

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM AND CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2866
ANSWERED ON:22.12.2003
SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS
A.F. GOLAM OSMANI

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the lack of transparency in the selection process for the Annual Sahitya Akademi Awards;
- (b) if so, whether Sahitya Akademi had laid down certain Rules and Procedure for selection for its Awards;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has taken steps to ensure transparency in the selection procedure for awards; and
- (e) if so the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF TOURISM & CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN)

- (a) to (c) The Sahitya Akademi is an autonomous organization. The selection process of Awards is governed by the rules made by the Akademi, which are periodically reviewed. The rules and procedure governing the Award is Annexed.
- (d) The rules and procedure governing the Sahitya Akademi awards are sufficiently transparent.
- (e) Does not arise.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN PART (B) & (c) TO THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2866 FOR DECEMBER 2003.

SAHITYA AKADEMI (NATIONAL ACADEMY OF LETTERS)

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THE ANNUAL SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS RULES

1. General :

(1) Subject to the provision of sub-rule (2), there shall be an award every year for the most outstanding book by an Indian author, first published in any of the languages recognised by the Sahitya Akademi (hereafter referred to as the Akademi) during the five years prior to the year, immediately preceding the year of the awards.

Illustration: For the award of 1999, book published between 1993 and 1997 would be considered.

(2) The award for any language may not be given during any year if, in the opinion of the jury constituted in pursuance of rule 5(1), no book published in that language during the five years preceding the year of the award merits the award.

(3) The awards shall consist of such amount as the Akademi may from time to time decide besides a citation that brings out, briefly, the book's significance and its author's contribution to his/her language and literature.

(4) Where two or more books are found to be of equal merit, the total literary contribution and standing of their authors shall be taken into consideration in deciding the award.

2. Criteria of eligibility for the Award:

(1) In order to be eligible for the award, the book must be an outstanding contribution to the language and literature to which it belongs. The book may be a creative or a critical work, but must not be

- a) a work of translation; or
- b) an anthology; or
- c) an abridgement, or a compilation, or an annotation; or
- d) a fresh collection of writings published earlier in book form, or revised editions published earlier, provided that the collection has been published during the period referred to in rule 1(1) and provided further that in the opinion of Referees in the Preliminary Panel and of the Jury, the collection merits consideration for the award; or
- e) an incomplete work, provided that if the part that is comprised in the book is complete in itself, it may be considered for the award; or
- f) a treatise or research work prepared for a university degree or any examination; or
- g) the work of an author who has earlier won an award; or
- h) the work of an author who is a member of the Executive Board of the Akademi.

(2) A posthumous publication is eligible for award if only the book is published within three years of the death of the author.

(3) A book shall be disqualified for the award if it is established to the satisfaction of the Executive Board that canvassing has been done by the author.

3. Preparation of the ground list and obtaining recommendations from members of the Language Advisory Board:

(1) The Akademi shall have every year a groups list prepared of eligible books of each recognised language. Preparation of the ground list shall be entrusted to an expert or, at the discretion of the President, to two experts. In the case of Sanskrit, the number of experts shall not be less than two or more than three. The remuneration of experts shall be such as may, from time to time decided by the Akademi.

(2) Each Language Advisory Board member shall send a panel of not more than five names and the president of the Akademi (hereafter referred to as the President) shall choose the expert or experts out of this panel.

(3) In preparing the ground list, the expert or experts shall strictly conform to the criteria of eligibility laid down in these rules. The ground list so prepared along with the ground list of the previous year shall be sent to all the members of the concerned language Advisory Board (including the Convener) with the request to recommend, by such date as may be specified by the Akademi, two titles each. A member may select:

- a) both the titles from the ground list, or
- b) one title from the ground list and the other on his own, or
- c) both the titles on his own.

4. The Preliminary Panel and its Functions:

(1) The Preliminary Panel shall consist of ten Referees. These Referees shall be nominated by the President after considering suggestions of the members of the Language Advisory Board concerned.

(2) The recommendations received from members of the Language Advisory Board shall be compiled and sent to each Referee.

(3) Each Referee should recommend two books. These titles may be selected either out of the list sent in pursuance of the preceding sub-rule or by the Referee on his own.

(4) Each Referee shall be paid such remuneration as the Akademi may determine.

5. The Jury and the functions

(1) The recommendations of Referees in the Preliminary Panel shall be considered by a three-member Jury. The Jury members shall be selected by the President after considering the recommendations in this behalf by the members of the Language Advisory Board concerned.

(2) The Akademi shall purchase the books recommended by the Referees in the Preliminary Panel and send them to the Jury members and to the Convener.

(3) The Convener shall act as the link between the Jury and the Akademi. He/she will ensure that the meeting of the Jury is conducted properly and satisfactorily and will countersign the report of the Jury.

(4) The Jury members shall, either by consensus or by majority, recommend a book for the award. They may also recommend that, in their opinion, no book is eligible for the award during the year. In the event not being able to attend the meeting, he/she may convey his/her view in writing.

(5) The members of the Jury and the Convener shall be paid, besides actual travelling allowance, daily allowance and sitting fee at rates payable to members of the Executive Board.

6. Declaration of Award

(1) The recommendation of the Jury shall be placed before the Executive Board for formal approval and announcement of the award. The names of the Jury members shall be made public simultaneously with the announcement of the award.

7. Miscellaneous

(1) If the time limit for submission of the recommendations is not observed by a member of the Language Advisory Board or by a Referee, the Akademi shall presume that he or she has no recommendation to make and shall proceed accordingly unless, in any particular case, it is in a position to extend the time limit and actually does so.

(2) The award ceremony shall be held on such date and at such place as the Executive Board may decide.

Secretary
Sahitya Akademi