



Biglittle
Book
award

Nabaneeta Dev Sen

Author (Bengali)

Shortlist 2017



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How did you become a children's author?

When my daughters were children, I used to tell them stories and later, compiled them into a book. I used to write for adults then. Writing for children came to me very spontaneously. My first children's publication was *Ichhamati*, in 1979, and since then I have written for them.

Do you feel that there has been a shift in Bengali children's literature over the last few decades?

Indeed. There has been a decline of fairytale. Detective stories, comics and graphic novels are being read more. Everyone looks for excitement and thus have turned to thrillers and

detectives. The sweetness of fairytale is lost altogether. Fairytale is very important for children to be encouraged about reading and they help in imagination, learn about beauty, about love and goodness. Fairytale is magical and they are now becoming almost extinct.

What has been your most treasured experience in your writing journey?

There are many, but I will share one from my recent experience. I had gone to a mall to watch my daughter's film. When I went to the toilet there, the lady who was cleaning the toilet told me that her son was a fan of my works and regularly reads Shuktara and Sandesh. I was very touched to find that my work has spread to children across a cross-section of society.

Who are your favourite authors and why?

Lila Mazumdar, Ashapura Devi, Satyajit Ray, ghost stories by Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay, Bhabani Prasad Mazumdar, Kartik Ghosh, Premendra Mitra and Narayan Gangyopadhyay. I find a child's heart in their writings. And the sentiment that their books hold are in favour of children instead of corroding them.

According to you, what role does an award play in promoting children's literature?

An award motivates the author to write more.

Have your books been translated into other Indian languages? If not, what are the challenges and would you like your books to be translated?

My books which are published by NBT have been translated and published by NBT in Hindi; like, Chhotto Bubul ar Parira, Tinni ar Mashi'r Goppogachha and others.

How can we encourage young authors to write for children?

The desire to write comes from within. Seldom can this take place through an external process. If one loves to write, they will write none-the-less.

