



# SOUTH ASIAN FESTIVAL OF SUFISM AND BUDHISM

FEBRUARY 22, 23, 24, 2019  
NEW DELHI

## DELEGATES



Organized by  
FOUNDATION OF SAARC WRITERS AND LITERATURE  
SAARC APEX BODY

in collaboration with  
SAHITYA AKADEMI

# AFGHANISTAN

## A.K. RASHID

Professor Abdul Khaliq Rashid was born in 1957 in Ghazni (Afghanistan). He had his early education in the historical city of Ghazni and higher education at Kabul. Presently he is a Visiting Professor in the Center of Persian and Central Asian Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, wherein he has developed the Pashto Programme of study up to Advanced Diploma and BA levels. He is deeply interested in Sanskrit studies. He has penned four collections of short stories in Pashto.



## AHMAD FARID SULTANI

Ahmad Farid Sultani is a poet, working as business development manager in Afghan Education Production Organization and producing educational radio programmes for BBC. He has worked with BBC and other media outlets in Afghanistan. He received training in writing fiction.



## AHMAD FAYAZ AMIRI

Fayaz Amiri is a Fulbright scholar, pursuing his Ph.D. degree in Education Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Denver. His research interest is to understand the role of international agencies in educational policy development in Afghanistan, particularly focused on girls' education and how to amalgamate art in the current context of Afghan Education. Fayaz has an extensive background with in Ministry of Higher Education in Afghanistan, New York University, Lehigh University, the



University of Denver, and Currently with Creative Associates International.

### **AHMAD GHANI KHOSRAWI**



Dr. Ahmad Ghani Khosrawi was in the position of VC (Vice Chancellor) in Herat University from 2012 to 2015, and Dean of literature and languages faculty from 2017 till now. His articles and papers have been published in different universities of the world like India, Iran, Armenia, Turkey. Also participated in different international seminars in different

universities of the world like Allahabad University, Ahmad Abad University, Delhi University, Anadolu University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Kashmir University, Aligarh University, Awaz University, Ferdousy University.

### **AHMAD JAVED**

Ahmad Javed is a poet, writer and producer. He has been working in media as producer and presenter. He has published four books of short stories. His first Novel was awarded by World Pen Organization.



### **AMINULLAH ADEL**



Aminullah Adel is an Afghan writer and author and has been writing for newspapers, magazines and online Afghan media. He worked as Publication Officer for Pen Association, Regional Editor for Literacy Hub for Broader Middle East and North Africa where 20 countries of BMENA were members of the Hub. Mr. Adel is member of

Afghanistan Reading Association affiliated with International Reading Association (IRA), and is also

member of Haand Think Tank (HTT) which has recently been established by Afghan Professionals. Mr. Adel has worked in UNESCO for 9 years and has developed/actively contributed to development of National Literacy Policy, National Youth Policy, National Youth Strategy and National Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education in Afghanistan. Mr. Adel has written on social issues, short stories and satire. He has translated and published 2 Arabic books in Pashto.

### **ANEEL AHMADZAI**

Aneel Ahmadzai started his career in private sector as a finance officer and worked in different finance and admin departments in private sector. In 2011 he established a new business entity by the name of Atlantic Travel & Tours, and currently he is the managing director of the company. He is a poet.



### **GUL AGHA AHMADI**



Gul Agha Ahmadi is an author and poet. He is working as Media Advisor at the Ministry of Education (MoE) Afghanistan. He has worked as an important head of several organisations. He started his career as a writer in 1992 and published more than 1000 articles and poems. He wrote 71 booklets in the Pashto language.

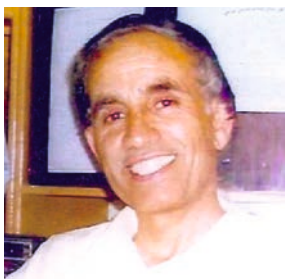
Ahmadi got peace medal from former Afghan President Hamid Karzai and was honoured with 'Peace Writer' title.

### **GULNOOR BAHMAN**

Gulnoor Bahman is an advisor to the office of the Vice President. Also Writer, Poet and Author of three







books. He was Head of the board of writer's Alliance in Afghanistan.

**MOHAMMAD MANSOOR NASIMI**

Muhammad Mansoor Nassimi is working as a writer in BBC soap opera and educational radio drama since 1999. Also works with Afghanistan National Radio Television as a writer. Two satire collections: Nabood Bad

Khaba and Agha Baly Hay Maasir were published.

**MOHAMMAD HAMAYOON HEWAD**

Hamayoon Hewad is a poet and writer. I am working with the media as educational and cultural program producer and writer. Now he is working with RERFL (Azadi Radio) in Kabul.



His poems and short stories are published in the magazines, newspapers and websites. His book awal numra kawtra (the first number pigeon) has been published by the Save the Children.

**M. AFSAR RAHBEEN**



M. Afsar Rahbeen's first poetry collection (Dar Khat-e-FasilaHaa) was released by the Afghanistan Writers Association in 1988, and at the same time he got arrested by the Communist regime. "Zakhm" (wound) his first Urdu collection was published in 2010 in Kabul.

He is an author of several translations from Urdu and Persian.

**FARHANAZ BEHZAD**

Farahnaz Behzad has a BA degree from literature faculty, Pashtu department, Kabul University. She



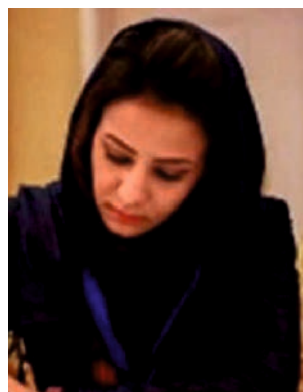
worked in Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education. Since 2009 she has worked as a Pashtu writer with Afgan Education Production Organization – making educational radio programs for BBC. She is also a poet, and her poems are printed in different magazines and newspapers.

### **MUHIB UR RAHMAN**

Muhib-Ur-Rahman Muhib graduated from Master's Program in Languages & Literature Faculty of Kabul University. In last 10 years, he has worked as Writer, Education Project Manager, Reading Materials Development Specialist, Curriculum Development Specialist, Curriculum Editor and Content Developer & Editor with different international organizations. So far he has written hundreds of educational dramas for BBC radio, two collections of poems, "Drama Characterization", "Literature and Aesthetics", "Art with its own type", " 50 titles illustrated children story books", Early grade reading curriculum and also translated more than 100 educational books and the "Aim of Literature" of Maxim Gorky.



### **NEGINA YARI**



Negina Yari is graduated with a BA. Negina Yari has worked with a wide range of civil society stakeholders including the Human Rights and Advocacy Consortium, Afghanistan cultural House organizations as well as NGOs and associations. She has been a member of key civil society networks such as Afghan Civil Society Election Network (ACSEN),

Civil Society Joint Working Group (CSJ-WG) and Afghan Women Network (AWN). Ms. Negina Yari is a board member and Facilitator of Afghanistan Peace House, an organization advocating for inclusive peace and justice. She has written more than hundred short stories about women's rights, education, peace and other social issues.

## **SAHZIA ASLAMI**



Shazia Aslami is a Professor of Persian Literature at the Educational University in Kabul. She has completed three research works: The Comparison of the Images in Manochehri's and Farukhi's poetry, The Comparison of Anwar-e-Suhaili and Kalila wa Demna, and The Characteristics of the Contemporary Short Stories of Afghanistan. More

than fifteen of her research papers are published in different magazines of Afghanistan.

## **SAIED MUSTAFA SAIEDY**

Sayed Mustafa Saiedy has 16 years of work experience in various sectors of the Afghan government. His latest occupation was at the presidential palace as President's Advisor in the field of good governance for two years. Currently, he is working as the Director of Cultural Affairs in Kabul Municipality w.e.f. March 21, 2018 till date. He is a poet.



## **SHAMSULHAQ HAIRAN**

Shamsulhaq Hairan is an Afghan author, lawyer, and poet.

He started his career as a writer in 2005 and published more than 450 articles and poems. Besides he has translated more than 31 books and documents into Pashto and Dari languages from English and vice versa. Hairan has participated in deferent competitions related to writing papers, poems. He got the first position among 375 students in a

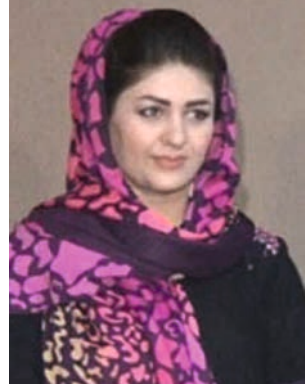


paper writing competition about Anti-Corruption in Afghanistan held by BEST, an USAID funded project in 2012.

## SHUGUFA SHUKOORI

Shugufa Shukoori is an eminent writer of Dari language. Has three collections of short stories.

She started her career 12 years ago, with different positions and with different organizations (as a Corporate Sales Consultant at Sky Travel & Tours, Travel Officer at German International Cooperation (GIZ) in Kabul). As a Literacy Advisor in GIZ- PIU Literacy Component. As a Program Advisor/Gender Focal Point in GIZ-PIU Project and has



worked as volunteer in National Representative “NRCA” of GIZ Afghanistan. National Advisor Capacity Building Specialists for Peace Education M&E and Gender Focal Point, at the Civil Peace Service (ZFD) of German International Cooperation (GIZ) in Afghanistan and as Senior Capacity Development Officer in USAID-Creative-ACR Project.

## BANGLADESH

### ABDUR RAZZAQUE KHAN



Abdur Razzaque Khan is an Associate Professor at the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Dr Khan has 20 years teaching and 12 years experience in journalism. Dr Khan was the head (2005-2008) of the Department of Communication and Journalism at the University

of Chittagong, Bangladesh. Dr Khan's areas of interest are : communication and social justice, spiritual communication, political economy, poetry.

### ABUL MOMEN

Abul Momen is a renowned poet,





essayist and senior journalist of the country. Momen has published 30 books including 8 books of verse. He has won Ekushe Padak, a Fellow of Bangla Academy and recipient of several other literary awards. He is regarded as one of the leading thinkers and educationist of the country.



### **AL MAMUN MAHBUB ALAM**

Al Mamun Mahbub Alam's first published rhyme appeared in a well circulated newspaper when he was a student of class six. Al Mamun is a cancer surgeon by profession. He has published five books so far. Those include two collection of poems, a novel for the children and two collections of short stories.

### **ALIM-UR-RAHMAN KHAN**

Alimur Rahman Khan is a scholar and speaker with considerable knowledge in Islamic philosophy, art, architecture and mysticism. He taught the same at Central Women's University, Dhaka in the mid 90's. He did his Masters in Islamic History under the Dhaka University, topping the list of candidate's that year.

South Asian Classical being his other subject of interest.



### **ASHRAF JEWEL**

Dr. Ashraf Jewel (original name, Md Ashraful Haque) started writing in 2009. He is mainly a poet but used to write short stories also. Nowadays he is writing regularly in Newspapers, Magazines, online literary portals, and the little magazine. He has three books of poetry: Zuddho Chara Shuddhota Osomvob (Purity is

impossible without War), Otita Dukkhora Pakhi Hoyo Gelo (Otita, Swarrow became bird), Onujjol Chokher Rat, (Night with Dimmed Eye). He is now working to edit a bilingual (English & Bengali) poetry anthology named 'An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry of South Asia.'

## **GULASHAN JHUMUR**

Gulashan Jhumur is a promising poet in Bangladesh. She has been writing poetry since her school life. She is writing short stories as well. The themes of her poems are the people and their struggle in life and in civil life at the same time. Loves to write about nature. “Obaddo Benojal” is her poetry book.



## **JABBAR AL NAYEEM**



Jabbar Al Nayeem (Academic Name: Md Abdul Jabbar) is an eminent young poet. From his school life he used to write poem. Till now, four of his literary works have been published. Collection of poems : '*Tara Khawa Maser Jibon*', '*Biruddho Procchoder Pekhom*', '*Gulbodun o Onnanno Kobita*', and '*Pushposojja Propertise*', a collection of short stories. He achieved 'Dag Literary

Award- 2016' by Rabindhra Krishi Institute.

## **KAZI SUFIA AKHTAR**

Kazi Sufia Akhtar mostly writes research based articles, columns, short stories, novels and poetry. Her distinctive writings and columns are published in national dailies, magazines and different journals on gender, secularism, humanism, human rights, folk culture, women and politics, governance & environment issues.

She worked with different non-government and human rights based organization as a Freelance Development & Gender Consultant and creative writer. She has three books on humanism, nature and pluralistic society. She is also a women activist, actively involved with Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, the largest Women Organization of Bangladesh since the last 48 years.





### **KHAIRUL ALAM SHABUJ**

Khairul Alam Shabuj is better known as an actor-writer in Bangladesh. Has acted on stages for more than thirty years; still working regularly as an actor, playwright and director of drama in Television, Radio, and occasionally in films as an actor. He is a poet, a playwright, short story writer, a novelist, an essayist and a

translator. Well, translation seems to be his favorite field of work. He has translated, so far, more than twenty classical plays of great playwrights like Anton Chekhov, Luigi Pirandello, Jean Anouilh, Harold Pinter, and Henrik Ibsen.

### **MAHBUB AZIZ**

Mahbub Aziz is a poet, novelist, storyteller and essayist.

Done his Masters from Jahangirnagar University, took higher study in journalism from International Institute of Journalism, Germany. By profession he is a journalist, now is a Feature Editor of Daily Samakal. He started writing poems in the 90's; then began writing stories and novels. He has written 9 books in total.



### **MAHBUBA FARUQUE (Mahbuba Umme Kulsum)**



Mahbuba Faruque was born in Barhatta and currently resides in Dhaka with her husband and only daughter. She is an M.A. B.ED. and a teacher by profession. Mahbuba started writing from her childhood. She writes poems, short stories, songs, dramas etc and so far she has published ten books. Mahbuba is also an enlisted lyricist of Bangladesh Television (BTV). She

loves traveling and has traveled to many foreign countries. Mahbuba got several awards from different organizations over the years.

## MD. ESRAFIL HOSSAIN EMRAN

Emran is son of a veteran freedom fighter Abul Kalam Mohammed Nurul Alam Khan and Bilkish Begum. He is editor of literary magazine "Kaler Dhoni" and Star Books-Coordinator in most circulated English daily in Bangladesh: 'The Daily Star'. His first poetry book 'Mourn Forever' was published in 2017.



## MD KHAIRUL KABIR

Rotarian Md. Khairul Kabir is familiar as 'Kabir Chanchal'. Diversified era of our life becomes prominent through his poems. Many of his poems have been published in newspapers of Bangladesh and India. His published poetry "SHA" has been highly acclaimed.

As a successful businessman, Mr. Kabir represents many business chambers and social organizations. Has visited more than 30 countries. Besides, he is a famous Bonshai Artist in Bangladesh.

## MEHTAZ NUR (Taslima Nasrin Papia)

Mehtaj Nur writes poems, short stories and novels. Her publications include three collections of poems, four short stories and a novel. She tries to express untold stories of our women's life in her writings. Her

Father

Mohammad Nur Ali, who

was a passionate admirer of Madhusudan Dutta, inspired her in literary writing at her early childhood.

## MOHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

Mohammad Nurul Huda is a leading Bengali poet of international repute with more than 100 titles to his credit





including 'Collected Poems' in Bengali and 'Selected Poems' in English. Translated into many international languages including English, French, German, Swedish and Russian, he has won more than fifty awards: national and international. A noted critic, translator, IPR Specialist, folklorist, novelist and literary organizer. He is the Chairman of Bangladesh Writers Club.

### **NAHIDA ASHRAFI**

Nahida Ashrafi is a poet, story writer, and editor of an international life style magazine for women named 'Nandini'



and a literary magazine 'Jolodhi'. She has written three books of poetry, one book of stories and edited a book of story based on freedom fighters of Bangladesh. She has received several awards as a poet, a story writer and as an editor also. She is the member of Bangladesh writers club and International Pen, Bangladesh. She is also the vice chairman of 'ajker

projonmo foundation' and on the advisory board of two literary magazines 'Ferary' (Bangladesh) and 'Asha, Bangla Potrika' (Kolkata, India).

### **NIAZ ZAMAN**

Niaz Zaman retired as Professor of English, University of Dhaka. Her short story, "The Dance," won an Asiaweek Award. Author of The Dance and Other Stories and The Maidens' Club. Her translation of Kazi Nazrul Islam's novel Mrityukshudha was published as Love and Death in Krishnanagar in 2015. In 2013, she received the Anannya Award for Literature and in 2016 the Lekhika Sangha Award for translation.



### **NUR QUAMRUN NAHER (Old)**

Nur Quamrun Naher is a famous poet and writer. Especially her short stories have captured the attention of the literary genius. She contributes articles on gender issues, women empowerment and on other relevant issues to national



dailies. She has twelve books. Her stories are translated into English, Hindi and Nepali. Her anthology of poems Tomar Bhag Chai, novels Aka, Alo, Bikeler chil and short story books entitled Golpoguchchho, Sis Deya Rat, Mirtu o Akti Sokal, Brikkkho o Pramiker Golpo and the column book` Nari Khomotayon: Shopno o Bastobota have earned huge acclaim.



### **PM ABU ISHAHOQUE HOSSAIN**

Abu Ishahaq Hossain received his Ph.D on The sage and Society: Lalon Shah and 19th Century Social Movements in Bengal from Dhaka University. In spite of intense propensity to poetry, he now is totally enthusiastic in research work. He carries research on different areas of Bengali literature and philosophies. He is the founder president of Lalon Research and Culture Foundation. He has been scripting and presenting a serial TV Program on Baul philosophy for more than 10 years on state-owned Television channel BTV. Besides his research work he is a poet, novelist and lyricist. He has 23 publications to his credit.



### **RASSEL RAIHAN**

Rassel Raihan is an eminent young poet of Bengali language. From his college life he used to write poem. His first collection of poems Bibroto Moyur was published by Prothoma Publications in 2016, it was awarded prestigious Jibanananda Das Pandulipi Puroshkar. His second collection of poems Sukhi Dhanurbid published by Platform Publications. Both anthologies are highly appreciated by critics as well as by reader. He was editor of a little magazine GHUGHU, was editor of a web



mag [www.porospor.com](http://www.porospor.com). He is also acting editor of a Publication named Platform.

## **RUBANA HUQ**



Rubana Huq is a brilliant young poet of Bangladesh. She shoulders many responsibilities like being Managing Director of Mohammadi Group, Director of Technovista Ltd., Executive Editor of South-Asian, Chairperson of Sharaf Memorial Trust, Editor and Publisher of [www.monsoonletters.com](http://www.monsoonletters.com) and the Chief Coordinator of Bangladesh Chapter of Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature. She

organised a mega SAARC Literary Festival in Dhaka in February 2014. Collection of her poems, 'Time of My Life', has been published by Writers Ink, Dhaka.

## **SARDAR HIRAK RAJA**

Enlisted Singer Bangladesh Radio & Television. Has completed MA in Folk Music from University of Dhaka. Doing Ph.d on Lalon Fakir & his songs under Prof. Dr. Shahnaz Nasrin Ila, Dept. of Music, University of Dhaka. Working with department of production, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, as a Lalon Researcher & Vocal Artist.



## **S M FARIDUR RAHMAN**

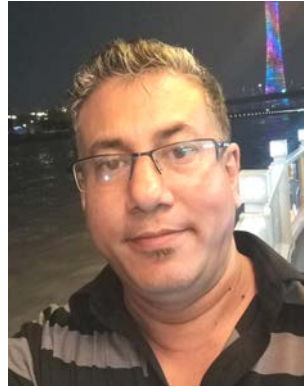
Faridur Rahman is basically a short story writer. Besides poems, travelogues and juvenile rhymes. Excellent sense of humor, sharp observation and natural flow of dialogues are the features of his short stories. Participation in the great liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971 has enriched his stories on war of freedom. His publication include six collections of short stories, five travelogues, two novels and a collection of poems.



## **SALEH MUJAHID**

Saleh Mujahid was an active member of cultural group called Bartaman, involved in street drama. Was a political activist for a socialistic party. His writing covers diversified subjects Sufism, mysticism in bengali literature, relating to chariyapada. His first poetry book is “Chad Kabbo”, second one is

“Vognangshopremprokash” and novel is “Ornober Diery”. Main theme of his poetry is love. Reunion of loved ones, inner soul and greater soul.



## **SHAILA RAHMAN TITHI**

Shaila Rahman Tithi is heading “Zhumzhumi Prokashon”, a Publication Agency, and making efforts to publish

“Zhumzhumi”, a popular monthly Children Magazine, as its Editor. Her contribution in the literary fields includes: poetry, prose, rhyme, short stories. Shaila Rahman Tithi makes literary contribution to almost all popular magazines in Bangladesh. Her published books are: Sporshe Jage Sovvota, Ronge Rongin Chora, Potoner Shobdo, Alo Adharir Chador, Voyonkor Doitto Dileram and

Dampaire, Hinshar Porinam, Cholo Michil kori, Vanga Danar Projapoti and Mayer Kole Fulki.



## **SHAH SHEIKH MAJLISH FUAD**

A journalist, researcher and academician Shah Sheikh Majlish Fuad, now working in the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB), under the Ministry of Information, began journalism as a student of the department of Mass Communication and Journalism, University of Dhaka. He had worked in various national leading news-agency, newspapers and electronic media including in the state-owned Bangladesh Television. `News Published in the First Pages of



Newspapers of Bangladesh: Importance and Trends in the Evolution of Time' is one of his research-work.

### **SHEIKH SHAHBAZ RIAD**

Sheikh Shahbaz Riad is working as an Associate Professor of Education of Teachers Training College, Dhaka,



Bangladesh. He is a teacher educator and curriculum planner of secondary level and teacher education. He is the writer of some books on education. His research books and articles have also been published locally and internationally. He is a Member of Bangladesh Forum for Educational Development (BAFED), Dhaka University Alumni Association, and Member of

International Advisory Board of Raj Rajeshwari Journal of Psychological & Educational Research (RRJPER) India.

### **SHILA MOMEN**

Shila Momen participated in the war of liberation as a singer and performed at various training and refugee camps. She dedicated herself on two fields - music and child education. She is the principal of a unique child institution, Fulki. In times of dejection or anguish she writes poetry. Now she is working on a music album of Tagore songs of classical forms, Rage-Robi Rage.



### **ZUAIIRIJAH MOU**



Zuairijah is a writer and filmmaker. The names of her films are: "Graffiti" (Fictional Short-film), Adda C/O Chobir-Haat (Documentary), Green-Room, Biralpakhi - Word will carry us, Adda C/O Beauty-Boarding and 'Bhoy: The fear of silence', which is based on the murder issue of bloggers in Bangladesh. Her last poetry book "Tashera Bookmark" was released in 2016.



# BHUTAN

## CHADOR WANGMO

Chador Wangmo, Teacher turned Writer, lives in Thimphu, Bhutan. She has authored four novels and ten illustrated books for children. Although her work is mostly prose, she likes writing poems and currently she is working on compiling her first collection of poems. She has been awarded an honorary Doctorate in Literature by the Vikram Sheela Vidyapeeth, Sidharth Nagar, UP. She has also been awarded the Sidhartha Tathagat Sansthan Sahitya award in recognition of her contribution to literature.



## INDRA KUMARI VISHWA



Indra Kumari Vishwa, is a B.ED graduate of Paro College of Education, Bhutan. She works in Samtse Lower Secondary School, Samtse Bhutan. Her first book – Pulses of Reality (collection of poems, short stories and articles) was published in 2013. And the second book – Moments... and, Beyond (collection of poems) is

published in 2015.

## RINZIN RINZIN

Dr. Rinzin Rinzin is a prominent Bhutanese writer, poet, consultant and academician. He also worked as a lecturer, agriculture scientist, bureaucrat and parliamentarian. He is a recipient of the Gold Cross of the World Union of Poets, Italy, 2018 and Vidyavachaspati and Tathaghat Srijan Saman 2017, India, and various academic awards, like Cum laude and President's Medal (Philippines), Golden Key and Dean's Excellence Award (Australia), and two Certificates





of Merit for Academic Excellence from His Majesty the King of Bhutan.

## **SONAM KINGA**

Sonam Kinga is the former Chairperson of National



Council, Parliament of Bhutan. He represented Tashigang Dzongkhag for two consecutive five-year terms (2008-13). In his first tenure, he served as the Deputy Chairperson of National Council as well as Chairpersons of Good Governance Committee and House Committee.

He has led many parliamentary delegations worldwide for bilateral and multilateral meetings and

conferences.

He was a founding member of The Centre for Bhutan Studies, founding Editor of Bhutan Observer and also worked for Save the Children after leaving the Civil Service, where he worked with the Ministry of Education.

Some of the books he wrote are Kingship, Polity and Democracy (2009), Changes in Bhutanese Social Structure (2002), Speaking Statues, Flying Rocks (2004) and Gaylong Sumdar Tashi (1999). His upcoming publications include Modern Monarchy in Bhutan and Political Contest as Moral Battles: A Perspective on Bhutan's Democratization Process.

He has been awarded the Gold Medal (National Order of Merit) in 2014 and the Honour of Nyikelma (Red Scarf) in 2012 by His Majesty the King during the National Day Celebrations. He was also part of the group of National Council members who received the institutional award of Druk Thuksey Medal in 2012.

He teaches Bhutan's Political History at the Royal Institute of Governance and Strategic Studies in Phuntsholing and also delivers talks and lectures in institutes and colleges within Bhutan and abroad.

