



SA/PR/2019

2/2//2019

Press Release

Publishing in India: Panel Discussion Transgender Poets' Meet Spin-A-Tale, A Programme for Children

Publishing in India: Panel Discussion

Sahitya Akademi organized a Panel Discussion on “Publishing in India: Panel Discussion” at the Rabindra Bhavan Lawns on 2 February 2019. In the inaugural session Dr. K.S. Rao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed Sri Sugata Ghosh, Director, Global Academic Publishing, Oxford University Press, panel discussants and the present fellow writers and publishers. Dr. Rao in his speech expressed his concern that this is the third consecutive occasion when the Akademi is organizing such a discussion on publishing in India yet, despite all our efforts, through advertisement or social media, the expected response from the publishers and the printers is not reflected. He appealed to the printing and publishing sector for their increased participation in such programmes so that their concerns would reach the government agencies.


In his keynote address, Sugata Ghosh said that the publishing industry is one in which growth is at the same level for the last three years. This is the time to write the history of print. There was a time when it was predicted that the publishing world would be shut down by digitization. That printed books would be dead. But we have survived and the growth is phenomenal. Even the mid-stream and the small book stall survived because the seller knew what they were selling and how the reading preferences were changing. He further added that digitization matters as it is taking over the world by its charm. Sri Ramesh Kumar Mittal as moderator of the panel discussion said that publishing creates employments and raises revenues. It is a dynamic and diverse industry because it not only includes commercial publishers but institutions, universities and government houses. Indian publishing industry has been growing substantially in academic and literary fields. Our books are well-received all over the world. Publishing in Indian languages is in the sixth place and in English publishing, India holds the second position--both globally. Sahitya Akademi, National Book Trust, Publication Division and some state-level institutions also are contributing significantly to this field. Sri Ashok Maheshwari said that Indian publishers should be publishing all the Indian books in their languages as these are not just regional languages but are Indian languages. Books are being published in 16 major Indian languages. Sri Bhaskar Dutta Baruah said that digitization is the biggest challenge for the publishing industry. Though the regional language publishers are from an unorganized sector, but still they are closer to the local readers. Sri Balendu Sharma Dadhich said that for the advancement of the publishing industry, technology plays a very important role. He further said that technology should not be taken as a threat; rather, we should try to find out opportunities with the help of technology. Dr. Ram Kumar Mukhopadhyay, quoting Charles Dickens, said that in the advancement of civilization printers and publishers play a significant role. A question-answer session followed.

Transgender Poets' Meet

Sahitya Akademi organized a **Transgender Poets' Meet** at the Rabindra Bhavan Lawns on 2 February 2019. In the inaugural session Dr. K.S. Rao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed the eminent writer, scholar and academician and first transgender member of the Sahitya Akademi Advisory Board, Dr. Manabi Bandyopadhyay, and Chairperson, Ms Debajyoti Bhattacharjee and all the other poets from Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Bihar. He further said that the Akademi is a writers' forum for writers from all parts of the country irrespective of their language, class and gender. Sahitya Akademi does not categorize writers--for us a writer is a writer. The mandate is provided to us to unite varied cultures and traditions of this diverged country. This transgender poets' meet is a part of our commitment to uphold diversity. Dr. Manabi Bandyopadhyay in her inaugural address thanked Sahitya Akademi and Dr. K.S. Rao, for providing this platform to the transgender poets and creating history. She took pride in introducing all the 12 poets (2 poets could not attend the program) as great poets. Ms Debajyoti Bhattacharjee in her address from the chair offered her gratitude to Sahitya Akademi and specially to Dr. Manabi Bandyopadhyay for paving a path for all the transgenders. The poets—Ms Rani Majumdar, Ms Shivani Acharya, Ms Reshma Prasad, Ms Debdatta Biswas, Ms Ahona Chakraborty, Ms Prosphutita Sugandha, Ms Bikoshita Dey, Ms Raveena Bariha and Ms Arunava Nath poured out their hearts in their poetry, and Ms Kalpana Naskar and Ms Anjali Mandal performed on the stage. Dr. K.S. Rao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, in his vote of thanks proposed that such meets will be organised in the rest of India as well, and the next time onwards all poets will be given the same platform irrespective of their gender or community.

Spin-a-Tale, A Programme for Children

A programme for children, 'Spin-a-Tale,' was also organized at Rabindra Bhawan Lawns in which more than 300 students from various schools, such as DPS International, Pathways School, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Mehta Vidyalaya, Modern School, Vasant Vihar and The Indian School participated. Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, welcomed Sri Rajnikant Shukla, eminent Hindi children's poet, story-writer and playwright, and Dr. Divik Ramesh, the recipient of Sahitya Akademi's Bal Sahitya Puraskar. Both Sri Shukla and Dr Ramesh interacted with the children. A short story/poetry competition was held in which a large number of students participated and won prizes. The topic for the competition was devoted to Mahatma Gandhi and his thoughts. Some Children also spoke about Gandhiji and read their own poems on him. Ms. Zaibunnisa 'Haya', a famous children's writer and freelance broadcaster in All India Radio, read out an interesting story to the gathered students. A workshop on cartoon-making was also coordinated by cartoonist Sri Uday Shankar.



(K.Sreenivasarao)