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SAARC



ARPANA CAUR

FESTIVAL OF  
LITERATURE  
REPORT

A large white graphic of a quill pen writing on a globe, with the word 'SAARC' written in a cursive font across the globe.

LUCKNOW  
March 16, 17, 18, 19, 2012

Organised by  
FOUNDATION OF SAARC WRITERS  
AND LITERATURE  
SAARC APEX BODY  
in collaboration with  
INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS  
ARPANA CAUR

# SAARC FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE

## LUCKNOW

MARCH 16, 17, 18 & 19, 2012

Intellectual, poets, academicians, fiction writers and critics from the eight SAARC countries converged to Lucknow, the renowned centre of culture, arts, music, architecture and literature of medieval India. **Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL), the Apex Body of SAARC**, organized a three day SAARC FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE in collaboration with **Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Arpana Fine Arts on March 16, 17,18 & 19, 2012**, in Lucknow.

It is said that the heart of the writers beats for humanity. A writer's pen becomes dysfunctional unless it is dipped in the ink of social concerns and immediate problems facing humanity. It is with this conviction that the theme of the SAARC LITERARY FESTIVAL, 2012 was **'ENVIRONMENT' : 'OUR EARTH : OUR ONLY HOME'**. That writers, poets and intellectuals of all age groups and genres converged to the SAARC Festival of Literature in Lucknow, is proof that they feel that Climate Change and Ecological Imbalance are concerns that have to be addressed urgently. As far as the question of environment is concerned we have to believe "Yesterday was too early; tomorrow would be too late; we have to act today!"

Gathering of writers in general and of South Asia in particular plays a major role in the continuation of peace, mutual understanding, reciprocal respect of our cultural diversity, and the survival of our shared civilization and history. Writers and intellectuals have to meet in an congenial atmosphere to hold discussions, raise queries and discover and share answers. There is a vehement need for such literary festivals to focus on the issue of environment and global warming, because climate change is something that would influence the entire earth.

People to people contact and Track II initiatives have played a crucial role in facilitating remarkable changes in the political climate and social fabric of the South Asian World. It is now time for us to unite and strive for saving the earth. We have to speak with one voice because we are not simply a group of adjoining countries in one region of the earth; we are linked in the North by the Himalayas that govern our climatic conditions and in the South we are washed by the common Indian Ocean that determines our

monsoons.

What the writers and intellectuals think, believe, suggest and advise has to reach the corridors of power where policies are formed and important far reaching decisions taken. Climate change is a physical reality but it also has far reaching psychological, social and cultural effects. These aspects can be foreseen and analyzed by the creative fraternity and congregations like the SAARC Literary Festivals are venues where this knowledge can be shared and these apprehensions can be voiced so that they reach the powers that be.

SAARC Festival of Literature, an annual conference of writers organized by FOSWAL is not an ordinary gathering of writers and poets. It is aimed at raising important issues, presenting papers on relevant subjects, generating debates with long ranging consequences and in focusing attention on tribal, cultural and lingual concerns

More than 250 delegates from all the eight SAARC countries, converged, deliberated, exchanged, discussed, recited and debated, issues that are important ecological concerns for their own country, for the region, and for the world as a whole.

**We would like to point out here, that though Myanmar (Burma) is not a member of SAARC, we have been trying for the last several years to get a participation from this country. This year we are happy to say that a very well known and respected writer Tin Tin Win who is fondly called Ju joined us in the Festival and stayed for the entire period of four days.**

It might be mentioned here that Afghanistan too was not a member of the original seven countries who had joined to form the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation. However we had been inviting and receiving writers and poets from Afghanistan since 2000 and finally in 2007 Afghanistan became a full-fledged member of SAARC.

The SAARC Festival of Literature conference was formally inaugurated on March 16, 2012 by **Dr. Abid Hussain**, senior diplomat, scholar, author and a long standing friend of FOSWAL and our peace initiatives.

The Chief Guest **Dr. Abid Hussain**, was welcomed by **Ajeet Cour** and dignitaries from the SAARC countries at the venue, **The Banquet Hall of the Clarke's Avadh Hotel, Lucknow**. Ajeet Cour, an eminent fiction writer with more than twenty five books to her credit is an ardent crusader from peace and human rights.



Ms. Ajeet Cour delivering her Welcome Address. On the dais : Chief Guest Dr. Abid Hussain, with Guest of Honours : Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra, India; Prof. Abhi Subedi, Nepal; Dr. Nihal Rodrigo, Sri Lanka; Ms. Tin Tin Win (Ju), Myanmar.

Linked with her concern for humanity is her passion for preservation of historical heritage, protection of environment and voicing the issues of the aboriginals and the subalterns. She is a social and cultural activist who believes that all these things have to be turned into our immediate involvement if humanity has to survive and society has to progress. Having launched the crusade for cultural connectivity, she has remained one of its foremost soldiers in South Asia, standing up for the artistes, the writers, the folklorists and scholars in their fight for justice and equality. Her presence in a conference is a source of joy to participants and gives confidence and assurance to the writing fraternity.

In keeping with the FOSWAL tradition, Dr. Abid Hussain, Dr. Nihal Rodrigo and other dignitaries from the eight countries floated flower petals in the Urli. This is FOSWAL's style of inauguration which is both secular and inclusive.

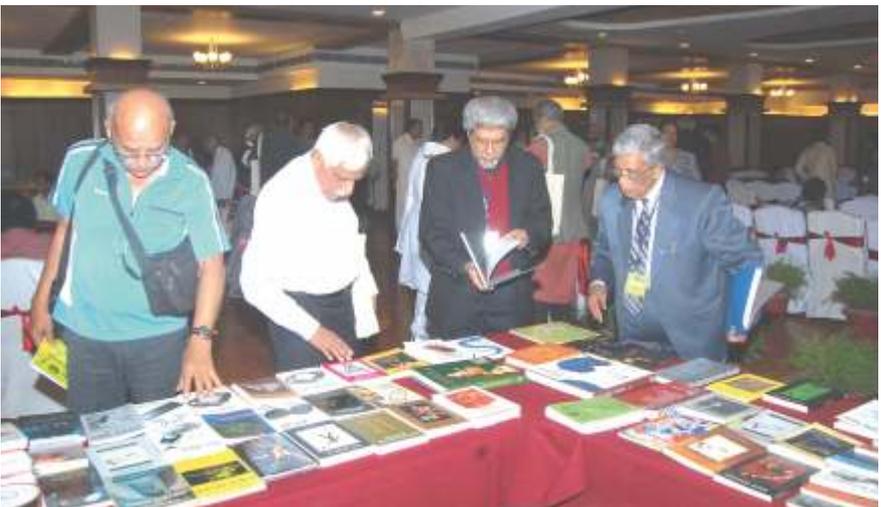
**Ajeet Cour**, President of the Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature personally welcomed the Chief Guest, Dr. Abid Hussain, the President of the Inaugural Session Dr. Nihal Rodrigo, another scholar-diplomat from Sri Lanka; Guests of Honour : Prof. Abhi Subedi from Nepal, Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra, Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma, former Secretary General of SAARC Secretariat; Special Guests : Prof. Manzoorul Islam from Bangladesh, Dr. Abdul Wakil Sulamal from Afghanistan, Dr. Pushpa Raj Acharya from Nepal, Dr. Kanthi Wijetunge, Secretary in the Government of Sri Lanka, Ms. Ayesha Zee Khan from Pakistan, Mr. Ibrahim



Hotel Clark Avadh, where the delegates stayed and the Festival was held.



The overflowing mesmerized audience.



Dr. Karol, Dr. Ahmad Salim, Dr. Nihal Rodrigo and Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra, looking at FOSWAL's books at the Book Exhibition.

Waheed from Maldives, Mr. Tshering Dorji from Bhutan, Ms. Tin Tin Win, fondly known as Ju, from Myanmar.

In her welcome speech **Ajeet Cour** elaborated that in our SAARC Region, besides sharing our clouds and monsoons, our birds and animals, our oceans and rivers, our flora and fauna, we also share long civilizational journeys, horizontally and vertically, on micro and macro levels. We therefore share our pains and anguish too.

Our river waters are being placed in 'nooses', race for industrialization is eating into our fertile lands and forests, peaceful tribal villages have become places of long struggles for survival; mindless mining all over our countries is ruining our fertile lands; slaughtering and butchering of trees of our ancient forests are pushing out huge numbers of tribal population which have been living there from times immemorial. Forests are not only their homes but also provide them their survival. Slaughtered trees are also homes to innumerable, most of them rare, species of birds which are being exiled and pushed to extinction.

She re-told how she and her daughter Arpana, with a handful of like-minded people, fought a case in the Supreme Court against butchering of several acres of Protected Forest for Commonwealth Games, the forest which was home to thousands of peacocks, rare eagles, and lakhs of little sparrows, mynahs, bulbuls. The whole forest used to quiver with their early morning symphonies which no Mozart can ever copy.

She recalled how she saw dazed peacocks being eaten by stray dogs, how Arpana pulled a couple of them from the jaws of wild dogs and rushed them to the birds' hospital, in old Delhi.

The case was won after 15 months and the Supreme Court ordered replanting of five thousand nine hundred trees in the same spot, which was a first time in the history of Delhi.

In her emotion filled voice she reminded the audience that the whole cosmos was created in a very subtle but very fragile balance. "If man cannot disrupt the orbits of sun, earth, moon, stars, galaxies, because they are too far away, should he pounce upon and destroy whatever is closer at hand ?

Who has given him the right to destroy what he did not produce, and can in no way replace after destroying it, disturbing the subtle balance of earth which is the home of all living species? Why are we not conscious to the fact that without the bees and butterflies, who marry all the fruits and crops and vegetation by carrying the pollen from one to the other, all the greenery will disappear!

If industrial gas emissions are causing danger to ozone layer, let us also articulate the danger to our village ponds, wells, *pokhars* and *baulis* which are drying up, and the water-level which is going deeper down so fast, that our women walk for tens of miles every day in search of water.

Do we talk about the chemical waste which affluent countries bring in their ugly ships, and offload in our oceans, near our coasts?

Why don't we remember that poor little penguin shivering with panic, soaked in oil who could neither fly, nor walk a step, sitting bewildered and paralyzed on the shore of a forsaken ocean, because a whole oil tanker had spilled its millions of tons of oil in the sparkling waters of the ocean?

Can we raise our own SAARC-specific voice in international environment forums to save the planet from extinction?

The planet Earth was created as a place of harmonious coexistence of humans and animals; of earth surrounded by vast oceans; by multifarious and multi-hued living species on the earth and in the water; birds and animals and fish ; little blades of grass and huge trees ; bees and butterflies and insects ; little ants and snakes ; myriad life-forms, living in a harmonious balance !

A beautiful world without boundaries and borders !

Why don't we, the SAARC countries, with a single strong voice, stand up and be counted, talk about our own problems which are our exclusive concerns ? Related to our environmental degradation, butchering of our forests, neglect of our beautiful sea-coasts, mindless expansion of our industries on cultivable land, melting of our glaciers, our oceans sighing with anguish called Tsunamis, drying up of our water bodies effecting not only human life but also the lives of birds and animals.

Concern for saving the environment has acquired not only multi-layered dimensions, but has also become the most crucial question that concerns the survival of human species, all living things on the planet, and of our planet itself which is our only home !

We are here to articulate our common concerns, over the next three days.”

Ajeet Cour ended her welcome address by saying that she hoped we will be able to make the policy-makers listen to our concerns and our appeal, because we are together as one voice of the

SAARC Region.

In his inaugural speech, **Dr. Abid Hussain** who is also the Additional Chairman of FOSWAL lauded Ajeet Cour who he said,



Dr. Abid Hussain

is the backbone of creating and nurturing SAARC cultural and literary platform, and continues to labour for and hold such well attended cultural and literary dialogues. He emphasized that such meets provided a base for peace and tranquility in the Region through cultural connectivity.

He stressed the point that writers can achieve what no one can. They can break down barriers and boundaries to show the world that there is only one humanity and its demands for peace, love and understanding are the same. Likewise when they pick up their pens for the concerns of Environment they can rise beyond time and social norms and convince the world that it has to be saved and the time to act is 'now'. A writer and a poet can do so because they are always free. Physically they might be in shackles and confined to a prison cell, yet their spirit is free. Even when the pen and paper is taken away from a poet like Faiz Ahmed Faiz, he can still write:

What if the pen and paper has been taken away  
I have dipped my fingers in the blood of my heart  
What if my lips and tongue have been sealed  
I have given a tongue to every link of my shackles

**Dr. Nihal Rodrigo**, veteran diplomat of Sri Lanka and long standing friend of FOSWAL, in his presidential address spoke about the concept of sustainability and the varied definitions of the word. In the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, sustainable



Dr. Nihal Rodrigo

Development is described as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need.'

Nihal Rodrigo who is an eminent spokesman for peace in the region gave an example of the time when the King Devanampiya Tissa of Sri Lanka met Arahat Mahinda, son of Emperor Ashok and the person who brought Buddhism to Sri Lanka. Arahat Mahinda had instructed the king that he was not the master of the forest. He was only its custodian. This aspect of the rulers of today taking care of the natural resources and not misusing or abusing them is missing today. He laid emphasis on the fact that sustainable development is upheld on the three pillars of economic development, social equity and environmental protection.

In his very knowledgeable and well informed discourse Nihal Rodrigo talked about global economies, energy depletion, environment and the unavoidable presence of globalization. He highlighted the fact that economics of the west had been suffering recession while the regimes that it had been supporting in the middle east have been crumbling. On the other hand China, a communist republic has overtaken Japan to become the second largest economy in the world. Clearly this shows that the Western model is not to be followed blindly.

**The Guests of Honour for this year's SAARC Literary Festival were Prof. Abhi Subedi, Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra and Dr. Sheelkant Sharma.**



Prof. Abhi Subedi

Closely associated with FOSWAL, **Prof. Abhi Subedi** of Nepal has been helping the organization in selection of writers, poets and scholars from Nepal. He is also involved with the research and publication side of FOSWAL and in 2011 was the fulcrum that made the **Indo Nepal Writers Conference, organized by FOSWAL and B.P. Koirala Foundation**, a grand and memorable success.

Abhi Subedi spoke about the manner in which the Himalayan Glaciers are shrinking, causing an acute danger of flooding in the lower regions, destruction of crops and loss of human life. He emphasized the fact that the change that happens in one corner of the Himalayas would affect the entire ranges and in turn would have an influence on the lower hills and the plains. A sharing of resources and information within the SAARC community is the need of the hour if, the ecological balance of the Himalayan ranges is to be maintained.

**Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra**, well known poet of Orissa, Jyanpeeth and Sahitya Akademi Award winner, said in his speech that the urban dwellers needed to understand and identify with the forest dwellers, that is the aboriginals. Development has to be by mutual consent and respect. It cannot be forced.



Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra

**Dr. Sheelkant Sharma** who is a retired IFS officer and has served as Ambassador of India in various countries and held important posts at the UNO, has been Secretary General of

SAARC Secretariat, emphasized on need to develop and propagate the 'look east policy.'



Dr. Sheelkant Sharma

In his keynote address, Dr. Sharma said that the world and policy makers need to urgently focus on the issue of the degradation of environment and climate change. One of the reasons for doing this is because every change in the

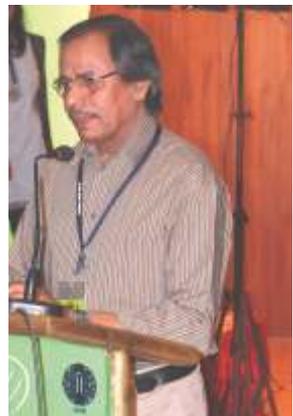
economy, social fabric, political set-up of any one country effects the entire region of South Asia. The latest problem to enter our area of concerns is the "Global Warming and Climate Change." Dr. Sharma said that he was impressed that FOSWAL had decided to focus on Environment and Ecology for the SAARC Festival of Literature, 2012.

He said that he was very pleased that writers and intellectuals had decided to throw in their weight with the cause of Ecological Balance because the change that can be brought about by meaningful literature is unsurpassable. It is to be expected that many points of views and opinions would surface in the three days and would be discussed in great detail. He said that it was the need of the hour that intellectuals and writers take up the cause of Climate Change because the potential of their reach is much wider and deeper.

He noted with satisfaction that there was a big representation from each of the eight countries and a writer from Myanmar had also joined. It was to be hoped that a strong message would go from this Festival that the writers would no longer remain mere spectators from the galleries. They can and are willing to play a more active role in the awareness and in the actual preservation of the natural resources.

The basis for the formation of SAARC was that all countries would be treated as equals and the congregation would operate in a round table concept where there is no head of the table. In keeping with this tradition, at the SAARC Festival of Literature, each country is given five minutes at the Inaugural Ceremony, to put forward their major problems regarding the theme of the conference and what should be done and is being done to counter the issues. Usually the leader of the delegation of each country speaks.

**Prof. Syed Manzoorul Islam** from Bangladesh is a leading figure in literary criticism. In his speech he said that it was necessary for us to come together, because we have a shared civilizational history of colonial domination. Rule of the western imperialists has shaped our economies and eroded our cultural heritage. But more than that it had sown in our psyche the seeds of grabbing and looting and pulverizing what nature has made available. Just as we have got



Prof. Syed Manzoorul Islam

rid of the colonizers and become sovereign, independent countries, we should also make a concerted effort to change the way we think and begin to believe that our future depends on what we are so ruthlessly destroying.



Ms. Ayesha Zee Khan

**Ayesha Zee Khan** of Pakistan is a poet and columnist and has been working relentlessly to promote peace and people to people dialogue within the SAARC region. She is also a Foundation of SAARC Writers Literary Award winner. In her speech she said that man has a very important lesson to learn from nature. Just as the birds, animals, trees and even winds and rain do not accept borders but recognize regions and habitats, so

should man move beyond the conservative definitions of boundaries and accept that we are more South Asian than Pakistani, Indian, Maldivian etc. This gathering of writers and the love and friendship being showered on each of us should make us realize that we are one at heart, with common sensibilities and similar needs. Preservation of the environment is the call of the hour and has to be addressed with utmost urgency. Environment should be at the top of all Regional cooperation and a primary concern of the writing fraternity.

**Kanthy Wijetunge, Secretary Ministry of National Heritage, Sri Lanka**, spoke about the way in which women, even the poor and illiterate ones can play an important role in reclaiming eroded and deforested land. By nature a preserver, woman takes care without expecting result or benefit for herself.



Ms. Kanthy Wijetunge

**Pushpa Raj Acharya of Nepal**



Dr. Pushpa Raj Acharya

spoke about the group of writers who formed the delegation of Nepal to the Festival. He said that he was happy to note that most of the writers belonged to the younger generation and are in some way or the other associated in the movement for environmental preservation.

In her very eloquent speech **Dr. Tin Tin Win from**

**Myanmar** spoke about the drying up of the Irawaddy River which is the life line of Myanmar. She recalled how in her teens she had travelled the river on a steamer boat. Today the river has become so silted and shallow that even small boats cannot float on it and it can be crossed on foot, the deepest point is no more than two to three feet deep. This neglect has come about because of the continuous civil war which is over using and taxing the bounties of nature at such a fast rate that replenishment is impossible. The result is that crops suffer and hunger and famines are growing This in turn is adding fuel to the civil war and providing scope to the army to use food as a bargaining weapon. In a way it goes in favour of the present regime of Myanmar to have a shallow, drying river and unemployed, hungry population.



Dr. Tin Tin Win (Ju)

**Mr. Ibrahim Waheed who represented Maldives** in the Festival was delayed for a day because the flight from Male to Delhi was cancelled and he could come only on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March.

## **SAARC LITERARY AWARDS**

The morning session ended with honouring important writers of the SAARC countries for their contribution to literature. The awards were presented by Dr. Abid Hussain. The awardees were introduced and the citation read out by Sri Manmohan Singh Mitwa.

SAARC Literary Awards were given to:

1. Eminent Oriya poet Jayant Mahapatra of India
2. Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge from Sri Lanka
3. Mr. Sitakant Mahapatra of India
4. Mr. Om Thanvi of India
5. Dr. Abid Hussain of India
6. Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma of India
7. Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam from Bangladesh
8. Prof Tissa Kariyawasam of Sri Lanka
9. Pushpa Raj Acharya from Nepal
10. Dr. Noor Zaheer of India
11. Ms. Tin Tin Win from Myanmar



Dr. Jayanta Mahapatra, eminent Oriya poet, receiving the SAARC LITERARY AWARD from Dr. Abid Hussain.



Dr. Abid Hussain honouring Excellency Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge, Secretary, Ministry of National Heritage, Sri Lanka, with SAARC LITERARY AWARD.



Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra, eminent English and Oriya poet, receiving the SAARC LITERARY AWARD from Dr. Abid Hussain.



Dr. Abid Hussain presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Mr. Om Thanvi, Chief Editor, Jansatta.



Excellency Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge honouring Dr. Abid Hussain with SAARC LITERARY AWARD.



Dr. Abid Hussain honouring Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma with SAARC LITERARY AWARD.



Dr. Abid Hussain presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Prof. Syed Manzoorul Islam, eminent writer and scholar from Bangladesh.



Prof. Tissa Kariyawasam, eminent scholar from Sri Lanka, receiving the SAARC LITERARY AWARD from Dr. Abid Hussain.



Dr. Abid Hussain presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Dr. Pushpa Raj Acharya, eminent poet and scholar from Nepal.



Dr. Abid Hussain presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Dr. Noor Zaheer, eminent fiction writer and scholar.



Ajeet Cour honouring Tin Tin Win (Ju) eminent writer from Myanmar with a Kashmiri Pashmina Shawl, with Arpana's Secretary Tamanna.



Excellency Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Mr. Mahboobullah Khan from Afghanistan.



Dr. Abid Hussain presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Prof. Fakrul Alam, eminent scholar and poet from Bangladesh.



Excellency Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge, Secretary, Ministry of National Heritage, Sri Lanka, presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Mr. Ibrahim Waheed from Maldives.