# INDIA

## A.J. THOMAS

Dr. Thomas, A.J. is an Indian English poet, fiction writer and translator. Was Editor of Indian Literature, and is Guest Editor now. Taught English in Benghazi University, Ajdabiya Branch, Libya, from 2008 to 2014. Recipient of Katha Award, AKMG Prize. Senior Fellow, Department of Culture, Govt. of India and Honorary Fellow, Department of Culture, Government of South Korea. Guest Speaker in writers' conferences and readings in South Korea (thrice), Australia, Thailand, Hong Kong and Nepal.



## AJEET COUR

Ajeet Cour, Padma Shri, well-known Punjabi fiction writer, is the spirit behind the Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (1987), and Academy of Fine Arts and Literature (1977). A visionary who launched, for the first time, the idea of cultural connectivity for peace in the SAARC region, way back in 1986, she has been working tirelessly since then, for these Track II initiatives, resulting in the inclusion of 'culture' in the SAARC Charter. FOSWAL has been honoured as 'SAARC APEX BODY'.



She is the author of 22 collections of short stories, novelettes and novels, 9 creative translations of fiction and poetry, over 20 edited works, and numerous articles as an Accredited Journalist. Her books in English translation are : 'The Other Women' 'Leftover' 'Pebbles in a Tin Drum', 'Dead End', 'Water Weaver'. She writes in Punjabi but is widely translated into several Indian and foreign languages. Ajeet Cour's forte lies in the passion and commitment she brings to bear on everything she takes up — from creative writing to cultural activism, from the preservation of the environment and historical heritage to the empowerment of marginalised women. She has been a Visiting Scholar,

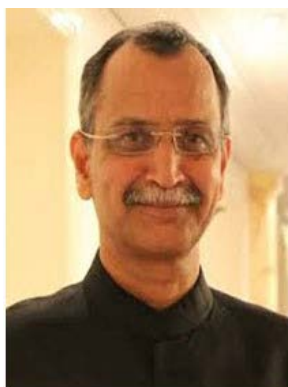
lecturing in several universities on 'Indian Cultural Heritage', in Stockholm, Gottenburg, Copenhagen, Budapest, Athens, London, Istanbul, Cairo, Dhaka, Lahore and many towns in India and Sri Lanka. Recipient of several national and international awards, including Sahitya Akademi Award in 1986 and Padma Shri in 2006. She is one of the '1000 Women Peace Crusaders Across The Globe for Collective Nobel Peace Prize'.

### **AKHTARUL WASEY**

Prof. Akhtarul Wasey is a noted Islamic scholar. Currently working as the President, Maulana Azad University, Jodhpur. He has been conferred Padma Shri in 2013 by the President of India. He has also been associated with the world famous Sufi Chisti Shrine of Ajmer, for 10 years in the capacity of President, Vice President and Member. Also been awarded Fulbright Fellowship in 2008. Prof. Wasey has been invited by World famous Universities around the globe to deliver lectures. He has been associated with Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi for 36 years in the capacity of Head, Department of Islamic Studies, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Languages, and Director, Zakir Hussain Institute of Islamic Studies.



### **AMARENDRA KHATUA**



Dr. Amarendra Khatua writes and publishes poetry in Odia, English, Hindi and Spanish since last 4 decades. Has published 25 collections in Odia, 8 in English, 5 in Hindi and 2 in Spanish. Has been translated into all major Indian languages and in Russian, French and German. Has won a number of national and international awards and participated in poetry festivals in

several countries.

## **ANAND KUMAR**



Prof. Anand Kumar is a former Professor at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. He is the Fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences, India. He has three poetry books including 'Reflections in the Windowpane' and a volume of short stories to his credit. He is a member of Advisory Committee of the FOSWAL's SAARC Festivals and is the Director

of South Asian Sufi Festival, 2017 and South Asian Literature Festival 2018. He lives in Auroville, Tamil Nadu.

## **ARPANA CAUR**

Born in 1954, she is exhibiting since 1974. Her solos, apart from Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru and Chennai, have been held in London, Glasgow, Berlin, Amsterdam, Singapore, Munich, New York, and in Stockholm and Copenhagen National Museums. Her works can be seen in

Museums of Modern Art in Delhi, Bhopal, Mumbai, Chandigarh,

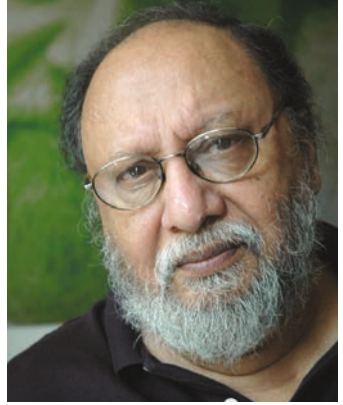
Dusseldorf, Singapore, Bradford, Stockholm, Hiroshima, MOCA LA, Asian Art San Fransisco, Bradford Museum, San Francisco Museum, and Victoria Albert Museum

London. She has been written about, filmed, and awarded with several national and international awards including a Gold Medal in VIth International Triennele, 1986. She was commissioned by Hiroshima Museum of Modern Art for its permanent collection for the 50th Anniversary of the Holocaust in 1995, and by Bengaluru city and the city of Hamburg to do large noncommercial murals in public spaces. Since 1981 she did three large non-commercial murals in Delhi too, and a mural for SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu. Today her paintings support several projects for the underprivileged.



## **ASHIS NANDY**

Ashis Nandy has worked for more than thirty-five years on two contrapuntal areas of social existence—human potentialities and human destructiveness. The oscillation between these two domains defines his work. This has brought him close to social movements and non-state political actors grappling with issues of peace, human rights, inter-civilizational dialogue, environment, and cultural survival. Nandy is a Distinguished Fellow of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi, and of the Institute of Postcolonial Studies, Melbourne. In 2007 he received the Grand Prize of the Fukuoka Asian Culture Prizes and in 2008 he was listed as one of the top 100 intellectuals of the world by the magazine, 'Foreign Policy'.



## **AZIZ HAJINI**



Born at Hajini Kashmir, Dr. Aziz Hajini is a noted Kashmiri and Urdu writer. He has nineteen published books to his credit including the Sahitya Akademi award winning book titled “Aene Khana”. He has also bagged the translation prize from National Akademi of Letters for translation of famous Urdu novel “Do Gaz

Zameen” into Kashmiri.

Hajini, who is presently working as Secretary, J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, has participated in scores of national and international seminars and conferences in India and abroad. He is currently serving as Convener, Kashmiri Board in Sahitya Akademi, for the second time.

## **BALBIR MADHOPURI**

Born in 1955 in a small village Madhopur, Punjab, took Masters of





Arts (MA) in Punjabi from Guru Nanak Dev University. A progressive-dalit litterateur, author, poet, translator and journalist, writes the voice of voiceless.

Madhopuri has authored 14 books in his mother tongue. Apart from his original works he has translated 31 books into Punjabi from Hindi and English. He has also edited 40 books in Punjabi. Balbir is a Punjabi poet with three collections of poetry. Recently, he has received Sahitya Akademi Translation Award 2013 and Life Time Achievement Award 2013, Punjabi Academi Delhi, Govt. of Delhi.

### **BINOD KHATIAN**



Dr. Binod Khaitan studied medicine for his Profession but his deep interest was in Literature from his childhood. He started writing poetry in his College days. His poems are published in various magazines. His first book '*Bar Bar Yayavaar*' was published in 2001. His second published book was '*Umar Se Lambi Sadhkon Par Gulzar*'. He is from Bihar, now lives in Delhi.

### **CHANDRASHEKHAR KAMBAR**

He is a prominent poet, playwright, folklorist, film director in Kannada language and the Founder Vice-Chancellor of Kannada University in Hampi. He was the Chairman, Karnataka Nataka Academy and National School of Drama, New Delhi. After a brief stint in teaching in the University of Chicago, he taught in Bangalore University for over two decades. He has 25 plays, 11 anthologies of poems, 5 novels and 16 research works to his credit. His plays have been widely translated and staged in several Indian languages and published in English. Besides his voluminous works, he presented papers on Indian Folklore and Theater in the universities of Chicago, American Oriental Centre, New



York, etc. He has made five feature films and a number of documentaries for Government of Karnataka and Government of India. He was a Fulbright Scholar and has been conferred with many prestigious awards including Padma Shri by the President of India, Jnanpith Award, Sahitya Akademi Award, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Kabir Samman, Kalidas Samman, Karnataka Sahitya Akademi Award (five times), Pampa Award, and many more.

### **DEO PRAKASH CHOUDHARY**

Deo Prakash Choudhary is a journalist, artist and poet. He has created hundreds of book covers for publishers. He has published a number of books in Hindi and taken part in many national & international art exhibitions. He has been awarded a Fellowship by Department of Culture, Government of India, and Media Fellowship by National Foundation of India.



