

16 JUNE 2001



Sahitya Akademi

invites you to

meet the author

N.P. MOHAMED





Sri N.P. Mohamed was born in 1929 in the suburbs of Kozhikode, Kerala where the Kallai river flows to the Arabian Sea. Kallai was one of the greatest timberyards in the world in those days. Mohamed was brought up in this vicinity where the main source of income was timber, both for wealthy tradesmen and poor workers. Mohamed's father, N.P. Aboo, a dealer of timber products was attracted to the National Freedom Movement. He was accused and imprisoned in Keezhariyur Bomb Case, first of its kind in 1942 Quit India Movement in Kerala. As a young boy, life of the poor folk of Kallai and the political atmosphere at home made inalienable impression in Mohamed's mind. Later his many works reflected the life and times of Kozhikode suburbs.

Socially and educationally backward, it was quite natural that the rays of culture never penetrated into the minds of

general public of Kallai. This is the background in which N.P. Mohamed conceived, planned and penned his stories. As a writer of short fiction, his stories portrayed the sufferings of this microscopic minority, Mappila Muslims with their social ethos and taboos. The stories were something of a powerful social criticism which has hitherto strange to the Malayalam readers. His first short story collection brought out in 1952, *Thoppiyum Thattavum* (Caps and Turbans), was received well. It won Madras Government's Prize, as Malabar was then a district of Madras Province. This collection of short story and the subsequent award helped him to have wide contact with the then writers. The exchange of literary problems with them enriched his experience and gave him opportunity to read books of various other countries. Thus the experimental writing became his passion.

N.P. Mohamed wrote short stories, novels, essays and children's literature. Most of the writings of the first phase belong to the social and human situation of people and culture of Kallai and Kozhikode.

First short novel *Maram* (The Drift Wood) presents the mental richness of the poor people of Kallai suburbs, and was later translated into English and published. It also has a

Hindi version. *Maram* was successfully filmed in late 1970. Later N.P. Mohamed's literary mind had evolved over the great issues of human landscape and his stories have more of an Indian background. *Arabipponnu* (The Arab Gold) co-authored with M.T. Vasudevan Nair, first of its kind in Malayalam made a tremendous impact in Malayalam Literature. *Hiranyakashipu* is a satire on political humbug, using the method of mythological characters and situations. It forecasts the political crisis and autocracy which could happen in a period of Emergency. He again turned his mind to the life of Kallai and wrote a collection of connected novellas, *Ennappadam*. This novel captured the imagination of the entire readers of Malayalam literature. Its adaptation as a television serial was so popular that it was telecast many times. This was also adopted for a film.

N.P. Mohamed always experimented his stories with a variety of subjects like politics, religion, media, myths and historical settings. All these stories were not written in a conventional mono-pattern. He used the language, style, presentation, depiction in novel ways, making him one of the notable craftsmen of his period. Especially his stories on mythology based on Quranic themes such as *Oru Kaladi Mathram* (One Footstep Only), *Lokavasanam* (The Dooms Day), *Al-Khujoor*, (A Hymn of Praise of God), *Vellam* (Water), *Mohammadinte Jananam* (Birth of Mohamed) etc., are translated into many Indian languages. The creative mind of N.P. Mohamed touching the spheres of mythology and religion with a bent on modern psychology has yielded a creative method of intense expression. It can be seen in *Daivathinte Kannu* (The Eye of God). It won him many awards including Sahitya Akademi Award in 1993. It was rendered



Receiving Sahitya Akademi Award from the President, Prof. U.R. Anantha Murthy



Receiving Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for total contribution from the President, Shri M.T. Vasudevan Nair. Prof. O.N.V. looks on

into English by Smt. Gita Krishnan Kutty who also got the Sahitya Akademi's translation prize for the same in 1999.

N.P. Mohamed is considered to be an original thinker in his literary and political circles. His articles have been collected in 3 books. His book on the Indian Muslims and Secular Democracy is considered in many ways as a text-book on Indian Muslims in the context of Indian politics. Also his work *Veerarasam of C.V. Raman Pillai*, the great Malayalam novelist is an original study, mainly as a novelist, unlike the studies of former critics as a historical novelist. He has five works of childrens' literature to his credit, which also received much attention and awards. Many of his books are prescribed and taught for various courses of studies in universities.

The Malayalam reading public is well aware of the variety and craftsmanship of his works, which earns him an

enviable position in the field of present Malayalam literature. He is widely proclaimed as the 'story-teller of humanity'.

N.P. Mohamed was employed in a co-operative society in 1948 and retired from there in 1980 as its Secretary. Then he joined *Kerala Kaumudi Daily* and was its Resident Editor till 1994. He was very active in social and cultural activities of Kerala, worked on many capacities. He was associated with little magazines - *Navasahiti*, *Gopuram* and *Jagratha* in his early years of literary activities. He was also connected with the activities both of the central and state bodies; Kerala Sahitya Akademi, Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi, Central Board of Film Certification etc. Presently he is the Executive Committee member of Sahitya Akademi and the Convenor of the Advisory Board for Malayalam. He has travelled widely both in Gulf countries and Europe.

