



Sahitya Akademi

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meet the author

Sureshwar Jha







Sureshwar Jha is an eminent Maithili writer, editor and translator. Except poetry he has written in almost all genres of Maithili literature, such as short story, essay, memoir, travelogue and translation. He has enriched the genre of essay which has remained neglected in Maithili. As an academic person he served as professor of political science and also appeared in political scenario where he contributed significantly.

Born on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1928 at an obscure village, Tumaul in Darbhanga district of Bihar, Jha had his early education in his village and then at Laheriasarai (Darbhanga). He graduated at Patna College (Patna University) and got the M.A. and B.L. degrees from same University.

His father Pandit Raj Radha Kant Jha, an eminent scholar of *Navya Nyaya* at Varanasi died when Sureshwar Jha had not even completed his middle school education. Later on he was educated under the guidance of his mother and elder brother.

While he was a student of undergraduate stage, he was attracted towards the personality of Jay Prakash Narayan and became a member of the Socialist Party.

In the same period Sureshwar Jha came in close contact of Baba Nagarjuna Yatri at Patna and as a writer he switched over to his mother tongue Maithili.

Jha's first Maithili short story was published in *Kiran* a Maithili Periodical in 1950, which was launched at Patna by Baba Nagarjuna. After that Sri Jha wrote many short stories and essays in

Maithili which were published in different magazines and periodicals of Kolkata, Patna and other places. He began to write regularly in *Mithila Mihir*, published at Patna.

After completion of his educational career, he worked as full-time worker in Socialist Party and Praja Socialist Party and was arrested and jailed in the agitations.

He was made the Joint Secretary of the Ikha Kastkar Sangh of Bihar and worked for the cane growers of the state, under the Hind Kisan Panchayat of the Praja Socialist Party. Later on Sri Jha was made the Joint Secretary of the Bihar Hind Majdoor Sabha and worked under the leadership of Basawan Sinha, a renowned revolutionary and leader of the Industrial labour organisations in South Bihar.

When the second general Elections happened in the country, Sri Jha was shifted from labour movement to the headquarters at Patna in 1956 and he was made Parliamentary Board's Joint Secretary and laboured hard since the beginning of the year to the end of 1957 and managed the affairs of State Praja Socialist Party regarding the selection of candidates both for the Assembly and Parliament. During the elections he remained



*Felicitation from Prof. Gopi Chand Narang, Vice-President, Sahitya Akademi at Akademi Translation Prize ceremony, 2002*





*Shri Jha with his wife Rambha Devi*

alone as an official of the Party at the state Party office with a few members of the staff, as all the leaders were engaged in their poll campaigns.

Apart from these works Sri Jha had to see editing work of the *Janta* Hindi weekly of the Party, whose Chief Editor was Chandra Deo Prasad Verma.

While studying in Patna College, Sri Jha took active part in Nepali Congress revolution in 1950, under the leadership of B.P. Koirala.

Sri Jha was not allowed to go to the front of the revolutions, as he had no military training. But he remained very active in the rear, throughout the whole period of the revolution, collecting arms and ammunitions. He was giving the work of procuring dynamite from the industrial areas of south Bihar, specially from Jhumari Tilaiya (Kodarma), the centre of Mica mines, where labourers were supplied dynamite for exploding the mines to get mica. The then Socialist Party of Bihar was extending all help for the revolutions under the guidance of Suraj Narayan Singh.

At the end of the revolution, Sri Jha came back to his hostel room of Patna College, resumed his studies and completed his B.A. (Hons.). He did his M.A. in 1955 and joined R.K. college, Madhubani as lecturer in Political Science in 1958 and finally retired from C.M. College, Darbhanga in 1992 as University Professor.

Sri Jha took active part in the Gram Dan Movement, launched by

Acharya Vinoba Bhave, when Loknayak Jay Prakash Narayan joined the Sarvodaya movement after leaving active power politics and joined the gramdan work. Sri Jha concentrated his work in Bahera Thana (Darbhanga) and collected the land gift papers and they were presented to Vinobaji at Madhubani under his leadership.

