

INAUGURATION OF THE 89<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
NIKHIL BHARAT BANGA SAHITYA SAMMELAN

Hon'ble Chief Minister's Speech

25-12-2016 / 12-30 P M / ITI Vidya Mandir High School, Dooravani Nagar,  
Krishna Raja Puram, Bengaluru

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Shri Pranab Mukherjee,  
Hon'ble President of India,

Shri Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala,  
Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka,

Shri Subhra Kamal Mukherjee,  
Hon'ble Chief Justice,  
High Court of Karnataka,

Shri Saryu Rai,  
Hon'ble Minister for Parliamentary Affairs,  
Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs,  
Government of Jharkhand,

Prof Pradip Bhattacharjee,  
President,  
Nikhil Bharat Banga Sahitya Sammelan and  
Member of Rajya Sabha,

Distinguished Invitees,

Media Friends,

Ladies and Gentleman,

1. I am delighted to be present in this Banga Sahitya Sammelan amidst a distinguished gathering of eminent personalities led by none-other-than our beloved Rashtrapati-ji.

2. I am told that the Nikhil Bharat Banga Sahitya Sammelan is an all-India literary organisation founded by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore along with other eminent Bengali personalities and that he presided over its first Conference held in Varanasi.

3. I am doubly delighted that the Sammelan is being held in the City of Bengaluru - known for its vibrant, harmonious and all-inclusive cosmopolitan ethos and that too just a day after the Bengali Poet and Critic, Shri Shanka Ghosh, also a leading authority on Rabindranath Tagore, has been announced as the Jnanpith Awardee for 2016.
4. Such has been the literary brilliance of Gurudev that India is yet to produce another Nobel Prize Winner in Literature, even after a century. No wonder, the national anthems of India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have been penned by Gurudev.
5. Our Father of the Nation, Gandhiji and Gurudev had mutual admiration and respect for each other. We all know, it was Gurudev who bestowed the title of Mahatma on Gandhiji.
6. In these times of international strife, is it not in the fitness of things that both advocated the concept of plurality of nations, while denouncing competition and violence in our civilized world ?
7. The most eminent Kannada Poets and Jnanpith Awardees, Dr K V Puttappa (Kuvempu) and Dr Dattatreya Ramachandra Bendre (Ambikatanaya Datta) were deeply influenced by the concept of *Cosmic Consciousness* of Gurudev.
8. Another Jnanpith Awardee, Dr U. R. Anantha Murthy, who headed the Tagore Chair till his death, was profoundly impressed by the propagation of the ideal of national integration espoused in Gurudev's all-time classic, *Gora*.

9. I take pride in the fact that there are as many as 28 translations in Kannada of the *magnum opus* of Gurudev, *Gitanjali*. The most prominent being the translations of Shri Prahlada Naregalla.
10. Thus, we can see that the Bengali and Kannada Literatures have a history of long connect and I am glad that this Conference has a special session dedicated to deliberate upon the confluence of these two Schools of Literature.
11. It is indeed heartening to note that Bengaluru is hosting the Annual Conference for the fourth time.
12. I wish the Sammelan, all success.

Thank you one and all !

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