

SADIA DEHLVI (India)



Sadia Dehlvi is a Delhi based writer and columnist. For over 30 years, Dehlvi is engaged in voicing concern on issues regarding heritage, culture, women and Muslim communities. She is the author of the recently released book, “Sufism: The Heart of Islam” published by HarperCollins India. The

book draws on a range of Muslim texts and traditions, the lives of the early Sufis, highlights the important Sufi orders of the subcontinent and their message of love, tolerance and inclusion. Dehlvi is presently working on her next book that details Delhi's rich Sufi history.

A.K. RASHID (Afghanistan)

A.K. Rashid is a poet and scholar. A.K. Rashid, is a cultural Counsellor, and First Secretary in the Embassy of Afghanistan, New Delhi. He was one of the first poets from Afghanistan who was invited by FOSWAL to participate in the first-ever Conference in April 2000.



MOHAMED RASHEED (Maldives)

Mohamed Rasheed, born in 1964, is Masters in Visual Communication, Asian Academy of film and Television. While working in TVM, he started his acting and his first film was shown in 1981. From 1981 to 1993 he has done more than 16 films in a leading rolls. His major film will be released on 28th April. He has done more than 46 documentaries for



Maldives, Norway, Sri Lanka, Netherland, Nepal and Bangladesh. Won the President's; National Award for contribution for Maldives film Industry, 2005.

SAVITA SINGH (India)



Savita Singh is a young poet of India who writes both in Hindi, and English. She has two collections of poetry published in Hindi *Apne Jaisa Jeevan* and *Neend Thee Aur Raat Thee*; one in English Translation : *Rowing Together*, and one in French translation : *le sui maison des etoiles*. She

also writes fiction. Recipient of several awards, Savita Singh is a Professor and Director in the School of Gender and Development Studies, IGNOU, Delhi .

GHULAM JAFFAR (Pakistan)

Ghulam Jaffar was born in 1966. His Publications, include : '*Mein Ney Nasha Chode Dia*', '*Ilmul Manchiat*', '*Sehar Qareeb Hey*', '*Naey Dino Ke Khawab*', '*Dariya Say Sehra Tak*', '*Apnay Istanbul Mein*',. Has done research in several fields of human rights concerns, including child labour. Presently working as Vice President and Branch Manager EFU



General Insurance Company. Has been awarded by Qaid Award 1992, Human Guide Award 1999, Maddray Millat Award 2000, Adara-e- Humsukh Sathi 2003, Mian Afzal Memorial Gujranwala 2003.

SURYAKANTHI TRIPATHI (India)

Retired from the Indian Foreign Service with her last assignment as India's Ambassador to Spain. During



her career she has served in Belgium, Pakistan, France, Nepal, Bangladesh and USA. In India, she has headed the Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of External Affairs and has been Director General of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. She has written for newspapers and magazines on international

trade and economic matters, and science and technology issues. Her special interest is in theatre

and her play, *Crying for Kurukshetra*, was produced in Delhi. It was translated into Manipuri and presented by the eminent theatre director, Ratan Thiyam. The play also won the first prize in 2004 in the Philippines for the best play by a woman playwright. She is interested in painting and has participated in several exhibitions, including the Zurich Art Fair in 2007. She has curated three Photo Exhibitions for the Government of Delhi on Women of India from Vedic Times, Gandhiji's Talisman, and India's North East. She is Managing Partner of Nasadiya Arts, a firm that does websites and design work, and is the Managing Trustee of India Foundation which runs a free medical clinic in Delhi for the homeless.

SHAFI AHMED (Bangladesh)

Shafi Ahmed is currently a Professor of English Literature and theatre studies at Jahangirnagar University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. He has been teaching



for a little more than 36 years now. Beyond teaching, Prof,. Shafi Ahmed is a noted literary critic and translator. His area of specialization is primarily Shakespeare. He has two published books on this great dramatist. Ahmed has also published books on modern drama and literature of both home

and abroad. He has a good number of articles on Shakespeare, Ibsen, Authur Miller and other dramatists.

He is a life member of Bangla Academy, the house of Bangladesh art and culture. He is the editor of a Bangla journal on music and culture. Shafi Ahmed is associated with International Theatre Institute (UNESCO) and has been holding the position of one of the vice-presidents of the Theatre Education Committee. Prof. Ahmed has presented many articles at national and international seminars and visited many parts of the world as a leader/member of Bangladesh cultural delegation.

AMBASSADOR SHASHANK (India)

Ambassador Shashank retired in 2004 as the Foreign Secretary. In a diplomatic career spanning four decades, he served as Indian Ambassador in



Denmark, Republic of Korea (South Korea), Libya and Malta. Earlier he was posted to key assignments in Africa, America, Asia and Europe. Widely regarded as an architect of India's economic diplomacy and strengthening relationships with Africa and East Asia. He is presently a Visiting Professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru University's School of International Studies and serves as Chairman of the Association of African Studies in India. In addition, he is the President of the Indian Council for International Cooperation and India-ROK Friendship Association. He is also an advisor to several leading universities on international relations, chambers of commerce, non-governmental organizations, think tanks and corporations.