Dr. Abid Hussain presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Mr. Abdul Wakil Sulamal, eminent writer and scholar of Afghanistan, from London.



Ms. Ayesha Zee Khan receiving the SAARC LITERARY AWARD for Mr. Saad Ullah Jan Barq from Excellency Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge.



Dr. Abid Hussain honouring Mr. Nisar Ahmad Chaudhary, FOSWAL's Chief Coordinator in Pakistan, with SAARC LITERARY AWARD.



Dr. Abid Hussain presenting the SAARC LITERARY AWARD to Mr. Mithilesh Shrivastava, eminent Hindi poet.

12. Mr. Mahboobullah Khan, of Afghanistan
13. Prof. Fakrul Alam from Bangladesh
14. Mr. Ibrahim Waheed from Maldives
15. Mr. Abdul Wakil Sulamal from Afghanistan
16. Mr. Saad Ullah Jan Barq from Pakistan
17. Mr. Nisar Ahmed Choudhary from Pakistan
18. Mr. Mithilesh Shrivastava of India

In her intervention Ajeet Cour emphasized the importance of Track Two Initiatives, like the SAARC Writers Conferences. She said that the basic honesty and integrity and sensitivity of writers made them popular and trustworthy in the eyes of the people.

A short **tea break** preceded the Academic Sessions.

## PAPERS

**Prof Abhi Subedi** brought his involvement with theatre and juxtaposed it with the theme of the Festival.

In the paper he discussed how playwright's experience is imbricated in the act of producing a play on stage. Even when writing on terrorism, which is a major issue today one might revive the traditional myths of comedy and absurdity, heroism and crime, mayhem and terror.

People may well ask why, with so much terrorism in the world, why would anyone want to see more terror on the stage. Surely people come to the theatre to be entertained. The answer is, of course, that *the actor makes these terrifying stories transcendent, partly by making them comprehensible, partly by leaving the terror with pity.*

In the similar manner as the aggression on the environment and natural resources continues, we have to keep telling their stories. This is not only to create an awareness but also to make the facts comprehensible.

**Arpana Caur** the well-known painter and art collector, in her very beautiful presentation showcased her paintings and sculptures while elaborating the connectivity that she shares with Nature. This sharing has grown over the years and has become part of her expression that take shape on canvases and in bronze. In her humble manner and introvert voice she explained how she finds the presence of environment in every religion, philosophy, spiritual doctrine and most importantly, in life. That is why it can be found present in her paintings of Guru Nanak, Kabeer, Sohni Mahiwal and all her other series.



Arpana Caur speaking about Environment, with her slide show.

Arpana Caur also highlighted the need for artistes to move to public spaces. She said this was necessary since the general public of South Asia have not as yet discovered 'art galleries' as a space. She talked about her own work on the outer wall of the SAARC Secretariat building in Kathmandu, Nepal. The work, though constantly facing the ravages of nature, had remained fresh and new as if it has been put up just yesterday.

After the presentation of Arpana Caur it was time for **lunch**, where an elaborate arrangement of food, soft drinks and sweets had been made.

After Lunch the second session began with a short poetry intervention.

Whatever the theme of the Conferences, creative writing is the main thrust of FOSWAL, and a lot of space is provided for poets to recite their poetry to fellow-writers of the eight countries. The concept is to showcase each country in all its creative and intellectual vibrancy.

In this session four very significant poets read out their works. The session was chaired by Jayant Mahapatra and the other poets were:

1. Prof Fakrul Alam-Bangladesh
2. Vandana Shukla-India
3. Pushpa Raj Acharya-Nepal
4. Jayant Mahapatra-India

Following the poetry interlude seven academic papers were presented.

These were by:

1. Prof Tissa Kariyawasam-Sri Lanka
2. Om Thanvi-India
3. Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam-Bangladesh
4. Kiran Basheer Ahmad-Pakistan
5. Suneel Pokhrel-Nepal
6. Rubana Haq-Bangladesh
7. Jayasumana Dissnayake-Sri Lanka

**Prof. Tissa Kariyawasam-** presented a paper -**Environment in Sri Lankan Sinhala Literature.**



Prof. Tissa Kariyawasam

Prof Tissa Kariyawasam is a Historian and Folklorist. In his very scholarly paper, he traced the presence of Environment in Sinhala literature and its role in shaping the way cities were planned by the kings. This he said happened because the earliest Aryan settlers in Sri Lanka were eco-friendly.

He said “Following the paths trodden by the founders of the civilization in Sri Lanka, King Vijaya and his ministers followed the same structure in planning out the city of Anuradhapura. The first settlers from India built their settlements near a river or tributary. The concept of a closely networked Earth, Water and the Wind thus helped the establishment of the Sinhala civilization.

The life of Prince Siddhartha, who later became The Lord Buddha too shows similar affinity to the environment. According to the classical literature the Prince Siddhartha was born under Sala trees in the forest during the king's sojourn while heading to the palace of queen Mahamaya. When Prince Siddhartha left the palace to become an ascetic, he lived in the forest among the trees and creepers.

It is because of these examples from religion that Sri Lanka of those days became an environment friendly country.

**Om Thanvi**, veteran journalist and editor of Jansatta, the popular



Mr. Om Thanvi

Hindi paper of Northern India, read out a paper on the Indus Valley Civilization. He has travelled to Mohenjo Daro in Pakistan and written a travelogue on his journey.

In the Conference he spoke on the eco-friendliness of the Indus Valley Civilization and the manner in which it used nature but did not exploit it. This meant that in spite of the proximity of a major river they were able to not only exist but use the river as a means to carry on trade and navigation.

**Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam** read out a paper titled: **Reading the earth: Tagore's environmental poetics.**

In his highly researched paper, Manzoorul Islam said that Rabindranath Tagore was not a keen reader of political history; he was not interested in following the twists and turns that contemporary events took in the west or elsewhere in the world, although he kept a close eye on the political development in his own country. There were attempts to draw him into the public sphere, by no less a person than Mahatma Gandhi, who had expected that Tagore would lend his active support to his *Charka* movement. But Tagore preferred to remain an onlooker, an interested observer and an occasional commentator.

On the other hand he had a deep commitment to nature. In his "The Crisis of Civilization" Tagore talked about the exhaustion and depletion of human creativity brought about by material greed and the colonial incursion deep into the sphere of nature. The earth, he lamented, had lost its glory and its pride, just as man has lost his footing in the world as he is caught up in a mad rush towards progress.

Tagore could see a possible way out of the crisis in his passionate poem "Prithibi" (The Earth). An attempt to read the earth in its timeless ecological order and its symbiotic relation with man and animal, the poem also reiterates Tagore's belief that the earth can revive and replenish itself, and restore the balance between man and nature.

Tagore's optimism lies in his realization that earth is never an exclusive male domain as colonial geography and contemporary cartography claimed, and defies the gendered approach characterizing spatial relations in terms of control and dominance.

In this poem Tagore writes:

You counter your rigidity with softness

Your nature brings together both the male and

the female

You rock man's life with unbearable conflicts

With your right hand you pour the nectar

With your left hand you break the beaker

**Kiran Basheer Ahmad** presented a paper titled : **Tree tales – Metamorphosis of the Tree in South Asian Literature.**

Building her presentation on the continuous presence of trees in the psyche of the culture of the region, Kiran elaborated on how that image transcends the physical to reach the meta-physical. She said “The image may be one of a disciple sitting underneath a tree to receive instruction, a holy man meditating, a weary conqueror resting, mischievous youngsters playing hide and seek in the gardeners' prized fruit trees, a mynah or a koel (cuckoo) cooing in the shade, or even the gruesome image of a body hanging from the branches for all wayfarers to see and beware of the hand of justice. Symbolically then, in literary thought it is the tree that is timeless and a silent witness to all that goes on in the travails of Time and what it gives and takes.



Ms. Kiran Bashir Ahmed

Early literature of the subcontinent depicts this link as spiritual and a connection between man and God. Tree worship dates back to early days in the Indian peninsula and these temples of nature are said to be adorned by the presence of gods and goddesses. While the neem, peepul, banyan and wood apple retain their holiness in the political boundaries of what is now known as India, the plantain groves as a cult have their ethnographical significance in Bengal and numerous giant cypress trees around Bhutan have their own tales to tell. The man is shown as a tree growing in Brahma or the universe being like an inverted tree with its roots in the sky and the branches below – the eternal fig tree as defined formally in the Upanishads.

**Suneel Pokhrel**, a theatre director and choreographer, in his multimedia presentation showed slides of the civil war in Nepal that lasted seven years and like all internal strives took its toll of performing arts. Most of the formal spaces for performance were shut down and there developed a reluctance on part of the



Dr. Sunil Pokhrel

organizers to sponsor and support activities that involved a large number of people.

In such an atmosphere the only option left for those wishing to continue with theatre was to explore natural spaces. That is how theatre in Nepal came out of the formal proscenium theatre to the masses. Once within the people, it had to echo the expectation and the hopes of the

masses. Experimentation with natural spaces led to innovations in form, storyline and concepts. With time theatre began to emerge not only as a defined art expression but also as a strong voice of protest.

Vivid slides of Pokhrel's productions supported his stand and lent a sense of reality even for the audience that had in no way participated or witnessed the theatre movement in Nepal.

**Rubana Haq** read out a paper on the well-known novel by Selina Hossain: *Neel MoyurerJoubon* or *The Youth of the Blue Peacock*. In this novel Selina Hossain makes out a strong case of the aboriginal habitat and the value system which does not allow the abuse of forest land. This novel is a dialogue between Freedom, Nature and Fiction.

In her paper Rubana intricately discussed that South Asia is the name of a region that embraces Nature, accepts all its ferocities, battles its lashes and yet chases it with passion. To the world and to South Asia, Nature and Man are regarded as being mutually reactive and interrelated.



Dr. Rubana Haq

New phrases like green cultural studies, eco poetics, environmental literary criticism are gradually crowding our vocabulary. But what are the ways that we are bridging Nature with Literature?

*Neel MoyurerJoubon's* plot circles around the injustices suffered by the indigenous people in the hands of their King and his

counsel. The novel is all about the quest for freedom, and a thirst for self-expression in one's own language. However, the writer uses the characters and resorts to symbolism, direct references, analogies etc. as tools to bare her heart to her readers.

**Jayasumana Dissnayake** read out a meticulous paper titled: **Environment Degradation and the Developing World.**

In his paper he pointed out that Sri Lanka is one of the few countries of the world that had a civilization which protected and nurtured environment from olden times. Although the recently found concept “Man is not the owner of the earth but the custodian for future generation” is new to the world, it was an accepted norm in Sri Lanka even prior to 300 B.C according to ancient chronicles. Around 300 BC in his sermons to King



Dr. Jayasumana Dissanayake

Devanampiyatissa Arahant, Mahinda who came from India to enlighten the king in Buddhism is reported to have mentioned it. He said to king “The birds and beasts have equal rights to this land and the king is not the owner but only the custodian. And it is the duty of the king safeguards the environment.”

With regard to rain water harvesting no other country in the world in the past could be compared with ancient Sri Lanka. It was a unique system. Arid and dry land of north and Central part of the country was transformed into cultivatable, habitable and fertile land.

Water was scarce in this dry zone. To overcome this obstacle large reservoirs had been constructed called *Vaewa* (also known as Tanks) by connecting two or more hillocks with huge dams to collect rain water during the Monsoon. There are thousands of large and small reservoirs scattered all over the country. Thus harvested rain water in these reservoirs was used for agriculture, drinking and all other purposes, including development of inland fisheries throughout the year.

The network of reservoirs was cleverly designed. Around the main Tank there were some tanks at a lower level. Beyond those hundreds of minor tanks had been erected at a further low level. Once the water was released for agriculture from the main lager

tanks to the farmlands all the excess water did not go waste. It accumulated in network of tanks erected at lower levels. Furthermore during rainy season when the principle tank is filled to capacity, water is released to other tanks built in descending levels through well designed canal system.

Agriculture flourished and both man and beast were happy. Arts and crafts developed to great heights. Great educational institutions, temples, monasteries, and pleasure gardens were the trophies of environment protection development of the time.

Unfortunately due to continual foreign invasions up to sixteenth century the great hydraulic civilization was destroyed. Foreigners destroyed these tanks to destroy the agricultural economy which was the life line of prosperity. We are still struggling to bring back to the former glory.

After more than four hundred years of colonial rule, in 1948, country got its independence back. But did the prospective governments follow in the footsteps of our forefathers? The rulers have governed now more than sixty years since independence, but they have not understood the value of saving the environment. Instead of protecting, all respective governments have harmed environment in the name of development. When country got the independence the forest cover of the Island exceeded 40% of the land area. Forests were a blessing to the country; then started the denuding of the forests in guise of accelerated development. Ill planned projects for short term agriculture and industries denuded valuable forest lands. When they became unsuccessful, lands were abandoned and left exposed to elements. As a result of the denuding forests, ecological changes too are visible. Springs that provided water to rivers and streams have gradually dried up. Moisture that gives life to plants has diminished.

We reap the results of devastation. Climate has changed. Extreme weather patterns alternate devastating draughts that prevail for long periods. Not enough rains during monsoons as before but still unprecedented floods that happen frequently.

A short **tea break** followed this very extensive and in-depth academic session.

**Poetry** was given the floor after the academic session, and 9 poets recited their works.

The participating poets were:

1. Sitakant Mahapatra, who also chaired the poetry session
2. Naresh Saxena, India
3. Piyush Daiyya, India
4. Gita Karki, Nepal
5. Naheed Zaman Khan, Pakistan
6. Zahid Abbas, Pakistan
7. Mahvesh Khan, Pakistan
8. Sabita Gautam, Nepal
9. Gita Karki, Nepal

## **CULTURAL PROGRAMME**

After the Academic Sessions and Poetry Readings, it was time for **cultural programme**. The evening began with the well-known Sufi singer from Pakistan **Iqbal Bahoo**.

Equally comfortable with Ghazal, **Iqbal Bahoo** sang three ghazals by renowned poets Ghalib, Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Ahmed Faraz. He followed this with two Sufi lyrics that linked the entire Universe and stressed the need for inter-dependence and mutual cooperation; thus linking the Sufi tradition to the theme of the SAARC Literature Festival.

**Our hearts are heavy and filled with sorrow at the sudden demise of Iqbal Bahoo, just four days after his return from our conference. It was an unfortunate loss for Pakistan, the music fraternity and of course FOSWAL.**

The performance of Iqbal Bahoo was followed by a short poetry recitation of **Bilquis Bano** of Pakistan, who performs with the name of Nisho ji and is an actress and playback singer. She sang some of her own songs and recited poetry from the collections of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Habib Jaalib, Ahmed Faraz and other eminent poets of Pakistan.

The evening was concluded by a scintillating performance by the '**Malangs**' of the Shah Hussain Durgah in Lahore, Pakistan. These are the '**Dancing Derveshs**' of South Asia who perform to the beats of a huge percussion drum and treat dance as a form of worship and a means to achieve unity with the ultimate.

Accompanied by their Guru who sounds the single horn right at the inception, almost in the manner of shepherding or calling to flock, sheep or goats scattered in a grazing ground. The rhythmic cycle is slow at the beginning, picking up momentum with each



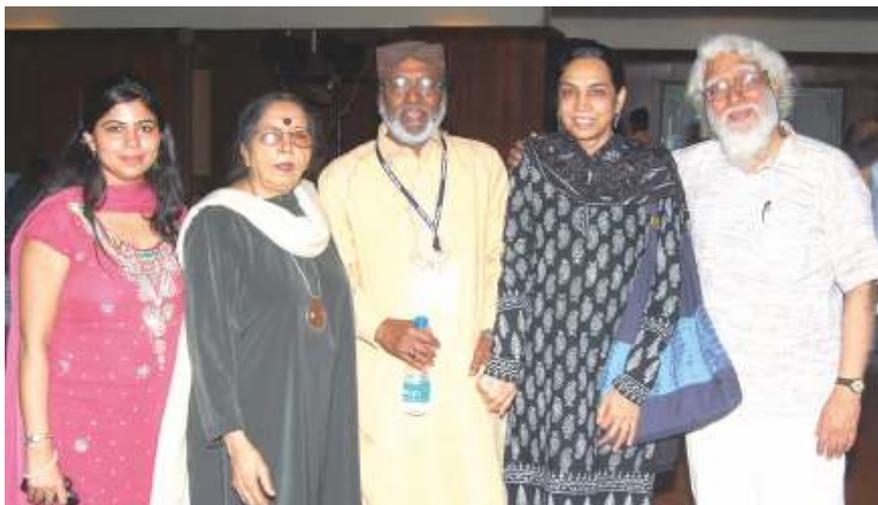
Performance of 'Malangs' (Whirling Darveshs) from Pakistan, on the 16th evening : in the Cultural Programme.



In the Cultural Programme on the 16th evening, Iqbal Bahoo, from Pakistan, singing Sufi songs and Heer.



Film Actress from Pakistan, Nisho jee, reading her poems.



Tamanna, Ajeet Cour, Arpana Caur and Manmohan Singh Mitwa with Sufi Singer Mr. Iqbal Bahoo.



Attentive Audience.



Dr. Nihal Rodrigo and Ajeet Cour with the 'Malangs' and our Coordinator in Pakistan Mr. Nisar Ahmed Chaudhary.

passing minute to reach a frenzy where the performer transcend earthly bonds to reach out to the Supreme Being.

The day ended with the beats of the DHAMAAL reverberating in the hearts and soul of the audience.

We would like to point out here that though the Academic Sessions are a select affair in which only the delegates from the eight countries present their papers and participate in the discussion, the poetry sessions and the cultural programme is open to the general public of the venue city. Lucknow audience was present in full force and enjoyed every minute of the poetry sessions and the evening cultural programme.

## 17<sup>th</sup> March - Day 2

On the morning of the second day of the Festival, the delegates were welcomed by Dr. Noor Zaheer, Chief Coordinator of FOSWAL, who said that South Asia has not always been a peaceful region. Several wars have been fought on this soil but writers and intellectuals owe it to the future generations to make every effort to create an atmosphere of mutual co-existence and peace. It is the Track Two efforts like SAARC Literary Festivals that would show us the way we resolve differences with dialogues and stand by each other in an attitude of being friendly neighbours.

The session began with Hon'ble Minister Mr. Hazrat Wahriz of Afghanistan, Pavel Partha of Bangladesh, Kanthi Wijetunge of Sri Lanka, Tin Tin Win of Myanmar and Uxi Mufti of Pakistan in the presidium.



On the dais from left : Hon'ble Minister Mr. Hazrat Wahriz from Afghanistan, Excellency Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge from Sri Lanka, Mr. Pavel Partha from Bangladesh, Mr. Uxi Mufti from Pakistan, Ms. Tin Tin Win from Myanmar

Four papers were presented in the session by:

1. Abdul Wakil Sulamal (Afghanistan)
2. Dr. Pratibha Ray (India)
3. Sanjeev Upreti (Nepal)
4. Mustafa Zaman Abbasi (Bangladesh)

**Abdul Wakil Sulamal** presented a paper titled: **Picturizing 'Nature' In Pashto Literature.**

Weaving a beautiful picture of the landscape Abdul Wakil Sulamal



Mr. Abdul Wakil Sulamal

said that the area where Pashtuns live has a fictional and strange nature. There are vast deserts, high mountains and woods and the weather is mild. Hence there is no sense of 'similarity' or 'sameness' in the environment in which Pashtuns live. Another reason is that Pashtun poets and writers, and the Pashtun people in general, who are the creators of folkloric literature and art, have lived and are

living in a very close proximity to nature, both psychologically and spiritually. This means that deserts and mountains and highways are well known to a Pashtun, whether he is a farmer, a shepherd or the leader and guard of a caravan. He reflects his feelings and love, which are either in conformity or contrast with nature, better than others. He extracts everything from nature, be it beauty or ugliness, good or bad, options or hopelessness.

Pashto language has many living examples to the testimony of these claims. Pashto is an ancient language and the very first literary creations in this language give evidence to this claim. Also, a very old and pure form of Pashto literature, the 'landay' proves this as well. A microscopic view of contemporary literature will reveal that it is rooted in people's life and their folklore. 'Landay' is a good example because 'nature's' perfect and pure picturization starts here. Consider the following 'Landay':

*God is benevolent towards the high mountains: their peaks are white with snow and their skirts are flowers.*

Or maybe this one:

*There are rumors of the approach of my sweetheart today: the ground becomes velvet and the paths sprout flowers.*

And this:

*Oh God! the spring is here and flowers are in blossoms: but deep in my heart is till winter stricken.*

**Dr. Pratibha Ray** well-known writer, Sahitya Akademy Awardee and activist presented a paper that was beautifully titled: ***Echo of the Eco : In Indian Earth Novel.***

In her paper she made an important point, that all religious writings or scriptures were in fact Sahitya or Literature thus adding a human and creative element to what is held sacrosanct and taboo.



Dr. Pratibha Ray

She said : In India worship of trees, mountains, rivers, animals like snakes, tigers, lions, birds and mother Earth, sun, rain,

moon were prevalent much before temples and idol worship came into being. As soon as man would have felt the divine forces of nature, it's beneficial power and destructive power, a feeling of reverence towards nature would have arisen spontaneously and man would have chanted "stuti" (prayer) the most ancient form of worship as mentioned in Vedic literature. Hence Nature writing in form of Nature worship is inherent in Indian creative consciousness from the beginning. In our tradition nature is considered as propelling force, a manifestation of God.

As an activist who has worked for a long time with the aboriginals in Odissa [India] she touched a raw spot when she said: Australian aboriginal poet sang the eternal song for the people all over the world. They say the song is as old as rocks and hills. How relevant is the voice of aboriginal people at this moment when global warming and climate change are the hot topics of human concern. The echo of the song is fading gradually, which disturbs the eco-feminists.

From the same song she quoted:

Animals are like family to us,  
Earth is our mother,

Eagle our cousin,  
Tree is pumping blood,  
We are all one!

