

German-Indian Poets Get Together to Inter-translate Works

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: It was the American poet Robert Frost who famously said, 'Poetry is what gets lost in translation.' Painfully aware of the phenomenon, artists are taking efforts to minimise this loss.

As part of the project, German translations of poetry from three Indian languages- Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam- and translations of German poetry into these three languages will be presented at the Goethe-Zentrum Thiruvananthapuram, next Saturday. At present, a workshop- Poets Translating Poets (PTP)- where poems are getting translated is underway in Kollam. What is unique is the way that the poems are getting translated.

"Poetry gets translated in PTP using 'Interlinear Translation'. Poets work in pairs and translate each other's poems with the help of interlinear translators," centre director Syed Ibrahim said. It enables direct interaction, which aids better 'transplantation' of stylistic nuances, cultural connotations, word play and poetic traditions. Simultaneously, PTP helps to create a forum for poets from different regions of the world.

The 'interlinear translators' are Annakutty Findeis for Malayalam- German, Hem Mahesh and Seralathan for Tamil-German and M P Rajendra for Kannada-German.

The PTP project in Kerala is part of an initiative started in July this year by the Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan Mumbai - India, in collaboration with Literaturwerkstatt Berlin and Deutsche UNESCO.

The project is being implemented with the support of Goethe-Instituts in Dhaka, New Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad, the centre said in a statement.

In the Kerala leg, poets Orsolya Kal sz, Nicolai Kobus and Ulf Stolterfoht join hands with their Malayalam, Tamil and Kannada counterparts including poets like Anitha Thampi and Veerankutty, Tamil poets Sukumaran and Sukirtharani and Kannada poets Mamta Sagar and Abdul Rasheed.

"The results of their endeavour will be presented at the centre on Saturday. The workshop in Kollam started on Tuesday and will be held till Saturday. We have planned the presentation for Saturday evening, 7 pm," Syed Ibrahim said.

As many as 48 poets and 20 translators from Germany and South Asia are participating in the larger PTP project.

In the summer of 2016, the participating German poets will present their results in different German cities. The project will culminate in a Poetry Festival in Mumbai in November 2016.