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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Inauguration of the Akademi Exhibition 2019  
All India Tribal Writers' Conference**

**Cultural Programme: Sri Krishna Parijat: A Traditional Folk Musical Drama**

Sahitya Akademi's annual Festival of Letters 2020 commenced with the inauguration of the Akademi Exhibition 2019 at 10 a.m. Smt. Mannu Bhandari, eminent Hindi writer, lit the lamp and inaugurated the Akademi Exhibition. She was accompanied by Dr Chandrasekhar Kambar, President, Sahitya Akademi, Dr Madhav Kaushik, Vice-President, Sahitya Akademi. Dr. K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, in his introductory address, heartily welcomed Smt. Mannu Bhandari, Dr Chandrasekhar Kambar, Dr Madhav Kaushik, Members of the Akademi's Executive Board and General Council, and lovers of literature and members of the staff of the Akademi present. At the Exhibition, glimpses of the Akademi's activities and achievements during 2019 are showcased. Dr K. Sreenivasarao briefly elaborated upon the Akademi's literary endeavours saying that the Akademi organized 715 programmes, published 484 literary books, participated in 164 book fairs and exhibitions including in international book fairs in Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Guadalajara, Mexico, earned a gross revenue of Rs 6.40 crores, conferred 93 awards in four categories, produced six documentary films taking the total number of documentary films to 148, added 2243 books 24 Indian languages taking the total number of books in all the Akademi libraries to 2, 46,221. Besides, the Akademi started online sale of its publications through Amazon, launched Dalit Chetana programme series, conferred Fellowship on four distinguished litterateurs, and Bhasha Samman on eight eminent scholars and writers, and hosted writers' delegations from China, Mexico and Fiji, and sent Indian writers' delegations to Abu Dhabi, Kyrgyzstan, Portugal and Mexico and Nepal. Also, the Akademi, for first time in its history organized a national programme in Arunachal Pradesh, he said. Finally, he thanked Smt Mannu Bhandari for inaugurating the Exhibition.

As part of the Festival of Letters, the three-day all India Tribal Writers' Conference was commenced on 24 February 2020 at Rabindra Bhavan Lawns. Dr. Anvita Abbi, noted scholar and linguist, inaugurated the Conference. In his welcome note, Dr. K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, said that world of tribal literature is a space of shared living sans stratifications of other societies and it is a space that contains remarkable gems that human minds can ever discover. Sahitya Akademi, India's premiere institution, has been committed to the cause of promotion of tribal literature in all the regions of India. He further said that this programme is part of our commitment to promote tribal writers and tribal literature. This is the fourth straight year we have included tribal writers' meet in our annual Festival of Letters, India's most inclusive literary festival, he added.

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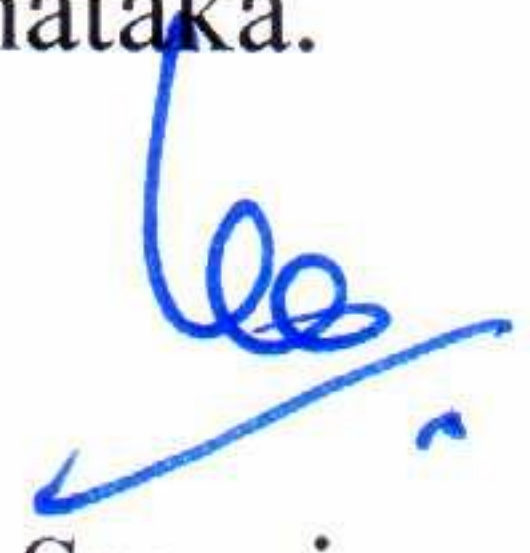
In her inaugural address, Dr. Anvita Abbi said that tribal literature is connected with the folk literature and folk literature is connected to oral literature as most of our folk literature is available in the form of oral literature. Oral literature does not have boundaries, all genres of literature in oral literature are

interconnected while written literature has many genres—poetry, fiction, prose, songs, etc. Reader cannot connect with the author while reading the book as the reader is not able to see him or her, but in oral literature the narrator has direct eye-contact with the audience.

Dr. Chandrasekhar Kambar, President, Sahitya Akademi, speaking as chair of the inaugural session, said that in a country like India, with its rich and manifold cultures, literatures, and art forms, I believe that we should always highlight this diversity when we talk about what India or Indianness mean to us. The Akademi tries to bring the urban and so-called modernized worlds into dialogue with rural and tribal cultures. We at this Akademi strive to show how the languages and literatures of the many tribal communities in the country have their own rich traditions. We wish to provide a platform for such tribal voices. They will open up their diverse and rich literary and aesthetic traditions to us. Their voices will make us aware of the pain, the loss, and also the will to fight back.

The first session of the Conference was chaired by Sri Chandrakanta Murasingh, noted scholar. The session was meant for poetry recitations. Sri Ch. Sote Aimol (Aimol), Sri Mukteswar Kemprai (Dimasa), Sri Mirthnarch K. Marak (Garo), Rup Lall Limboo (Limboo) and Ngurang Reena (Nyneshi) recited their poems in this session.

In the evening, at 6.00 p.m., a cultural event included spontaneous rendering of Shrikrishna Parijata: A Traditional Folk Musical Drama revolving around the relationship between Lord Shrikrishna, Rukmini and Satyabhama, by the celebrated folk artist Ms Durgavva Mudhol (as Rukmini), and her fellow artist Ms Parvati Kalageri (as Krishna), Yallamma Madara (as Satyabhama), and they were accompanied by Ashok Bellakki on Harmonium, Mahantesha Sutara on Tabala, and others. The troupe of folk artists was from Lokapur, Karnataka.

  
(K.Sreenivasarao)