In his extremely useful paper ***The Self and the Other: Humanity and Environment***, **Sanjeev Upreti** said: While a number of world religions have stressed upon the insoluble relationship between humans and nature, capitalist modernity often took



Dr. Sanjeev Upreti

nature — including forests, rivers, flora and fauna — as mere objects, only to be used or consumed for the sake of humans. In other words, nature was considered as an “Other” of the humanity within the ethical horizon of capitalist modernity. All this has led to the current ecological crisis that the globe is facing, resulting in global warming, floods and famine at different

parts of the world. It has also led to a transformation of nature into modern cities with their sprawling complexes; spaces where human dignity is often compromised and where materialism and inflated egotism reigns uncensored.

Sanjeev quoted from the Nepali poet Swopnil Smriti: “The Red Brick Jungle”:

“...the village began to recede  
Only when I crossed the stream...  
I arrived here asleep in a truck  
The commotion awoke me  
Agents of multinationals kicked me off  
along with the goods  
Thus did I, a solitary creek  
Mingle with the ocean

In another poem by Gobardhan Puja “This City I seek” he quoted:

Not a chirp to be heard  
not a bird to be seen...  
Dasahin and Tihar-they come and go  
garlands of velvety marigolds can't be woven  
Plastic flowers in a flower pot  
Aromas spread from a bottle's hole,  
this city, whose is it?  
Living by the day  
In a pact with death

While debating life  
this city, whose is it?

At the end he made a narrated a remarkable statement that he had read in a Nepali paper a few weeks before “Indian elephants have entered Nepal and were creating havoc and destroying the harvests.”

Sanjeev said that we should be collaborating towards reducing the man made borders, but in reality we are even dividing up animals into our boundaries.

**Mustafa Zaman Abbasi**, the renowned scholar and musicologist gave a multi media presentation titled : **Literature Facing Environmental Challenges.**

The paper focused on the advocacy debate of nature writing, science writing, environmental interpretation which was closely linked and followed by the era of writers on environmental literature. This is an area where writers base their writings on first hand information received from reporters of environmental handbook. The items include : Air pollution [indoor, outdoor], cancer and other disease cluster claims, global warming and climate change, ground water pollution, sprawl and environmental health, cross border environmental issues [US-Mexico], naturally occurring and technologies disaster, occupational health, children's health [lead], water supply, surface water quality etc.



Mr. Mustafa Zaman Abbasi

In an advice to younger writers he suggested that it would be an interesting study for new writers to go to a writing course in any university or to an 'Institute of Continuing Education' a he did in University Georgia, Athens and attend a practical course guiding him to nature writing. Books on culture and environment, the environmental imagination, towards a sustainable society are good guidelines for new writers.

He emphasized that while for a long time the South asia borrowed its ideas of climate change and its preservation from the west things had been fast changing. This was mainly because of award winning works like Kiran Desai's Booker-Wining Novel 'the

Inheritance of Loss' and NRI [non resident Indian] writers like Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, who have taken the market by storm in the West. Writers from Bangladesh have also shown up like Monica Ali, Syed Manzurul Islam [Manzu Islam] and Tahmima Anam.

The presentation of the papers was followed by a **Panel Discussion** on 'Sustainable Development'. The panel discussion was modulated by the well-known Hindi poet, **Piyush Daiya**.

1. Latif Behand, Afghanistan
  2. Daya Dissanayake, Sri Lanka
  3. Jharna Rahman, Bangladesh
  4. Archana Thapa, Nepal
  5. Vandana Shukla, India
- were panelists in the discussion.

The discussion focused on the land erosion and deforestation. It was a very lively discussion. While **Jharna Rahman** brought in the information of the sea and river deltas eroding the low lying regions, **Latif Behand** talked about the concerns of a land locked country and **Daya Dissanayake** elaborated on the problems of an island country. **Piyush Daiya** himself from Rajasthan was able to provide inputs of the desert region, **Archana Thapa** has direct dealing with small savings and credit talked about how small loans to women can help them in preserving the forests thus making development sustainable while **Vandana Shukla** talked about the vanishing birds and animals from concrete jungles.

The discussion was followed by **tea break** and while the tea was



On the dais, from left : Ms. Jharna Rahman from Bangladesh, Ms. Archana Thapa from Nepal, Ms. Vandana Shukla of India, Mr. Latif Bahand from Afghanistan, Dr. Daya Dissanayake from Sri Lanka, Mr. Piyush Daiya of India.

in process, the Welcome Committee of FOSWAL was informed that **Dr. Suresh K. Goel, the Secretary General of Indian Council for Cultural Relations** had arrived.

**Suresh Goel ji** was welcomed by **Ajeet Cour**, who in her very short welcome speech emphasized the need for having bureaucrats who could empathize and identify with the need for nurturing the fine arts and literature.

She said that there are very few people in powerful positions who kept their sensitivities alive and continuously thought out of the box. It is these people who enrich society by keeping age old traditions alive and making room for contemporary experimentations. Suresh Goel is one such bureaucrat who even within the limitations of a bureaucratic set up, managed to



Ms. Ajeet Cour

find new ways to promote performing arts and rejuvenate the fine arts. He had blown new life into the existing structure of ICCR and now almost every day dance, music, theatre is being presented at the Azad Bhawan Auditorium, the performance space of the Council. ICCR had also begun funding in a big way. Its foremost manifestation was that exchange programmes on both international and national level were being held. Fellowships for research have been introduced and scholarships for learning have been updated. The result is a more vibrant, happening and pulsating ICCR.



Chief Guest Excellency Dr. Suresh K. Goel, Director General ICCR, being welcomed by Ajeet Cour.

However, the most remarkable contribution of Suresh Goel ji was that he had turned his office into an 'artiste and writer friendly zone.' This accessibility to the highest office in ICCR has come about only because of Suresh ji's personality and his willingness to listen to people and use his office to serve the cause of arts.

**Suresh Goel ji** in his speech said that while he admired Ajeet Cour for several positive attributes, perhaps the highest is that nobody can say 'no' to her. She not only has the vision to give a new meaning to Track Two initiatives, she also has the tenacity to see that these visions and dreams take a concrete form.



Dr. Suresh K. Goel

It is because of this ability that she is a source of inspiration all over the South Asian Region. The Conferences she organizes are always well represented and well attended. The themes are well thought out and relevant. Like this one-ENVIRONMENT- something that is not only of

extreme importance today, but is something that concerns each and every individual inhabiting this earth.

Ajeet Cour and her daughter Arpana Caur, the well-known painter, together carry this responsibility of bringing important pen wielders of eight SAARC nations on one platform. This time I am happy to note that there has been one inclusion from Maynmar as well.

Demarcation of territories is important. Boundaries can be drawn and must be respected, but Cultural commonality is something that cannot be divided. This cultural commonality is based on at least the last five thousand years of the movement of the people of this region. That is why we share so many aspects of culture, be it literature, visual arts, music, Sufism, cuisine, folklore. In spite of so many different religions existing in the region, I would dare to say that we also share common bonds of spirituality. More recently we have come to realize that we share the dangers of the global warming and climate change.

Suresh Goel ji explained that ICCR is not just about Indian Culture though it does use it to develop collaborations. While politics and



Special Performance of Malangs (whirling darveshs) in honour of the Chief Guest Excellency Dr. Suresh K. Goel on the 17th morning.



The 'WHIRLING DARVESHS', called the MALANGS, who dance in divine ecstasy in Shah Hussain's 'mazaar' in Pakistan. They captured the hearts of the people, and lifted their souls to the heights of ecstasy.



Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma honouring Dr. Suresh K. Goel with the SAARC LITERARY FESTIVAL Memento.



Excellency Dr. Suresh K. Goel with the Guru of the 'Malangs'.



On the 17th, the Chief Guest Excellency Dr. Suresh K. Goel, with Ajeet Cour, and Prof. Abhi Subedi from Nepal.



In the Audience, from left : Mr. Jayasuman Dissanayake, Mr. Samantha Herath, Prof. Tissa Kariyawasam, Excellency Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge from Sri Lanka and Dr. Abid Hussain.

economics might divide people, literature and culture are the binding forces. This is because writers and artistes of the region have the same aspirations. Globalization in this region is not just about economies and free markets. It is about neighbours coming together to sort out and discuss problems.

### **That is why ICCR and FOSWAL work together.**

It is often the case that the Government and its various departments and bodies try to back out of financing events that show no immediate results.

I applaud Ajeet Cour and her able daughter Arpana Cour, who do not allow the Government or other funding agencies to back out and make us work for far reaching and long lasting results.

He expressed the hope that a lot of thought provoking material would emerge from the Conference that would lead to a number of smaller level dialogues and discussions.

Suresh Goel ji was presented with a memento of the SAARC Festival of Literature by Sri Sheelkant Sharma.

On a special request by Suresh Goel ji, a short performance of the Malangs of Pakistan was arranged. Suresh ji especially wished to see the Malangs perform 'dhamaal'. He sat spell-bound throughout the performance and embraced each Malang performer after the 'dhamaal'.

The Malang Group leader presented a 'chadder' from the Shah Hussain Mazaar to Suresh Goel ji.

After this short and very pleasant intervention, the academic session resumed with **poetry recitation**. The poets who recited their poetry were:

1. Hazrat Wahriz, Afghanistan
2. Mohammad Nurul Huda, Bangladesh
3. Naveed Ahmed Shazaad, Pakistan
4. Maleka Parveen, Bangladesh
5. Arbab Daud, Pakistan
6. Alfred Khokan, Bangladesh
7. Tin Tin Win, Myanmar.

After the poetry, the congregation broke for **lunch**.

The **Academic Session** was resumed after Lunch and four presentations were made in this session by

1. Pavel Partha, Bangladesh
2. Samanta Herath, Sri Lanka
3. Uxi Mufti, Pakistan
4. C.M. Bandhu, Nepal

**Pavel Partha** is an activist working with the indigenous tribes of Bangladesh and has been researching the presence of the environment in folk literature. He presented a very significant



Mr. Pavel Partha

paper: *Climate Calendar: Changes And Challenges :An eco-feminist analysis on climate change and the local knowledge of rural Bangladesh.*

In his paper he highlighted the role of KHANA the folk woman scientist of Bengal- "The rural people of Bangladesh conceptualize the *climatic*

*change* as a continuous natural process and phenomena. Through world's paleo-climatic study of pollen and sea plankton, it can be assumed that in the last 6000 years a continuous climatic change is occurring. *Khana*, the subaltern scientist of *Bengal* discussed the nature of adaptation of people with ecological and climatic changes. Verses of *Khana*, locally known as '*Khanar Vachan*' were the most important basic guidelines for traditional agriculture in Bengal. *Khana* showed how ecological-environmental-climatic change impacted on the life and nature and how people made adaptation with this natural process.

The verses written by Khana are full of knowledge about weather, climate and also instructions of what to do in agriculture according to what is visible on the sky and the earth.

Unfortunately this is of no use anymore because of man's interference in nature and very rapid climate changes.

**Samanta Herath** read out a paper titled : **Nature and Poetry: Incomplete Insights into Sinhalese Poetry.**

In this paper Samanta made reference to the continuous presence of nature in the Sinhalese poetry. "The history of the Sinhalese poetry can be traced back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC where early Brahmi inscriptions have been identified as poetical compositions. The famous Sigiri Graffiti of the mirror wall were scribbled in 7<sup>th</sup>

and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. The first book written in verse, *Siyabaslakara*, the Sinhala adaptation of *Kavyadarsha* by Dandin was written in the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD. Since then, literary work of Sinhalese poets flourished for centuries continuously. *Kawsilumina*, the cradle of the Sinhalese poetry, was written in the 13<sup>th</sup> century AD. Sinhalese poetry, received greater attention with the emergence of 'errand' or 'message' poems during the period of 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.



Mr. Samantha Herath

The desire of depicting nature in the form of poetry has been evident from early periods. Even in Sigiri poems it can be seen that people have expressed their feelings poetically and their language had been enriched with the nature and natural entities.

**Prof. Fakrul Alam** presented a paper **Rabindranath Tagore and Eco-Consciousness**. Focused on Tagore's later years poetry and

drama, the paper beautifully analyzed and compared the naturalism of the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore to his lifestyle and his instructions to the students.



Prof. Fakrul Alam

“It is because of Rabindranath's belief that we must reinvest in the natural world to preserve life on earth for ourselves and posterity. It was his way of connecting us to nature that he made events like planting, and celebrating the advent of the seasons part of Shantiniketan's curriculum. So that his own students and associates practiced

what he believed in so fervently, Rabindranath initiated the “Halkorshon” or ploughing and “Brikhoropon” or tree-planting ceremonies and made them part of the annual festivities of his institutions.”

In another part of the paper, Fakrul Alam emphasizes “Rabindranath took to the theatre too to dramatize the havoc humans were causing to the environment by their obsessive exploitation of nature's recourses, particularly at the bidding of powerful interest groups. Such groups, he felt, were bent on self- aggrandizement, and

oblivious to the fact that they were depriving others of their rightful shares to the earth's resources or that they were obstructing the flow of life. The two plays devoted exclusively to this theme are *Muktodhara* (1922) and *Roktokorobi* (1926), *Muktodhara*—literally “the flowing current”, is an allegory of how nature can be subjugated to serve the privileged few and oppress the vast majority.”

**Uxi Mufti**, the former director of LOK VIRSA, the organization that is in charge of reclaiming and preserving the folk heritage of Pakistan, read out a paper titled : **Juzz o Qui: The Creative Web of Life.**

In his paper, Uxi Mufti making a reference to modernity said- “Modern ecological science bears witness that nothing can be isolated from the web of life. An isolated part (*juzz*) has no real existence. It simply



Mr. Uxi Mufti

cannot sustain itself. A severed part dies and an isolated puddle pollutes and evaporates. As eco-literacy spreads we become more and more aware of nature's inter-linked patterns and processes. All living things in nature, in the emerging picture of reality, are interconnected through interdependent network of relationships. All things survive through dependence on the same

web of life. All things hang together as one living reality (*Qui*).”

He further added that we have to save the environment for our own survival. “The interdependence of plants, animals and humans is well known to science. Interdependence of life is important as without it nothing can survive. Energy cycles flow continually through the web of life, creates, and recreates developments and dynamic balance. Interdependence is fully illustrated through global economy where materials and even labor comes from other sources.”

**C.M. Bandhu** a scholar of Folklore from Nepal, with a large body of work on the epics, presented a paper titled : **Oral Epics from eco-friendly Tharu culture.**

In this very important paper that directly related to a tribe of indigenous people, Bandhu made some very significant reflections.



Prof. C.M. Bandhu

“The word Tharu is interpreted as 'a

forest man' . Tharus are the indigenous people of Nepal and for centuries they have been living close to the dense forests of the Terai region. Tharu people have cultivated the land and produced major part of the grains for the Nepalese turning Terai into the breadbasket of the country. Even in the scarcity and during famines, they did not break their associations with the land and they preserved their knowledge and skills, language and their oral traditions.

Tharus know the habits of the different animals and birds. They can domesticate biggest animal of the forest – the elephant. Elephants are dangerous when they are angry. There is a long tradition of the Tharus domesticating and taking care of elephants. Recently Tharu ladies have also joined a job of caring and driving the elephants (Sapkota, 2012, p.6). Living closer to the forest they also have good knowledge about birds and their behavior.

But with the Tarai region turning into urban centres, the livelihood and culture of the Tharu tribe is threatened. Forestland is being depleted, lifestyle of the indigenous people is changing and their culture is being lost.

An extensive **poetry session**, presided over by Ahmed Saleem Saheb, well known poet and critic of Pakistan, followed the presentation of the papers.

The participating poets were:

1. Pir Mohammad Karwan, Afghanistan
2. Rubana Haq, Bangladesh
3. Raama Chandramouli, India
4. Ibrahim Waheed, Maldives
5. Kuldeep Salil, India
6. Bal Bahadur Thapa, Nepal
7. Ahmed Salim, Pakistan
8. Prakash Subedi, Nepal

After a short **tea break**, the **poetry session** was again resumed with poetry readings by:

1. Sitakant Mahapatra, India
2. Gita Tripathi, Nepal
3. Jayant Mahapatra, India
4. Obayed Akash, Bangladesh
5. Viky Arya, India
6. Mahvesh Khan, Pakistan
7. Manmohan Singh Mitwa, India
8. Yasmeen Haleema, Pakistan

9. Mithilesh Srivastava, India

10. Syed Shamsul Haq, Bangladesh

After the conclusion of the poetry for the day, it was again time for **cultural programme** and performances.

'Mami' a short story by Ajeet Cour, was presented as a solo drama by **Neeta Mahendra**. The play was directed by the well-known theatre director **M.K. Raina**.

Neeta Mahendra, a highly acclaimed and award winning actor performed with the bare minimum sets and lights. In a forty five minute long presentation, Neeta held the audience spell bound even though a large section of the spectators did not understand a word of Punjabi. The pain of an old woman, discarded by her husband because of her dark complexion and shunned by the women folk as well became apparent, in the passionate and involved rendition of this sensitive story.

After the play it was **Parvathy Baul** who regaled the audience with her soulful Baul performance. One of the finest performers of Baul tradition Parvathi sings in praise of love, humanity and peace. A complete performer, she plays the ektara with her right hand and a small percussion drum is tied to her waist which she plays with her left hand. Whirling, dancing and playing, she regaled the audience, taking them beyond the visual to the experienced, from the emotional to the metaphysical and from the physical to the spiritual.

The evening ended with **dinner** at the Banquet Hall.



In the Cultural Programme on the 17th evening, a play from Amritsar 'Boohe-Baariyan'.



A scene from the play 'Boohe-Baariyan'.



Baul Singer and dancer Parvathy Baul.



The overflowing mesmerized audience.

### 18th March, Day 3

The last day of the Conference opened with a **Panel Discussion on Women and Environment**. The discussion was moderated by **Kanthi Wijetunge of Sri Lanka**.



On the dais from left : Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh from Nepal, Prof. Shafi Ahmad from Bangladesh, Ms. Tehmina Mehmood from Pakistan, Dr. Renuka Singh of India, Ms. Ajeet Cour, Ms. Farheen Chaudhary from Pakistan, Ms. Marzia Lipi from Bangladesh.

#### The panelists were:

1. Farheen Choudhary, Pakistan
2. Marzia Lipi, Bangladesh
3. Renuka Singh, India
4. Ram Dayal Rakesh, Nepal
5. Shafi Ahmed, Bangladesh

This discussion was directly followed by another **Panel Discussion on Environment and Fine Arts**. This discussion was moderated by **Dr. Rani Massey of India**.



.Panel discussion : Coordinated by Dr. Rani Massey. On the dais from left : Prof. Rani Massey of India, Papree Rahman from Bangladesh, Dr. Ahmad Salim from Pakistan.

**The panelists were:**

1. Sunil Pokhrel, Nepal
2. Papree Rehman, Bangladesh
3. Shiva Rijal, Nepal
4. Ahmed Salim, Pakistan
5. Papree Rehman, Bangladesh

The Panel Discussion was followed by a short **poetry session** in which five poets read out their poetry. These were:

1. Hamza Hassan, Pakistan
2. Paul Kaur, India
3. Keshab Sigdel, Nepal
4. Suresh Salil, India
5. Jharna Rahman, Bangladesh

After a short intervention of **tea**, the morning session embarked on a more elaborate spell of **Poetry** which was chaired by the young poet Pushpa Raj Acharya of Nepal. In this slot the poets were:

1. Khodkar Ashraf Hussain, Bangladesh
2. Sandhya pahadi Nepal
3. Purugu Rama Krishna India
4. Naresh Saxena, India
5. Sharada Sharma, Nepal
6. Jayant Mahapatra, India
7. Syed Shamsul Haq, Bangladesh
8. Rukhsana Rafiq, India
9. Nabeela Rahman, Pakistan
10. Musab Rafique, Pakistan
11. Sitakant Mahapatra, India

The poetry session concluded with **Lunch**.

After Lunch the delegates collected for the final academic session in which four papers were scheduled. These were by:

1. Manmohan Singh Mitwa, India
2. Taralal Shreshta, Nepal
3. Nayyara Rahman, Pakistan
4. Syed Zulfiqar Arshad Gilani, Pakistan

**Manmohan Singh Mitwa**, a retired Air Force Officer and resident of Mashobra, Himachal Pradesh presented a paper titled : **How I Saved the Trees Marked to be Guillotined**



Mr. Manmohan Singh Mitwa

Derived from his personal experience Manmohan Singh Mitwa made out a strong case of how everyone has to do their own tiny bit to save the trees and the green cover.

**Taral Shreshta** in a highly interesting paper titled : **Existence of the Subaltern in Earth-Centered Discourse** raised the issue of the difference in the western and eastern perception of environment. He drew the attention of the audience to a very important point : The subalterns have remained the real children of the mother earth. But the irony is that the subalterns' habitats have been destroyed, which means the environment is destroyed. In the name of protection of the environment, the subalterns have been made the targets. The state machinery, the state capitalists, undermines the balance, the relational harmony between the earth and the subalterns. The subalterns have always remained closer to the natural environment than the elitist class whose existence and power lies in creating ruptures in this harmony. The privileged classes that have assumed various avatars in history as the destroyer of environment, are exercising their climax game today through various modes of capitalism, prominently in the form of state capitalism whatever may be the political ideology they may espouse. By existential exigency, the subalterns have remained the preserver of the environment but every elitist state capitalist schemes of destruction has targeted the very existence of the subaltern. It happened in colonial times in India and examples abound in Nepal and elsewhere. However, the subalterns are at the core of environments; they are close to the earth and nature of the earth, whether they are associated or dissociated with the



Dr. Tara Lal Shrestha

earth-centered academic discourses. Whether we call it deep or shallow ecological activity, academic discourse, however, is one of the best mediums to heal the present prevalent environmental wounds and academia is an important space for helping to extend the consciousness of interdependence.

**Nayyara Rahman**, a fiction writer and an activist had prepared a paper titled: **Bridging The Sustainability Gap.**

Without mincing her words she said : It is imperatives for young people to promote sustainable resource production/ consumption. For the simple reason that their own future depends on it.

