

Anamika Publishers & Distributors (P) Ltd.

&

Oriya Cultural Association

cordially invite you to the release of  
Prof. Bhubaneswar Behera's novel

**'Call of the Village'**

(translated from the original Oriya by Binoy Behera)

on Sunday, 7th February 2010 at 6.30 p.m.

at

**India International Centre**

(Annexe, Conference Room III)

40 Lodhi Estate, New Delhi 110003

**Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan**

Hon'ble Member of the Rajya Sabha

will release the book

**Prof. G.K. Das**

Former Vice-Chancellor, Utkal University

will speak on the book

**Dr. J.P. Das**

Saraswati Samman awarded writer

will preside over the function

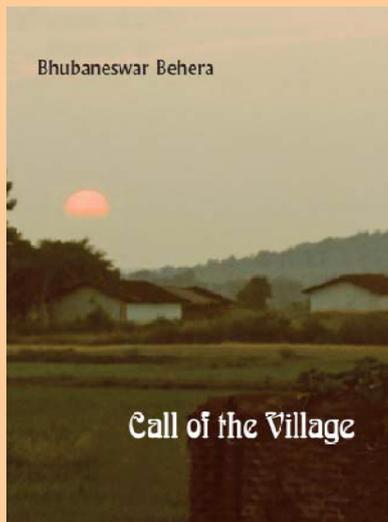
Tea: 6pm

RSVP:

Pankaj Sharma (9868345527)

Gyan Asis Jena (9910110925)

Binoy Behera (09437031695)



**Bhubaneswar Behera (1916 – 2001)**

‘Call of the Village’ portrays the joys and sorrows of life in an Indian village spanning over half a century either side of independence. The autobiographical tale begins in this small village that the protagonist has returned to after retirement, some forty years since he left after his early years there.

From the idyllic village of the 1920s through life in the small princely state to college study and after, the story depicts contemporary social and political history from the perspective of a nationalist minded protagonist. The Quit India movement experienced as a student in Bihar, the voyage to the US in the company of American soldiers returning home from war fronts, his return to see a fragmented India getting independence and leading up to merger of the princely states with the Indian Union, momentous occasions in India’s history – Nehru’s Independence address and Gandhi’s assassination among them – are seen through the eyes of the protagonist as he lived those moments.

Post-independence, he involves himself in the process of nation building but a growing disquiet haunts him as practical realities get distanced from the aspirations that the freedom struggle had of a free India.

Coming full circle the protagonist returns to his village in the twilight years of his life, and seeing the distress and suffering even so many years after independence, tries to find peace within himself as the ideals he cherished crumble around him.

Born in a small village in the princely state of Kalahandi, Bhubaneswar Behera graduated from Ravenshaw College, Cuttack and then went to Patna Engineering College for his engineering study. In 1942 he had a brief involvement in the Quit India movement as a student in Patna. He was amongst the first batch of students that went to the USA in India’s post world war reconstruction programme in 1945. His wife Uma, daughter of a renowned social reformer, was a graduate herself.

One of the architects of post-Independence Orissa, he had an important role in construction of the multi-purpose Hirakud Dam. The other major dam project Indravati, that has transformed a large portion of the state into a rice bowl also was his brainchild. Later taking up teaching as his career, the entire infrastructure for engineering education in Orissa till the end of the last century was largely built by him. He thus served the state of Orissa as a distinguished engineer as also a celebrated educationist and administrator, besides his contributions to Oriya literature.

Known for his distinctive style of prose, the author has eight major literary works which include collections of short stories, essays, belles-lettres, travelogues and an autobiographical novel. The Sahitya Academy Award, Sarala Samman and Utkal Ratna are some of the honours he has received for his contributions to Oriya literature.

‘Call of the Village’ (1993) received the Sarala Award, a most coveted honour in Oriya literature.

“In the fluidity of language and clear perspective of his storytelling is seen deep compassion for characters. Really as though he has intensely loved them, analysed their good and bad, their happiness and their sorrow through a microscope, studied their psychology very intimately. There surely is a little sadness in his stories, but those characters are vibrant in the fortune and pride of being human beings. They are at the forefront in all matters—facing life with happiness, with smiling faces, hiding tears even when tearful. One gets the impression (the author) feels that a weepy mentality is not a great thing in life. To live like a man, smile at fate and learn from it is the essential thing.”

**Sitakanta Mohapatra**  
(*Jnanpith Award winning writer*)

(He is) “an author of a very unusual kind of fiction. He describes people and events with insight and sympathy and does not withhold or dilute his protest where it is deserved. The language is free from artifice, replete with usages the community is used to and abounds in humour ... He gives himself a name that is not his ... at many places, he effaces himself and leaves the stage to these events and people ... The work is authentic history as well as fiction in which people and events are real.”

**Ramakanta Rath**  
(*Saraswati Samman awarded poet & writer*)

“Who says you are an engineer – you are a quintessential artiste, only an artiste.”

**Deepak Mishra**  
(*Sarala Award winning writer*)

“As a distinguished prose and story writer, editor and travelogue writer he has his own niche.”

**Orissa Sahitya Academy**

In him is seen “an amazing blend of scientific and literary talent.”

**Sarala Award Foundation**

“A distinguished prose, story and travelogue writer, he has marked his own place in Oriya literature.”

**Saraswat Foundation**