

## Padma Sachdev, the poet who took Dogri language to great heights

Writers and admirers pay tributes to the ebullient poet who was a legend well within her lifetime. The sparkling small-town Jammu girl won accolades for her poetry and prose as she navigated with typical rustic trademark, beauty, talent and an irresistible lust for life as she navigated the literary circles of Mumbai and Delhi.

A sense of great loss was felt nationwide with the passing away of Padma Sachdev, the first modern poet of the Dogri language.

Born in 1940 in Purmandal, Padma announced her impressive arrival on the poetic landscape of the region with her soul-stirring long poem "Raje Diyan Mandiyan".

A bold shade of progressive poetry, as she recited "Ai Raje Diyan Mandiyan Tundiyen Ne...." in late sixties in a local poetic symposium, she stunned all. As Padma, who was just a teenager then, threw a lyrical poser, "... those who blinded me... those weapons used against us... do they belong to you.... those forcibly took away all my belongings... do those horses carrying our brutally looted assets belong to you?..." veteran litterateurs present in the symposium were in awe of her revolutionary flight of imagination, woven in a poignant manner.

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She was to the Dogri language what Mahadevi Verma was to Hindi and Amrita Pritam to Punjabi. She started dabbling in poetry in the sweet dialect of the Jammu hills and went onto win the Sahitya Akademi in 1971 for her book of poetry 'Meri Kavita, Mere Geet'. She went onto win many awards including the Padma Shri and the Saraswati Samman for her autobiography 'Boond Bawari' in 2015 and in 2019, she received the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Fellowship for lifetime achievement. Her autobiography was translated into English by Uma Vasudev as 'A Drop in the Ocean'.

She authored many books in Dogri and Hindi, and her poetry collections, including Meri Kavita Mere Geet, won her the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1971. She received the Padma Shri, the country's fourth-highest civilian award, in 2001 and was awarded the Kabir Samman for poetry for 2007-08 by the Madhya Pradesh government.

Sachdev also wrote the lyrics for the song 'Mera Chhota Sa Ghar Baar' from the 1973 Hindi film 'Prem Parbat'. She also penned the lyrics for two songs for the 1978 Hindi film 'Aankhin Dekhi', including the famous duet 'Sona re, tujhe kaise milun' sung by Mohd Rafi and Sulakshana Pandit. She worked with All India Radio, Jammu and Mumbai and shifted base to New Delhi and Mumbai after marrying singer Surinder Singh.

Padma, along with other writers and activists, pressed hard for the recognition of the Dogri language. "When Atal Bihari Vajpayee became PM, I would nag him about it as I knew him as a fellow poet. So he would avoid me knowing what I was going to ask for!" she would recount. When official recognition came to Dogri in December 2003, Padma says it was the happiest day for her as the language had its own identity and was not just taken for a dialect."

In 2001, she was awarded the Padma Shri for her contribution to education and literature. Among her several awards also included the prestigious Soviet Land Nehru Puruskar and J&K Cultural Academy Lifetime Achievement award.

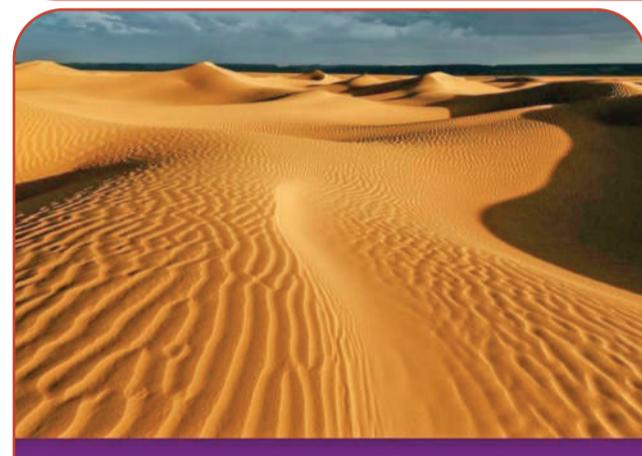
Karan Singh, son of the last Dogra king of J&K, Maharaja Hari Singh, also translated one of her poems into English and



hailed her commitment to propagating the language.