She reminded the audience that : Being an assertive consumer is about more than *saying* what you want or do not want. It is also about **rethinking consumption.**

Just because we are receiving a good/service does not mean we need it. Imagine the waste prevented, if young people rethought their needs regarding:

Packaging, Promotional offers, Consumption frequency and size and most importantly Consumption itself.



Ms. Nayyara Rahman

**Syed Zulfiqar Arshad Gilani**, the last speaker of the Academic Session read out a paper on “Water.”

He made out a strong case for taking care of our water resources



Syed Zulfiqar Arshad Gilani

through the instructions of various religious scriptures. “The Quranic account of the forming of the Cosmos places great emphasis on water, as demonstrated in other ayah. In Sura Al-Rum, Allah told us that: "We have sent down blessed water from the sky and we grow gardens with it as well as grain to be harvested and soaring palms which have compact clusters as sustenance for worshippers. We have revived a dead countryside with it; thus will your reappearance be".

The Vedas praise water as the source of everything in the universe. It is clearly mentioned in Mahan Arayana Upanishad that the whole universe is made up of water. All beings are made up of

water. The vital airs are the effects of water, cows are also effect of water; food comes from water; nectar, too, comes from water; all the kingdoms, cosmos, Vedic meters, all are made of water; water is truth and all the deities are water; all the worlds are made up of water.

Bible also has strong and numerous evidences that water is a reward from God for humanity.

There are more than 107 verses in which Allah described importance of the water.”

After this paper both the Academic Sessions and Readings of Poetry came to an end.

**The draft of the Resolution was then read out.**

### **RESOLUTION**

We, the writers, academics, journalists, artists and peace activists from each of the eight SAARC countries, gathered here in Lucknow for the SAARC Literary Festival, 2012, under the auspices of Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature, do hereby declare that it is the moral duty of the policy-makers, economic advisers, civil society representatives, intellectuals and religious leaders to make every effort to **protect the earth : our only home.**

For this to happen, mutual dialogue and cooperation between our eight SAARC countries should be the most important agenda. An understanding has to be developed regarding the pollution of air, soil and water. The concept of development must be redefined to include the indigenous people who have inhabited the forest, used its resources and have safeguarded it for thousands of years.

Most importantly this region has to be declared a war-free zone. Modern weapons and sophisticated fire-arms are the highest source of raising the carbon foot print in this region. A strong message has to be sent out by the writers' community that we believe every disagreement can be resolved through dialogue and mutual understanding.

The governments of each country should encourage frequent meetings between writers and other members of the civil societies so that people-to-people contacts can facilitate cultural understanding and build long-lasting bridges of friendship.

From this platform we urge all the eight governments to exempt

writers, artistes, social activists and journalists from Visa requirements to enable Track II Initiatives to be more effective and far reaching.

Translation from one language to another is one of the foremost requirements of the region. FOSWAL's publication of anthologies of translated works and SAARC Literary Journal are path-breaking steps. We urge the member countries of SAARC to take up this work on a large scale. We also request Indian Council for Cultural Relations to support a SAARC Workshop on translation of SAARC Literature.

### **The Resolution was unanimously accepted and passed.**

On the **19th of March**, an excursion of Lucknow had been arranged. The delegates who had stayed back and wished to go round this medieval city were taken in luxury coaches to the important sites of Lucknow. These were the **Chhota Imambara** that possesses the most exquisite glasswork on its walls and in the form of great chandeliers and the **Bara Imambara** which beside being a place of worship also houses the biggest and most complicated labyrinth or maze in the world. Called the **Bhulbhulaiyya** it is a complicated structure where even with all precaution one is bound to get lost.

The delegates were also taken to see the **Botanical Gardens** which boast of some of the rarest flora species in the world and the **Baradari** or Hall with Twelve Doors that used to be the performance area of the Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Lucknow.

Thus came to an end another of our Festivals of Literature. It was a great coming together of writers, scholars, activists and crusaders who had espoused the same cause: **Peace, Solidarity and Environment.**

The writers sent out a strong message that they were no longer willing to be silent witnesses to official decisions and political policies. Track two initiatives help in infusing the cross-border relationships with confidence and vitality. In the dynamic and fast changing world of today, discussion and dialogue between writers and activists of each country provide the motivation and impetus for panache to take form. It is these people to people exchanges that are a major source of establishing stronger, deeper and longer lasting ties in the SAARC Region.



Dr. Abid Hussain  
India



Dr. Suresh K. Goel  
India



Ms. Kanthi Wijetunge  
Sri Lanka



Prof. Fakrul Alam  
Bangladesh



Mr. Samantha Herath  
Sri Lanka



Mr. Ibrahim Waheed  
Maldives



Dr. Rani Massey  
India



Mr. Piyush Daiya  
India



Dr. Noor Zaheer  
India



Mr. Naheed Zaman Khan  
Pakistan



Ms. Jharna Rahman  
Bangladesh



Mr. Shiva Rijal  
Nepal



Ms. Kiran Bashir Ahmed  
Pakistan



Mr. Mahboobullah Khan  
Afghanistan



Ms. Geeta Karki  
Nepal



Prof. Manzoorul Islam  
Bangladesh



Dr. Nihal Rodrigo  
Sri Lanka



Dr. Jayanta Mahapatra  
India



Mr. Sharan Kumar Limbale  
India



Mr. Sunil Pokharel  
Nepal



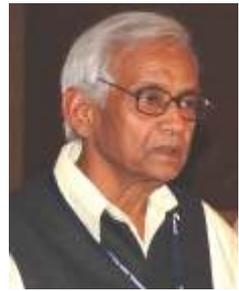
Dr. Rubana Huq  
Bangladesh



Mr. Manmohan Singh Mitwa  
India



Ms. Nayyara Rahman  
Pakistan



Mr. Naresh Saxena  
India



Prof. Ashraf Hussain Khondkar  
Bangladesh



Mr. Prakash Subedi  
Nepal



Ms. Nabila Rehman  
Pakistan



Mr. Syed Zulfiqar Gilani  
Pakistan



Ms. Papree Rahman  
Bangladesh



Mr. Kamrul Hasan  
Bangladesh



Dr. Tin Tin Win  
Myanmar



Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra  
India



Prof. Abhi Subedi  
Nepal



Prof. Tissa Kariyawasam  
Sri Lanka



Dr. Pratibha Ray  
India



Mr. Shamsul Haq  
Bangladesh



Dr. Pushpa Raj Acharya  
Nepal



Ms. Ayesha Zee Khan  
Pakistan



Mr. Sanjiv Upreti  
Nepal



Ms. Paul Kaur  
India



Mr. Keshab Sigdel  
Nepal



Mr. Hamza Hassan  
Pakistan



Mr. Perugu Ramakrishna  
India



Mr. Musab Rafique  
Pakistan



Ms. Marzia Lipi  
Bangladesh



Mr. Om Thanvi  
India



Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma  
India



Mr. Latif Bahand  
Afghanistan



Prof. C.M. Bandhu  
Nepal



Ms. Vandana Shukla  
India



Dr. Uxi Mufti  
Pakistan



Ms. Sandhya Pahari  
Nepal



Mr. Jayasumana Dissanayake  
Sri Lanka



Dr. R. Chakravarty  
India



Mr. Pavel Partha  
Bangladesh



Mr. Alfred Khokon  
Bangladesh



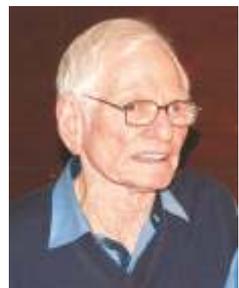
Ms. Viky Arya  
India



Ms. Bilquis Bano  
Pakistan



Dr. Ismatullah Zahid  
Pakistan



Mr. Kuldip Salil  
India



Dr. Ahmad Salim  
Pakistan



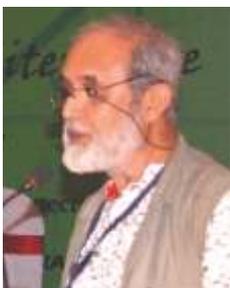
Mr. Hazrat Wahriz  
Afghanistan



Ms. Farheen Chaudhry  
Pakistan



Ms. Maleka Parveen  
Bangladesh



Dr. Mohammad Nurul Huda  
Bangladesh



Mr. Pir Mohammad Karwan  
Afghanistan



Ms. Haleema Yasmeen  
Pakistan



Mr. Hassan Mahmood  
Pakistan



Mr. Arbab Daud  
Pakistan



Mr. Bal Bahadur Thapa  
Nepal



Ms. Sharada Sharma  
Nepal



Dr. R. D. Rakesh  
Nepal



Ms. Mahvesh Khan  
Pakistan



Mr. Mithilesh Shrivastava  
India



Mr. Raamaa Chandramouli  
India



Mr. Abdul Wakil Sulamal  
Afghanistan



Mr. Dayananda Dissanyake  
Sri Lanka



Ms. Chitra Rodrigo  
Sri Lanka



Dr. Mustafa Zaman Abbasi  
Bangladesh



Dr. Shafi Ahmed  
Bangladesh



Ms. Archana Thapa  
Nepal



Dr. Renuka Singh  
India



Mr. Iqbal Bahoo  
Pakistan



Ms. Tehmina Mehmood  
Pakistan



Ms. Sabita Gautam  
Nepal



Mr. Nisar Ahmad Chaudhary  
Pakistan



Mr. Suresh Salil  
India



Ms. Parvathy Baul  
India



Mr. Tara Lal Shrestha  
Nepal



Ms. Neeta Mahendra  
India

## RESPONSES OF THE PARTICIPANTS FROM THE SAARC REGION

Dearest Ajeet and Arpana,

Thanks for the photos and for the wonderful experience in Lucknow. I wish I cd have danced with the dervishes. To be at the event was my Luck-I-know.

Love,

**Nihal Rodrigo, Sri Lanka**

•

Dear Ajeet ji,

I came back to Dhaka a few hours ago and thought that I would write to you before the day was over, not only to thank you--very, very much--for inviting me to the conference and for honoring me with the award but also to tell you how sorry I am that was not able to take leave from you personally when I left the conference site. I certainly meant to do so during lunch time but you were not around that day. Do excuse me for this.

I hope you are well and recovering from the strain that organizing such a massive event must have caused you. Please accept my best wishes too!

Respectfully,

**Fakrul Alam, Bangladesh**

•

Dear Arpana,

It was a wonderful experience for me and my team. Thank you and all the FOSWAL people for the hospitality and great arrangements.

Please give my regards to Ajeet Didi who is at the centre of all this creative, dear and welcome cyclone.

My best wishes to you

**Abhi Subedi, Nepal**

•

Dear Ajeet jee,

It was a wonderful opportunity that I had in the recent times to participate in the SAARC Festival of Literature in Lucknow. I came back enlightened, enriched and motivated, being in such a wonderful group of writers, poets and Artists. I really appreciate

the prestigious SAARC award given to me recognizing my talents and contributions in literature and academic writing. It encouraged me to engage in literary writing again which has been neglected by me for some time.

However, now I am determined to dedicate some more time to do more writing other than my official communication.

Having seen many young writers and poets who presented their creative work during the sessions, I was even inspired to persuade my daughter to utilize her writing talents in the same way. I hope she would definitely write more and publish her writing soon. It would be a very positive outcome of my attendance in SAARC festival.

I was really impressed about the presentations and comments made by our friends who came from different countries in the region. I felt that we were only different from our language; feelings, sensations and behavior all common. I am already getting requests from them to initiate possible collaborative projects for cultural activities.

We all talked about our environment during the conference in an unique way. I was fascinated by the way how creative people looked at the environment in different perspectives. I began searching for more about creative poems, short stories and cases written on environment. This encouraged me to compile interesting poems and short stories which convey important messages to the community. I realized how much we could do through wielding our pen to create awareness on the environment protection in this way.

Above all, I will never forget the warm welcome by you and Arpana. You are so affectionate. I saw that everybody is highly impressed about your motherly love. I have already read your story in 'Pebbles in a Tin Drum' which was really touching. You are a great mother who has overcome all these hurdles and today stands with SAARC by giving strength to all creative people in our region.

You two are doing an enormous contribution for SAARC. I believe your genuineness and kind heart must be the basis of your success.

With my heart felt gratitude, I congratulate you and Arpana to move forward with more courage and strength.

**Kanthi Wijethunge**

Secretary

Ministry of National Heritage, Sri Lanka



Dear Ajeet ji,

Thank you for the photographs. I also have some from Bangladeshi participants. Together, these make a wonderful album that I'll always cherish.

I was worried about your health, and I hope you are better now. I'll pray for your good health and happiness.

And thank you for considering me for the SAARC literary award. It was such a wonderful moment.

With warm regards,

**Manzoorul Islam, Bangladesh**

•

Dear Maa Ji,

Time and life, both play tricks, pleasant and unpleasant. . .human mind ironically tends to forget the pleasant ones . . . dont know why?

. . . but certain pleasant INCIDENTS can't be forgotten and have long lasting imprints on mind and soul, rather start reshaping certain GROOVES of mind !

I have enjoyed and learned a lot during FOSWAL in March 2012... got curious; read books of Ajeet Cour religiously and tried to find the hidden meanings of Arpana Caur's paintings and then the spiritual messages.

When I got invitation by Ajeet Cour . . . . via mail, for FOSWAL in Lucknow my excited YES was warmly greeted and replied by a long list of instructions to apply and get visa in time, not to miss transports arranged for delegates and bookings etc.

Then many mails about topics and delegates and other details. It was the concern, the love Ajeet Ji has for writers.

It is beautiful to know that the host is warm and welcoming and wants to see you around? We crossed Wagah on 14 March.

All was warm, comfortable and beautiful, food, feelings, hotel and faces . . . . !

Thanks to Manmohan Mitwa, Dr. Noor Zaheer, Parveen, Tamana, Aman Singh . . . . and of course the MASTER MINDS . . . the writer and painter, mother and daughter . . . Ajeet Cour & Arpana Cour . . . . hats off to them.

Despite of her hectic schedules, spade work for FOSWAL and age factor, Ajeet Cour was fresh and in form. Her glittering proud smile was spread all over the venue, her mental strength was

unbeatable, she was here, there and everywhere ! followed by shy Arpana, pursuing for medicine in time.

Auditorium was all set with dominant green colour, with reference to the theme ENVIRONMENT. . . .

FOSWAL was comprised of 10 sessions during 4 days 16 -19th March, having eminent scholars, poets, fiction writers and cultural giants of SAARC . . . as speakers participants, presidium and panels. . . .

Environment & Women, Environment & Fine Arts . . . and Sustainable Development were the special concerns.

Speakers highlighted the grave and critical conditions of environment threatened by chemicals, pollution, deforestation and certain technologies . . . in their countries specifically and in the region generally. . . well researched, presentations along with rich facts and figures definitely enhanced awareness regarding environment and mother earth . . . .

Presence of scholars as Dr. Abid Hussain, Dr. Nihal Rodrigo, Prof. Abhi Subedi, Dr. Sitakant, Dr. Sheel Kant, Syed Mazroorul Islam, Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, Ibrahim Waheed, S.A.D.J.N. Dissanyake and Uxi Mufti provided ample opportunity to learn about cultural and socio-economic environments of the region ... too

Participation of Dr. Tin Tin Win of Mayamar, for the first time was a pleasant addition to the family of SAARC writers and intellectuals.

Young energetic voices like Pushpa Raj Acharya inspire for better future outlook of South Asia.

Presentations, panel discussions and creative poetry representing a variety of cultures paved way to certain humane solutions and raised some new questions for the safety of mother earth for the sake of survival of future generations. . .

Ideas, concepts, words, images, catharsis, questions answers by different minds flew together on 16th and landed on 19th on FOSWAL FLOOR. . . together . . . . !!!!

It was productive... it was creative ...

Music, body language, art ... all have a universal language ... the language of love.... so we all were enthralled equally by the performances of whirling darvesh and Iqbal Bahu... from Pakistan, Parvathy Baul from India and the Monologue written by Ajeet Cour and performed by Neeta Mahendra every one was anxious to meet, hug and click memories.... during tea and lunch breaks. . .

Till Noor's and Mitwa's witty words used to drag them back on seats. . . . books, books and books by great literary figures were

another attraction near the lunch area. . . . (don't know whose brilliant idea it was) for audience to linger on a bit more . . . writers and books were exchanging secretive blinks. . . (not secret to Ajeet Cour at least )she could ignore it but not always... remember!!

Arpana Cour's multimedia presentation regarding her work. exhibitions and murals abroad added a flavor to FOSWAL this woman behind the scenes deserves a great appluad . . .

FOSWAL a wonderful, creative event, is another leap to bridge the gaps, another chapter in the book of humanity another step towards the global peace. . . thanks . . . no one returned empty headed. . . .we all have food for thought . . .

### **Farheen Chaudhry, Pakistan**

•

Dear Ajeet jee,

The programme was very useful since it provided a forum for writers and artists of SAARC region making them aware of each other's works of creation and related activities and also learn new trends and techniques in writing.

For me personally, it was the first time I was participating in a SAARC level literary event. I was fascinated to be with such beautiful minds and hearts of this region most of whom I had just heard of, but not met before-this itself was inspiring and motivating.

I was thrilled to listen to the Sufi music, their amazing dance and also the Boul dance. I had never got an opportunity to come across such lovely traditions which belong to some of us in the neighborhood. I don't understand paintings properly, but the work of Aparna jee is something I have cherished with me.

I have been to US and China earlier to participate in literature related programmes. But this time it was different because I was much comfortable with my friends living just around me- sharing almost similar type of socio, cultural and political background- which made me feel more home like. Hindi and Urdu languages are very familiar to us Nepalese, also Bengali to some extent.

I have just gone through Ajeet jee's autobiographies and have identified myself in so many instances there-I cried while going through the first part of 'Khanabadosh' It's a prose written in poetry! That's the strength of a mother writer! I don't think, a father writer could do that with the same intensity!

I feel good that I have made friends with many writers and good

people of the region. I believe, this will help me to widen and update myself with new contexts coming up in the region including literary developments.

The event was great, one of the most meaningful programmes I have ever participated. I hope it'll continue in the future too!

**Sharada Sharma, Nepal**

•

Dear Didi,

Greetings !

We are grateful to you and the organizers for successfully concluding a great festival of writers.

On return home we are still remembering the great four days that we passed together in Lucknow.

It is a rare occasion in our lives. I enjoyed presenting my paper as well as singing at the concluding session on your request.

I am writing on the conference in Bengali, the first one is enclosed herewith.

With kind regards

Sincerely,

**Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, Bangladesh**

•

Dear Ajeet ji,

The SAARC Literature festival of March 2012 was the first SAARC event that I have ever attended and, as such, it was a tremendous learning experience. In-fact, there are so many impressions to relate that I don't quite understand where to begin.

Let's begin with what made the most impact on me during the SAARC literature festival. I loved:

The presentation by Ms. Aparna Caur about her paintings. I loved the pictures of the paintings – maybe someday I will view the paintings themselves. I found the painter's personality very impressive. Her extreme humility, her refusal to promote herself and her dedication to her art – to the extent of climbing up ladders to paint various walls – were all characteristics of a truly good human being.

The second, highly impactful exhibition was the one-woman play written by Ms. Ajeet Cour and acted out by Ms. Neeta Mohindra. I had a very hard time controlling my tears during this performance.

I shouldn't be focussing only on the cultural exhibition because this was, after all, a literary festival. Unfortunately, what is spoken runs out of the mind very fast. Especially when one is blessed with a memory such as mine, which has a long-term limit of a year and a short-term one of a day! It excels at forgetting everything heard/experienced within a week's duration. However, I will give this a go. The readings I loved included: The poems recited by the Nepalese group were, overall, very optimistic poems.

Ms. Paul Kaur's poems were extremely relevant, touching upon issues that are obviously common to both Pakistan and India. I was very impressed by Ms. Viky Arya's very brief verses which reflected a great love for nature. Mr. Kuldip Salil's poetry was very moving, sending a message of great love towards the people of Pakistan. I was most touched by it.

The constant display of books written by authors from the SAARC region was another wonderful aspect of the festival. It was interesting to see the concerns of the authors from this region though of-course some of the books were in languages I did not know. However, there were a large number of books in Hindi-Urdu and English so it was all in all a satisfactory experience.

I was extremely grateful for the opportunity to witness an exhibition of the regional culture at this forum. I met some very interesting people during the lunch and tea breaks.

I am very impressed with the thought, effort and sheer hard work that has gone into hosting this conference and am very touched by the underlying philosophy. SAARC is truly a way to reach out to hearts and minds and if we can, as people, view each other as fellow human beings making the best of an imperfect world, maybe we can indeed heal the divisions that will destroy us all if we let them.

**Mahvesh Khan, Pakistan**

•

My beloved Ajeet ji !

Greetings from Bangladesh!

Yesterday night I reached Bangladesh from Lucknow.

Yes that was a dream for me, but you made this possible.

You are the core seed of our SAARC literature journey.

I learnt more and more, but specially from Arpana Caur, she is upholding the ethnic and folk art form of the continent. I can't believe a top most painter also knows to create the Warli and Kurumba folk arts. She knows the secrets of traditional folk lives

and eco-philosophy. My great salam to her.

I can't forget the cooperation of Noorji, Mitwa and all.....

## **Pavel Partha, Bangladesh**

•

Respected Ajeet jee,

I feel deeply honoured to get your appreciation for my attendance in SAARC writers festival in Lucknow. I have discovered in you a matchless motherly force trying to unite all the creative souls of South Asia (and beyond) rendering it into a great home of all its humans, regardless of their geo-political habitats and boundaries. I do believe that your dream of South Asia as a visa-free zone would come true soon. In Bangladesh we have been dreaming of it long since. Bangladesh writers club has been in favour of '*Mukta Swadesh Mukta Prithibi*' (Free Homeland Free World) from its inception in the early 1990s. As current chairman of this organization I do confess that this is clearly in conformity with your dream and you are one of our intrepid inspirers. Please accept my gratitude and highest regards for inviting me to take part in this festival, that gave me some wonderful moments to feel our dreams as well as to contemplate on how to translate them into reality in the days to come. One immediate suggestion is the oft-recurrent holding of such festivals at different venues and different states of South Asia. FOSWAL may take the initiative and the states concerned may give their supportive hands.

