

SOME BASIC KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARD



Sahitya Akademi Award

ABOUT SAHITYA AKADEMI

The proposal to establish a National Academy of letters in India had been under the consideration of the British Government of the country long before independence. In 1944, the Government of India accepted in principle a proposal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal that a National Cultural trust should be set up to encourage cultural activities in all fields. The trust was to consist of three Academies, including the Academy of letters. After freedom, the proposal was pursued by the independent Government of India, while convened a series of conference to work out the details. Consensus emerged in favour of establishing three National Academies one of letters, another of visual arts and the third of dance, drama and music. But deference of opinion persisted whether the Government should take the initiative and establish the Academies or whether it should wait for the advent of individuals who had the necessary moral authority to establish the Academies. Abul Kalam Azad the union minister of education, was of the opinion that "if we had waited for the Academy to grow up from below, we might have had to wait till the Greek Kalends". It was felt that there was no alternative to Government taking the initiative to set up the Academies. The Government's functioning in the process was to be that of a curtain raiser. The Government would set up the Academies, but once they were establish, it would refrain from exercising any control and leave them to perform their function as autonomous institution. The Government of India decided to establish a National Academy of letters to be called Sahitya Akademi by its resolution No F-6-4/51G2(A) dated December 1952.

The Sahitya Akademi was formally inaugurated by the Government of India on 12 March 1954. The Government of India Resolution, which set forth the constitution of the Akademi, described it as a national organisation to work actively for the development of Indian letters and to set high literary standards, to foster and co-ordinate literary activities in all the Indian languages and to promote through them all the cultural unity of the country. Though set up by the Government, the Akademi functions as an autonomous organisation. It was registered as a society on 7 January 1956, under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters, is the central institution for literary dialogue, publication and promotion in the country and the only institution that undertakes literary activities in 24 Indian languages, including English. Over the 64 years of its dynamic existence, it has ceaselessly endeavored to promote good taste and healthy reading habits, to keep alive the intimate dialogue among the various linguistic and literary zones and groups through seminars, lectures, symposia, discussions, readings and performances, to increase the pace of mutual translations through workshops and individual assignments and to develop a serious literary culture through the publications of journals, monographs, individual creative works of every genre, anthologies, encyclopedias, dictionaries, bibliographies, who's who of writers and histories of literature. It has so far brought out over 6000 books, the present pace of publication being one book every 19 hours. Every year the Akademi holds at least 50 seminars at regional, national and international levels along with the workshops and literary gatherings-about 300 in number per year, under various heads like Meet the Author, Samvad, Kavisandhi, Kathasandhi, Loka: The Many Voices, People and Books, Through My Window, Mulakat, Asmita, Antaral, Avishkar, Nari Chetna, Yuva Sahiti, Bal Sahiti, Purvottari and Literary Forum meetings.

Akademi gives 24 awards annually to literary works in the languages it has recognized and an equal number of awards to literary translations from and into the languages of India, both after a year long process of scrutiny, discussion and selection. It also gives special awards called Bhasha Samman to significant contribution to the languages not formally recognized by the Akademi as also for contribution to classical and medieval literature. It has also system of electing

eminent writers as Fellows and Honorary Fellows and has also established fellowship in the names of Dr. Anand Coomaraswamy and Premchand. The Akademi has launched Centres for Translation in Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Delhi, and an Archive of Indian Literature in Delhi. A project office for the promotion of Tribal and Oral literature has also been set up in the North Eastern Hill University Campus, Shillong. Many more imaginative projects are on the anvil. Sahitya Akademi is aware of cultural and linguistic differences and does not believe in forced standardization of culture through a bulldozing of levels and attitudes. At the same time, it is also conscious of the deep inner culture, spiritual, historical and experimental links that unify India's diverse manifestations of literature. This unity seeks an international species-dimension through the Akademi's Culture Exchange Programmes with other countries on the globe.

Languages Recognised: Besides the 22 languages enumerated in the Constitution of India, the Sahitya Akademi has recognised English and Rajasthani as languages in which its programme may be implemented. Names of present members of various language Advisory Boards, which have been constituted to render advice for implementing literary programmes in these 24 languages are given in the website

Head Office: The Head Office of the Sahitya Akademi is housed in Rabindra Bhavan, 35 Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi. This elegant building was constructed in 1961 to commemorate the birth centenary of Rabindranath Tagore, and houses all the three National Akademies, namely, the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the Lalit Kala Akademi and the Sahitya Akademi. The Head office looks after the publication and programme's in Dogri, English, Hindi, Kashmiri, Maithili, Nepali, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Sanskrit, Santhali and Urdu and functions as a regional office as far as these languages are concerned.

Every year since its inception in 1954, the Sahitya Akademi Award prizes to the most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the major Indian languages recognised by the Akademi. The award amount, which was Rs.5,000 since inception, had been enhanced to Rs.10,000 from 1983, Rs.25,000 from 1988, Rs.40,000 from 2001, Rs.50,000 from 2003 and is now Rs.1,00,000 from 2009. The first Awards were given in 1955.

FOR DETAILS U CAN LOG ON FOLLOWING LINK

http://sahitya-akademi.gov.in/sahitya-akademi/awards/akademi%20samman_suchi.jsp

SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE