



Academy's Best Book Award presented in 7 languages Writers are players of social change: Rather

Srinagar, June 18, 2013

The J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages Tuesday presented the Best Book Award-2011 to seven authors in as many languages. The Award, carrying a cash prize of Rs. 51,000, a memento, shawl and citation each, was given to Mr. N. D. Jamwal for his Dogri book, *Triphala*, Mr. Abdul Gani Sheikh for his English book, *Reflections of Ladakh, Tibet and Central Asia*, Mr. Shiv Nirmohi for his Hindi book, *Kishtwar- Sanskriti Aur Parampara*, Mr. Makhan Lal Kanwal for his Kashmiri book, *Yath Aangnas Manz*, Mr. Uryyan Rigzin for his Ladakhi book, *Nubray Nas Shad*, Dr. Sushil Sharma for his Punjabi book, *Jammu Kashmir De Panjabi Geetan Wich Samkaleen Samaj Di Jhalak* and Mr. Muhammad Amin Lala for his Urdu book, *Kitab ul Mousiqee*.



The Academy gives away this award annually in 10 languages. However, this time Gojri, Pahari and Dardi languages remained out of the competition as the minimum three books required for the completion were not received in these languages.

The Awards were presented by Minister for Finance & Ladakh Affairs, Mr. Abdul Rahim Rather. Minister of State for Industries & Commerce, Home, Tourism & Culture, Mr. Sajad Ahmad Kitchloo, Commissioner/Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Mr. Atal Dulloo, a large number of writers, senior officers and lovers of literature were present.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Rather described writers as players of social change and highlighted their role in socio-cultural transformation. He said writers have always played pivotal role in bringing positive changes in society. He said J&K has rich cultural and literary legacy which needs to be promoted and preserved and assured his Government's full support to any initiative in this regard.

Rather appreciated the role of the Academy in promoting quality literature and said that the Best Book Award was one of its efforts in this direction. He complimented the awardees and hoped the honour would inspire them to write more and achieve higher excellence in writing. He said writers and poets from Jammu & Kashmir have been producing excellent literature and receiving great accolades and honours. He specifically referred to the Gnanpeeth Award received by one of the iconic poets of Kashmiri language, Prof. Rehman Rahi.

The Minister hoped that languages that did not make to the award this year because of lesser than the required number of entries would be part of the next Best Book Award of the Academy. He asked the writers of these languages to make sure that enough books are written and submitted for the competition next time.

Earlier, giving a resume of the Academy's activities during the past one year since June 2012, Secretary, J& K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages, Khalid Bashir Ahmad said that, besides routine activities, many significant steps were taken to improve the functioning of the institution and promote art, culture and literature. He said a comprehensive website of the Academy was launched to disseminate information and keep viewers updated. He said digitization of the Academy's rich collection of manuscripts, paintings, miniatures, calligraphy specimen and photographs was started last month and was going on smoothly, a 12-page multi colour newsletter, *Saqafat*, was launched which was being published regularly, major language conferences were held in Kashmiri, Dogri and Punjabi to discuss challenges and opportunities for different languages of the State while more were scheduled later in the year and the annual Drama Festival in Kashmir was revived after a gap of four years. He said that a 2-month long Kashmir Folk Festival was launched in Kashmir on April 4 during which, for the first time in the history of the Academy, a record 56 cultural events showcasing Kashmiri folk music and theatre are being held. Among the last year's other significant measures and programmes, he listed the 2-day Quranic Manuscripts & Calligraphy Specimen exhibition, enhancement in TA/DA of artists and writers and writers' remuneration and institution of Artists & Writers' Welfare Fund.

Unfolding the package of the forthcoming events, Khalid said that a 3-day Kashmir Music Festival, showcasing light, folk and sufiana music, will start from June 19 to be inaugurated by legendary singer,

Raj Begum, 5-day All State Writers' Camp will begin, first time in 24 years in Kashmir, from June 23. He said a major Kashmir Heritage Exhibition will be held in the first fortnight of July while All India painting Camp, All India Sculptors Camp, Conferences in Pahari, Urdu and Hindi languages, State level essay competition at school, college and university level, Play script competition, seminar on role of mother tongue in social reform and Children's on-the spot painting competition are other activities scheduled for the coming months.

On the publication front, the Secretary said, apart from regular issues of periodicals, many special publications in different languages were published during the last one year including Kaeshir Conference Number, Nishat Ansari Number, monographs on Akhtar Mohiuddin, Iqbal Nath Wanpoh and Ahmad Ullah Haakbari, Koshur Encyclopedia Vol 5 and reprint of Kaeshir Dictionary in three volumes in Kashmir language, Tagore Number in English, Meeraji Number in Urdu, Malfoozat-e- Nizamia, Qissa-e- Chahar Darvaish, Tareekh-i-Ibn-i-Khaldoon and Mathnavi Maulana Room in Gojri, Hemis Monastery Number, Likir Monastery Number and Ladakh Pottery Number in Ladakhi, Professor Madan Mohan Sharma Number in Dogri and Lok Waarta Number and Anthology in Punjabi. He said many special publications in different languages were under print including Iqbal- Ahbaab-o-Aasaar by Dr Akbar Hyderi, Tagore Number, Hum Asar Afsana Number, Mantoo Number, Pran Kishore Number, Dogri Conference Number, Jammu Kashmir Ladakh Number Vol 8 and the first ever Academy publication on Sheena language.

He said several special publications that were lying in the press for a long time were also printed during the last year. These include Faiz Number, MF Hussain Number, Pushkar Nath Number, Fareed Parbati Number, Jammu Kashmir Ladakh Number Vol 7 in Urdu, Tagore Number and Ram Nath Shastri Number in Hindi, Saada Sahit in Dogri and Punjabi, Karnah Number and Poonch Number in Pahari and Kulyaat-i- Ismail Zabeeh, Kulyaat-i-Mukhlis Wajdani, Kulyaat-i-Shamsuddin Mehjoor and Ilm Din Banwasi Number in Gojri.