I have profited a lot meeting many new faces from all nine participating countries and many of them have become my friends in the mean time. Some of them have mailed me and I am eager to keep in touch with all of them.

From the very beginning the Lucknow festival attracted me in big way. The inaugural session was a memorable one and Aparna jee's amazing painting display catering to the needs of time made me spell bound. I also liked the presentation on trees, plants, searise and warming and the allied areas. However, as suggested by you in your mail, I recited some poems on human relations, protection of trees and interactions of creative souls in South Asia, including a poem that I wrote in Lucknow. I did scribble many small poems which I shall send to you after these are finalized as texts. Cultural functions including baul songs and whirling sufis were attractive.

To me, the most attractive part of Lucknow Festival was the diverse poetry reading in diverse languages and manners. Almost all the languages of the region were uttered by poets from various

languages echoing a symphony I never heard before. The fusion of all these sound and words may create, who knows, a unique language, somewhat creolized, in the not-so-distant future. If it so happens, it will be the outcome FOSWAL to a great extent. The honour you bestowed upon selected writers for their contribution is also encouraging and it should continue in future as well.

As suggested by you, I am attaching some of the poems that I read and wrote while staying at Lucknow. The hospitality and sight-seeing including a most exciting tour to Bhul Bhulaiya is still fresh in my memory. I have also revisited the cultural and aesthetic history of Lucknow as I went around the famous picture gallery of the illustrious Nawabs and rulers of the region.

I felt like travelling through tradition where time past and time future seemed to stand in time present. Indeed, I am the proud successor of this indivisible tradition of South Asia as a unified entity.

With best regards,

**Mohammad Nurul Huda, Bangladesh**

•

Respected Ajeet Madam,

It was my privilege to be the part of the SAARC Literary Festival. Also, it was my very first experience at the SAARC festival. I was surprised to see the large number of renowned literary personalities all in one place. Meeting the writers, poets, intellectuals, artists and various scholars from different walks of life was indeed an enriching experience. The most remarkable thing to me, however was that despite having differences of scholarly disciplines, coming from different geographical locations, having different mother tongues, religious beliefs and nationalities, each one of them seemed at ease while sharing, talking, reading his/her paper or reciting poems. Among other reasons, one could have been that all of us were dealing with the environmental concerns which has become a universal concern for all of us.

I realize that organizing an event like this is certainly not an easy task. I cannot thank you enough for bringing us all together under one roof, and bridging the gaps of difference while creating an atmosphere of caring and sharing as ONE.

Also, I thank you for the nice gift that you sent me with Prof. Abhi Subedi. I just received the packet today and loved it. I am also looking forward to read your book **Khanabadhosh** and **Kurakabara** that I received as gift in this trip

Thank you again for the memorable moments.

Regards,

**Archana Thapa, Nepal**

•

My dear Ajeet Di,

Thank you for your valuable words! Respect towards each others culture and ethnicity makes the friendship stronger and longer. The independence of Bangladesh was declared in 26th March and a civil war started. On 16 December 1971, the allied forces of the Indian army and the Mukti Bahini (Liberation-Army of Bangladeshis) decisively defeated the West Pakistani forces. So the alliance of India & Bangladesh is always auspicious! I hope this remarkable friendship among these two countries and also other countries will be forever.

Best Wishes,

**Papree Rahman, Bangladesh**

•

Dear Maa ji and Noor,

Today I was invited by Nisho ji and her Channel in the afternoon, we recorded an episode on the SFL 2012, our experiences there, the Pakistan Chapter and how we are excited to invite and host a tri-country Conference and the sad demise of Iqbal Bahu sb. I requested Uxi Mufti sb yesterday to accompany me but he had to leave for Islamabad, so then I requested Tehmina Mehmood to accompany me. It was a two member panel discussion, a very candid interview by Nisho ji. The program goes on AIR tomorrow night (Sunday night) at 8pm Pakistan Standard Time. If you receive the broadcast of Pak Channels please look for "Apna Channel" its the only Punjabi Channel from Pakistani Punjab which is watched Internationally in 52 countries. I have asked the producer of the program to burn it on a CD so that I can send you via email. The next episode of this two-part program will be recorded on the coming Friday afternoon. I plan to invite the Malangs so that we can show their performance that they did in Lucknow. The producer has graciously agreed upon adding photographs of the SFL too. I have given him 6 pictures from the festival, including that of Maa ji, yourself, Arpana didi and Mama ji Mitwa with the Pak Delegation. These pictures will be shown in the next episode.

Love,

**Ayesha Zee Khan, Pakistan**

•

Dearest Maa ji, Madam Ajeet Cour,

I thank you so much for inviting me to attend the FOSWAL Festival of Literature in Lucknow. I also gratefully accept and acknowledge the award that was given to me. It means much and would go a long way in the uphill battle we have to face to make the effect of literature more effective and meaningful in making the human condition more humane, safer, more productive and more meaningful in the greater SAARC region.

I also admire your courage and wisdom in keeping the flame alight, thank my sister Arpana Didi for fueling the flame with all her efforts, and applaud the inimitable Mamuji Manmohan Singh Mitwa without whose wisdom, wit and humor the Festival would not have had its vital spark.

My felicitations to the tireless and often sleepless Shri Ravjot Singh and his team of the young and the younger for all the efforts they invested in the effort successfully, to ensure that our stay was comfortable. Smt Noor Zaheer, whose work very often happens in the background, I am sure, deserves unbound thanks. I would also like to include our very own Tamanna in my list of thanks.

While I thank FOSWAL, I also thank Lucknow for hosting all of us.

Mother, I am deeply encouraged and inspired by your courage and endurance in ensuring that so many nationalities were represented not only in kind as it were, but in the sheer quality and outstanding eminence of all the scholars who were there. If anyone deserves an award, it is you! If I were to list the names of the eminent personages who were there, it would read like a Who's-Who of SAARC writers, poets and playwrights.

I am also very impressed by the cultural extravaganza offered to us. I feel that the Malangs, the Baul and that extra-special play in Punjabi were eye-openers in more ways than one. The Punjabi play also happened to be the first time I understood Punjabi. I thank you for that extra-terrestrial experience.

I must mention your success, nay victory, in getting over the Pakistani team, especially the vivacious Ayesha Zee Khan who continues to be such a good ambassador, whose travel included long train journeys and very special arrangements.

I thank my friends and colleagues from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal who made my visit simply too short; I use this opportunity to thank all of them for their contribution to my Gross Happiness Product! Without the eminent scholars from India, we simply would have been empty!

Maa ji, thank you once again. May God bless you and keep you

safe, happy and healthy. May you live long that we may enjoy your company and the fruits of your efforts like this.

All the best, with respect,

Your Maldivian Son

**Ibrahim Waheed**

•

Dear Ajeet ji,

I take this opportunity to thank you for the warm hospitality and monetary assistance that you and FOSWAL extended to me and made my stay at Lucknow a happy and enjoyable one. I learned a lot from all the participants. Please thank the FOSWAL staff on my behalf for everything they did.

Thank you again,

**Khondakar Ashraf Hossain**

Professor, Dept. of English, Dhaka University, Dhaka

•

Dear Didi,

I must heartily appreciate the work you are engaged with in the the activities of FOSWAL, which echo the emotions of our liberation. My humble pronam to you since you are literally tireless to uphold the cause of SAARC spirit. By every standard, you are the glorious example in consolidating the spirit of SAARC in a much more high degree than the political leaders can aspire to achieve.

This time I almost could not talk to you other than the first two minutes when I met you on reading Lucknow. But I enquired about your health more than once a day with Arpana.

I will always wish best for you, Arpana and FOSWAL.

**Shafi Ahmed, Bangladesh**

•

Dear Ajeet Cour,

This is to thank your entire team for the gracious hospitality extended to us at the well organized SAARC Festival of Lit. at Lucknow. I hope you all experienced the warmth of the city and its people. I hope I get a chance to participate again. Being a moderator to a panel discussion was a stimulating experience !

I would like to mention & appreciate the laudable efforts of Noor as a co-ordinator, Mitwaji's wit & commitment, the office staff-Praveen and Sethi, and most of all, the spirit and strength of Arpana Caur

and your vision and persuasive power to conduct such an important Event. May God grant you good health so that you can carry forward His works.

Thanks for every thing.

**Rani Massey**

•

Dear Ajeet jee,

I was very pleased to be a part of the Festival at Lucknow. Because of the historical place and because of the people I met, and because of the invisible rays of passion for creativity that interconnected all of us there, the program remains memorable to me. For me, we live because of such beautiful moments and their memories keep us going for they work as the source of inner light of hope and love. In this cycle of time, which we call "Kaal", such moments burning like jewel spark and defy the darkness that tries to cover us.

I thank you, Arpana ji, and the whole FOSWAL team for making the program such a moment and for bringing together all these beautiful souls. And I am pleased to receive the award. The design is so beautiful.

The spring is in the air in Kathmandu. I will write again soon.

Love,

**Pushpa Raj Acharya, Nepal**

•

Dear respectable Ajeet Cour ji,

I hope you are in the best of your health and relaxed after the festival.

Please excuse the delay in getting this letter to you. I have just returned from New Delhi.

I am writing to thank you for the festival you held and also offer my humble feedback regarding some aspects of the whole event. It was an enlightening experience as there were nine countries involved in the presentation of the literature.

In my personal opinion this literature ties are not only bifacial for literature progress but also make worthwhile and effective to eradicate the existents animosity within our zone of countries. . Not only in the academic sense of it all, but also at the cultural and social aspects.

Once again thank you for the invitation and the time and co-

operation you offered me. You yourself are an excellent writer and a symbol of kindness and a motherly figure for all of us. I am at your service and glad to be part of such an organization of individuals.

Best regards,

**Abdul Wakil Sulamal, Afghanistan**

•

Dear Ajeet Cour ji,

Madam,

After participating in our 'SAARC LITERARY FESTIVAL' at Lucknow from March 16, 17, 18,19, 2012 I could not come out of the inspiring memories which I accumulated from my co-delegates of 9 SAARC countries. Really it was superb regarding this I summarize my feelings below.

- 1) The way how the 10 significant sessions were organised by madam Ajeet Cour (Aparna Cour behind her...A dynamic force) were of highly significant, precise, valuable and meaningful too. they were also constructive and thought provoking. The credit goes to madam Ajeet ji. I Express my deep sense of gratitude.
- 2) Hospitality, programming, planning of activities particularly without the intervention of politicians)is exemplary.
- 3) The resolutions made were also very much constructive. I fully support them all.
- 4) I look forward for further FOSWAL activities from Madam Ajeet ji under her able leadership.

With regards,

**Raamaa Chandramouli, India**

•

Dear Didi,

I hope this email finds you in all good health. I am writing to thank you for all your effort to bring us together at the SAARC Literary Festival in Lucknow. Though it was my first participation in FOSWAL event, I have brought back strong and unfailing experiences of love and fraternity.

I, along with my friends who participated in the Lucknow Festival, will be willing to contribute to FOSWAL officially. As we are already running various literary organizations and holding annual national/international conferences in Nepal, we hope we can contribute to FOSWAL in a more organized way. Please let us know if you want us to support you in any way you want.

My remarks are the reflections of how deeply I am attached to you and the great literary work you are leading.

Warm regards,

**Keshab Sigdel, Nepal**

•

Dear Ajeet jee, Arpana jee,

The symbol on the festival logo, of the leaf and the pen, looked to me like the leaf of our sacred Bo tree. The Peepal. The sacred Ashvattha, worshiped for the past 5000 years, from the time of the Indus civilization as we see in the clay tablet found at Harappa.

Ficus religiosa has been worshiped by all communities, in every country the tree is found, and justifies the name 'Cosmic Tree', the 'Axis mundi'.

As the Bodhi tree it symbolizes Awakening, Enlightenment.

Ashvattha is Vishnu. They are not two but one. The roots growing upwards is Parameshawara, the branches growing down is Maha Brahma, the leaves are the Vedas, and the trunk is the Samsara. Thus it is also called the Samsaravruksha and also Brahmavruksha

The rishis know of the tree Ashvattha  
Rooted in heaven, its trunk growing earthwards,  
Its leaves, each one, bringing for the Vedas,  
he who knows this, knows all.  
(Bhagavad Gita XV, verse 1)

Indrani joins me in expressing our most sincere gratitude for giving us the opportunity to attend the SAARC Writers Festival, and for your kind hospitality extended to us. It was the first time for me to have been able to meet, listen and talk to so many creative writers and poets.

As a Buddhist I believe that we should all be Peaceful and Useful, and that you have earned much merit from your deeds.

As I mentioned to Arpana jee, you can count on me for anything I can do for FOSWAL and all your other good deeds, and also to promote e-books and going digital to cut down the use of paper and save our trees and reduce pollution.

**Daya Dissanayake, Sri Lanka**

•

My dear dear Ajeet ji,

Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature has become a Bodhi

tree in true sense for writers. I have no words to express my gratitude for inviting me to SAARC writers' conference. You brought together the writers and artists under the SAARC Bodhi Tree to enlighten the creative consciousness further. You are such a dynamic personality. You know the meaning of Art. You have not only produced Arpana, the great artist but also have produced such an organization to inspire the world of artists.

The meaning of art, or a painting does not begin or end with what artist conveys or intends to convey. It continues its progressive act of realization in the experience and realization of other artists and writers as the audience. This is why the true meaning of a piece of art whether literature or painting is never completed or fully realized, because its audience continue in the flux of time and for all ages.

Ajeet ji, SAARC Foundation will extend its branches to the whole world creating the opportunity for confluence of creative minds. You will remain immortal in Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL).

I love to quote St. John Perse "it is action, it is passion, it is power and always the innovation that extends the borders. Love is the heart fire; insurrection its law, its place is everywhere in anticipation, it wants neither to deny not to keep aloof. It expects no benefits from the advantages of time. Attached to its own destiny and free from any ideology, it clasps both past and future in the present, the human with the super human."

Perhaps Mr. Perse foresaw FOSWAL and wrote the above lines.

You are my evergreen Ajeet ji.

All my writer friends from SAARC countries are in touch with each other now. The credit goes to you.

Long live Ajeet ji,

And take care.

Affectionately,

**Pratibha Ray, India**

•

Dear Ajeet ji,

Thank you very much for all your kindness and for inviting me for the conference. I enjoyed it very much. It was my first ever visit to a Labyrinth which was fascinating. I still don't know how I managed to climb 72 steps and go through the dark passages. Of course Arpana and Tina helped me.

This was my first full conference and I enjoyed it very much even when I did not understand Hindi!!! May be I should start learning Hindi.

Coming for the Conference was well worth my breaking rest this week.

Thank you once again for all your generosity.

With All my Love,

**Chitra Rodrigo, Sri Lanka**

•

Respected Madam

The days we spent in Lucknow are very vivid in my eyes. We had great times meeting writers and poets from all the SAARC countries and listening to their thoughts and creations. I am personally grateful to you, Madam, for inviting me to such a high assembly of writers, many of whom are superstars.

We enjoyed our stay; the hospitality was fabulous. Thanks to you and the Festival Organizers for making our stay so comfortable! I liked Lucknow for its historical buildings built by Nawabs. Your selection of this ancient and culturally rich city is a good choice and deserves praise.

The sessions and proceedings of three-day program went smoothly and all the agendas could be covered. You, as the prime-mover of SAARC Festival of Literature, deserve most of the thanks, while your able partners also deserve thanks for putting good works together. I am particularly amazed to see how generously your daughter, Arpana Cour, contributes and helps her mother realizing a dream of building friendship and bridging the gaps among South Asian Writers. She is a famous daughter of a famous mother. Her paintings are exquisitely beautiful, very original and simply world-class.

As I had committed to you, I wish to translate some of your short stories into Bangla, and gradually, I wish to publish a complete book of your stories in our Ekushey Boimela. Hence, please send me a copy of Dead End (or other Books available in English).

My personal regards to you, Madam. Thanks again for the kind invitation. I wish you a very long creative and vibrant life!

Poetically yours,

**Kamrul Hassan, Bangladesh**

•

Dear Sister Ajeet,

Congratulations for once again organising a very successful SAARC Writers' Meet. For the conference, I had sent ten poems. A bunch of at least 4/5 poems should be featured in Beyond Borders. I find that my poems are rarely there. Secondly, there is a slight change for the titled of my paper. The revised titled is "Declining Green Cover of Mother Earth - The Tree-'Sukta'".

**Sitakant Mahapatra, India**

•

Dear Ammi Ji,

Congratulations on another mission successfully accomplished, and the addition to a growing family of writers and poets. As always, the SFL has been a transforming and highly memorable experience.

Thank you also for your warm and generous gift. I am very grateful, truly!

Hope you're well.

Please give my regards to Arpana Aapa and your wonderful team. Lots of Love,

Aap ki Beti,

**Nayyara Rahman, Pakistan**

•

Ajeet ji,

I have no words to express my feeling and 'Thanks' is a very small word for it.

I have attended SAARC literature festival for the first time and all I can say that this is really a great opportunity, amazing platform for creativity and a friendship bond beyond borders.

There were many mesmerizing moments... like when Arpana ji made her beautiful presentation... Listening to most of the writers and poets, who read their fabulous paper or poetry. Mitwa ji was just too amazing!

And how can I forget to mention the evening sessions of 'Darvesh Malangs' and the play written by you and roles played by Neeta.

I cried and cried... couldn't stop my tears. Even forgot to take her photographs.

Just wish that I get such more opportunities to connect, to grow and learn to present in a better way.

Warm regards and tons of best wishes,

**Viky Arya, India**

•

Respected Ajeet ji,

I do not have words to thank you enough for your kindness and generosity for offering me the privilege to be a part of SAARC festival of letters at Lucknow.

I enjoyed every minute of it. Everyone appreciates and admires the effort you have put in for years to make the festival such a success, and I am not an exception. I salute you and your untiring spirit. As a single woman, I draw a lot of inspiration from you.

The memories I carry of your kindness and generosity will be a source of joy for me.

With best regards,

**Vandana Shukla, India**

•

My Dearest Didi,

How great a person you are! You never forget our special days! You are always with our pain and pleasure. We are so grateful to you to have a wonderful friend, not only friend, a relative by heart like you. Thanks to almighty Allah.

Your appreciation filled my heart with extreme joy. It is my great pleasure to attend the SAARC festival in Lucknow. We are so happy and also grateful to have so gorgeous treatment and honorable hospitality.

Praying for your sound health and long life.

Love you,

**Jharna Rahman**

## SAARC literature fest inaugurated

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The four-day Saarc festival of literature organised by the Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature [FOSWAL] was inaugurated on Friday at a city hotel. This is the first time that the festival is being organized at Lucknow. Earlier, they were held at Bhopal, Agra, Chandigarh, Aligarh, Bhubaneswar and Kolkatta. FOSWAL believes that all the Track II initiatives and cultural exchange events within the SAARC nations should not be Delhi-centric or capital-centric. The Theme of the festival is 'Environment: Our earth : our only home' with sub-themes like environment, its importance for sustaining life on this planet, sustainable development, industrial expansion which topples the environmental balance, tribals and their forests. While delivering the welcome address at the inaugural session, writer Ajeet Cour said that SAARC countries collectively could stand up and raise a voice to save the planet from extinction. She added that the mindless expansion of industries on cultivable land, melting of glaciers, drying up of water had become the most crucial questions for the survival of human species. The other speakers on the occasion were Abid Hussain and Nihal Rodrigo. The festival will witness new and brilliant ideas and latest literary writings by eminent writers, poets, intellectuals, scholars and peace activists from all over the SAARC region including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, including Myanmar. Some important writers from various countries include Abdul Wakil Sulamal Shinwari from Afganistan, Abdul Ghafoor Liwal from Bangladesh and others.

