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



SA/37/PR/2020

8.1.2020

PRESS RELEASE
Indo-Iranian Writers' Meet

An Indo-Iranian Writers' Meet was organized by Sahitya Akademi and the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran at Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi, on 7 January 2020. The Chief guest of the meet was the renowned writer Nasira Sharma. Mohd. Ali Rabbani, Cultural Consellor, Islamic Republic of Iran chaired the Inaugural Session. Dr. K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi welcomed the guests by presenting them angvastram. In his welcome address Secretary, Sahitya Akademi pointed out the cultural relations between India and Iran, existing over the last several centuries. He said how cultural and literary exchanges between two communities or societies or nations were once upon a time attempts to promote understanding and how poetry, prose, historiography, religious writing, scientific writing on the middle period would bear witness to rich exchanges between Persian and classical Indian languages. He dwelt on Urdu and other Indian literatures were influenced by Persian literature, how Persian painting, sculpture and architecture vastly influenced their respective Indian counterparts. He also pointed out the need of translation between Farsi and Indian languages literature.

Dr. Nasira Sharma, eminent writer in Hindi and Farsi said that we got our ancient works published because of their translations from Indian languages to Farsi, from which they were translated into languages like German, French etc. She also pointed out that in many Farsi books Indian society, and culture have been discussed. Mohd. Ali Rabbani said that because of the valuable contributions of writers, artists, scholars and others good relations have been built between India and Iran. Now it is necessary for literature of both the countries to come closer by translation.

A poetry session of Indo-Iran poets was conducted after the inaugural session, in which Ali Reza Ghazveh (Iran), Hadi Saeedi Kaisari (Iran), Ain-ul-Hasan (India), Iraq Raza Zaidi (India) and Balram Shukla (India) presented their original and translated poems.

As the third part of the Meet, a Panel Discussion on "Indo-Iran Cultural Bonds" was conducted. The Session was chaired by Ehsanollah Shakrollahi, Director of Persian Research Centre, Iran Culture House. He explained in great detail, during his introductory remarks and in-between interventions, the intricate cultural relations India and Iran had over the centuries. Ahmad Ali Haidari, dwelt on the philosophical and cultural connections our two countries had. Professor Rajender Kumar who spoke next made a wide range of connections—literary, aesthetic, cultural, philosophical, spiritual, scientific, mathematical—between Persian and Indian cultures. He even mentioned the Persian connection of certain Christian communities in India, including in Kerala. Dr. Rakshanda Jalil who spoke next made specific comments about the influences of Persian on Urdu, and on our poetic forms like the ghazal etc., in great detail. She concluded her speech by appealing to both Indian and Iranian authorities to build a befitting memorial to the great Persian poet Mirza Bedil, lying buried near the National Stadium in Delhi, about whom no one among the common people seems to know anything, but entire literatures departments in many Indian and foreign universities are dedicated to him. The next speaker Husaini Pur Nicknaam (Iran) dwelt on libraries and their roles in facilitating preservation and dissemination of books, which Iran does in a special way. Ehsanollah Shakrollahi, the chairperson, concluded the session with special references to all the speakers, and summing up their viewpoints. The Meet was moderated by Dr. A. J. Thomas, Guest Editor, *Indian Literature*.

K. Sreenivasarao