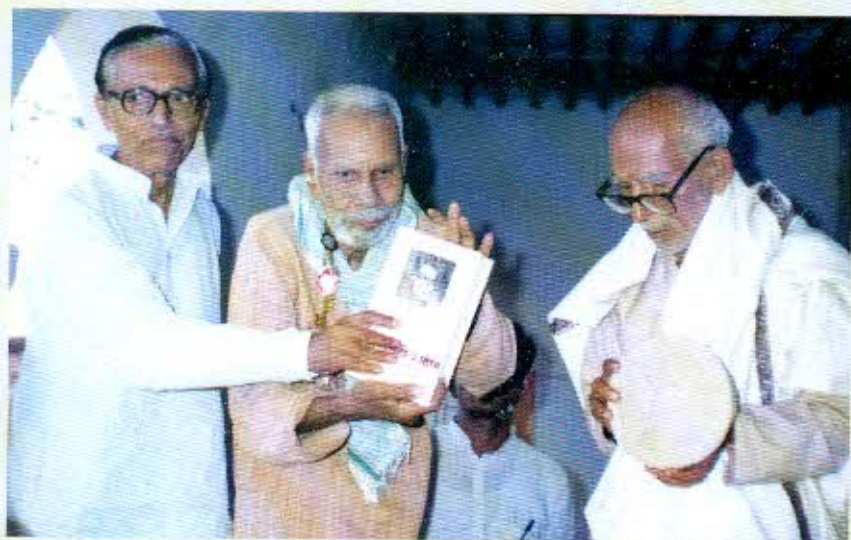
Sri Jha worked restless in relief and rehabilitation work during the great famine in Bihar in 1967, under the leadership of Loknayak Jay Prakash Narayan, the chairman of the relief committee.

Sri Jha founded the most



*With Ramdeo Jha and Amarji on the occasion of Manasotsav, Cochin, 1994*





*With Baba Nagarjuna and Sumanji on the occasion of presentation of Felicitation Volume to Sumanji by Baba Nagarjuna in 1994 at Darbhanga.*

popular and important Maithili Language literary organisation, called *Chetna Samiti* in 1954 at Patna with literary stalwart Baba Nagarjuna - Yatri. Sri Jha has been actively engaged in the activities for the upliftment of Maithili language and literature since 1950 to till date. He is always connected with the work for establishment of a separate state of Mithila through an organisation, called *Mithila Rajya Abhiyan* as its performing President. Therefore, Sri Jha is known throughout the region of Mithila and among the Maithili speaking people of the country.<sup>49</sup>

Sri Jha established Gandhi Pustakalaya (Library) in his village in 1958.

Sri Jha was sent to New Delhi as sole representative of Chetna Samiti, Patna to meet the members of the expert committee constituted by Sahitya Akademi to take decision of the inclusion of Maithili language in the Akademi with a memorandum in September, 1964. Sri Jha met the important members of that committee, such as Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee and Dr. Sukumar Sen, with Sri Babu Saheb Chaudhary of Kolkata. Maithili was included on 26th September, 1964 in the meeting of the General Council of the Akademi on the unanimous report in favour of Maithili by the expert committee.

Sri Jha was elected as a member

of Bihar Tarun Shanti Sena Samiti, established by Jay Prakash Narayan on 12 August 1970 and he was also elected as President of Benipur (Darbhanga) Khadi Gramodyog Swarjya Samiti in 1974.

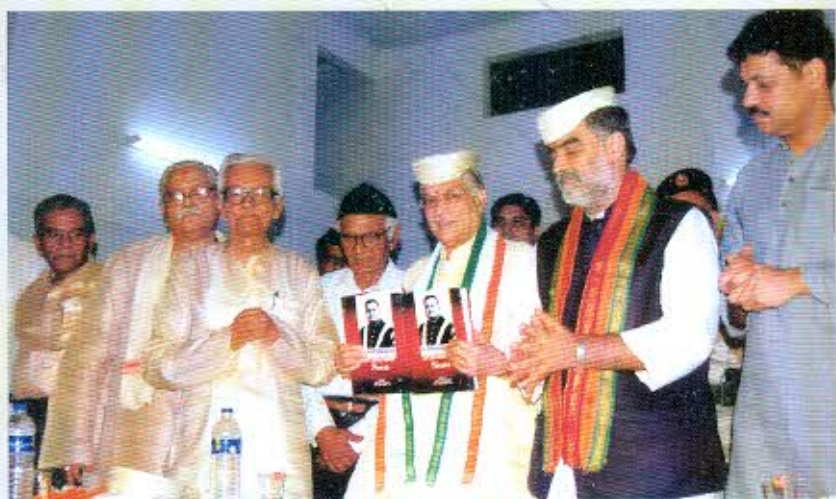
Sri Jha's first book *Swatantrata Andolan Me Mithilak Yogdan* was published in 1989 and the first collection of Maithili short stories saw the light of the day in 2004. In between and afterward he has written and published more than thirty books in Maithili, Hindi and English. He has translated some books in Maithili and Hindi also.

Sri Jha has written half a dozen monographs published by Sahitya Akademi under the 'Makers of Indian Literature' series, on life and works of literary giants of Maithili literature. His travelogue *Kathmandu son Kanyakumari* discusses the religious, social, cultural and other aspects of life, which is an amalgam of tour, travel and pilgrimage.

In the wide span of his life Sri Jha has got the opportunity to take active part in social, political and cultural activities of the country in close context with national and international personalities and that has been described in his book of memoirs, *Sangharsh Aa Sehenta*.