# हिन्दुस्तान

तस्वदीपिका साहित्यिक जला नगरिया

## सार्क सम्मेलन में विश्व शांति पर चर्चा

लखनऊ | मित्र संवाददाता विचार मंथन

सार्क देशों के सम्मेलन में जहां महिला सशक्तिकरण, पर्यावरण संरक्षण और विश्व शांति जैसी ज्वलंत समस्याएं मुख्य रूप से उठाई गईं, वहीं विभिन्न देशों के मधुर संगीत ने दिलों को जोड़ने का कार्य किया।

यह कार्यक्रम फाउंडेशन ऑफ सार्क राइटर्स एंड लिटरेचर की ओर से होटल कलार्क अवध में शुक्रवार को आयोजित किया गया। समारोह की अध्यक्षता डा. निहाल रोड्रिगो ने की। कार्यक्रम के मुख्य अतिथि भारत के अमरीका में रहे राजदूत डा. आबिद हुसैन थे।

साउथ एशियन प्रसोसिप्शन फॉर रीजनल कोऑपरेशन (सार्क) देशों के साहित्यिक कार्यक्रम की शुरुआत इन्नाहीम वहीद ने गिटार वादन से की। कार्यक्रम में वक्ताओं ने अपने-अपने विचार प्रकट किये। बंगलादेश के मंजूर इस्लाम के अनुसार बंगलादेश में पर्यावरण के प्रति काफी जागरूकता है। पाकिस्तान मूल की आयशा खान ने बताया कि साहित्य के माध्यम से हिन्दुस्तान और पाकिस्तान के बीच सौहार्द की कड़ियां जो जोड़ा जा सकता है। इस कार्यक्रम में सार्क साहित्यिक पुरस्कार 2012 का

● सार्क साहित्यिक पुरस्कार 2012 का विवरण भी दिया

● महिला सरावतीकरण, पर्यावरण पर भी परिवर्त

विवरण भी दिया गया। उसके अनुसार श्रीलंका की कान्ति विजयतुंग, अफगानिस्तान के अब्दुल वकील सुलामल, भारत के ओम धानवी, बांग्लादेश के डा. मंजूर इस्लाम का नाम उल्लेखनीय है। पुरस्कारों के नामों की घोषणा मशहूर लेखक व कवि मनमोहन सिंह ने की तथा पुरस्कारों का वितरण, आबिद हुसैन ने दिया। श्रीलंका की कान्ति विजयतुंग ने बताया कि उनके देश में महिला अधिकारों के प्रति काफी सजगता है। कार्यक्रम के दूसरे भाग में नेपाल के अमी सुवेधी, भारत के डा. शीलकान्त शर्मा और अर्पणा कौर ने पर्यावरण संरक्षण पर प्रकाश डाला। अंत में आकर्षक सांस्कृतिक प्रस्तुतियां हुईं।

पाकिस्तानी कलाकारों द्वारा पेश मलंग डांस मुख्य आकर्षण बना। इसके सुफी गायक इकबाल बानो व बिल्कीस बानो की गजले भी श्रोताओं द्वारा सराही गईं। कार्यक्रम का संचालन पाकिस्तान की नूर जहौर ने किया।







## 'सार्क देशों के बीच बने सांस्कृतिक सेतु'

लखनऊ (एसएनबी)। नौ देशों के संस्कृतिकर्मी शुक्रवार को राजधानी में जुटे। उन्होंने पर्यावरण एवं साहित्य-संस्कृति के विविध पक्षों पर चर्चा की। ज्यादातर लोगों ने कहा कि सांस्कृतिक गतिविधियों का होना सार्क देशों की सबसे महत्वपूर्ण आवश्यकता है, क्योंकि ऐसे समारोहों के जरिये सभी देशों के बीच सांस्कृतिक सेतु का निर्माण किया जा सकता है, जिसपर सवार होकर लोग एक दूसरे की सांस्कृतिक विरासत के रूबरू हो सकते हैं।

होटल क्लार्क्स में अमेरिका में रहे पूर्व राजदूत डा. आबिद हुसैन समारोह के मुख्य अतिथि थे। उन्होंने सार्क साहित्यिक पुरस्कार 2012 के पुरस्कृत साहित्यजनों को सम्मानित किया। इनमें श्रीलंका की कांति विजतुंग, अफगानिस्तान के सूलामन, भारत के ओम थानवी व बांग्लादेश के डा. मंजूर इस्लाम प्रमुख थे। मुख्य अतिथि डा. आबिद हुसैन ने कहा कि फाउण्डेशन ऑफ सार्क राइटर्स एण्ड लिटरेटर के इस आयोजन के जरिये सार्क देशों के साहित्यजनों के साथ संस्कृतिकर्मियों के बीच एक ऐसा सेतु का निर्माण किया जाता है, जिससे सभी देशों की सांस्कृतिक विरासत का नजारा दिखायी देता है। इस कारण ऐसी गतिविधियों का होना बहुत आवश्यक है। समारोह की अध्यक्षता श्रीलंका के राष्ट्रपति के सलाहकार डा. निहाल रोडरिगो ने की। उन्होंने कहा कि जो भी देश इस सम्मेलन में शिरकत कर रहे हैं, उनका सांस्कृतिक व साहित्यिक विरासत बहुत ही मजबूत है। इस कारण ऐसे साहित्यिक और सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रमों से दोनों के लोग एक दूसरे की सांस्कृतिक विरासत से रूबरू होकर मजबूत रिश्ता कायम कर सकते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि पर्यावरण के प्रति जागरूकता सभी देशों में प्रमुख एजेण्डे में शामिल होना चाहिए। समारोह में बांग्लादेश से आये मंजूर इस्लाम ने कहा कि लखनऊ की तहजीब दुनियाभर में जानी जाती है।

### बही सूफी बयार

लखनऊ। पाकिस्तान लाहौर के गायक मो. इकबाल बाहू ने बुल्ले शाह के साथ ही अन्य सूफी नगमानिगारों की रचनाओं को सुनाकर महफिल को सूफी रंग में रंग दिया। उन्होंने बुल्ले शाह की नज्म से कार्यक्रम की शुरुआत करने के बाद अपनी बाहू रचनाओं को सुनाया। कलाकार ने 'अलिल अल्लाह चावेदी मुरी, मूशिर विद् लायी हूं' के साथ 'दिल दरिया समुन्दरों दूँदे' के साथ अपनी गायकी का आनन्द दिलाया। उन्होंने 'नील कुसंगी' को सुनाकर सभी को अच्छे संगत में रहने की सीख दी। उनके साथ तबले पर दिनेश मिश्र ने संगत की। सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम में कल होटल क्लार्क्स में शाम 6.30 से अफगानिस्तान के हजरत वारिज व खालिदा एफ, बांग्लादेश के मोहम्मद नुरूल हुदा तथा पाकिस्तान के नावेद अहमद अपने-अपने कार्यक्रम पेश करेंगे।

### देश के हालात प्रभावित करते हैं :

पाकिस्तान लाहौर के गायक मो. इकबाल बाहू ने कहा कि देश के हालात किसी सांस्कृतिक गतिविधियों को प्रभावित करते हैं। पाकिस्तान के हालात वहां के भी सांस्कृतिक गतिविधियों पर प्रभावित करते रहे हैं। उनका कहना है कि घर में सुकून हो तो सबकुछ अच्छा होता है।

**संघर्ष कर रही हैं महिलाएं :** श्रीलंका से आयी प्रतिनिधि कांति विजतुंग ने कहा कि श्रीलंका की महिलाएं अपने अधिकारों को लेकर बहुत संघर्ष कर रही हैं। आज भी वहां की स्थिति ऐसी नहीं है, जिससे कहा जा सके कि महिलाएं पूरी तरह से स्वतंत्र हैं।

**बालीवुड का रहता है जलवा :** पाकिस्तान में ड्रीम गर्ल कही जाने वाले अभिनेत्री बिल्कीस बानो ने कहा कि पाकिस्तान में भी बालीवुड का जलवा रहता है। वहां पर लोग भारतीय अभिनेताओं और अभिनेत्रियों के दीवाने हैं और आगे भी रहेंगे।

# परख सब की जनसंदेश डाइम्स

## एक मंच पर मुखर हुए नौ देशों के विचार

लखनऊ। नौ विभिन्न देशों के विचार एक ही मंच पर एक साथ ले आने का प्रयास और संभव बनाने का प्रयास हुआ। तीन-तीन-तीन-तीन-तीन-तीन-तीन-तीन-तीन-तीन के देशों के प्रतिनिधिक व्यक्तित्व का सम्मेलन लखनऊ में आयोजित किया गया।

जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।

### सातों सम्मेलन में आज

- 2011-12 का प्रयास और प्रयासों के प्रतिनिधिक का सम्मेलन, कुल 10 देश
- विश्व विकास, 10.30 करोड़
- विकास, 11.30 करोड़
- प्रतिनिधिक व्यक्तित्वों की संख्या, 12.30 करोड़



सातों जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है।

प्रत्येक देश के प्रतिनिधिक व्यक्तित्वों का सम्मेलन लखनऊ में आयोजित किया गया। जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है।

जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।

जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।

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# डेली न्यूज़ ऐक्टिविस्ट

## 'सातों' देशों ने व्यक्ति की पर्यावरण प्रदूषण पर चिंता

लखनऊ। जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।

जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।



सातों जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है।

जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।

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## अवधानामा

### महिलाओं को स्वच्छता के बारे में ज्यादा जागरूक होना पड़ेगा:आयशा

लखनऊ। जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।



जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।

जहां जहां है। जहां के लोगों ने आवाज को सुनाया है वहां विचार फैला है। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं। जहां की इच्छाएं आवाज देती हैं।



# दैनिक जागरण

## 13 विभूतियों का हुआ सम्मान

• सार्क देशों के साहित्यकारों का सम्मेलन शुरू



होटल क्लर्क में सार्क देशों की कला गीठी में हिस्सा लेते देश विदेश से आए प्रतिनिधि

लखनऊ, 16 मार्च (संवाद सुत्र) : साउथ एशियन एसोसिएशन ऑफ रीजनल को-ऑपरेशन (सार्क) देशों के सांस्कृतिक कर्मियों का सम्मेलन शुक्रवार को राजधानी के होटल अवध क्लर्क में शुरू हो गया। पहले दिन 13 विभूतियों का सम्मान किया गया। इनमें, डॉ. सीतकांत महापात्रा, डॉ. सोल कांत शर्मा, सईद मंजूरुल इस्लाम, अब्दुल वकील मुल्तासिल, पुष्पा सन आचार्य, कान्ति विजयतुंगे, ओम धन्वी, निस्तार अहमद चौधरी, अब्दुल हकीम, जयंत महापात्रा, प्रो. लिप्सा करियावासम, डॉ. गुर जहोर व मिथलेन श्रीवास्तव को सम्मानित किया गया। इस अवसर पर सुमन पोखराल को भी सम्मानित किया जाना था, पर वह उपस्थित नहीं थे। इससे पूर्व आयोजक संस्था 'फाउंडेशन ऑफ सार्क एंड एशोसिएशन एंड लिटरेचर' की अध्यक्ष अजोत कौर ने आठों देशों के सांस्कृतिक कर्मियों का स्वागत किया।

नेपाल के प्रो. अर्ध सुवेदी ने देश के साहित्य पर प्रकाश डाला। वे बोले-नेपाल में अच्छा साहित्य लिखा जा रहा है, पर स्तरीय और स्तरीय साहित्य के बीच काफी अंतर है। इसे ढाटा जाना चाहिए। हर विधा में साहित्यकार लिख रहे हैं। जूनियर अवार्ड से सम्मानित उडिया कवि डॉ.

खोताकांत महापात्रा बोले-देश में साहित्य की स्थिति संतोषजनक है, पर कला का कोई अंत नहीं होता कि उसपर संतोष किया जाए। जो लिखा जा रहा है, उससे और बेहतर लिखा जाना है। बंगलादेश के सईद मंजूरुल इस्लाम ने बंगलादेश की साहित्यिक गतिविधियों पर प्रकाश डाला। उन्होंने कहा कि हर विधाओं पर लेखकों को कलम निर्बंध रूप से चल रही है। इसके साथ ही कान्ति विजयतुंगे (श्रीलंका), इब्राहिम तहरीद (मालदीव), टिन टिन विन (म्यांमार), आइशा जी खान (पाकिस्तान) आदि ने भी अपने देश के विषय में बताया।

पहले सत्र में नेपाल के अर्ध सुवेदी ने पेपर पढ़ा। विषय था, 'थिप्टर एंड एवागर्मेट'। ब्रजपति कि-रामचंद्र तमेशा श्री चित्तौरी के विरोध में रहा है। आज पर्यावरण सबसे बड़ी समस्या है। रामचंद्र को

इसके लिए आगे अना चाहिए। अर्पण कौर ने पर्यावरण पर फाउंडेशन प्रेजेंटेशन दिया। विविध कलाकृतियों के माध्यम से उन्होंने पर्यावरण संरक्षण की अपील की। दूसरा सत्र कविताओं को समर्पित था। ओम धन्वी ने अपने पेपर में पुरानी सभ्यताओं और भारतीय काल परंपरा के विषय में पढ़ा। यह बोले-पुरानी सभ्यताएं बताती हैं कि भारत में काल परंपरा पुरानी है। इडप्पा-मोहनजोदड़ो में कुछ कविताएं मिली थीं, जो पढ़ी गईं। काफी कुछ अभी ऐसा है, जो पढ़ा नहीं जा सका। प्रो. सईद मंजूरुल इस्लाम (बंगलादेश) बोले कि अगर कुछ समय से देश में गुरुदेव रबींद्रनाथ टैगोर को 150वां जयंती मनाई जा रही है। इससे साहित्यिक गतिविधियों में रीजो आई है। कविताओं में देश समृद्ध है और नई कविताओं की रचना खूब हो रही है।

लखनऊ, कानपुर व फैजाबाद से प्रकाशित

# राष्ट्रीय स्वरूप

लखनऊ, शुक्रवार, 16 मार्च 2012

नगर संस्करण

## सांस्कृतिक कर्मियों का जमावड़ा आज

लखनऊ। त्रि-दिवसीय साउथ एशियन एसोसिएशन ऑफ रीजनल कोऑपरेशन (सार्क) देशों के सांस्कृतिक कर्मियों का जमावड़ा शुक्रवार से राजधानी में होने जा रहा है जिसमें विश्व के लगभग सात देशों के साहित्य, लेखन से जुड़े व्यक्ति व कलाकार भारत में उपस्थित होकर अपने-अपने देशों के साहित्य व कला का प्रदर्शन करेंगे तथा इसी की तर्क पर कई देशों के बीच पुराने रिश्ते और सभ्यताओं को तलाशने का काम भी करेंगे। कार्यक्रम के आयोजक रवींद्र सिंह ने बताया कि राजधानी में पहली बार कराये जा रहे इस कार्यक्रम का मुख्य उद्देश्य विभिन्न देशों में आपसी सौहार्द बढ़ाकर आपसी देशों में मेल-मिलाप को मजबूत करना है। उन्होंने बताया कि इस कार्यक्रम का आयोजन संस्था फाउंडेशन ऑफ सार्क राइटर्स एंड लिटरेचर द्वारा किया जा रहा है।





# डेली न्यूज ऐक्टिविस्ट

राष्ट्रीय हिन्दी दैनिक

## आज जुटेंगे सार्क देशों के साहित्यकार

दिल्ली न्यूज ऐक्टिविस्ट

लखनऊ: सार्क क्षेत्र के साहित्यकारों का एक दिवसीय सम्मेलन 'सार्क' देशों के साहित्यकारों और उद्योगपतियों के सहयोग से आज शुरु हो रहा है। अफगानिस्तान, भूटान, पाकिस्तान, नेपाल, श्रीलंका, म्यांमार, मालदीव, श्रीलंका, म्यांमार, मालदीव, श्रीलंका के साहित्यकारों का सम्मेलन दो दिन चलने वाला है।

संस्कृत के लेखक डॉ. विद्यालक्ष्मी कोटनियार के अध्यक्षता में सम्मेलन शुरू हो रहा है।



संस्कृत के लेखक डॉ. विद्यालक्ष्मी कोटनियार की अध्यक्षता में सम्मेलन शुरू हो रहा है।

संस्कृत के लेखक डॉ. विद्यालक्ष्मी कोटनियार की अध्यक्षता में सम्मेलन शुरू हो रहा है।

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संस्कृत के लेखक डॉ. विद्यालक्ष्मी कोटनियार की अध्यक्षता में सम्मेलन शुरू हो रहा है।

राष्ट्रीय सहारा

संस्कृत के लेखक डॉ. विद्यालक्ष्मी कोटनियार की अध्यक्षता में सम्मेलन शुरू हो रहा है।

## सार्क देशों के सांस्कृतिक कर्मियों का सम्मेलन आज से

लखनऊ (एसएनबी)। नौ देशों के सांस्कृतिक कर्मियों का 16 मार्च से पर्यावरण एवं साहित्य-संस्कृति के विविध पक्षों पर चर्चा करेंगे। होटल क्लबर्स में पूर्वाह्न 10 बजे शुरू होने वाले इस सम्मेलन में सार्क के आठ देशों से भारत, अफगानिस्तान, बांग्लादेश, भूटान, मालदीव, नेपाल, पाकिस्तान और श्रीलंका के अलावा म्यांमार से प्रतिनिधि भाग लेंगे।



प्रेस क्लब में पत्रकारों से वार्ता करतीं अजीत कौर, मनमोहन सिंह मितवा व आयशा जी खान।

बृहस्पतिवार को प्रेस क्लब में फाउण्डेशन ऑफ सार्क राइटर्स एण्ड लिटरेचर के प्रतिनिधियों ने पत्रकारों से बात की। संस्था की अध्यक्ष अजीत कौर, उपाध्यक्ष मनमोहन सिंह मितवा तथा पाकिस्तान से आयी सांस्कृतिक कर्मिणी आयशा जी खान ने कहा कि लाजवाब सांस्कृतिक परिवेश के कारण लखनऊ का चयन इस आयोजन के लिए किया गया। यह सम्मेलन तीन दिनों तक चलेगा, जो एनवायरमेंट आवर अर्थ- आवर ओनली थीम पर आधारित होगा। समारोह के पहले दिन विभिन्न गतिविधियां होंगी, जिसमें सम्मान समारोह प्रमुख है। यह सम्मान समारोह अपराह्न 12 बजे आयोजित किया जाएगा। पहले दिन ही पाकिस्तानी कलाकारों द्वारा 'सूफी संगीत' के नाम एक शाम सजायी जाएगी। 18 मार्च तक नौ देशों के प्रतिनिधि पर्यावरण को संजोने के साथ साहित्य-संस्कृति पर चर्चा करने के बाद 19 मार्च को शहर भ्रमण करेंगे।

बृहस्पतिवार को प्रेस क्लब में फाउण्डेशन ऑफ सार्क राइटर्स एण्ड लिटरेचर के प्रतिनिधियों ने पत्रकारों से बात की। संस्था की अध्यक्ष अजीत कौर, उपाध्यक्ष मनमोहन सिंह मितवा तथा पाकिस्तान से आयी सांस्कृतिक कर्मिणी आयशा जी खान ने कहा कि लाजवाब सांस्कृतिक परिवेश के कारण लखनऊ का चयन इस आयोजन के लिए किया गया। यह सम्मेलन तीन दिनों तक चलेगा, जो एनवायरमेंट आवर अर्थ- आवर ओनली थीम पर आधारित होगा। समारोह के पहले दिन विभिन्न गतिविधियां होंगी, जिसमें सम्मान समारोह प्रमुख है। यह सम्मान समारोह अपराह्न 12 बजे आयोजित किया जाएगा। पहले दिन ही पाकिस्तानी कलाकारों द्वारा 'सूफी संगीत' के नाम एक शाम सजायी जाएगी। 18 मार्च तक नौ देशों के प्रतिनिधि पर्यावरण को संजोने के साथ साहित्य-संस्कृति पर चर्चा करने के बाद 19 मार्च को शहर भ्रमण करेंगे।

# जनसंदेश लाइम्स

पटरण हय की

भारतीय समाज से इतने सन्तुष्ट-11

संस्करण, जयपुर, श्रीवास्तव एवं साठवानी से प्रकाशित

## शहर में आज से सार्क देशों के कलाकारों का जमावड़ा

लखनऊ। राजधानी में सार्क देशों के कलाकारों का शुक्रवार से जमावड़ा लगेगा। फाउंडेशन ऑफ सार्क राइट्स एण्ड लिटरेचर की ओर से होने वाले इस समारोह में भारत, पाकिस्तान, अफगानिस्तान, नेपाल, श्रीलंका, बांग्लादेश, भूटान, मालदीव और म्यांमार देश के संस्कृतिकर्मी भाग लेंगे। जो पर्यावरण और साहित्य-संस्कृति के विविध पक्षों पर अपने विचार रखेंगे।

आयोजकों ने खासतौर से साड़ी सांस्कृतिक विरासत के कारण आयोजन स्थल के रूप में ऐतिहासिक लखनऊ का चयन किया है।

होटल में 16 मार्च को सम्मलेन का आगाज होगा जो विविध सत्रों में 18 मार्च तक चलेगा। एनवायरमेंट आवर अर्थ-ऑवर ओनली होम थीम पर आधारित इस समारोह में बड़ी संख्या में साहित्यकारों के अतिरिक्त रंगकर्मी, संगीतकार, लोक कलाकार, शोधार्थी, पर्यावरणविद् एवं संस्कृतिकर्मी शामिल हो रहे हैं। सभी प्रतिनिधि समारोह के उपरांत लखनऊ की ऐतिहासिक इमारतें देखने जायेंगे। साहित्य अकादमी के सहयोग से हो रहे इस अनोखे सम्मेलन के पहले दिन सम्मान समारोह आयोजित किया जा रहा है।

पहले दिन मालदीव के इब्राहिम वहीद का गिटार वादन, सम्मान समारोह, काव्य पाठ एवं पाकिस्तानी गायिका इकबाल बानों का गायन होगा। वहीं दूसरे दिन 17 मार्च को काव्य पाठ, एवं एमके रैना द्वारा निर्देशित बुहे बेरियन का मंचन 18 मार्च को महिला एवं पर्यावरण पर

चर्चा के उपरांत पर्यावरण एवं ललित कलाओं पर विचार विमर्श एवं काव्य पाठ के साथ समापन होगा। समारोह में भारत की ओर से सीताकांत महापात्र, आबिद हुसैन, लीलाधर मंडलोई, अनामिका, नरेश सक्सेना, ओम धानवी, पीयूष दईया, बिल्किस बानों, शीलकांत शर्मा, जयंत महापात्र, प्रतिभा रॉय, बसंता कुमार व अन्य, पाकिस्तान की ओर से आयशा जी खान, किरण बशीर, जमाम खान,

### आयोजन

होटल क्लार्क अयध में तीन दिवसीय समारोह का उद्घाटन आज

उक्सी मुपती, अहमद सलीम, अरबाब दाऊद, हसन महमूद, महविश खान, हुमैरा इशफाक, मुसाब रफीक,

सैय्यद जुल्फिकार, अहमद गिलानी, नथ्यारा रहमान, अफगानिस्तान की ओर से अब्दुल वकी, सुलामल पीर, मोहम्मद कारवान, महबूबा इब्राहिमी, हजरत वारिस, अब्दुल गफूर लेवाल, परताब नादेरी, श्रीलंका से निहाल रोड्डीगों, कांति विजेतुंगे, तीसा करियावासाम, लुसे राकरुणानयके, एसएडी जेएन दिशानायके, चित्रा रोड्डीगों, सगरिका राजाकरुणानायके, नेपाल से अभी सुबेदी, पुष्पा राज आचार्य, सुनील पोखरेल, मनु मंजिल, गीता कार्की, सविता गौतम, शारदा शर्मा, संजीव उप्रेती, अर्चना थापा, बांग्लादेश से सैयद मंजरुल इस्लाम, सेलिना हुसैन, परवीन सुल्ताना, रुबाना हक, शफी अहमद, पापरी रहमान, पवेल पार्थ मरजिया लिपि, जरना रहमन, भूटान से तेजरिग दोराजी, सोनम, ओनेगेमो, पी वांगमों, मालदीव से इब्राहिम वहीद और एफ हुसैन एवं म्यांमार से टिन टिन विन शामिल हो रहे हैं। कास