NEIL WIJERATNE (Sri Lanka)

Neil Wijeratne is a practising Lawyer by profession. A bi-lingual creative writer and a columnist, Meeduma Atharin (Through the Mist) was published in 1968. He has published Fifteen books ranging from fiction to travel writing and sports history. Neil's novel travelogue "*Kerala Nalangana*" (The Keralite Glamour Girl) won an award at the prestigious Vidyodaya Literary Awards



Ceremony of the Sri Jayawardenapura University in 2009. Amongst his English writings are "*Rugby Across the Straits – Rugby Football links between Sri Lanka & India*" (1999), "*Sevens Saga – A history of seven-a-side Rugby in Sri Lanka.*" Neil's recent literary work titled *Debasay Debasay*" (2010) introduced contemporary Sri Lankan English writers, to the Sinhala readership. Jagath Kumarasinghe, a Gratiaen award winner wrote in 'The Island' newspaper that "Neil Wijeratne is a Ruskin Bond among Sinhala readers. – Already he has built a Sethusamudram for his readers to reach India. No other writer in Sri Lanka has bonded Sri Lanka and

India as much as he has."

Prof. KIRAN WALIA (India)

Prof. Kiran Walia, was born on 28th October 1944 at Shimla in a prominent family of freedom fighters. Her father was a close associate of Bhagat



Singh. Her family, members of Congress, have served the public and the country. Prof. Walia started her professional carrier as a teacher in a College of Delhi University, always struggling for educational, social and political activities.

She is known as honest, hardworking, clear-hearted and dynamic woman. During her tenure as Chairperson of Delhi Women Commission she fought for the rights of women. She has a personal touch of compassion with the people of her area.

ANJUM SALEEMI (Pakistan)



Anjum Saleemi was born in Faisalabad in 1963. His first collection of poetry was in Punjabi named “*Suk kay Athru*” and second was “*Santaap*” published in 1992. He also writes drama, ghazal and nazam.

Anjum's collection of poems and : “*Urdu Nazam Ki Chchothi Jahat*” are : “*Aik Qadeem Khyal Ki*

Nigrani Mein”.

ARKAMAL KAUR (India)

Arkamal Kaur, born in 1955, is a Punjabi poet. Her collections of poetry are: ‘*Gilla-Mudh*’, ‘*Agan-Gatha*’, ‘*Pawn Parvaz*’, ‘*Rooh Ton Rooh Tak*’. Collection of her stories: ‘*Takia Kalam*’. Awarded by the Haryana Punjabi Sahitya Academy and Haryana Govt ; Baba Sheikh Farid Award, and Maha Kavi Bhai Santokh Singh Award. Translated many books in Punjabi. She is Publisher and Editor of SARU Quarterly Magazine.



TAHIR IQBAL (Pakistan)

Tahir Iqbal was born in village of Gujranwala on 15-09-1968. After his graduation he achieved a



significant place in the social and literary circle due to his deep affinity with social and literary organization. He is committed to peace and the Protection of human rights. He is a Executive member of Progressive Writers Association. He enjoys great recognition as an

Event organizer in the city. He made a tour of India four times in order to participate in Festivals promoting peace and harmony between the peoples of two countries.

AKHTARUL WASEY (India)

Prof. Akhtarul Wasey is Professor and Head, Department of Islamic Studies, and Hony. Director, Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies, Editor of four scholarly journals, *Islam and the Modern Age* (English), *Islam aur Asr-e-Jadeed* (Urdu), *Jamia* (Monthly), and *Islam Aur Adhunik Yug* (Hindi). Professor Wasey takes keen interest in significant social and political issues. He is the General Secretary, South Asia Inter-Religious Council on HIV/AIDS and is also actively involved in Interfaith Dialogue. He is one of the original signatories of "The Common Word" document and was also part of the Mecca Conference organized at the initiative of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, on the need and role of Muslims in Inter-faith Dialogue. He is one of the Consultants of FOSWAL.



KIRAN BASHIR AHMAD (Pakistan)

Kiran Bashir Ahmad is a prolific writer. She is amongst the five winners of the *I Belong* project launched by the British Council in 2004. Her short story collection '*Parched Earth*' published. Stories included in prestigious Anthologies, including - *13 Stories by Women Writers from Pakistan*, published



by HarperCollins, she has published many poems in English. Currently working as a lecturer.

BHUPEN VYAKUL (Nepal)

Bhupen Vyakul is a poet and cultural activist. He is Masters from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. He has



two collections of poems to his credit. He has also co-edited another collection of poems. Bhupen is one of the Founders of the 'Save Poetry Movement' in Nepal.

HIMANSHU JOSHI (India)

Himanshu Joshi, born in 1935 is a journalist and Hindi author. His short stories collection include: 'Antatah', 'Rath Chakra', 'Manushya Chinnah', 'Jalte Hue Dene', 'Tapashaya Tatha Anya Kahaniyan', 'Gandharv - Gatha', 'Anchlik Kahaniyan', 'Agala Yatharth', 'Sagar Tak Ke Shahar', and an anthology of 'Pashan Gatha', and '71 Short Stories'. His novels are : 'Aranya', 'Chhaya Mat Chuna Man', 'Samaya Shakti Hai', 'Tumhare Liye', 'Su-Raaj. ; and Poetry Collections : 'Agnisambhaw', 'Neel Nadi Ka Vraksh'. Awards by Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sansthan, Hindi Academy, Bhasha Vibhag, Bihar Govt., Ministry of Human Resources Development and Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag, Allahabad. Some of his novels and short stories have been translated into several Indian and foreign Languages.