### **GANGA PRASAD VIMAL**



Ganga Prasad Vimal. He penned around 12 volumes of poetry and 13 collections of short stories with 5 novels, besides a number of prose books including translations from foreign languages. Spent more than 30 years in teaching. Awarded several national and international prizes that include Mahatma Gandhi

Samman by Hindi Santhan. Writings translated in all Indian and many foreign languages.

### **GEETALI BORAH**

Geetali Borah has been working as a journalist and literary Editor since 2001. Now she is working in Prakash, a monthly literary magazine published by Publication Board Assam as Associate Editor. She has five short story collections and she is



awarded Munin Barkataki Bota (2008) and Homen Bargohain Sahitya Bota (2015) for her two story books: 'Sambhawatah' and 'Nirobodhi Noiranjona'. 'Buddhajaya' (2015) is her first novel. It's based on the life of Yashodhara, the wife of Lord Buddha and for this highly appreciated novel she got the special literary award from the president of Asom Sahitya Sabha. She has participated in many seminars and symposiums organized by Sahitya Akademi and NBT.

## **H.S. SHIVAPRAKASH**



Professor, Theatre and Performance Studies, JNU, New Delhi. Author of 9 books of poems, 15 plays and 3 critical works in Kannada, which are widely discussed, performed and translated into several Indian languages and into English, Spanish, French, Italian, German, Polish and Turkish. Winner of the prestigious Rajyotsava Award from Karnataka

State (2006) and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award from National Theatre Akademi (1997) and Sahitya Akademi Award (2012) Participated in International Writing Program in School of Letters, University of Iowa, USA (2000). Former Editor, Indian Literature, the journal of National Akademi of Letters.

## **JASPAL SINGH**

Former Indian High Commissioner to Mozambique and Swaziland. Former Vice Chancellor, Punjabi University, Patiala from 2007 to 2017. During his tenure, the University witnessed a multi-dimensional expansion raising a number of new institutions The overall development of Punjabi language, literature and culture has been the major thrust area with launching of Punjabipedia on the lines of Wikipedia, All-India and Regional Punjabi Conferences, and Mission Punjabi-2020 are the highlights.



The Sahitya Akademi, Government of India, has bestowed the prestigious Bhasha Sanman on Prof. Jaspal Singh in recognition of his significant contribution to the classical and medieval literature, on August 16, 2015.

Dr. Jaspal Singh has authored five highly acclaimed books on Sikh religion, Sikh politics and Sri Guru Granth Sahib. He has authored over 300 articles on Medieval Literature, with focus on Sikh Scriptures including Guru Granth Sahib.

### **K. SREENIVASARAO**

Dr. K. Sreenivasarao is the Secretary of Sahitya Akademi, India's premier Institution of Letters, since 2013. Dr. Rao has a Ph.D. in English literature. In his long and illustrious career, Dr. Rao has been closely associated with various prestigious projects such as Encyclopedia of Indian Poetics, Encyclopedia of Indian Literature, National Bibliography of Indian Literature, Archives of Indian Literature, Indian Literature Abroad. He has translated a Children's dictionary from English to Telugu. He regularly gives talks/interviews on All India Radio and Doordarshan. He is the recipient of Delhi Telugu Akademi Award for 2011.



### **KARAM TEJ SINGH SARAO**

Professor Karam Tej Singh Sarao did his MA (History), MPhil(Chinese and Japanese Studies) and PhD(Buddhism) from Delhi University. He was awarded the prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship in 1985 to study at the University of Cambridge from where he received his second PhD in Archaeology in 1989. He began his teaching career in 1981 at Delhi University's KM College. In 1993, he joined the Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University as a Reader where in 1995 he was selected to occupy a professorial chair. Professor Sarao has been a visiting fellow/professor at Dongguk University



(South Korea), Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies (Taiwan), Sorbonne (France), Cambridge University (UK), Visvabharati (India), and PSRoyal Buddhist University (Cambodia). He has written sixteen books and published more than 250 research papers and articles. In 2011, the PS Royal Buddhist University, Phnom Penh, conferred the degree of D.Litt. (Honoris Causa) on him.

### **KALA RAMESH**



Poet, editor, anthologist, Kala Ramesh's initiatives culminated in founding 'INhaiku' to bring Indian haiku poets under one umbrella in 2013. She has taught haiku and allied genres at Symbiosis International University and the Katha National Writers Workshop since 2013. To bring haiku into everyday spaces, Kala has initiated

HaikuWALL, haikuTRAIL, haikuTALK, haikuWORKSHOP, haikuYOUTH, haikuUTSAV, haikuDHYANA, and haikuSTAGE. Kala has two books and two eBooks on haiku and haibun to her credit. She has edited four anthologies and is the editor of four journals.

### **KAVITA MUKESH**

Kavita Mukesh's book of poetry titled 'Pal Ruko Bas Yanhi Par' was launched in 2003. Her poetry regularly appears in newspapers and journals. She also dabbles in children literature.



### **KAVITA SINGHAL**

Kavita Singhal is a poet, social worker and an educationist. Kavita has published her book of poems titled 'Each Moment A Poem'. Her poems have been published in the anthology 'Indian Poetry through the Passage of Time' and in various journals such as the Seventh Quarry,



Wales, and the Journal of The Poetry Society of India.

### **KUSHAL DUTTA**

Kushal Dutta is an Indian poet, journalist and editor writing in the Assamese language, has five collections of poems and three other non-fictions. He has also edited a number of literary, cultural, GK, cine magazines, souvenirs and books. He was awarded the the MUNIN BARKOTOKI LITERARY AWARD (2003); the KATHAMALITA AWARD (2011) and the SRIJAN SAHITYA SAMMAN (2013). His few poems have been translated into all major Indian regional languages including English and also translated into some major languages of the world. His poems selected for MA Hindi syllabus, Cotton University and MA Assamese syllabus, North Lakhimpur College (Dibrugarh University). By profession Kushal is a journalist working with Dainik Asam, an Assamese daily from Guwahati.



### **LUTFA HANUM SALIMA BEGUM**

Lutf Hanum Salima Begum has five collections of poetry to her credit. Her poems have been translated into other languages— Hindi, Nepali, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Uzbeki, etc. She is a recipient of Munin Borkotoky Award in 1996. She presently teaches Assamese Literature in Cotton College,

Guwahati.

### **MADHAV KAUSHIK**

Madhav Kaushik is an eminent Hindi writer and the Vice-President of Sahitya Akademi. He has more than 30 published books to his credit. Some of his books and poems have been included in the curriculum at graduate and post-graduate level in



different universities. He was the former Secretary of Chandigarh Sahitya Akademi and is presently the Chairman of Chandigarh Sahitya Akademi. He is the recipient of Shiromani Sahityakar Samman, Mahakavi Surdas Samman, All India Balraj Sahni Award, Millennium Award, etc.

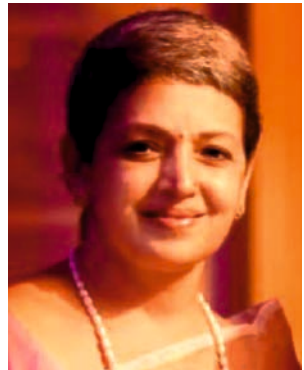


### **MANPREET SINGH SIDHU**

Manpreet Singh is pursuing PhD from Panjab University Chandigarh. His area of research is "illicit cross-border drug trafficking in the western border of Punjab". He is a poet and writes satirical works on social and political issues plaguing our society.

### **MEENU MINOCHA**

Literally whirled into the literary world with a couple of major translation works, Meenu Minocha discovered in herself an ability to create poetical compositions. A whole new avenue opened up, giving a free reign to a magical flow of words, straight from the heart! Showcasing a range of emotions, her poems have been compiled as 'The Sound of Silence', yet with an echo, loud enough to be heard far and wide!



### **MITHILESH SHRIVASTAVA**



Mithilesh Shrivastava, a Hindi poet and art and theatre critic, has been writing on the contemporary art and theatre and social themes in reputed newspapers, magazines, audio & visual media. He was awarded the 'Young Poetry Award' of the Hindi Academy of Delhi. His collection of poems is Kisi Umeed Ki Tarah. He is the Coordinator of The SAARC Dialogue, a monthly literary

programme of The Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature.

## **MUCHKUND DUBEY**

Prof. Muchkund Dubey is currently President of the Council for Social Development, New Delhi. He is former Foreign Secretary, Government of India, and Professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru University. He was India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh and Permanent Representative to U.N. Organizations in Geneva. He served at U.N. and UNDP Headquarters and was also India's member on the Executive Board of UNESCO. He was Vice Chairman, Planning Commission of the Government of Sikkim.



