

Vinod Kumar Shukla Wins Mathrubhumi Book of the Year Award for *Blue is like Blue*

Thiruvananthapuram 30th January, 2020: Well-known Hindi poet and novelist Vinod Kumar Shukla won the inaugural Mathrubhumi Book of the Year Award for his *Blue is like Blue*.

The award, which carries a cash prize of Rs 500,000, a memento sculpted by well-known artist Riyas Komu and a citation, has been decided by a three-member jury comprising Dr Shashi Tharoor, Chandrasekhara Kambar and Dr Sumana Roy.

Shukla lives in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. In 1999, Shukla received the Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel *Deewar Mein Ek Khidki Rehti Thi*. Renowned for bringing the marvellous to the ordinary, Shukla has long been recognised as one of India's foremost writers, with a voice uniquely his own. The stories in *Blue Is Like Blue* deal with 'smaller-than-life people'.

"His indifference to literary trends and fashion, reflected both in his writing and the life he has chosen for himself—his writing is at odds with the high-pitched idiom that seems to have become the most accepted tone of the literature—reiterates the vocation of the artist," says Dr Roy.

The award will be presented by Booker Prize Jury Chair Margaret Busby on Jan 31 at 5pm at Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters at Kanankakkunnu, Thiruvananthapuram.

"The Mathrubhumi Book of the Year award is a commitment from Mathrubhumi to honour the best in Indian literature. We are inspired to honour and celebrate brilliant works, and encourage publishers to look for the best writing by Indian authors," said Mr MV Shreyams Kumar, Joint Managing Director, Mathrubhumi.

About Mathrubhumi Festivals of Letters

MBIFL is celebration of Kerala's inherited syncretic culture and an initiative to take forward the legacy of literature, words, and their potency. High – profile conversations, reading sessions. A cartoon / illustration exhibition, story-telling, impromptu performances and an exploration of traditional Malabar cuisine and the wandering history of the Malayalee are among the main attractions. Each day of the festival will culminate in cultural evenings.

For media enquiries on the Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters, please contact Anupam Luthra, anupam@mpp.co.in / 9061089000

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