Akademi is giving me its Honorary Fellowship, a great achievement for a village boy who taught himself to read and write in English and wrote a book – *My Village, My Life* – so far the only book written by a villager anywhere in the world about his village. I am grateful to Sahitya Akademi for inviting me to Delhi and creating a beautiful atmosphere where the Sun is shining, people are smiling and the children dancing. I am very happy to accept the honour. Sri Bijayananda Singh, the Convener of Sahitya Akademi's Advisory Board for Odia felicitated Sri Mohanti and also gave a brief account of Sri Mohanti's illustrious career and his works as a writer in English and an accomplished painter. Sri Madhav Kaushik, Vice-President, Sahitya Akademi in his concluding remarks said that the Akademi feels pride in honouring Sri Prafulla Mohanti. He said that Sri Mohanti is a great scholar and worked extensively for enriching Indian Literature.

The Akademi also organized an *Awardees' Meet* in which the Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar winners shared their literary experiences. Sri Diganta Oza, (Awardee in Assamese) said that the children are the most harassed folk under the Sun. The physical and mental oppression of them in homes, schools and other social functions have become simple phenomena. We are the victims as well as perpetrators of this heinous, inhuman convention. Ms Joya Mitra (Awardee in Bengali), said childhood is the most beautiful and promising part of human life. The children possess the capacity to be happy under all kinds of circumstances. They have the natural power to believe and to react if they are given the slightest support. That is why, I think, they should culturally be exposed to most positive thoughts and experiences. Sri Dewbar Ramchary (Awardee in Bodo) said that he had great faith that the children literature is a weapon of the new generation which can uplift their talents. The development of all kinds of talents begin from childhood. The future of the country depends on their quality of talent of students. So, the granary of children literature should be rich. Sri Rajeshwar Singh 'Raju', (Awardee in Dogri), said that he enjoyed a lot while writing stories. he became a father, a story-teller and a kid at the same time. It was a beautiful feeling to step into childhood again. Sri Kirit Goswami, (Awardee in Gujarati) said that the new generation of children should be given new subjects, new imagery, new instruments, new fantasy poetry and by doing so we can spread love and happiness among them. Smt. Kshama Sharma (Awardee in Hindi), sharing her childhood memories said that actually, we all keep running towards our childhood throughout our life, but it flaunts, always goes ahead, and we can never catch it up.

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Ms Tammanna Beegar (Awardee in Kannada), in his speech stressed that her efforts are centred around opening the realities of the world of children living around here. Her stories, novels, poems, and short works carry the same broad theme with different layers. It is my intention and wish that such writings should propel the growth of children into a responsible citizen. Sri Qamer Hamidullah (Awardee in Kashmiri) said that the children do not like poems containing direct advice and instructions. They like poems which appeal their imagination. They are delighted with poems about natural objects, natural beauty and about the environment. But they do not like the lengthy poems and the poems written in tough language. Ms Jyoti Kunkoliekar, (Awardee in Konkani) said that through her novel, she wants to tell that only book studies are not enough, it is necessary for a child to have physical, mental, emotional development. There should also be love for the environment and animals and birds. Sri Birendra Jha, (Awardee in Maithili) said that children's literature should be in accordance with child's interest, psychology and desire. It is necessary that children's literature to be short, simple, juicy and interesting. The purpose of children's literature is to increase knowledge in sports along with entertainment. Sri Naorem Lokeshwar Singh, (Awardee in Manipuri), said that he would consider his efforts fruitful if his message to the young ones to love their age-old traditions and customs is delivered.

Ms Sangeeta Rajeev Barve (Awardee in Marathi), said that she considers her duty to encourage children to try to write in their mother tongues, because now in Maharashtra, reading and writing in her mother tongue Marathi is becoming less. Sri Meena Subba (Awardee in Nepali) said that in today's situation, we have to work towards making the family environment child-friendly and connecting with our roots as well as inculcating modern thinking to face the future challenges. Sri Narendra Prasad Das (Awardee in Odia) said that writing for adults and writing for children are completely different. Children's literature as already told, has to inform, entertain and persuade its readers making them creative and imaginative. Sri Vishwamitra Dadhich (Awardee in Rajasthani) wanted to convey his point to every class of people the suffering of aquatic creatures through fish and tears. Through his book he made it clear that in the present scientific era, we have to inculcate the values towards the environment in the child's mind. Sri Kuldeep Sharma (Awardee in Sanskrit) discussed his awarded book said that this book is based on the principles of child psychology and education psychology. The justification for all the answers is also given in the appendix of the book.

Sri Ganesh Marandi (Awardee in Santali) thought that children literature of each language has an important role in the development of language, literature and culture. It gives a completeness to a literature of a particular language.

Sri Manohar Nihalani (Awardee in Sindhi) said that writing children's literature is a difficult task with a lot of responsibility because while writing, the writer has to write each sentence, each paragraph after thinking it, because it has a direct effect on the soft heart and mentality of the children. Sri G. Meenakshi (Awardee in Tamil) said that he loves writing stories for children. Although he has worked on numerous short stories and articles for adults, he feels an overwhelming joy in narrating stories for children, which just cannot be described in words. Sri Pattipaka Mohan (Awardee in Telugu) referring to his awarded-book said that his book is in two parts. The first part includes Gandhi's songs and the second part is Gandhi's lyrical story. Children can read and sing the songs in metrical rhythm themselves. The songs have been composed in simple and soft Telugu words not only inform the children about Gandhianism, but also reveal Gandhi's philosophy, his personality, his religion, his leadership in the freedom struggle. Ms Zafar Kamali (Awardee in Urdu) said that she feels, even at the age of 63, that there is an innocent child hidden in her heart, who jumps and laughs at her, who, with the emphasis of his flirtation and innocent expressions, compels her to write for him. Dr. Arshia Sattar (Awardee in English) and Sri A. Sethumadhavan (Awardee in Malayalam) could not come.

Sri Madhav Kaushik, Vice-President, Sahitya Akademi, concluding the Meet, thanked all the awardees and the literary lovers who were present on this occasion.



(K. Sreenivasarao)