## **RIYAZ PUNJABI**



Prof. Riyaz Punjabi is the former Vice Chancellor of the University of Kashmir. He was granted the Padma Shri, one of India's high civilian awards in 2011. He is President of International Centre for Peace Studies, New Delhi, and Honorary Co-Director European Institute, New Delhi. He is the founding Editor of the quarterly Journal of Peace Studies, New Delhi. Riyaz Punjabi

has authored six books, contributed chapters in 12 edited volumes, more than 200 research papers in National and International journals.

## **R.S. ARORA**

R. S. Arora “Dildar” is a renowned Urdu Poet whose creations are regularly published in various prominent newspapers and magazines. He is also a recipient of many international and national literary awards. His ghazals have been published in two successful books “Sooraj Ka Khwab Hai” and “Toh Zindagi Sanwar Gayi”, to which famous Ghazal singers have lent their voice.



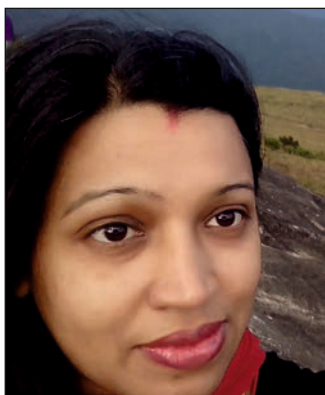
## SANT BALBIR SINGH SEECHEWAL



A great environmentalist, born 1962. He is a real Sufi, selflessly cleaning rivers like Beyeen since 2000 in Punjab and cleaning sewerage systems and roads in villages, planting trees, promoting sports and organising education for the poor. The Beyeen is sacred as Guru Nanak bathed in and got enlightenment on its banks. He has set up a School, College, Computer Training Centre, and Environment Research Centre in Seechewal Village near Jalandhar. He has received several awards and honours by Educational and Environmental and Cultural Institutions in India and abroad, and was visited by former President of India Abdul Kalam personally.

## SADIA DEHLVI

Sadia Dehlvi is an author, columnist and political commentator from New Delhi. For over 30 years her writings have focused on issues of faith, heritage, minorities, and women. She is the author of '*Sufism: The Heart of Islam*' and '*The Sufi Courtyard: Dargahs of Delhi*'. Over the last decade Dehlvi has engaged in writing and spreading enlightened, inclusive, and pluralistic narratives of Islam. She has produced and directed a television series; *Sufiyon ka Aangan*.



## SIGMA SATHISH

Dr. Sigma is currently an Asst. Professor of English at VTMNSS College, Trivandrum. Besides being a poet, article writer, is also an editor, reviewer and advisory board member in five international journals. Her areas of research are feminist studies and poetry and politics. Summer Dreams is her first



poetry collection and the second one is Feminine Blues. She has participated in several prestigious national and international Poetry festivals.

### **SUBHASH NEERAV**

Subhash Neerav is a well known Hindi writer. Eight short story books, two poetry books and two books for children in Hindi have been published. Apart from this, he has rendered Hindi translation of more than 40 Punjabi books, 600 Punjabi stories besides three books of Ajeet Cour, namely '*Post Mortem*' (Novel), '*Yahin Kahin Hoti Thi Zindagi*' and '*Phaltu Aurat*' (Short Stories).



### **SUBODH SARKAR**



Subodh Sarkar is a noted Indian Bengali poet, editor, essayist and translator. He is currently Associate Professor in English at City College, Calcutta University. Central Sahitya Academy Award winner for his collection of poems, '*Dwaipayan Drader Dhare*' ( By the Side of Lake Dwaipayan) for 2013. Participated in International readings in France, Greece, USA, Taiwan, Canada, Russia, Czeck Republic and India. Edited and Guest-edited '*Indian Literature*', Sahitya Academy's flagship journal. Recipient of Bangabhushan from the Govt. of West Bengal, 2015.D.Lit (Honoris Causa) from Gourbanga University and Vidyasagar University. He is now the President of Paschimbanga Kovita Academy, the first of its kind in the country.

### **SUKHWINDER AMRIT**

Sukhwinder Amrit is one of the foremost poets of Punjabi. Her important anthologies include Suraj Di Dehleez, Chiragan Di Dar, Patjharh Vich Pungarde Patte,



Hazar Rangan Di Lat, Kanian, Dhupp Di Chunni. She has been honoured with several literary awards like Kanwar Chauhan Puruskar, Bawa Balwant Purskar, Sarghi Di Lo Puruskar, Ikkivin Sadi Di Amrita Pritam Puruskar, Punjab Rattan Puruskar, 2004 and other awards.



### **TAJENDER SINGH LUTHRA**

Tajender Singh Luthra has Master in Applied Positive Psychology from University of Pennsylvania (USA). He is a keen poet too whose poetic sensibilities travel from real world settings to innocent imaginations. He is a serious practitioner of contemplative practices of the eastern world i.e. meditation.

### **TARANNUM RIYAZ**

Recipient of several national and international awards, Dr. Tarannum Riyaz is also the recipient of SAARC Literature Award 2014. She is a Senior Fellow (Urdu Literature) with The Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Dr. Tarannum Riyaz has authored more than 16 books of Fiction, Criticism and Poetry and her works have been the subject of about 30 books for Ph.D and M. phil degrees. She is a Visiting Fellow and Guest Professor at several prestigious Institutions in India and abroad.



### **VARSHA DAS**



Dr. Varsha Das has more than 100 publications to her credit. Her latest publications are Odia Sahitya-Darshan, a collection of various forms of Odia literature translated into Gujarati, and Chehakata Chauraha, a collection of her Radio Plays in Hindi. She has been writing on visual arts for the past 50 years. She is the recipient of several awards.

# MALDIVES

## AISHATH SHIMLA

With over 15 years of experience as a teacher, Ms Aishath Shimla stands as an enthusiast in the field of education.

She exhibits great interest in linguistics and the history of Maldives. Her interest in varied use of the Dhivehi language is also evident in her role as a presenter and newscaster at the first private channel in the Maldives, Dhi-TV.



Together with developed skills in language, oratory, and a profound awareness of Maldivian history, she hopes to further pursue research in the area of the Dhivehi language and Maldivian culture.

## ASHRAF ABDUL RAHEEM



Dr Ashraf Abdul Raheem is a keen reader of the history of Dhivehi Language. He is an avid writer of poems, short stories and textbooks. He has spoken at various national functions on the linguistics aspects of Dhivehi Language. He has appeared on the national TV and presented programmes to help improve the love of Dhivehi Literature among the Maldivian youth.

His knowledge of Urdu has brought him very close to personalities such as Dr. Allama Iqbal of Pakistan. He has translated several poems of Dr. Alama Iqbal and presented them at various literature forums. He is also closely associated with the teaching community for more than 10 years. At present, he works as a part-time lecturer at Maldives National University.

## NEPAL

### ABHI N. SUBEDI



Professor, poet, folklore scholar, columnist, playwright, and theatre director, Prof. Abhi N. Subedi is an Honoured Member of the Think Tank of FOSWAL. He has written several articles on FOSWAL in national dailies of Nepal. An eminent scholar and expert in folklore documentation, he has been closely associated with FOSWAL for more than a decade. He

is the recipient of many honours and literary awards including SAARC LITERARY AWARD. He has published many research works, in Nepali and English. Currently, he is working on a research project for FOSWAL on 'Kabir and his Contemporary Bhakti Poets in Nepal'.

### ANUPAM ROSHI

Anupam Roshi is a major female voice in the contemporary literary landscape of Nepal. She is the author of three popular novels: Kumari Ama (Unwedded Mother, 2011), Naango Maanche (A Nude Man, 2012) and Kaalo Chhaya (The Black Shadow, 2014) along with a collection of poems Aakanchha ko



Phool Mero (Flowers of My Aspirations, 2005). An editor of Sabdadeep (literary magazine), she is the recipient of several literary awards. She is also a member of International Nepali Literary Society and Nepali Srasta Samaj.



### BADRI BIKHARI (Badri Prasad Pokharel)

Badri Bikhari is a well known Nepali poet and writer. His poems are published in various literary journals, websites and poetry portals from across the country. He has three books of poetry collections, namely 'Madsapko Jhola', 'Hatkelabharika



Rekharu' and 'Samudra Sauti', in his credit.

### **BHISMA UPRETY**

Bhisma Upreti is an award-winning Nepali poet and writer. His 8 books of poetry, 6 books of travel/essay and 1 Novel have been published. His works have been translated into English, Hindi, Tamil, Japanese, Korean, Serbian, Slovenian and Russian and have appeared in various international and national literary journals, magazines and anthologies.