A Select Bibliography

Short Stories

- Thoppiyum Thattavum* (Caps and Turbans) - 1952
Nallavarude Lokam (World of Good People) - 1955
Maranam Tharattupadi (Death Sang a Lullaby) - 1960
Kavithakal - Variyellukal (Poems and Ribs) - 1962
Nalpathirandam Veetil Chekuthan (The Devil in 42nd House) - 1964
Presidentinte Adyathe Maranam (First Death of the President) - 1968
Muhammadinte Jananam (Birth of Muhammed) - 1971
Selected Stories - 1988
Mezhukuthirikal (The Candles) - 1989
Soofikathakal (Soofi Stories) - 1990
De-colonisation - 1999

Novels

- Maram* (The Drift Wood) - 1957
Arabipponnu co-authored with M.T. Vasudevan Nair (The Arab Gold) - 1960
Hiranyakashipu - 1966
Guha (The Cave) - 1969
Thankavathil (Golden Gate) - 1980
Ennappadam - (Oilfield) 1980
Daivathinte Kannu (The Eye of God) - 1990

Criticisms

- Pukakkuzhalum Saraswathiyum* (Chimney and Saraswathi) - 1968
Manushyakam (On Humanness) - 1981
Veera Rasam CV Krithikalil (Veera Rasam in CV Literature) - 1988
Mandahasathinte Mounarodanam (Silent Cry of Smile) - 1990

Children's Literature

- Navu Murinja Kili* (Tongue-cut Sparrow) - 1958
Avar Nalu Per (They are Four) - 1986
Kalikkoppukal (Toys) - 1987
Uppum Nellum (Salt and Rice) - 1997

Other Works

- Abudhabi, Dubai* (Travelogue) - 1977
Muhammed Abdurahiman, A political biography (with S.K. Pottekkat, P.P. Ummerkoya and K.A. Kodungallur) - 1978
Islam Rajamargam (Translation of Islam between East and West by Alija ali Issat Begovich) - 1990
Indian Muslimkalum Secular Democraciyum (Indian Muslims and Secular Democracy) - 1990
Thamaranool (String of Lotus) (Reminiscences of writers) - 1990
Marivillinu Tee Kolutharuthu (Don't lit fire to the Rainbow) - Collection of Essays in lighter vein - 1993



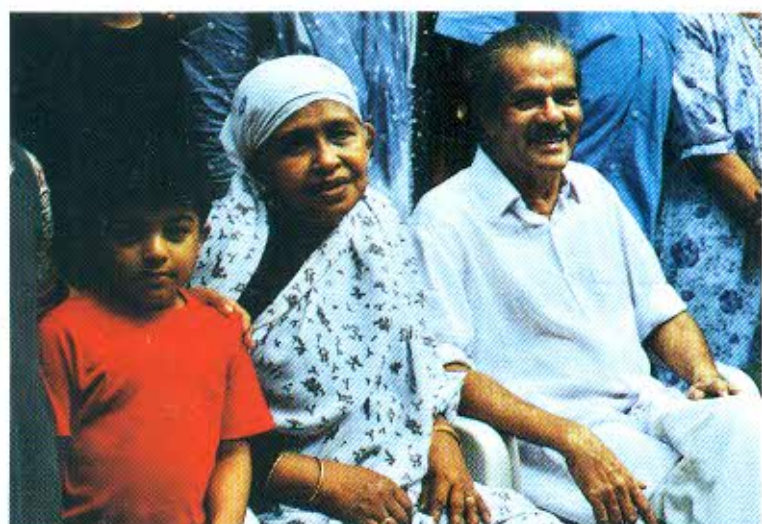
Unveiling the portrait of eminent Novelist Shri K. Surendran

A CHRONOLOGY

1929	Born at Kozhikode	1994	C.V. Raman Pillai Award - <i>Veerarasam C.V. Krithikalil</i>
1952	Madras Govt. Award for Short Story Collection - <i>Thoppiyum Thattavum</i>	1997	Lalithambika Antharjanam Award for total contribution
1969	Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Short Story - <i>Presidentinte Adyathe Maranam</i>	1994	Sahitya Parishat Award, <i>Daivathinte Kannu</i>
1980	Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Fiction - <i>Ennappadam</i>	1998 - 2002	Executive Board Member and Convenor, Advisory Board for Malayalam, Sahitya Akademi
1988	Padmanabhaswami Puraskaram for Children's Literature - <i>Avar Nalu Per</i>	1999	Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Total contribution
1990	Abudhabi Malayali Samajam Sahithya Award <i>Daivathinte Kannu</i>	2000	Padmaprabha Puraskaram for total contribution
1993	Sahitya Akademi Award <i>Daivathinte Kannu</i>	2001	Muttathu Varkey Award - <i>Daivathinte Kannu</i>



With Sahitya Akademi President Shri Ramakantha Rath, Secretary Prof. K.Satchidanandan during the presentation of Sahitya Akademi Award to Shri R. Ramachandran



With Wife and Grandchild