JHARNA RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

Jharna Rahman is a writer, poet and playwright. She also writes for children.

Among her publications are : *Swarna Tarbari*, *Agnita*, *Krishnapakhsher Usha*, *Perek* (all short story collections). A collection of her poems *Noshto Jotsna Nosto Roudro* and a play *Briddha o Rajkumari* have also been published. She is a Professor of Bangla at Bir Shreshtha Noor Mohammad



Rifles Public College. She is a regular singer on Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television.

LEELA DHAR MANDLOI (India)

Leela Dhar Mandloi, born in 1953, has done Masters in Journalism. An eminent Hindi Poet, and is the Director General, Doordarshan. Leela Dhar Mandloi has a Represented Govt. of India as Hindi Writer Dialogues on the subject "Today's India" Media, Literature and Culture. He has been Executive member of National Literary Mission, Member M.P. Film Corporation, Member National Book Trust and

Member Hindi Academy. His Published work include Poetry anthologies : '*Ghar Ghar Ghuma*', '*Rat- Birat*', '*Magar Ek Awaz*', '*Dekha Adekha*', '*Kaal Banka Tirchn*', '*Upasthit Hai Samudra*', '*Kshama Yachna*', '*Likhe Me Dukh*', '*Mahaz Sharir Nahi Pahan Rakha Tha Usne*', '*Ek Bahut Komal Taan*'. His Fictions includes : '*Daana Pani*', and '*Pahar Aur Pari Ka Sapna*'. Has written books for children, and has edited and translated several publications. He has also written, produced and directed several films and documentaries. His Awards include: Pushkin Samman, Samsheer Samman, Nagarjun Samman, Dushyant Samman, Raza Award, Ram Vilas Sharma Samman, Kriti Samman and Sahityakar Samman. Has represented India as Guest of Honour to several international Poetry Festivals.

ABDUL GHAFOOR LIWAL (Afghanistan)

Abdul Ghafoor Liwal, the H.H. Humphrey Fellow in Journalism at Maryland University, and has Master



degree in Pashto language and literature from Kabul University. Abdul Ghafoor Liwal is the Director of Regional Studies Center of Afghanistan (RSCA). Has been Director of Department of Cultural and Social Affairs, and Media Consultant with the office of Administrative Affairs

(Presidential Office). He has served as the Spokesman and Press Officer for the Secretariat of Constitutional Commission of Afghanistan.

15 of his books, mostly poetry collections, and 120 articles have been published through different magazines and newspapers about Literature, History, Criticism, and Sociology. He has written plays and radio programs for Radio and TV of Afghanistan. He is a member of Poets and Writers Association of Afghanistan.

He has been awarded for his Poetry, Peace Initiations and Journalism.

KAMLA BHASIN (India)

Kamla Bhasin is an activist, social scientist, and is actively engaged with issues related to development, education, gender, media, and others since 1970.



Currently, she works with SANGAT, a South Asian Feminist Network; with JAGORI, Women's Resource and Training Centre, and with SAHR: South Asians for Human Rights. She is also Co-chair of the worldwide network, *Peace Women Across the Globe*. Her main work is at the South Asian level, and she is committed to the creation of a peaceful, democratic and pluralist South Asia. Most of her books are written for activists and development workers. She has also written a large number of songs and slogans for the women's movement, books for children, and have created many posters and banners for different movements.

DON NISSANKA WIJEMANNA (Sri Lanka)

Don Nissanka Wijemanna, born in 1927, is working



as Adviser in Zonla Education Office, Mahiyanganaya. His creative publications include poetry, short stories, and one novel : 'Muwa Meru Salamon', 'Thiththa Seem', 'Dalaradi Saha Kaseesalu', 'Chandra Kinnarawiya', 'Keedawo Awilla', 'Kalu Kirtillie', 'Nawa Dhlihena', 'Api Kandu Wagey', 'Velentine Kumaraya'.

Several Awards include : Thiththa Seem, Dalaradi Saha Kaseesalu, Chandra Kinnarawiya, Keedawo Awilla, Best Lyric Writer and Muwa Meru Salamon.

SOHAIL HASHMI (India)

Sohail, born 1950, studied at DU and JNU is a writer, film-maker and a

Dilliwalla. Gave up academics to work among unorganised workers, slum dwellers and unorganised youth before moving into electronic media and taking up his first job at the age of 41. Has written on heritage, culture, social issues, conservation and water.



Has conceptualised, researched and scripted documentaries on the History of Urdu, History of Delhi, Pioneers of Women's Education, etc. loves to travel and cook and to talk about both.

Sohail is one of the Founders of SAHMAT, a cultural platform working to defend freedom of creative expression, and to promote democratic and secular values.