

National Seminar on Folklore: Endangered Languages and Cultures

17th – 19th December 2012

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in collaboration with Indian Folklore Congress (IFC) organized a three day National Seminar on Folklore: Endangered Languages and Cultures from 17th- 19th December 2012 at Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) in Mysore. The inaugural ceremony on 17th December began with a beautiful invocation by V. Geetha. Mr. G. Devi Prasada Sastry, RRO, CIIL gave the welcome address. The seminar was inaugurated by Prof. K.C Baral, Director CIEFL. After Prof. Baral's motivating inaugural address, Prof. Jawaharlal Handoo, President IFC, presented a detailed report to the audience on the workings of the Indian Folklore Congress. Prof. Awadesh Kumar Mishra, President CIIL gave his remarks on the seminar and enlightened the members present with the agenda of this year's seminar. The programme was ended by a vote of thanks by Mr. K Srinivasacharya.

On the first day of the seminar, there were three sessions which were chaired by Prof. S.C Malik, Prof. K.C Baral and Prof. Awadesh Kumar Mishra. The first paper was presented by Nepalese scholar Mr. Bhim N Regmi on "Lohorong Folk Life as Reflected in the Spoken Discourse". Some of the interesting papers presented were "Folklore: Comparison Inter-disciplinarily and the New Humanities" by Dr. T. S Satyanath, "Analyzing the Swadeshi Movement (1905) through select Folk Songs from Bengal" by Ms. Debosmita Paul and "Social Mobility: Narrative Experiments with Traditional Textiles in Kutch" by Ms. Nina Sabnani. Each session was followed by enthused and intellectually stimulating interactive session and discussion.

On the second day, the delegates were taken on a field trip to the outskirts of Mysore to experience firsthand the sites and sights of folk culture in Karnataka. We visited the towns of Belur, Halebidu and Sravanabelagola. Belur is renowned for its Chennakeshava temple and Halebidu for the Hoysaleswara temple; both are one of the finest examples of Hoysala workmanship. The temples are a holy house for sculptures showcasing innumerable stories from the Puranas, Upanishads and other myths, including the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The facades of the temples are filled with intricate sculptures, heavy ornamentation and friezes. The inner sanctum, the doorways and the ceilings are fully decorated with sculptures that represent life and vigor with variety of actions and movements. The statue of Gommateshvara Bahubali at Sravanabelagola is one of the most important

pilgrimage destinations in Jainism, one that reached a peak in architectural and sculptural activity.

On the last day of the seminar, there were four sessions which were chaired by Ms. Simi Malhotra, Prof. Saugata Bhadur and Prof. Tulasi Diwasa. Dr. Simon John presented a paper “Transgender’s Folklore” which was followed by a short illustrative video clip. Prof. Jawaharlal Handoo was the chair for the Special IGNCA session. The IGNCA research fellows presented paper on the research topics undertaken by them. Sarah Rahman Niazi presented a paper titled “Cinema’s Folkloric Imagination: Mythologicals and Devotionals in Early Indian Cinema”, Sangeeta Dutta on “*Sabin Alun*: Reflections on Ramayana among the Karbi Tribe of Assam”, Jayanti Thokchom’s paper titled “Religious Interaction in Manipur: A Study of Meitei Myths and Legends”, Ahanthem Homen Singh “*Emoinu*: The Goddess of Prosperity of the Meitei” and Pranab Jyoti Sarma “The Legend of Numolikunwori and Fort of Numoligarh”. The papers were well received by the members present and were a catalyst for a great intellectual discussion and debate. The three day seminar was a platform for exciting dialogue and provided senior and junior scholars to present their research material and add to the corpus of research on Folklore and Folklore Studies. The Indian Folklore Congress ended with a provisional conclusion that it will be organized again next year in Rajkot.