



Smt. Suvra Mukherjee brought grace and dignity to the position of the first lady of the country: Vice President Releases the book 'President's Lady'

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The Vice President of India, Shri M. Hamid Ansari has said that Smt. Suvra Mukherjee brought grace and dignity to the position of the first lady of the country. He was addressing the gathering after releasing the book 'President's Lady' authored by Ms. Sangeeta Ghosh and handing over the first copy to the President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, here today.

The Vice President said that Smt. Mukherjee was a patron and performer of music, a painter, a writer, a teacher, a mother and a soul companion to the person who now adorns the highest office in our land. He further said that this volume, reflects a remarkable personality, the endearing and humane approach of Smt. Mukherjee shine though. This book is a befitting tribute to wonderful and talented person, he added.

Following is the text of Vice President's address:

"Smt. Mukherjee, who brought grace and dignity to the position of the first lady of the country and became the perfect foil for the President. She was a patron and performer of music, a painter, a writer, a teacher, a mother and a soul companion to the person who now adorns the highest office in our land. It is also fitting that the book is being released on this date, which marks the wedding anniversary of our President.

Born in Jessore (now in Bangladesh), she faced the uprooting that visited millions in the sub-continent as partition cut through not only the map, but also across the social and cultural fabric of the land. She built a new life in Kolkata, with her love for the academic pursuits resulting in degrees in History and Political Science.

As the first lady, she brought her love of sangeet to the Rastrapati Bhawan, with her harmonium and tanpura, gifted to her by the Bengali music maestro DL Roy, accompanying her here.

Smt. Mukherjee was a vocalist, an exponent of Rabindra Sangeet and performed in the poet's dance-dramas for many years in India, Europe, Asia and Africa. She was also responsible for setting up the 'Geetanjali Troupe', with the mission of showcasing Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy through song and dance. The book recounts how in 2013, pushing aside protocol concerns, the First Lady sat with her troupe and sang her favourite numbers of Tagore on the occasion of Rabindra Jayanti.

She also authored two books- the first, 'Chokher Aloey' a personal account of her close interaction with former Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, and the second, 'Chena Achenai Chin', a travelogue recounting her visit to China.

Smt. Mukherjee was also a talented painter, with several exhibitions to her credit. In pursuit of this art, she drew inspiration from her mother, who was a critically acclaimed painter.

This bilingual compilation (English and Bengali) also contains reminisces of people who knew Smt. Mukerjee, including former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, Mrs. Gursharan Kaur, Smt. Sheila Dikshit and other members of the Family.

This volume, reflects the remarkable personality, the endearing and humane approach of Smt. Mukherjee shines though. This book is a befitting tribute to wonderful and talented person.

I congratulate the authors- Sangeeta Ghosh and her able assistant, Shayeree Ghosh, for bringing together this volume.

Jai Hind.

KSD/BK

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