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Sahitya Akademi
&
Konkani Bhasha Mandal Mumbai

invite you to
meet the author

G. M. B. Rodrigues





Gaspar Melchior Baltazar Rodrigues was born on January 6, 1914, at Falnir, Mangalore (Karnataka) in a lower middle class family. He had to stop his studies after the fifth standard as his parents could not afford to give him further education. Bowing down to the circumstances and to the wishes of his parents, he dropped out of school and started earning. His parents wished that their first son should at least become a matriculate. Hence, he agreed to help them out in fulfilling their desire. GMB was their third son, the second having died.

At the age of 12, an electrical engineer who was his neighbour, picked GMB up and took him to Calcutta as his assistant. While assisting the engineer, he stayed in his residence where he got food and shelter and was brought up rather comfortably, only he was compelled to do odd household jobs. Konkani was his medium for conversing, as he had no knowledge of English and other languages. Gradually he learnt to speak Hindi and obtained a working knowledge of Bengali. To learn English, he started going through Newspapers during nights, when all were sound



Offering flowers to Prof. M. J. Savadatti, VC, Mangalore University:

asleep. He studied the words by referring to the Dictionary for meaning and pronunciation. Sports pages of papers were particularly helpful since they carried a number of words commonly used in conversations. Thus he picked up English and slowly became fluent in it. Today his knowledge of English is more than that of a Matriculate and he is well-versed in it.

At the age of 15 he got apprenticed to a printer and

mother-tongue. He has never given up this love, inspite of all hardships. At the age of 20, he wrote a play and staged it. Since then he has continued writing dramas and has staged and directed them in Mumbai, Mangalore etc. Till today he has written and directed 53 plays of his own and has directed 19 of others. He also has corrected and revised 13 plays of other writers. His three best plays are: **Avoicho Mog** (Mother's Love –



Exhibition of GMB's collectors.

thereby gained knowledge of a few more languages. He persisted in this line for 68 years. Fifty seven years ago, when he came to Mumbai, he was aggrieved to see the condition of Konkani language and to improve its position, laid the foundation of Mangalorean (Christians) Konkani Stage in Mumbai. Nine years later he also founded the Mangalorean Konkani Press in Mumbai. Besides, he took keen interest in politics as well, before and after Independence. During his school days he had acted in two Konkani plays, which spurred on him great love for his

8 shows), **Mhojem Kazar** (My Wedding – 4 shows), and **Bhuim Kaamp** (Earthquake – 3 shows). He had undertaken to produce a Konkani Film **Sukhi Konn?** which was the first Mangalorean film but it failed due to the closure of the company, Etica Pictures. He suffered heavy losses due to this failure and this hampered the work of his weekly **Sukh-Dukh** as well. He has composed a few songs and sang them himself on the Mangalorean Konkani stage fifty years ago.

Sukh-Dukh (weekly), **Phool** (daily), **Samajichem Vozr** (monthly) and **Ekvott** (a peri-



Felicitaton on 83rd Birthday by MWA

odical) were the publications which GMB himself edited, printed and published. The first one was very popular and was in circulation for six years, but the others did not last long. He was instrumental in bringing for the first time Goans and East Indians together on the Mangalorean stage way back in the Nineteen-forties.

GMB was honoured by the Mazdoor Sangh in 1972, in the 11th All India Konkani Conference held at Mangalore in 1976 and by his Alma Mater, St. Joseph's Primary School, Jeppu, Mangalore at its

Centenary Celebrations in 1991. Kala Sagar, Kala Kusum, Mangalorean Welfare Association, Karkal Dramatic Association, — all of Mumbai, and Mandd Sobhann of Mangalore also have honoured him at their public functions.

Associated with most of the Konkani and non-Mangalorean organisations he extends his whole-hearted co-operation to all of them irrespective of caste or creed. As has been rightly said by one of the senior Konkani writers, "GMB is really an Inspiring spirit for the young generation."



Felicitaton . . .



Addressing the gathering



Inauguration of KBM Cultural Show

List of plays

In Mangalore

1. Kuselant Kusel
2. Bhagi Morn
3. Kurddo Sounsar
4. Gorv Vorta Sorv
5. Dev asa

In Mumbai

- | | |
|--------------------------|------|
| 6. Khuris ghurt zoitacho | 1939 |
| 7. Sot zikta | " |
| 8. Nirbhagi Sounsar | " |
| 9. Vhokal Konnachi | 1940 |
| 10. Ghantt Amorechi | " |
| 11. Bomboi Sorg | 1941 |
| 12. Mhozo Opradh | 1942 |
| 13. Kosoli Loz | " |
| 14. Ghatki | 1943 |
| 15. Mhojem Kazaar | " |

- | | |
|--------------------------|------|
| 16. Piso Rai | 1944 |
| 17. Mhoji Khoxi | 1945 |
| 18. Mhojim Avoi- Bapui | " |
| 19. Ghoddit Vorta Voddit | 1947 |
| 20. Gondoll | 1951 |
| 21. Avoicho Mog | 1952 |
| 22. Aaz ami jietaum | 1954 |
| 23. Desvatt | 1955 |
| 24. Stella | 1957 |
| 25. Fottoilem | 1958 |
| 26. Ballancho Sounsar | 1967 |
| 27. Bhuim Kaamp | 1968 |
| 28. Sounsarache Khell | 1975 |
| 29. Ghutta Bhair Loolt | 1979 |
| 29. Konn? | 1980 |
| 30. Atancho Sounsar | 1981 |
| 31. Ghuttachem Resper | 1982 |

and many more



With near and dear ones



A piece of advice to youth

A Chronology

- 1914 January 6: Born at Falnir, Mangalore (Karnataka).
- 1925 Discontinued Schooling after V-std.
- 1928 Took up apprenticeship in the Codialbail Press (Mangalore).
- 1933 Worked with 'Janavani' daily and 'Prajamatha' weekly at Madras.
- 1938 Joined Don Bosco press, Mumbai.
- 1939 Staged and directed 'Cross the Sign of Victory' – First Public Konkani drama by Mangaloreans in Mumbai.
- 1940 Formed an Actors' group of Mangalorean artistes.
- 1946 Married in Mangalore.
- 1948 Started Kannada Script Konkani weekly 'Sukh- Duhkh' in Mumbai.
- 1951 Executive Committee Member of 'Konkai Bhasha Mandal', Mumbai and Working Committee Member of V All India Konkani Conference in Mumbai.
- 1955 Started monthly 'Samaji-chem Vozr' in Kannada script Konkani.
- 1961 Manager at the Adabi printing press of Saboo Siddik Polytechnic.
- 1970 Member of the Manddo Festival Committee
- 1972 Honorary Secretary, Maharashtra Education Trust; Asstt. Secretary, Shenoji Goemba Centenary Memorial Committee.
- 1976 Honoured at the XI All India Konkani Sahitya Parishad, Mangalore.
- 1987 President, Akhil Konkani Porjochi Zomaat, Bombay.
- 1993 Participated in the First World Konkani Convention in Mangalore.



With the stalwarts of Mandd-Sobann