# दैनिक जागरण

विश्व का सर्वाधिक पढ़ा जाने वाला अखबार

## पश्चिमी देशों ने प्रदूषित किया पर्यावरण और संस्कृति को

लखनऊ, 12 जून (आई.एन.ए.) पश्चिमी देशों ने पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर दिया है। जिसका कारण है कि वे, अपने देशों में ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं।

**• डॉ. शक्ति के अनुसार पश्चिमी देशों ने पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित किया**

पश्चिमी देशों ने पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर दिया है। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं।

डॉ. शक्ति के अनुसार पश्चिमी देशों ने पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित किया है। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं।

**विश्व है उर्दू साहित्य : नूर जहीर**

डॉ. शक्ति के अनुसार पश्चिमी देशों ने पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित किया है। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं।

डॉ. शक्ति के अनुसार पश्चिमी देशों ने पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित किया है। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं।

डॉ. शक्ति के अनुसार पश्चिमी देशों ने पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित किया है। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं।

**मनु मोहन सिन्हा**

डॉ. शक्ति के अनुसार पश्चिमी देशों ने पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित किया है। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं। साथ ही पर्यावरण को प्रदूषित कर रहे हैं।

## राष्ट्रीय स्वरूप

# साहित्य व कला से जुड़े कार्यक्रमों से मिलता है आपसी सौहार्द को बढ़ावा

स्वरूप संवादादाता

लखनऊ। साँऊथ एशियन एसोसिएशन फॉर रीजनल कॉऑपेरेशन (सार्क) देशों के साहित्यिक कार्यक्रम का उद्घाटन आज प्रातः 10 बजे मालदीप के इब्राहीम वहीद के द्वारा गिटार बजाकर किया गया। कार्यक्रम की अध्यक्षता डा० निहाल रोडरिगो-श्रीलंका व मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में भारतीय मूल के अमरीका में रहे राजदूत डा० आबिद हुसैन द्वारा की गयी। कार्यक्रम में मौजूद वक्ताओं ने अपने-अपने विचार प्रकट किये जिसमें बंगलादेश से आये मंजूर इस्लाम ने राजधानी के बारे में बताया कि लखनऊ शहर अपनी तहजीब के लिए पूरी दुनिया में जाना जाता है यहाँ के लोगो ने आजादी की लड़ाई में बहुत योगदान दिया।

उन्होंने बताया कि यहाँ की इमारतें भी बहुत ऐतिहासिक हैं। उन्होंने बंगलादेश को पर्यावरण के प्रति काफी जागरूक बताया है। साथ ही हरियाली को बढ़ावा देने के लिए निरन्तर प्रयास करता रहता है। पाकिस्तान से आयी आयशा जो खान ने भारत-पाकिस्तान के सम्बन्धों में नजदीकियों को बढ़ाते हुए कहा कि अन्य सार्क देशों के

बीच भी आपस में साहित्य व कला से जुड़े हुए लोगों के बीच इस प्रकार के कार्यक्रम होते रहना चाहिए जिससे आपसी सौहार्द को बढ़ावा मिलता रहे। इस कार्यक्रम में सार्क साहित्यिक पुरस्कार 2012 का वितरण भी किया गया जिसमें मुख्य रूप से कान्ति विजतुंग-श्रीलंका, अब्दुल वकील सुलामल-अफगानिस्तान, ओम धानवी-भारत, डा० मंजूर इस्लाम बंगलादेश को पुरस्कारों से सम्मानित किया गया। पुरस्कारों के नामों की घोषणा मशहूर लेखक व कवि मनमोहन सिंह ने की तथा पुरस्कार वितरण आबिद हुसैन के हाथों किया गया। श्री लंका से आये कान्ति विजतुंग ने बताया कि वह पहली बार इस कार्यक्रम में भाग लेने के लिए भारत आये है वह अपने देश में भी महिला अधिकारों को लेकर काफी संघर्ष करते रहे हैं। कार्यक्रम के अन्तिम भाग में कल्चरल कार्यक्रम को प्रस्तुत करते हुए पाकिस्तानी कलाकारों द्वारा मर्लिंग डॉस प्रस्तुत किया गया जो कि काफी पसंद किया गया। इसके बाद सूफी गायक इकबाल बानों व बिल्कीस बानों ने गजल सुनाकर लोगों का मनोरंजन किया जिसका संचालन पाकिस्तान की नूर जहीर ने किया।





# हिन्दुस्तान

तरक्की को चाहिए नया नजरिया

गुरुवार, 16 मार्च 2012, लखनऊ, प्राय 6:00, 18 संस्करण, वार संस्करण

www.livehindustan.com

सार्क देशों के साहित्यकार और संस्कृतिकर्मी आज से लखनऊ में जुटे हैं

## पर्यावरण पर आज से होगी सार्थक बहस

लखनऊ, 16 मार्च

लखनऊ में शुरू होने वाले 'सार्क' के साहित्यकारों और संस्कृतिकर्मियों के बीच पर्यावरण पर साहित्यिक बहस का कार्यक्रम आज से शुरू हो रहा है। कार्यक्रम का उद्देश्य है कि साहित्यकारों के बीच पर्यावरण पर चर्चा हो सके और वे अपने देशों में पर्यावरण को संरक्षित कर सकें।



1948 में पूरे विश्व में पर्यावरण पर चर्चा शुरू हुई थी। उसी साल ही 'पर्यावरण दिवस' के रूप में 5 दिसंबर को मनाया गया। 1972 में स्थायी विकास के अर्थ में पर्यावरण को संरक्षित करने का प्रयास किया गया।

1987 में स्थायी विकास के अर्थ में पर्यावरण को संरक्षित करने का प्रयास किया गया। 1992 में स्थायी विकास के अर्थ में पर्यावरण को संरक्षित करने का प्रयास किया गया। 1997 में स्थायी विकास के अर्थ में पर्यावरण को संरक्षित करने का प्रयास किया गया।

### आज के आखबार

- 12.45 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 1.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 1.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 2.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 2.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 3.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 3.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 4.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 4.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 5.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 5.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 6.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 6.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 7.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 7.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 8.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 8.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 9.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 9.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 10.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 10.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 11.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 11.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)
- 12.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)

सं. लोक सभा (संसदीय) (संसदीय)

1.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)

1.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)

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11.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)

11.30 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)

12.00 बजे: लोक सभा (संसदीय)

### पाक में लेखकों को है आजादी: अख्तर

लखनऊ, 16 मार्च (संवाद) - पाकिस्तान के साहित्यकारों को लेखकों को आजादी देनी चाहिए, अख्तर ने कहा। अख्तर ने कहा कि लेखकों को आजादी देनी चाहिए और वे अपने देशों में पर्यावरण को संरक्षित कर सकें।

### प्रदेश के कलाकारों को नहीं किला सम्मेलन

लखनऊ, 16 मार्च (संवाद) - प्रदेश के कलाकारों को किला सम्मेलन में शामिल नहीं होना चाहिए, अख्तर ने कहा। अख्तर ने कहा कि कलाकारों को आजादी देनी चाहिए और वे अपने देशों में पर्यावरण को संरक्षित कर सकें।

# जनसत्ता

लखनऊ, 16 मार्च 2012, लखनऊ, प्राय 6:00, 18 संस्करण, वार संस्करण

## सार्क लेखकों ने कला-साहित्य और पर्यावरण को बचाने की हिमायत की

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो

लखनऊ 19 मार्च। सार्क देशों के सम्मलेन में यहां जुटे लेखकों ने अपने साहित्य काव्य-संस्कृति, प्रकृति और पर्यावरण को बचाने पर जोर दिया है। अदब और तहजीब के शहर में तीन दिन तक चले सम्मलेन में सभी मेहमानों ने अपने-अपने देशों से जुड़ी समस्याओं को साझा किया और उन्हें दूर करने के उपायों पर भी चर्चा की। सम्मलेन में भारत, पाकिस्तान, अफगानिस्तान, नेपाल, भूटान, बांग्लादेश, मालदीव व श्रीलंका के बुद्धिजीवियों का सोच, उनके विचारों से साझा हो रहा था। सभी ने एक साथ कला, साहित्य, प्रकृति और पर्यावरण को बचाए रखने पर सुझाव दिए, जिसमें पारंपरिक संसाधनों पर निर्भर रहने का सुझाव दिया गया। कार्यक्रम के अंतिम दिन लखनऊ शहर घूमने निकले लेखकों के दल को शहर खूब भाया। इसके पहले कार्यक्रम के आखिरी दिन फैल चर्चा हुई। इसका विषय पर्यावरण और महिलाएं था। कार्यक्रम की अध्यक्षता श्रीलंका की कांति विजयतुंगे ने की। इस संगोष्ठी ने पर्यावरण में महिलाओं के योगदान पर विस्तार से चर्चा हुई। इस संगोष्ठी में फरहीन चौधरी

(पाकिस्तान), रुबाना हक (बांग्लादेश), रेणुका सिंह (भारत), राम दयाल राकेल (नेपाल), तहमीना महमूद (पाकिस्तान), शर्फी अहमद (बांग्लादेश) ने भाग लिया। पाकिस्तान से आई आयशा खान ने बताया कि वे स्वच्छता पर कई वर्षों से काम कर रही हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि महिलाओं को स्वच्छता के बारे में ज्यादा जागरूक होना पड़ेगा। साथ ही सरकारों की भी जिम्मेदारी बनती है कि इस ओर ध्यान दें। कार्यक्रम में एक दूसरी संगोष्ठी में पर्यावरण और ललित कला पर विचार-विमर्श किया गया। इस कार्यक्रम की अध्यक्षता भारत की रानी मैसी ने की। तीन दिन चले इस कार्यक्रम में कई सत्रों में सार्क देशों के कलाकारों, साहित्यकारों ने अपनी-अपनी बात रखी। पर सबसे खास बात रही कि कई तरीक़ों निसानियों और खासियत समेटे लखनऊ ने मेहमान लेखकों का दिल जीत लिया। पाकिस्तान से आई किरन बशीर अहमद ने कहा कि उनको भारत आकर यह नहीं लगता है कि किसी दूसरे देश में आई हैं। यहां के लोग बहुत मुहब्बत करने वाले हैं। उनका दिल चाहता है कि वे बार-बार यहां आएँ।

# जनसंदेश टाइम्स

परस्य सय की

## सार्क देशों का पर्यावरण जागरूकता पर जोर

लखनऊ। पर्यावरण को बचाने के लिए साउथ एशियन एसोसिएशन फॉर रीजनल कोआपेरेशन (सार्क) देशों के सम्मेलन हुआ। सम्मेलन के आखिरी दिन बुद्धिजीवियों ने पर्यावरण के साथ ही महिलाओं पर अपने विचारों को रखा।

कार्यक्रम की अध्यक्षता श्री लंका से अश्वी कान्ति विजयतुंगे ने की। संगोष्ठी में फरहीन चौधरी - पाकिस्तान, रुबाना हक बग्लादेरा, रेनुका सिंह - भारत, राम दयाल राकेश-नेपाल, तहमीना महमूद-पाकिस्तान, शाफी अहमद - बंग्लादेश ने भाग लिया। इस संगोष्ठी के द्वारा पर्यावरण में महिलाओं के योगदान पर विस्तार से चर्चा की गयी तथा उनके द्वारा पर्यावरण को बचाने के लिए किये जा रहे प्रयासों पर प्रकाश डाला गया। पाकिस्तान से आयी आपशा ज़ी खान ने बताया कि वह स्वच्छता के ऊपर कई वर्षों से कार्य कर रही है। महिलाओं को स्वच्छता के बारे में ज्यादा जागरूक होना पड़ेगा। इसके साथ साथ देश की

सरकारों की भी जिम्मेदारी बनती है कि वह इस ओर ध्यान दे। उन्होंने आगे बताया कि पाकिस्तान में ग्रामीण स्तर पर भी सफाई को लेकर बहुत समस्याएँ हैं जो लगभग भारत, पाकिस्तान, बांग्लादेश

**सम्मेलन**  
भारत, बांग्लादेश तथा पाकिस्तान में समस्याएँ समान महिलाओं के योगदान पर भी हुई चर्चा

में एक ही तरह की है। एक दूसरी संगोष्ठी में पर्यावरण और फाइन आर्ट्स पर विचार विमर्श किया गया। इस कार्यक्रम की अध्यक्षता रानी मैसी (भारत) ने की। इसके अतिरिक्त इस संगोष्ठी में भाग लेने वालों में युनील पोखरेल-नेपाल, पपरी रहमान-बांग्लादेश, बेज रतने-श्रीलंका, अल्लाउद्दीन खान-भारत शिव रिजल-

नेपाल, हुमैरा इराफाक-पाकिस्तान, वन्दना शुक्ला भारत ने भाग लिया तथा अपने-अपने विचार प्रकट किये। इसके साथ इन देशों से आये व्यक्तियों ने अपनी कविताएँ सुनाकर लोगों को मनोरंजन किया।

तीन दिन चले इस कार्यक्रम में कुल 11 सेशन किये गये। इसमें सार्क देशों के कलाकारों साहित्यकारों ने अपने-अपने विचार प्रकट किये तथा अपनी-अपनी कलाओं का प्रस्तुतिकरण किया। जिसमें ये देश एक दूसरे के साहित्य व कला से स्वरु हुए। कलाकारों व साहित्यकारों को लखनऊ शहर के बारे में काफी जिज्ञासा थी। वह यहाँ की सभ्यता से काफी खुश दिखे। उन्होंने यहां विकन के बारे में हुए कपड़ों की खरीदारी की तथा यहां के मराहूर कजाब पराटों का लुत्फ भी उठाया। पाकिस्तान से आयी किरन बशीर अहमद ने बताया कि उनकी भारत आकर यह नहीं लगता है कि वह किसी दूसरे देश में आई है यहां के लोग बहुत मुहब्बत करने वाले हैं। **कार्य**

# तरुणामित्र

लखनऊ

वर्ष: 13 मार्च 141

शनिवार, 17 मार्च, 2012

लखनऊ

32°C | 19°C

लखनऊ, फैजाबाद, जौनपुर, घटना (बिहार) एवं काशी (महाराष्ट्र) से प्रकाशित

www.tarunamitra.com

## सार्क देशों के कार्यक्रम में लखनऊ की तहजीब को सराहा

लखनऊ, 16 मार्च (सं.)। साउथ एशियन एसोसिएशन फॉर रीजनल कोआपेरेशन (सार्क) देशों के सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम का पहला दिन लखनऊ में आयोजित हुआ। इस अवसर पर कार्यक्रम में मौजूद महिलाओं ने अपने-अपने विचार प्रकट किये। विद्वान् बंगलादेश ने अपने प्रमुख इस्लाम ने लखनऊ के बारे में बताया कि वह एक ऐसी जगह है जहाँ पर विभिन्न जातों के लोग रहते हैं। उन्होंने बताया कि सार्क देशों के लोगों ने लखनऊ को लखनऊ में बनाया है। लखनऊ को लखनऊ के लिए बहुत प्रयासों की हैं। वहीं

### आपसी भेदभाव दूर करने के लिए सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम पर जोर



पाकिस्तान से आयी आपशा ज़ी खान ने कहा कि भारत पाकिस्तान ने अन्य सार्क देशों के बीच आसानी से सहित्य के बंधन से जुड़े हुए लोगों के बीच इस प्रकार के कार्यक्रम होने रहने चाहिए जिससे आपसी सीमाएँ को बहाल मिलता रहे।

इस दौरान कार्यक्रम में सार्क साहित्यिक दूरकक्षा 2012 का विचार भी किया गया जिसमें मुख्य रूप से बच्चों विमर्श कार्यक्रम, अर्थात् बच्चों मुताबत-अपराधिनता, और बतानी-पान, का प्रमुख इस्लाम बंगलादेश की पाकिस्तान से

समाचार किया गया। श्री लंका से आयी कान्ति विजयतुंग ने कहा कि वह पहले बार इस कार्यक्रम में भाग लेने के लिए भारत आए हैं वह अपने देश में पहला कार्यक्रम को लेकर बहुत खुश रहते हैं। कार्यक्रम के दूसरे भाग में डॉ. बंगलादेश साहित्यकार, आशी मुखर्जी-नेपाल और अर्जुन बोर-भारत ने सार्क देशों के लोग अपने देश उन्नत किये तथा पर्यावरण के विकास पर विचार भी प्रकट किया। कार्यक्रम के अंतिम भाग में पाकिस्तान से आयी किरन बशीर अहमद ने बताया कि सार्क देशों के लोगों ने लखनऊ को लखनऊ में बनाया है। लखनऊ को लखनऊ के लिए बहुत प्रयासों की हैं। वहीं

## संस्कृति बचाने की जद्दोजहद

लखनऊ, 17 मार्च (ब्यूरो)।

साथ एशियन एसोसिएशन फॉर रीजनल को-आपरेशन (सार्क) देशों के साहित्यक कार्यक्रम के दूसरे दिन सदस्य देशों के प्रतिनिधियों का जोर अपने साहित्य काव्य, संस्कृति, प्रकृति और पर्यावरण को

### प्रकृति व पर्यावरण के कई सवालों से जूझते रहे लेखक

बचाने पर था। सभी मेहमानों ने अपने-अपने देशों से जुड़े समस्याएं साझा कीं और उनको दूर करने के उपायों पर भी चर्चा की। दूसरे दिन के सत्र में काव्य गीत मुख्य रूप से छाये रहे, जिनमें भुवमरी, गरीबी, सामाजिक असमानता को विशेष रूप से उजागर किया गया। इन प्रतिनिधियों ने अपने साहित्य एवं काव्य पर व्याख्यान भी दिया। जिन साहित्यकारों कवियों ने अपने रखे उनमें अफगानिस्तान के अब्दुल वहीद सुलेमान और लताफ बहाम, भारत की प्रतिभा राय, नेपाल के संजीव उप्रेती तथा बांग्लादेश के मुस्तफा

जमाल प्रमुख थे। सार्क बुद्धिजीवियों के काव्य की आत्मा उनकी रचनाओं से झलक रही थी। भारत, पाकिस्तान, अफगानिस्तान, नेपाल, भूटान, बांग्लादेश, मालदीव और श्रीलंका देशों के बुद्धिजीवियों को सोच उनके विचारों से साझा हो रही थी, जहां सभी ने एक साथ कला, साहित्य, प्रकृति और पर्यावरण को बनाये रखने पर सुझाव दिये, जिसमें पारंपरिक संसाधनों पर निर्भर रहने का सुझाव दिया गया। सार्क फेस्टिवल के दूसरे दिन भी मलंग धमाल छाया रहा। दर्शकों को फरमाइश पर इसकी प्रस्तुति दोबारा की गयी। 30 मिनट के इस धमाल में लाहौर से आये पाकिस्तानी कलाकारों ने अद्भुत प्रस्तुति दी, जिसे दर्शकों ने अपनी तालियों से सराहा।

यह एक प्रकार का ऐसा धमाल है जिसमें चार लोगों के द्वारा काले कपड़ों में पहने हुए लम्बे-लम्बे बालों के साथ एक जर्बदस्त परफार्मेंस दी जाती है। इसमें लगातार पूरे जोश के साथ कलाकार मंच पर प्रस्तुति देते हैं। उनकी ऊर्जा देख दर्शक हैरान थे। शाम के कार्यक्रम में गजल भी प्रस्तुत की गयी, जिसे दर्शकों ने खूब सराहा। कल अंतिम दिन भी कई प्रकार के कार्यक्रमों का आयोजन किया जायेगा।

# स्पष्ट आवाज़

लखनऊ व गोरखपुर से एक साथ प्रकाशित

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● spastawaz@gmail.com

● लखनऊ, रविवार, 17 मार्च 2012

● पृष्ठ

## सार्क देशों के कार्यक्रम में लखनऊ की तहजीब को सराहा

आपसी भेदभाव दूर करने के लिए सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम पर जोर

लखनऊ: साथ एशियन एसोसिएशन फॉर रीजनल को-आपरेशन (सार्क) देशों के साहित्यक कार्यक्रम का दूसरा शुक्रवार होरत आज सार्क के सदस्य देशों के बुद्धिजीवियों ने फिर बलबारा किया। इस अवसर पर कार्यक्रम में मौजूद बच्चों ने अपने-अपने विचार प्रकट किये। बिलाल बंगलादेश से आये मसूर इस्लाम ने लखनऊ के बारे में बताते हुए कहा कि लखनऊ अपनी तहजीब के लिए पूरी दुनिया में जाना जाता है यह के लोगों ने अजबाने की लखनऊ में बहुत योगदान दिया। यहाँ की इमारतें बहुत ऐतिहासिक हैं। उन्होंने बंगलादेश के बारे में बताते हुए कहा कि बंगलादेश पर्यावरण के प्रति काफी जागरूक है तथा हरिवाली को बढ़ावा देने के लिए नियंत्रण प्रदान करता रहता है। इसके साथ ही उन्होंने कहा कि इस प्रकार के कार्यक्रमों का निष्ठा रूप से आयोजन के लिए बहुत उपयोगी है। वहीं पाकिस्तान से आये अब्दुल वहीद सुलेमान ने कहा कि भारत पाकिस्तान व अन्य सार्क देशों के बीच आपसी में सहिष्णु व सकारात्मक जुड़े हुए लोगों के



बीच इस प्रकार के कार्यक्रमों को बढ़ावा देना चाहिए जिससे आगामी संवाद को बढ़ावा मिले। इस दौरान कार्यक्रम में सार्क साहित्यक फोरम 2012 का विचार भी किया गया जिसमें मुख्य रूप से साहित्य, विज्ञान, कला, अख्युत कला, भूतमाल-अफगानिस्तान, योग धाम्नी-भारत, आ