### **EAK PRASAD DUWADI**

Eak Prasad Duwadi, an Assistant Professor of English Literature in Kathmandu University. The author of three books, and the editor of three journals, has also published critical essays on a wide range of topics in leading national dailies of Nepal. A dozen of his research papers have been published from USA, UK, Australia, India, and Nepal. His publications have been discussed and disseminated widely in different parts of the world because he has been already invited to speak and give workshops in India, England, Australia, USA, China, Philippines, Italy, Ukraine and in several other countries. In 2016 he was awarded projects from US Embassy Dhaka, British Council Nepal and University Grant Commission Nepal.

### **KG SUBBA**

KG Subba is a young Nepali poet and artist. His poems are published in various poetry journals and anthologies from across the country. He had been recognized as one of the 'Kavya Tara's following a nationwide poetry competition. He has received several other literary awards. Currently, he teaches in a government owned school in Dhankuta.



## KARUNA JHA



Karuna Jha is a multilingual Nepali poet, writer and social activist. She writes in Nepali, Maithili and Hindi. She has one book of poetry in Maithili and a collection of essays in Nepali. She is awarded various awards including 'Mahadevi Barma Sahityik Samman' in Assam, India. She has been affiliated with number of literary and cultural organizations.

## KESHAB SIGDEL

Keshab Sigdel is a poet, translator, editor and academic based in Kathmandu. His published poetry books include Samaya Bighatan (Dissolution of Time, Kathmandu: 2007), Six Strings (co-authored, NWEN: 2012) and Colours of the Sun (Poesis, Slovenia: 2017). Editor of An Anthology of Contemporary Nepali Poetry (Big Bridge, USA: 2016), he also edits two other journals Rupantaran and Of Nepalese Clay. He is the recipient of Kalashree Srijana Puraskar (2015), Rock Pebbles International Literary Award (India, 2018) and Yuwa varsa Moti Puraskar for Literature (2018). He is also the member of the International Coordinating Committee of World Poetry Movement. His



poems and critical writings are published widely in different languages. He works as the assistant professor of English at the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

## MAHESH PAUDYAL

Mahesh Paudyal is a Nepalese writer, translator and critic, who writes both in English and Nepali.



He has published five novels for children, one novel for young adults, three collections of short stories, a collection of plays, a book of criticism and around thirty school textbooks for English. His translation, *Dancing Soul of Mount Everest*, a collection of 354 poems by 150 renowned Nepali poets, is the biggest collection of Nepali poems available in English. He teaches at the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, and is a recipient of Nepal Vidyabhusan, a title conferred by the President of Nepal for high academic merits.

### **MUKUNDA PRAYAS**

Mukunda Prayas is a young poet, artist and radio jockey from Nepal. He has one book of poetry titled '*Ek Jhola Indreni*' to his credit. He has bedecked hundreds of book covers with his paintings. *Satako Sahitya*, a lit-webzine, awarded one of his poems as the best poem of the year in 2014. In addition, he has received various literary awards from across the country. He is actively involved with numbers of organizations working in the area of art and literature.



### **NIRMAL KUMAR THAPA**



Nirmal Kumar Thapa is a poet, novelist and story teller based in Kathmandu. He penned 9 books in different genre. He is founder president of Color Nepal CNEP, an organisation working in literature, art & culture since 2006. Mr Thapa's recent work *Ekalaap*, an anthology of short stories is receiving popularity among local and global readers.

Thapa honoured by Universal Peace Federation South Korea as an Youth Ambassdor for Peace, Young Achievers Award by Today's Youth Asia, Paragon Fellowship by Honkong, & National Bestseller Winner of 2009 by Maya Publicaion, New Delhi.

## **RAJENDRA PARAJULI**

Born in 1964. Has written 6 books- 4 short story collections, 1 novel, 1 poetry book. Editor of more than dozen literary magazines and contemporary literary collections. Regular column writing in literature, book review and contemporary issues in national publications. Working journalist since two and half decades. Associated- Feature editor of '*Nagarik*' national daily, Nepal Republic Media Group.



## **SHREEDHAR GAUTAM**



Dr. Shreedhar Gautam, a Professor of English in Tribhuvan University, is the President of Literary Association of Nepal, and the former vice-president of Fulbright Alumni Association of Nepal. He is a political analyst and author of six published books in English and Nepali. His area of interest is South Asian writing in English.

## **SINDHU RIJAL**

Sindhu Rijal writes poems and essays in Nepali and contributes to local magazines and papers. A popular host of cultural programs, she is the head of Nepali Department at Capitol Hill Academy in



Kathmandu, and teaches Nepali Literature and Language.



## **SUBASH SINGH PARAJULI**

Subash Singh Parajuli won PENTASI B UNIVERSAL INSPIRATIONAL POET award of 2017, EPITOME for PEACE from Nigeria-



2018, ENTERNITY for PEACE from India-2018, and Icon of Literature from India-2018. A very versatile poet, story teller, avid traveler and literary organizer from Nepal, he has published many poems in many International Journals and Anthologies. He had published 'Mystic Myth', a collection of poetry in 2014 and 'Soil on Pyre' in 2017. He visited India, Bangladesh, Morocco and China for his literary contributions. He writes both in Nepali and English.

### **SUMAN POKHREL**

Suman Pokhrel, an eminent Nepali poet, lyricist, playwright, translator and artist; is widely reckoned as one of the most creative contemporary voices. He lives in Biratnagar. He writes in Nepali, English, Hindi and Urdu. He has three collections of poems. Besides English, his poems are translated into Spanish, French, Italian, Arabic, Farsi, Hindi, Bengali, and Urdu; and are published in various literary journals, anthologies and webzines globally. Recently, he wrote a play 'Yajnaseni', based on 'Draupadi', one of the lead characters from the famous Sanskrit epic Mahabharata. The play was premiered in Irvin Art Center, Dallas, Texas in the USA in October 2016, and was performed in other six states in the US. Suman Pokhrel is two-time SAARC Literary Award recipient.



### **UTTAM LIMBU**



Uttam Limbu (1993) is one of the very active young Nepali poets. His poems are published in major literary journals in Nepal. He is known for craft of his poetry and recitation. He has one book of poetry titled "Caligraphy" to his credit. Limbu bagged the first prize in 'Worldwide Nepali Poetry Competition – 2017' organized by INLS South Korea. He

has received several other awards including Youth Talent Award 2017.

## SRI LANKA

### ASHA NADEEKA RELAPANAWA



Asha Nadeeka Relapanawa is a Visiting Lecturer, Department of Sinhala, University of Sabaragamuwa. Her Novels include : Salapathana Mandiya, Cheka. Short Story Collection: Lemapila. Awards : First Place Literature Division Award for the Novel : Kavitha Talent and for Salpthana Mandiya.

### ASOKA WIDYARATNE

Asoka Widyaratne is a publisher and is Managing Director of APE POTHAK (Our Book) Publishing house. In 2018 APE POTHAK has published two books for additional reading of school children under her supervision. National Library of Sri Lanka has approved those books for school libraries in Sri Lanka.



### D.M. NADUN YASITHA DASANAYAKA



Nadun Yasitha Dasanayaka is working as a government officer. He is a poet, and likes to read and write poems. Has written 4 poetry books. and won North western provincial state literary award for 3 books. In 2017 one of his books nominated to Rjatha Pusthaka National Award.

### GUNATHILAKA SIRIWARDHANA CHARITH PRIYADARSHANA

G. S. Charith Priyadarshana, is Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies and Comparative Philosophy, Faculty of Buddhist Studies in Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka. He is a



Research scholar in religious studies and comparative Philosophy. His Interesting fields are; field studies of religion and contemporary issues, comparative philosophy, Buddhist studies, diverse religious practices and, so on. He is convinced that religion is for ethical development and spiritual development of the society.

### **HETTIGE NIHAL ANURASIRI**

Anurasiri Hettige works as a Deputy Director at Sri Lanka Rupavhini Corporation. (Television Corporation). He has written 07 novels titled *Ganaduraihidilenaelli* (Brightness of darkness) 1992, *Kiyagamagiyaenukohisita* (Traveller: where are you from) 2008, *Kaluwaraipurahanda* (Full moon darkness) 2010, (short listed for SwarnaPusthaka- Awarded for best novel in the year by publishers guild) *Tharuduvili* (Star dust) 2011, *Smarana* (Remembrance) 2014 and *Benda mariya* (Hard rain) 2014 Pandaka Puthra Wasthuwa-2017 (Awarded Fairway Literary Award 2018). Also 3 short stories collections titled *Sinhabahuenakan* (waiting for king) 2011, *Chekoosahathawathkatha* (Where is CHE and Other stories) 2013, and *Dimiya* (Weaver ant) 2015. Got several State Literary Awards.