Behind her tinkling laughter was a life of struggle and resilience as she fought many setbacks and persistent health problems. She found a caring partner in classical singer Surinder Singh and she is survived by him and their daughter Meeta Sachdev. Adieu to Padma who will live forever in her poems.

### THE FACT CORNER



Sand from the Sahara is blown by the wind all the way to the Amazon, recharging its minerals. The desert literally fertilizes the rainforest



Looking at an aquarium for 10 minutes delivers 'significant health benefits' such as improving people's mood, reduced heart rates and blood pressure



There's a plant in Australia that will make you vomit in pure agony just by touching it



It snowed in the Sahara desert for 30 minutes on the 18th February 1979

### BRAIN TEASERS

1 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

A. parsley    B. basil  
C. dill        D. mayonnaise

2 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

A. tulip    B. rose  
C. bud    D. daisy

3 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

A. guitar    B. flute  
C. violin    D. cello

4 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the

others?

A. heading    B. body  
C. letter        D. closing

5 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

A. tape    B. twine  
C. cord    D. yarn

6 Q. Odometer is to mileage as compass is to

A. speed    B. hiking  
C. needle    D. direction

7 Q. Marathon is to race as hibernation is to

A. winter    B. bear  
C. dream    D. sleep

**SOLUTIONS:**  
1. Mayonnaise.    2. Bud.    3. Flute    4. Letter    5. Tape    6. direction.    7. sleep

### English Proverbs and Meanings

\* **Knowledge in youth is wisdom in age.**

What you learn when you are young will be invaluable when you grow old.

\* **No man can serve two masters.**

It's impossible to follow instructions from two different sources.

\* **Once bitten, twice shy.**

After an unpleasant experience, people are careful to avoid something similar.

\* **One swallow doesn't make a**

**summer.**

A single satisfactory event does not mean that all the others will be as good.

\* **Penny wise, pound foolish.**

Refers to a person who is careful about spending small amounts of money, but not careful about spending large amounts of money.

\* **Pride comes before a fall.**

Don't be too self-confident or proud; something may happen to make you look foolish.

### Vinegar and sea salt crackers



#### Ingredients:

3tbsp aquafaba  
Salt  
1½ tbsp white vinegar  
2 cups of almond or wheat flour

#### How To Make:

Preheat the oven to 350oF.  
Place parchment paper on a baking pan.  
Mix aquafaba, vinegar and flour in a bowl to make the dough.  
The mixture will look dry initially, so continue stirring.  
Use a floured surface, take the dough and roll it.  
Keep it as thin as possible.  
It will add to the crispiness.  
Cut them into round or square shapes and transfer into the baking sheet.  
Using a fork, poke the crackers to make small holes.  
Sprinkle some sea salt for seasoning.  
Bake it for 10 to 15 minutes until both sides are crispy and nice light brown (while baking, keep turning them halfway for evenness on each side).

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### Peanut candy bars



#### Ingredients:

3 cups cereal (Cap'n Crunch)  
1 ½ cups pretzel sticks  
One bag 11oz caramel candies  
¾ cup cocktail peanuts  
½ cup peanut butter, 2tbsp cream  
1 cup melted dark chocolate chips

#### How to Proceed:

Grease a baking pan and line up using parchment paper.  
Mix crushed pretzel sticks, cereal, and chopped peanuts in a bowl.  
Add caramel candies, peanut butter and cream, and cook them on medium-low temperature.  
Heat it for about 15 minutes until the mixture is smooth. Keep stirring occasionally. Pour in the cereal mixture and mix. Transfer the mixture into a prepared pan and chill it for about one hour to let it set.  
Cut the set into 12 bars. Sprinkle the bar with warm melted chocolate.  
Let them stand for an hour until the chocolate is nicely set.