Besides Political Science, History and Law, he is a renowned scholar of Vedic and Smriti literature, culture and traditions





With Sri Murali Manohar Joshi, in book release function  
 "Dr. Amarnath Jha : Hundred years" at Darbhanga in 2006

connected specially with Mithila. He was a member of the Executive Board of Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi from 1993 to 1997 and served as convenor in Maithili Advisory Board.

Dr. Jha's work *Political Thinkers in Mithila* is considered as most important contribution. The book has been published by Sanskrit Research Institute, Darbhanga and has got wide circulation and popularity. Apart from this *Dr. Amarnath Jha: Hundred Years, Mithila: Tradition and Change, Dimensions of Society and Culture of Bihar*—all compilations have enhanced the prestige and personality of Jha much throughout Bihar and outside.

He has got Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize in 2001 for translating Jayant V. Narlikar's Marathi Science fiction into Maithili. Added to this he is recipient of many more awards in recognition for his significant contribution to literature.

### A Select Bibliography Monographs and Literary Essays

#### In Maithili

- Jyotirishwar* (1996)  
*Jaynaryan Jha 'Vineet'* (1997)  
*Babuaji Jha 'Agyat'* (1998)  
*Dr. Lakshman Jha* (2004)  
*Chintna O' Archana* (2005)  
*Chākar- Rājpath: Pātar Ekperia* (2005)  
*Shreekant Thakur 'Vidyalankar'* (2013)

#### In English

*Yāgyavalkya* (1998)

#### Short Stories

*Chāriser Dhān* (2004)

#### Travelogue

*Kathmandu Son Kanyakumari* (2012)

#### Memoir

*Sangharsa Aa Sehenta* (2009)

#### History and Biography

- Swatnatrata Andolan Me Mithilka Yogdan* (1989)  
*Janak O' Yagyavalkya* (1993)  
*Karpoori Thakur* (2002)  
*Suraj Naryan Singh: Jeevan Gatha* (2004)  
*Rajnitik Chintan Me Mithilak Yogdan* (2011)  
*Political Thinkers In Mithila* (2005)

#### Translation

##### In Maithili

- Antariksha Me Visphot* (1998)  
*Jangal Me Ek Rati* (1998)

##### In Hindi

*Mithila Mein Navya-Nyaya ka Itihas* (2010)

#### Compilation and Editing

##### In Hindi

- Jhopari ke Lal: Jannanayak Karpoori Thakur* (2001)  
*Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia: Vyaktitva Aur Vichar* (2013)





*Addressing Seminar on "Mithila ki Sangeet Parampara" at Darbhanga organised by Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi in 2008*

### **In Maithili**

- Vineet Bharati* (1989)  
*Maithili Kāyak Vikas* (1998)  
*Shree Amar-Archnā* (2001)  
*Kranti-Yog* (2002)  
*Vichar-Chintamani* (2002)  
*Bindu-Visarg* (2005)  
*Kavishwar Chanda Jha* (2012)

### **In English**

- Dimensions of Society and Culture of Bihar* (2003)  
*Dr. Amarnath Jha: Hundred Years* (2005)  
*Mithila: Tradition and Change* (2008)

### **A CHRONOLOGY**

- 1928 : Born at Tumaul, Dharbhanga, Bihar  
 1950 : Took active part in Nepali Congress Revolution Party under the leadership of B.P. Koirala  
 1951 : Passed B.A(Hons.) from Patna College.  
 1953 : Married with Rambha Devi  
 1954 : Passed B.L. Examination from Patna Law College  
 : Founded Chetna Samiti of Patna under the leadership of Nagarjuna.  
 1955 : Passed M.A. (Political Science) from Patna University.  
 1955 : Whole timer in Praja Socialist Party and Joint Secretary of state Parliamentary Board.

- 1958 : Joined R.K. College, Madhubani (Bihar) as Lecturer in Political Science.  
 1964 : Elected Secretary of Mayanbehat (Darbhanga) High School Managing Committee.  
 1984 : Ph.D. from L.N. Mithila University, Darbhanga  
 1992 : Vice-President of Darbhanga District Congress Committee  
 : Retired from C.M. College, Darbhanga as University Professor.  
 1993 : Elected member of Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.  
 1997 : Felicitated by All India Maithili Sahitya Parisad, Darbhanga  
 : Elected as Senate Member of K.S.D. Sanskrit University, Dharbhanga.  
 2002 : Awarded by Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize (2001).  
 : Honoured with Mithila Bibhuti Samman by Vidyapati Seva Sansthan, Darbhanga  
 : Felicitated by Navratana Gosthi, Darbhanga.  
 2004 : Awarded Tamrapatra by Chetna Samiti, Patna.  
 2008 : Felicitated by International Maithili Sammelan, Chennai.  
 2012 : Presentation of Felicitation volume called *Abhiyani* at Darbhanga on 85th birthday (31 August)