मसूर इस्लाम बंगलादेश को बुलवाने से सम्बन्धित किया गया। श्री लखनऊ से आये बिलाल बंगलादेश से आये मसूर इस्लाम ने कहा कि यह पहली बार इस कार्यक्रम में भाग लेने के लिए भारत आये हैं यह अपने देश में महिला अधिकारों की लेकर कार्य कराते रहे हैं। कार्यक्रम के दूसरे भाग में डॉ. सोलमान बंगलादेश, अली सुलेथी-नेपाल और अरुण कोर-भारत ने पट्टी रोडिंग का द्वारा अपने गैर प्रस्तुत किये तथा पर्यावरण के विषय पर विचारों से प्रकट किया। कार्यक्रम के अंतिम भाग में पाकिस्तानी कलाकारों द्वारा काले-लंबे बालों द्वारा प्रस्तुत किया गया जो कि काफी पसंद किया गया। इसके अंदर सूर्य फलक इकट्ठा करने व बिल्लीयत करने में गजल सुमनर लोगों को पर्यावरण विषय कार्यक्रम का अर्थपूर्ण पकिस्तान को गुरु लहौर में किया। अणुशक्ति का विचार टैटो-सोमना के द्वारा की गयी। मुख्य अतिथि बलक के उम्मीदों में रहे समझा डॉ. अजित हुसैन ने की।

## महिला मुद्दों पर संघर्ष की लंबी दास्तां....

प्रगतिशील और वामपंथी आंदोलन के आरंभिक कार्यकर्ता, प्रगतिशील लेखक संघ के संस्थापकों में से एक सज्जाद जहीर की बेटी नूर जहीर की यादों में लखनऊ बसता है। उनका जन्म इसी नगर में हुआ है और आरंभिक शिक्षा-दीक्षा भी। उन्होंने हमेशा महिला मुद्दों को लेकर आवाज बुलंद की और हर पीड़ित महिला को न्याय दिलाने के लिए अपनी कलम चलाती रहीं। फाउंडेशन ऑफ सार्क राइटर्स एंड लिटरेचर के समारोह में भाग लेने लखनऊ आई लेखिका नूर जहीर ने साझा की लखनऊ की यादें...।

नूर जहीर उन महिलाओं में से हैं जिनके साथ एक विरासत चलती है। वे सज्जाद जहीर की बेटी हैं और खुद उनकी प्रतिष्ठा भी एक प्रमुख लेखिका की है। शाहबानो कांड से जुड़ी उनकी पुस्तक 'माई गाड इज ए वूमन' के अंग्रेजी, हिन्दी और मराठी के बाद जहाँ बांग्ला में अनुवाद होने जा रहा है वहीं पिता से जुड़ी यादों पर उनकी पुस्तक 'मेरे हिस्से की रोशनी' को हिन्दी अकादमी का पुरस्कार मिल चुका है। इनके अतिरिक्त 'सुख' कारवां के 'हमसफर', 'रेत पर खून', 'पत्थर के सैनिक', फैज पर उनकी पुस्तक 'आज के नाम' भी काफी पसन्द की गई है। नूर जहीर का बचपन लखनऊ में ही बीता है। लखनऊ में उनका जन्म 1958 में हुआ था। पिता तब पाकिस्तान से लौट आए थे। लेकिन नूर कहती हैं

कि पिता का ज्यादातर समय बाहर ही बीतता था। कभी कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी के काम से शहर से बाहर गये होते, कभी प्रगतिशील आन्दोलन के काम से। मैंने मां को ही घर का खर्च चलाने वाली के तौर पर पाया। गीरतलब है कि नूर की मां रजिया सज्जाद जहीर करमत में शिक्षिका थीं।

नूर चार बहनों में सबसे छोटी हैं। उनसे बड़ी नादिरा खबर हैं। नूर कहती हैं कि चूँकि मुझमें और दूसरी बहनों में अन्तर बहुत है



### Leading Ladies

लीडिंग लडीज

इसलिए मैं बहुत छोटी ही थी कि बड़ी बहनों का विवाह हो गया और मैं बेटियों में अकेली ही घर में रह गयी थी। इससे मां-बाप का पूरा ध्यान मुझ पर रहा। नूर बताती हैं कि किस प्रकार पिता ने कहा था कि मैं तुम्हें 13 वर्ष की उम्र पर ही कुरान दूंगा, जिससे तुम इसे समझ सको। मुझे उन्होंने कुरान के साथ ही महाभारत का भी अंग्रेजी अनुवाद दिया और ये भी कहा कि मैं दो-तीन दिन घर में हूँ और तुम मुझसे इस पर चर्चा करना। नूर

मानती हैं कि उन्हें उर्दू की तालीम मां से मिली। वह कहती हैं कि मां की याददास्त अजब थी। मण्टो हो या इस्मत, मीर हो या गालिब मां ने इनके बारे में बताया और सिखाया। वे अपने 'माई गाड इज ए वूमन' के बारे में कहती हैं कि यह है तो उपन्यास लेकिन मैंने यह बताने की कोशिश की है कि अगर शाहबानो कांड में राजीव गांधी ने डरकर फैसला न लिया गया होता तो आज मुस्लिम समाज में महिलाओं की स्थिति काफी बेहतर होती।

- आलोक पराडकर



# Doon-based poet attends SAARC Festival Of Literature

**By OUR STAFF REPORTER**  
**LUCKNOW: 27 Mar:** The Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literatures (FOSWAL) organized its most important annual event, SAARC Festival Of Literature in Lucknow between March 16 and March

among the prominent authors and poets invited to read their work at the Festival and her poems have very well received. She read out five of her short poems in Hindi that revolved around the theme of the festival, which was "Environment: Our Earth, Our Only Home". The

was divided into academic sessions in the pre-lunch hours and poetry-readings in the post-lunch sessions, every day. In the former, the participants and guest-speakers mostly writes of the SAARC region- questioned environment and cultural identity primarily through literary texts and lectures.

Young writers showcased their awareness about the fact that while they show a lot of their poet, they also show the problems that trouble the present times, and the through their writings, presented their visions for the future.

The SAARC Festival of Literature was attended by eminent writers, poets, academicians, scholars and peace activists from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. Some of the notable names included writer Abdul Waki Gulanaal Shirwazi from Afghanistan, writer and scholar Prof. Manowarul Islam from Bangladesh, Member of Parliament Sosam Kingsi, poet and musician



Bhawan Wihwad from Maldives, eminent fiction writer and scholar from Myanmar Tin Tin Win, Post poet, playwright and theatre director Abba Subedi from Nepal, scholar, writer and social activist from Pakistan Dr. Aul Ferozki and Sen Ministry of National Heritage of Sri

Lanka Kanti Wijeratne. From India, the event saw participation from Director General of Indian Council for Cultural Relations Suresh K. Gaur, Odia poet and scholar Dr. Sitabant Mahapatra, painter Anupa Das, Hindi poet Dr. Laxkhye Manchik and others.



18, 2012. FOSWAL believes that cultural exchange events within the SAARC nations should not be centered in metropolitan cities and following this principle, Lucknow was chosen as the venue for the event.

sub-themes under this include sustainable development, Industrial Expansion which touches the environmental balance, ethics and their trends, environment and sciences, environment in literature and others.

Dehradun's Vidy Arya was

The duration of the event

दिनांक 22 अप्रैल 2012  
 पृष्ठ सं. 38  
 साप्ताहिक, सोमवार  
 19 अप्रैल, 2012  
 मूल्य ₹ 4.00  
 दिल्ली • गोरखपुर

# दैनिक जागरण

## आंचलिकता है मुख्य विशेषता



**सप्ताह का साक्षात्कार**

आंचलिकता है मुख्य विशेषता... (Introductory text for the interview)

आंचलिकता है मुख्य विशेषता... (Main body of the interview text)

आंचलिकता है मुख्य विशेषता... (Main body of the interview text)

आंचलिकता है मुख्य विशेषता... (Main body of the interview text)

**पुस्तक सुविधा**  
 आंचलिकता है मुख्य विशेषता... (Text about book facilities)

**पुस्तक प्रदर्शन**  
 आंचलिकता है मुख्य विशेषता... (Text about book exhibition)

**एक नजर अब तक**  
 आंचलिकता है मुख्य विशेषता... (Text about a book review)





# The Kathmandu Post

MAR 17 -

## Ecology, Tragedy and Theatre

ABHI SUBEDI

WORDS & ECHOES

I am writing this in the context of the regional meetings of SAARC writers in Lucknow from 16-19 March, 2012. Fine, young scholars and some old academics and poets have been taking part in this meeting. The theme of the seminar is environment, literature and arts, and Sunil Pokharel and I chose theatre and environment as our theme. I speak about my experience of writing plays and working with the director Sunil Pokharel, who makes a visual presentation of his *modus operandi* on theatre. As I have been attending these meetings of the writers of the South Asian region over a decade and a half, I have noticed that the concept of region as conceived by writers are at odds with the one advocated by nation states, and by the SAARC organisation.

South Asia has many meanings. One meaning precedes the emergence of nation states and contains certain immanent features. Countries of this region share many things, there is no doubt about that. Ashis Nandy, an Indian scholar, sees problems with the concept of the region as a cohesive entity with nation states working with a psyche of negativity. He says South Asian countries define themselves "by what they are not". Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal always make efforts to say they are not India. Bangladesh defines its identity by saying it is not India, and certainly not West Bengal. Nandy discovered little late, Indian politicians too have begun to say 'that India is not Pakistan.' He calls them 'collective reluctant states' in an essay titled "The idea of South Asia: a personal note on post- Bandung blues" (Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, Volume 6, No. 4).

My encounter of South Asia takes place in contact zones, where reluctance has no place. I meet a region where writers recall the partition blues in SAARC writers' meetings. Poets from Punjab region of Pakistan and India read poetry that splash with common emotions. The enthusiastic audience becomes one during the poetry reading sessions. Urdu works very well. Besides Ghazals and dohas, free verses too give space to a tradition of the poetry of love, emotions and melodramatic moods. One can feel that there is another side of the reluctance—of writers and poets who are reluctant to share the animus of the architects of the nation-state feelings.

But the reality of nation state politics is invincible, ambitious and frightening when it comes to the question of hostilities in the region. Writers and poets try to turn the history of trauma into sublime words. I have not noticed the same in the case of the Bengali writers' cross-border contacts, but the imago effect of Rabindranath Tagore unites all the Bengali speakers. It works successfully to unite them. A meeting of writers of this region therefore reflects a history where people share many things in terms of writing, music, arts and architecture. Now we are united by the common concern about the terrible loss of environment in this region.

I look at it from a theatre experience. When I started writing plays I discovered that environment that is tangible, visual and imaginary shaped my consciousness. To find sense in the intangible heritage was a challenge to open avenues of 'tragedy' and to see how we have lived with the loss of environment. As a playwright I have always been struck by the subtleties of the intangible cultural forms that are poetic, aesthetic, life-oriented and even pragmatic. Such aspects of intangible culture can be foregrounded by means of heritage of kinaesthetic nature. That tension of border, that selection of what is part of ritual and what is selected for performance is important.

Sunil Pokharel, the creative director who combines the freak spirit of youths of the sixties and some post-historical sensibilities, put them on the stage. I was awed by his interpretation of environment, its loss and its crisis. Environmental loss has two avatars. One is lost in the past but engraved in the space formations, the structured architectural sites and human culture and the other is lived in the present with the rougher side of life, loss of familiar environment, the increasing difficulties as a result of a harsher terrains of existence, the widening gap between the privileged urban culture that engenders environmental degradation and the open, rural, nonchalant people's existence that is increasingly becoming the recipient and sufferer of the actions of the interventionist state agencies.

Autonomous drama is resistant art, and the most creative means of reliving lost heritage and sensitising audience to the health and ecology of the earth and humankind. My exercise in playwriting and working with theatre artists has shown me that we should perform for making up for the lost cause and opportunity. That is a life giving game, which poses serious challenge to destruction wrought by indulgence. But we should not forget that performance is not the monopoly of the theatre. A poet recites, a painter paints, a musician performs and a dancer dances. When he was ninety, Kazuo Ohno, the world famous Japanese dancer, said in his message to world dancers published in *Flemish dancers' Butoh* book (1998): "I wish to dance and dance and dance and dance, the life of the wild grass... In the abundance of nature I see the foundation of dance. Is this because my soul physically wants to touch the truth?"

Indian artist Arpana Cour, in her art depicting Sufi dances, suggests that her paintings are part of the great power in a world where the lake down below becomes the 'lap of god', to which I replied to her by mail, "your paintings are the laps of god to me, that lake, and that is the spirit of Sufi performance". That simultaneity of the calm lake and Cour's paintings should be seen as strong resistance to destruction of Nature. Every performance artist's work is resistance. The artist does not run away from either devastating or disgusting form or from beauty and hilarity. Instead, he or she faces that performance, and that is true resistance of art. Arturo Usler Pietri in his message on World Theatre Day 1992 says, "In every corner of the world, at every moment when a true being faces life, one can sense the curtains rising".

So Subtle and sublime is the relationship between performance and environment. Curtains will continue to rise, we will continue to face life and transform the loss back into art, into life. Such is the message of South Asian writers and artists.

# On SAARC Festival of Literature 2012



**MOHAMMAD  
NURUL HUDA**

When I look back, say back in 1986, just one year after the formation of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which unfortunately had overlooked the significance of culture and civilizational linkages of the region, I felt I owed it to literature and culture of the neighbouring countries, to raise voice for peace and amity in the SAARC region through cultural connectivity. And this was the ultimate argument and vital rationale for the formation of FOSVAL by a person no less than Aji Coor himself, a well-known Punjabi fiction-writer, a visionary who launched, for the first time, the idea of cultural connectivity for peace in the subcontinent. Since then she has been working for these initiatives in an unflinching manner, resulting in the inclusion of 'values' in the SAARC charter and FOSVAL, ALI honoured as a 'SAARC ALEX BOND'. For last twenty six years this organization has been playing a pioneering role to unite some of the best creative souls of the region in various manners and expressions including fairs, festivals, exhibitions and so on and so forth.

This year too, FOSVAL has organized a four-day long SAARC festival for literature with commendable success. The festival took place from March 16 to 19, 2012 in the city of Lucknow, India. It was participated by nearly two hundred delegates from diverse areas of creativity from all the eight SAARC countries plus Myanmar, which is yet to join this regional unity of successful cooperation. Myanmar's last representative was Ms Tin Tin Win, a medical doctor and surgeon by profession. Fondly called Ji, she is a prolific writer with twenty novels, seven collections of short stories and three books on environment, social and political thought. The dreamer and architect of FOSVAL Aji Coor, fondly called Aji Ji, has grown by now into a visible symbol of unity based on enlightenment of heart among the creative people of the subcontinent and its neighbours like Myanmar, who may become an integral part of SAARC in our future. If so, more delegates are expected to take part in the upcoming SAARC literary and creative interactions.

However, this time Lucknow festival witnessed an exhilarating participation of a number of poets, fiction writers, scholars, environmentalists, feminists, environmentalists, feminists and scientists belonging to various disciplines and generations that included 12 delegates from Afghanistan, 18 from Bangladesh, 80 from India, 4 from Maldives, 35 from Pakistan, 11 from Nepal, 10 from Sri Lanka, 4 from Bhutan and 1 from Myanmar. The delegates varied from who-Ohya's poet Sitakanta Mahapatra (more than 80 years of age) to young Bangladeshi feminist Marzia Akter Liza (in her 30s). The four-day interaction saw a total of seven sessions and an inaugural one. The celebrated thinker, writer and political activist Dr. Abid Hussain from India inaugurated the festival as chief guest while a good

number of representative writers from all the participating countries briefly addressed the audience focusing on the preamble of the festival. This session was presided over by Dr. Nihal Baidya from Sri Lanka and welcome address was given by Aji Coor who unfailingly set the theme and tone of the conference. Although the main theme of the festival was 'Environment and Our Earth Our Only Home', the speakers also dealt on many subsidiary themes anchored to it. Dr. Abid Hussain made his keynote speech on the central argument, after which he declared the festival open for three-day long academic discussions, poetry reading, paper presentation, panel discussions, free comments, cultural programs varying from local songs of Bengal, Bhatiali from Bangladesh to exotic dances of swirling soft from Pakistan. The last day (March 19) was declared free for sight-seeing and individual quest by the participants into the heart of the historic city of songs, music and poetry rooted in the great cultural spaces like Allahabad, Meiktila, Srinagar and others.

I was rather amazed to get an invitation from Aji Ji this time, more than a decade later, to participate again in a SAARC writers festival. However, as I interacted intensely with this great energetic lady, poet, editor, dreamer and seer, I could discover in her a matchless motherly love trying to unite all the creative souls of South Asia and beyond rendering it into a great home of all its fortunate, regardless of their socio-political, habitats and boundaries. Despite her old age and physical limitations, she engaged as the all-acknowledged leading force in the festival with her relentless momentum and astute supervision. She was constantly assisted by her illustrious daughter Aparna Coor, Noor Zahid, Mitwa Jee and others of her team.

I am rather tempted to believe that Aji Ji's dream of South Asia as a visa-free zone is not an absurd one, rather it may come true in near future. If the political leaders of the region may reach a consensus for balanced human development to South Asia.

In Bangladesh we have been dreaming of such a free zone long since. Bangladesh Writers Club has been in favour of 'Mukta Swadesh Mukta Pritibi' (Free Homeland Free World) from its inception in the early 1990s. As current chairman of this organization I do not see any hindrance in conformity with Aji Ji's dream and she access to be one of our integral inspirers.

This festival gave me some wonderful moments to revitalize our dreams as well as to rethink how to translate them into reality in the days to come. One immediate suggestion is the off-regular holding of such festivals and congregations in different venues in different States of South Asia. FOSVAL may take the initiative and the States concerned may give their supportive hands in all possible ways.

From the very beginning the Lucknow festival attracted me in a big way. The inaugural ses-

SION WAS A MEMORABLE ONE. Apart from many thought-provoking deliberations, Aparna Jee's amazing painting display catering to the needs of time happened to be beyond doubt. Speeches, commentaries, papers in various sessions were also diversified, but time shortage curtailed many presentations from their detailed analysis. Protection of environment and rendering the earth into a

presenting any paper on nature or other related areas as I got little time to prepare it owing to some pre-arrangements. However, as suggested by Aji Ji, the chief coordinator of the festival, I mailed some poems on nature selections, protection of trees and interaction of creative souls in South Asia, including a poem that I wrote in Lucknow. During my stay there I also scribbled many



**Aji Coor, Soul of FOSVAL**

powerful home of the privileged and less-privileged of the world was chosen as the central theme of the festival. It was, indeed, time-befitting and appropriate when the earth is passing through moments of storms and tremors as a result of environment pollution at different parts of this earth, from a barren desert to foamy waves of the oceans. In Bangladesh we have been confronted with cyclones, tidal waves and many other natural calamities for centuries together. Recently, indiscriminate onslaught on hills

in diverse languages and meters. Almost all the languages of the region were uttered by poets from various languages selecting a symphony I never heard before.

The fusion of all these sound and words may create, who knows, a unique language, almost crystallized in a not-so-distant future. If so happens, it would be largely considered as an outcome of FOSVAL efforts. However, I missed representative poets from West Bengal. Despite this shortcoming, the result is praiseworthy.

The honour bestowed upon Aji Ji by FOSVAL for their significant contribution is also encouraging. FOSVAL may also invite representatives from more indigenous people, their languages and cultural expressions during upcoming interactions.

I have gained profusely meeting many new faces belonging to different generations from all the nine participating countries. Many of them have become my friends in the mean time. Some of them have mailed me and I am eager to keep in touch with all of them. The intimacy would further consolidate when I may meet some of them in the first week of December 2012 in a stipulated poetry conference on the sandy beach of Cox's Bazar, now known as Baranagar locality situated at the south-western coastal belt of Bangladesh. This festival is called Darianagar Poetry Festival sponsored by KabitaBangla, Bangladesh.

The hospitality and sight-seeing including a most exciting tour to Bhulbhulaya is still fresh in my memory. I have also revisited the cultural and aesthetic history of Lucknow as I went around the famous picture gallery of the illustrious Nawabs and rulers of the region.

While boarding the aircraft on my way back home from



**Panel discussion on environment by some participants**

and now has added fuel to the fire that may burn the future of this newly-emerged nation-state and adjacent areas.

This is one main reason why I want to offer words of appreciation for the presentation on trees, plants, sea-rise and warning and the allied areas. At the same time some presentations including prose-poem ones seemed hurriedly done, and almost needless. This can be avoided on the next occasion notifying the presenters well ahead of time. I abstained from

ously. The most leading poet from Bangladesh Syed Shamsul Haq recited his Bengali poem in a unique manner and captured the attention of all concerned.

Most of the leading Indian poets including Sitakanta Mahapatra recited in English in the main. However, a good number of poets, including those from Lucknow, chose their mother tongue for oration. In fact, the most attractive part of Lucknow festival was the diverse poetry reading

in diverse languages and meters. Almost all the languages of the region were uttered by poets from various languages selecting a symphony I never heard before.

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While boarding the aircraft on my way back home from

this historic city, I felt like travelling through a tradition of tangible and intangible expressions where time past and time future seemed to diffuse in time present. Indeed, I am a proud successor of this indivisible tradition of South Asia conceived as a unified entity.

The writer is a leading poet of Bangladesh and currently Chairman, Bangladesh Writers Club, Dhaka. He may be reached at [poetnurulhuda@gmail.com](mailto:poetnurulhuda@gmail.com)



SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION  
**CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION**

This is to certify that the status of a  
**SAARC Apex Body**

has been renewed for

**Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL)**

at the Thirty-Fourth Session of the Council of Ministers

The aforesaid status will remain valid until 2 April 2017 and is renewable.

Given under my hand on this Eighth Day of December Two Thousand and Eleven.

SAARC Secretariat  
Kathmandu, Nepal

Uz. Fathimath Imiyana Saeed  
Secretary-General



ICCR



SAARC



ARPANA CAUR

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