

You are most cordially invited to

4TH SAARC FOLKLORE AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL



Folk Performances and Academic Seminar



AGRA

September 30 and October 1, 2, 3, 2011

organised by

FOUNDATION OF SAARC WRITERS
AND LITERATURE
SAARC APEX BODY

collaborators :



MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, GOI



ARPANA CAUR

THE CALL OF THE FOLK...

Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL) is an APEX BODY OF SAARC, the unique organisation in eight SAARC countries : India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives, Afghanistan, organizing literature-related and cultural programmes in all the 8 SAARC countries under the SAARC banner and SAARC logo.

FOSWAL's untiring, consistent, and profoundly intellectual work to create people-to-people contacts has gone a long way in building bridges of understanding and affinity across borders and beyond borders, in this strife-torn region called SAARC, an important and unique part of the world, where cultures, languages and traditions merge, overlap, and create a unique kaleidoscope of civilizational and emotional linkages which bind the region in a close kinship, in spite of all the conflicts. Our emotional bondages also emerge from our shared Folklore, Buddhism, Sufism.

Of all the emotional linkages, FOLKLORE is of the most vital importance, because it emanates from our centuries-old historical memories, sharing a civilisational journey, both horizontally and vertically, at micro and macro levels.

WHY FOLKLORE...

Folklore contains our indigenous knowledge systems and historical memories of thousands of years, since the Indus Valley Civilization, in the form of folk songs, folk tales, folk dances, folk theatre, folk paintings and folk crafts, besides folk cosmologies, theologies, belief systems, festivals and rituals, myths and legends.

Folklore of the SAARC countries has a unique continuity which emphasizes the similarities in our feelings and experiences, since the beginning of mankind in this civilisational belt.

We in FOSWAL realised long ago that if we were seriously endeavouring for cultural connectivity in the region, we must explore the cultural roots, lying intertwined under our earth and in the subconscious psyche of the entire SAARC region.

This is the culture which does not depend on the elite. It is the culture of the folk : the ordinary Masses, Tribals and Adivasis. It is the culture still living, throbbing, thriving in the mud-huts of villages, in the fields of the farmers, in the forests which are the dwellings of the Adivasis and the Tribals.

In this era of globalization when communities and countries feel that their local cultures are being swept away and languages are dying in the whirlwind of globalisation and vulgar consumerism, it is essential that the moisture in our roots which sustain us, is strengthened and reinforced by initiatives of the civil society, and by selfless, motivated, committed organisations like FOSWAL.

A JOURNEY TO THE ROOTS...

SAARC as a regional grouping is receiving world attention. It is therefore in consonance with the contemporary stature of SAARC, that it was decided at the highest levels in the



MAWJ BAND, Afghanistan



Been Saperas from Punjab Haryana

Meeting of Programming Committee in the SAARC Secretariat that SAARC FOLKLORE FESTIVAL should be organized by FOSWAL on a mega scale, EVERY YEAR.

Folklore makes the fabric of a culture more attractive, more intense and more humane. A society or a community which has not been careful in preserving its Folklore becomes a rootless plant or a rudderless boat.

CELEBRATING PEOPLE..

We organized the First-ever SAARC FOLKLORE AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL in December 2007, on the sidelines of the 27th SAARC SUMMIT in New Delhi.

And the Second SAARC FOLKLORE AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL was organized by FOSWAL on 6, 7, 8, 9 November, in Chandigarh, and on 11, 12, at Shimla.

At both places the Festival was a thundering success.

The Third SAARC FOLKLORE AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL was organised by FOSWAL, in Chandigarh in December 3, 4, 5, 2010.

All these three Folklore Festivals had two segments, running simultaneously : an Academic Seminar, with over fifty scholars and researchers of Folklore, from all over the SAARC region and also from Asia and Europe, deliberating over various levels of orality, tracing and unearthing the cultural roots of the SAARC region, extending to Afghanistan and beyond, through oral traditions; and Folk Performances : songs, dances, theatre, recreating myths and legends and Tribals and Adivasis celebrating their living traditions.



Ila Arun with Pandvani Artist Meena Sahu

AN AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE ...

Folklore being the deepest and most beautiful expression of our peoples' culture, ethos and aesthetic sensibility, and an extremely vibrant, dynamic and vital part of our unique intangible cultural heritage, the SAARC Secretariat may initiate immediate action towards establishing an autonomous FOLKLORE FOUNDATION, through Ministries of Culture in all the SAARC countries, with headquarters in one of the SAARC countries and branches in all others, whose aims should be :

1. to create an awareness of Folklore in all classes of people through Publications, Films, Folklore Festivals, etc.

2. to create an inventory of surviving Folklore Forms in the SAARC countries through audio and video Documentation.
3. to build up a Database of Institutions of Folklore Studies and Research done and being done in the SAARC countries.
4. to publish a Who's Who of Folklorists in the SAARC countries.
5. to research, compile, and publish Encyclopedia of major Folk Performances of the Region, with visuals.
6. to build up archives and libraries, to promote scholarships, fellowships, travel grants and other forms of financial support to scholars keen to study Folklore.
7. to help open Folklore Studies Departments in SAARC Universities, while supporting the institutions already working in the area.
8. to establish Chairs of Folklore in select universities in all the SAARC countries and
9. to do everything possible to end the continuing neglect and marginalization of Folklore as a creative practice and a significant discipline in our cultural institutions including government institutions; simultaneously using caution to fight against the creation of oppressive hierarchies of 'high' and 'low', 'folk' and 'classical' etc. among arts, thus earmarking Folklore to a secondary status.

**TO SING, TO DANCE, TO DELIBERATE, TO DISCUSS...
THE FOURTH SAARC FOLKLORE AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL**

September 30, October 1, 2, 3, 2011, in AGRA.

FOSWAL is hosting the Fourth SAARC FOLKLORE AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL : Folk Performances and Scholarly Deliberations from all over the eight countries of the SAARC region, in Agra, on September 30, October 1, 2, 3, 2011, in AGRA

Performing Groups from India and the neighbouring Countries : Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, will be representing folk culture of different regions of their countries. And simultaneously, serious deliberations by Research Scholars of Folklore.

Since all contemporary cultural thrust ignores the voice of the masses, of tribals and adivasis, we intend foregrounding their oral traditions which are lying quietly in the roots of historical and cultural memories of the SAARC nations.

The Themes of the Academic Seminar are :

Main Theme : FOLKLORE : HERITAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE SAARC REGION

Sub Theme : FOLKLORE OF THE SAARC REGION : OUR INTANGIBLE HERITAGE AND OUR CENTURIES-OLD CIVILISATIONAL AND CULTURAL ROOTS.

All relating to the SAARC context.

DR. B.N. GOSWAMY with AJEET COUR and ARPANA CAUR



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CENTRE OF BHUTAN STUDIES IS OFFICIALLY AFFILIATED TO FOSWAL



Kuddus Boyati Group from Bangladesh

All are most cordially invited to be part of this colourful SAARC Festival of Folklore and Intangible Heritage. Be with our beautiful people, living in remote villages and forest areas, radiant in their pristine innocence ! And our Research Scholars of Folklore !



Organised by :

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and
ARPANA CAUR

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