

An evening with Dr Ashok Chakradhar

Legendary Hindi Humour & Satire Poet's Sydney Appearance

Dr. Ashok Chakradhar, the world renowned satirical Hindi poet, is a multi talented personality. He is Professor at the department of Hindi, faculty of Humanities & Languages, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Among numerous 'Kavi -Sammelans' he presides all around the world like USA (where he visits regularly every year) UK, Australia, Singapore, UAE and many other countries of the world, he has presented programs on All India Radio, written and directed many tele-films like *Gulabri*, *Jeet Gai Chhanno* documentaries like *Vikas Ki Lakiren*, television programs & tele serials. He has published many books of poetry, children's and adult literature, literary criticism, screen plays and dramas. He has been recipient of numerous awards in the field of his poetry, folk literature, books and mass media and to name a very few, Best Writer & Director Award for the film on the handicapped 'Pangu Giri Langhe' by Directorate of Film Festival of India in 1992, *Kavi Samman in 1996* by President of India Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, *Baal Sahitya Puraskar* by Hindi Academy of Delhi in 1991, *Samaj Ratna*, *Kaka Hathrasi Hasya Puraskar* and more. He recently completed 156 episodes of 'Wah Wah' a popular poetry sammelan on television on one of India's leading channel.



Manju Channan, Rekha Rajvanshi, Gambhir Watts, Ashok Chakradhar, Om Krishna Rahat, Abbas Raza Alvi

Sydney residents had the opportunity to spend a beautiful evening with the Ashok Chakradhar who was visiting his son in Sydney and very kindly agreed to spare Bhavan Australia an evening and recite his poetry. The event was organized at Concord Community Centre on Saturday 18 June 2005 by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia. Considering the short two weeks in which the program was organized, it was an overwhelming response from the audience who came to listen to their favorite poet. It is indeed heartening to know that Sydney houses so many lovers of Hindi poetry.

After a short tea session the program was commenced. Mr Gambhir Watts, President of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia welcomed the Chief Guest and said it was a privilege to have such a talented poet from India with us for the evening. He requested Mr Ashok Chakradhar to come on stage and Mr Om Kishan Rahat, *an eminent senior poet in Australia* to accept the "Sadarat" of the session and *take the chair*.

Mrs Rekha Rajvanshi a hindi teacher and well known local poetess and writer gave a brief introduction of Mrs Bageshri Chakradhar and Ashok Chakradhar. Mrs Bageshri Chakradhar recited Laxmi Vandana and entertained the audience with her creative humoristic poetry. Ashok Chakradhar took on the stage after that and began enthralling the audience with his humour and unique poetry. From women, to politics, to men, to Indian Australians, Ashok Chakradhar recited poetry on a wide range of topics. He also kept narrating hilarious jokes from everyday life situations throughout the program which compelled the audience to smile and often laugh. Even though his poetry was humorous and satirical yet it touched great depths of human life and struggles and carried with it a meaningful message. His zest for poetry could be easily observed as he held the stage and recited poetry non-stop for more than two hours and the audience was willing to stay longer still in the late chilly winter night.

Mr Om Krishan Rahat also recited his sensitive and freshly created poetry which was very well appreciated by the audience. Mr Ashok Chakradhar was given many requests by the audiences who did not want him to finish but he finally concluded his poetry at 10.00 pm by reciting a beautiful poem. The evening was finally concluded with vote of thanks by Mr Abbas Raza alvi, a well known Sydney poet & Artist and Director, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia and presentation of a momento to Ashok Chakradhar by President Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia Gambhir Watts.



Bageshree Chakradhar, Om Krishna Rahat, Ashok Chakradhar



Gambhir Watts, Abbas Alvi, Om Krishna Rahat, Ashok Chakradhar



Om Krishna Rahat, Ashok Chakradhar



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'KAVI GOSTHI'

'A Conference' of Hindi & Urdu Poets in Australia'

In sequence to Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia's *An Evening With Dr Ashok Chakradhar* legendary Hindi humour & satire poet's Sydney appearance on 18 June 2005, a program 'Kavi Gosthi' for the local Hindi and Urdu poets was organized by Bhavan Australia on 24 June 2005. Ashok Chakradhar was the Chief Guest for the evening accompanied with his talented poetess wife Bageshri Chakradhar (daughter of Kaka Hathrasi). The program was coordinated by Abbas Raza Alvi renowned poet and Director Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia and Iqtedar Abdi conducted the program as the Master of Ceremonies. Iqtedar Abdi introduced the poets by reciting couplets of poetry by some of the famous poets like Neeraj, Ashok Chakradhar and others. Various talented Indian Australian poets and poet from Pakistan who attended were, Arif Sadik, Riaz Shah Australia's well known singer and poet, Dr Shailja Chaturvedi, Anil Verma, Kailash Bhatnagar, Raza Kirmani. Poet Subhash Sharma accompanied by his wife traveled from Melbourne to attend the event. Senior poet Om Krishna Rahat, recipient of many prestigious awards including Nishan – e - Urdu Award from Urdu Society of Australia also participated and recited some of his excellent works.



Om Krishna Rahat, Lalli Sethuram, Ashok Chakradhar, Bageshree Chakradhar, Gambhir Watts, Abbas Raza Alvi

Gambhir Watts, President Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia welcomed the poets and the guests and gave a brief introduction on Bhavan's activities in Australia. He told that *The Gosthi* was organized with a view to bring together Hindi and Urdu poets in Australia and provide a platform for regular Gosthi's. He also announced 43 entries received from the local poets and invited further contribution of poetry for the publication of a poetry book by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. This publication will be a unique poetry book in which Urdu and Hindi poetry by poets of Indian / Pakistan origin in Australia will be transliterated and published together. The English summary for the poetry will be available in the same book as well.



Ashok Chakradhar, Bageshree Chakradhar, Gambhir Watts



Iqtedar Abdi, MC

All the poets shared some of their poetry with the audience and fellow poets. Abbas Raza Alvi evoked patriotic sentiments of the audience with his heartfelt recitation of his freshly created poem in remembrance of the country of his love and childhood. Senior poet Om Krishna Rahat deeply touched the hearts of the audience with his extremely sensitive and intense poetry revolving around pain and struggles of human existence. Shailja Chaturvedi's recitation of poem on 'Ma'- mother, made obvious the value of 'Janani'- the one who gives birth. Kailash Bhatnagar beautifully depicted in her poetry the identity crisis faced by many women (as a daughter, wife and then a a mother). Bageshri Chakradhar surprised the gathering with her sensitive poetry and melodious and well trained voice. Ashok Chakradhar showed a deeper side to his poetic talents by narrating some thought provoking poetry though it was difficult to leave the gathering without reciting humorous poetry. Even though some of Ashok Chakradhar's poetry was satirical and humorous, it displayed a sound observation and humane concern for his country's social and economic situation.

Iqtedar Abdi and many other poets thanked Bhavan Australia for initiating such a good cause to preserve and revive Hindi and Urdu language in Australia through Kavi Goshti. The evening was concluded by recitation of poetry by senior poet Om Krishna Rahat. Lalli Sethuram, Director of Bhavan Australia gave the vote of thanks followed by an interactive get together of the attendees over tea and snacks.



Kailash Bhatnagar



Riaz Shah



Subhash Sharma



Arif Sadiq



Anil Verma