### **INDIKE NUWAN THOTAWATHTHA**



Dr. Nuwan Thotawaththa is working as an Assistant lecturer at Faculty of Medicine University of Peradeniya. Author of three poetry books and two story books. Working on Poetry and Children's Literature since childhood. Nominated for the awards of best poetry collection in national literature awards, and for best lyrics in state music awards.

### **KANCHANA PRIYAKANTHA**

Kanchana Priyakantha is a bilingual professional writer in Sri Lanka. Some of her works such as *The Virgin Wife* and



Karmaksha have been nominated for Literary Awards in Sri Lanka. She is the Sri Lankan Coordinator of Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature. She is the founder of KSP Publishers Sri Lanka, and the co-founder of KBOOKS.LK, the largest online bookstore in Sri Lanka.

### **KAUSHALYA KUMARASINGHE**

Kaushalya Kumarasinghe is a writer. He published his first novel in 2014 and received Simon Nawagattegama Award for the best novel in 2015. He has translated socio-anthropological and philosophical works into Sinhala including 'In Praise of Love' by Alain Badiou. Currently, he is working on his PhD research on the formation of romantic love in Sri Lanka.



### **KONGALA LIYANAGE AYESH DISHAN**



Ayesh Liyanage is a Sub Editor / Feature Journalist at Rivira Newspaper in Sri Lanka. Also active as activist in social media. Studied B.A in Communication at Trincomalee campus, Eastern University Sri Lanka. Working as a short film / Documentary director and script writer.

### **LAREENA ABDUL HAQ**

Dr. Lareena Abdul Haq is a Lecturer and student counsellor, Department of Languages, Faculty of Social Sciences & Languages, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya. Her published works are :

Collection of Research Articles "Porul





Veli” (2012), Collection of Translated poems (From Sinhala & English into Tamil) “Mounattin Osaikal”, (2008), Novel : “Oru Theep Pilambum Sila Arumbukalum” (2004), Collection of Poetry: “Veesuha Puyale” (2003). Collections of Short Stories: “Thajjaalin Corkkam” (2016) and “Erumai Maadum Thulashich Chediyum”, (2003)

### **M.M.S. HARISCHANDRA**

Dr. Manoji Harischandra is a senior lecturer at the Department of Philosophy, University of Kelaniya. Acquired PhD in Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka. Dr. Manoji has presented classical research papers at National and International conferences and she is academic and social worker. She has written many articles on various topics related to the themes of Philosophy, Psychology, Religion and Social Welfare since 2001.



### **NADIE WASALAMUDALIARACHCHI**



Nadie Wasalamudaliarachchi is a Sri Lankan Author-TV Presenter and former news anchor. Her best known recent work 'Wolfhandhal Street' is written in style of magic realism, which uses fantasy and myth to override time and place. She has published four books. Her poetry books are very popular among alternative political activists.

### **MADDUMA PATABENDIGE THAMEERA MANJU**

Thameera Manju started his journalism career from Ruhunu Sewaya which was the largest regional radio channel in Sri Lanka, 2001. His very first book was named as 'Sinhala Akura'. He has written 'Methanin Awasanai' 'Bunwatha'. He also wrote 'Sellamda Sellam' 'Regimayaka Ridum revolutionary



songs, 'Wasanthaya Ewidin loves songs'. His latest book is called 'Ana's Story' which describes Mr. Ana Punchihewa.

### **REV. DAMPAHALA RAHULA THERO**

Ven. Dampahala Rahula is a lecture at the Department of Religious studies and comparative philosophy in Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka. He coordinates about ten



classical diploma courses such as Buddhism, Pali and Sunskrit. Ven. Rahula has presented classical research papers at National and International conferences and conclaves and he is a social worker who dedicates his time; wealth and labour for the benefit of society. A freelance writer and a researcher of religious studies. As a journalist he

has written many articles on various topics related to the themes of politics, religion and scope of social welfare since 1999.

### **SAMANTHA ILANGAKOON**

Samantha Ilangakoon is a Professor and the Dean of the Faculty of Buddhist Studies at the Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka. He has authored more than twenty five books and participated in twenty six international conferences. He has compiled about thirty research articles and monographs on various subjects related to Philosophy, Psychology, Religious Studies and



Buddhist Studies.



### **SUHARSHANI DHARMARATNE**

Suharshani Dharmarathna is a poet and a lyricist. She has published 5 books of poetry, 1 book of lyrics, and won the Central Province Literary Award for poetry in 1997 for 'Bol Bijuwata'. The book of poetry 'Giri Hisa Tharanaya' won both Godage

Award and the State Literary Award in 2013. In 2016 'Sudu Watha Handi Kekiniya', another book of poetry written by her, was nominated for the State Literary Award under the category of 'Best Poetry'. She has been a member of the poetry judge panel of Godage Literary Awards for 2017 and 2018. Some of her poems are included in the syllabus of well-recognized academic institutions.

### **VEN O SOMANANDA**

Ven Omalpe Somananda is a Senior Lecturer in Department of Buddhist and Pali Studies. He is a Buddhist scholar.



### **VEN. GALLELLE SUMANASIRI THERO**

Ven. Prof. Gallelle Sumanasiri is presently Vice Chancellor of Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka, Professor at Religious Studies, Department of Religious Studies and Comparative Philosophy, and held the post of Dean, Faculty of Buddhist Studies from 2004-2007.



### **YASAWARDANAGE NIMAL JAYARATNE**

Nimal Jayaratne is working as a Chartered Engineer by profession at Sri Lanka Telecom Pvt. Ltd. There are three poetry books and one short story book he has written and published. One of poetry books published in year 2016 was selected for the final round in the state literacy award festival in year 2017. Actively engaged in the art and literature field (Sinhala Language), mainly focusing on poems. He is frequently participating, organizing poetry festivals, poetry book discussions sessions accordingly.



## CULTURAL EVENINGS :

**MUSICA MEDICINA** by

**Vishesh Kalimero and Rahul Jigyasu**

A tribal meditative experience bringing together sounds from monasteries, temples and forests.



**Vishesh Kalimero** plays string instruments from India, China, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. He also sings with various voice techniques such as Throat singing from Mongolia and Tibet. He has been travelling around the globe for the last 9 years performing, learning and sharing with the mystical realm of sound.

**Rahul Jigyasu** principally plays percussive instruments. He is trained in tabla and currently learning pakhawaj. He has lived in Indonesia and learnt the craft of making instruments with bamboo. He also plays the Indonesia harp Kaccapi and has experimented with various Indonesian folk and tribal music and instruments.

### **BABA FARID: POET OF THE SOUL : A FILM BY MEERA DEWAN**

Meera Diwan is a Producer-Director, Film Curator. Won 21 National & International Film Awards. Curated DOCUMENTA, the first Doc film section of IFFI; CINEWOMAN, India's first International Women's Film Festival, with Alliance Francaise; CINEMATIC IMAGES OF





INDIAN WOMEN, a touring fest of four cities, with Ministry of I & B,

GIFT OF LOVE, her first film, won 7 international awards.

Worked with National Film Board of Canada and returned to India to film an adaptation of STAYING ALIVE by Vandana Shiva, AMRIT BEEJA. Won six awards. Produced in the UK,

Germany, Vietnam, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Canada.

Film Awards include International Film Festival of India; Festival de films du femmes, France; Oberhausen Film Festival (4 Awards); Leipzig Film Festival, Reina Film Festival, France; Okomedia Film Fest, (Grand Jury Award). Mumbai International Film Fest, National Film Festival, India: 3 awards including Best Film & Best Music.

Jury membership of several International film festivals

### **Screening of the Film : 'RAMLEELA OF KHERIYA' by Dr. Molly Kaushal**

Molly Kaushal is a Professor of Performance Studies at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi and Head, Janapada Sampada Division. Her first Independent documentary film was on the Gaddi tribe – A Himalayan sheep herding community. Leela in Kheriya is her first feature length documentary film, which has been shown across different parts of the country and abroad. The film was shown at the Indian Pavilion in Cannes 2017, Indo German Film Week in Berlin in July 2017, Lonewala Film Festival 2017, Delhi International Film Festival 2017, SIFFY, 2017, and was awarded “Certificate of Excellence” at the 8th Dada Saheb Phalke Film Festival in 2018. Her other films include Landscaping the Divine: Space and Time among the Gaddis; Satrangi Sapne-Bangle Dreamz; Glass India: Born from Fire; and Carpet Weaving.

