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PRESS RELEASE

Election of Fellows of Sahitya Akademi

The General Council of Sahitya Akademi in its 90th Meeting held at New Delhi on 29 January 2019 unanimously recommended the following four distinguished Indian writers as Fellows of Sahitya Akademi:

Sri Jayant Mahapatra

He is a distinguished English and Odia writer. After completing his Master's Degree in Physics, he joined as a teacher and served in different Government college of Odisha. Besides being one of the popular Indian poets of his generation, he was also part of the trio of poets who laid the foundations of Indian English Poetry. He has more than 30 published books to his credit. He is the author of such popular poems as *Indian Summer* and *Hunger*, which are regarded as classics in modern Indian English literature. His poems got published in international literary journals such as Critical Inquiry, the Sewanee Review, the Kenyan Review, the New Yorker as well as in many prestigious anthologies and literary magazines in India. He is also a distinguished editor and has been bringing out a literary magazine, *Chandrabhaga* for many years. He was invited to participate in the International Writing Programme at Iowa among twenty two selected international poets. He is the recipient of many awards and honours including Sahitya Akademi Award, Jacob Glatstein Memorial Award, Allan Tate Poetry Prize, SAARC Literary Award, Honorary Doctorate by Ravenshaw University and D. Litt. From Utkal University.

Smt. Padma Sachdev

She is an eminent Dogri and Hindi writer. Her first poetry collection was published in 1969 and since then she has 10 collections of Dogri poetry, 15 books of Hindi prose including 8 novels, one collection of short stories, an autobiography, a travelogue and more than a dozen translations to her credit. She has enormously contributed for the inclusion of the Dogri language to the Eighth schedule of the constitution of India. She served in the Governing bodies of many literary and cultural organisations. She is the recipient of several awards and honours including Padmashri by the President of India, Sahitya Akademi Award, Saraswati Samman of K.K. Birla Foundation, J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Language Award and its lifetime achievement award, Kabir Samman, Soviet Land Nehru Award, Hindi Academy Award, Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize, Delhi Hindi Academy Award, Anuvad Parishad Award etc.

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Dr. Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari

He is a distinguished Hindi writer and the former President of Sahitya Akademi. He was Professor and Head in Gorakhpur University. He has more than 50 published books to his credit, which includes criticism, poetry collections, travelogues, biography, interview, compilation and edited books. His books have been translated into different Indian languages. He has been editing *Dastavez*, a quarterly magazine being published from Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh since 1978 and till now more than 150 issues have been published. He is the recipient of many awards and honours including Hindi Gaurav Samman, Vyas Samman from K.K. Birla Foundation, Sahitya Bhushan Samman, Pushkin Samman, Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad Award, Mahapandit Rahul Sanskritayan Award etc.

Prof. Nagen Saikia

He is an eminent Assamese writer. He has more than 125 published books to his credit including short stories collections, criticism, travelogue, besides edited, co-edited and translated books. He has delivered various memorial lectures in different universities/organizations in India and abroad. He was the member of the Rajya Sabha from 1986-1992 and was the Vice-Chairman of the Upper House from 1990-1992. He was the editor of *Natun Dainik* and *Amar Asom*, reputed newspapers of the region. He is associated with many literary and academic bodies in different capacities and served as President, Asam Sahitya Sabha. He is the recipient of many awards and honours including Sahitya Akademi Award, Assam Valley Literary Award, Hariprasad Rai Award, Sabda Sahitya Award, Mohan Chandra Sarma Award, K.K. Handiqui Memorial Literary Award, Jagadhatri Haramohan Award, D. Litt. by Dibrugarh University and many more. He was the former professor of Dibrugarh University and also served as Lakshminath Bezbaroa Chair in the same university.

Sahitya Akademi Fellowship is conferred only on the most distinguished Indian writers and is the highest literary honour in the country. As per convention, there can only be 21 living Fellows of Sahitya Akademi and the Fellows of Sahitya Akademi should be the persons who made seminal and lasting contributions for the enrichment of Indian literature.

(K. Sreenivasarao)