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साहित्य अकादेमी
(राष्ट्रीय साहित्य संस्थान)
संस्कृति मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार की स्वायत्तशासी संस्था
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PRESS RELEASE

Meet & Interact with your favourite Children Writer
and a session devoted to
"The Future of Children's Magazines"
16 November 2022

New Delhi, Wednesday, 16 November 2022, the sixth day of Sahitya Akademi's Book Fair *Pustakayan* featured two literary programmes - *Meet & Interact With Your Favourite Children Writer - Kamaljit Neelon* and *The Future of Children's Magazines - Discussion and Readings*. The first programme was enthralling with the mesmerizing performances of Kamaljit Neelon, a renowned Punjabi children's writer, singer and mimicry artist. Remembering his past days, Kamaljit said that he had a very sweet childhood; his father always appreciated him for his singing and writing; he used to do mimicry of every voice; he was a monitor in his school and was a good observer of everything around him. He further said that he likes the poetry which comes from the inner self of a person and would never do commercial singing as he loves children and shall only sing for them. He sang a number of hilarious songs accompanied with mimicry having deep-rooted meanings for the children.

The second programme had an interactive session on "The Future of Children's Magazine" in which S.R. Lal, Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar awardee and Bhairu Lal Garg, Editor, *Balvatika* were the speakers. Giving a brief account of the history of children writing, S.R. Lal said that adopting scientific methods of writing for children in Malayalam started in the 19th century. As regards the first children's magazine in Malayalam, there is no precise data available. Some literary historians consider *Balardeepam* as the pioneering children's magazine in Kerala whereas some other say, it is *Nammude Masika*. He further said that print media is facing major challenges due to outbreak of corona pandemic, lack of advertisements and dwindling circulation which has enormously crippled it. He was optimistic that the children's publications are there to stay. Writers and publishers are responsible for fascinating the readers and nurturing reading habits in them by employing modern writing techniques served in newer and attractive forms. So they must create the magazines more visually and sensibly crafted.

Bhairulal Garg, Editor, *Bal Vatika* began his talk asking the children present in this programme as to which are the children's magazines they read? Upon getting not too encouraging response, he asked the children to insist their parents to provide them children's magazine regularly in addition to their syllabus books. He said, we must have some more interactive sessions not only with children but also with their parents to make them understand the importance of providing children's magazine to their children for their all round growth. This will also help the children's magazines survive and go a long way. Earlier, our grand parents used to tell stories to children but now this practice is gradually fading away due to new society culture in which we are having majority of nuclear families. He said children's magazines have played a major role in his life and the poems, stories which we read in our childhood inspire us throughout our life. Kamaljit Neelon who was chairing the programme hailed the views expressed by the two speakers and called upon the children to read as many children's magazine as possible which will take them closer to nature, understand the world in a better way and turn into a responsible citizen of the country. The children too actively participated and interacted with their favourite writers and thoroughly enjoyed these fun filled programmes.


(K. Sreenivasarao)