

Meet Mr. C.M Rawal: Vice–President, Indian Translators Association



Mr. C.M Rawal

Mr. C.M. Rawal, B.A in Commerce, M.A. in Hindi from University of Delhi, Specialization in Translation (English-Hindi), Delhi University. He has worked in Reserve Bank of India as Asstt. General Manager in the capacity of Head of the Department (Hindi) at New Delhi. Subsequently, he got associated with Microsoft Corporation (India) as a Consultant Linguist. He has more than 35 years of experience in translation from English to Hindi of annual reports, manuals, journals, newsletters, brochures, publicity literature, handouts, booklets, questionnaires, press releases, etc. He has translated from English to Hindi a book published by ILO, Geneva, "An Introduction to Co-operative Practice in India." His recent areas of translation are Mobile Phone, Healthcare, Medical Research Questionnaires, Hotel Corporate Training, Engineering, Automobiles, Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, Human Resources, Telecommunications, Website Localization, IT, Hindi Lexicon Development, etc. He is well-versed with Unicode fonts like Microsoft's 'Mangal' and Arial Unicode MS, etc. and prefers to use CAT tools for translation.

Vice-President Mr. C.M. Rawal (CMR) revealsITA has lots of task ahead.....

How do you feel about formation of Indian Translators Association?

CMR: I am extremely happy that collectively we have been able to form Indian Translators Association. I see it as a landmark in the history of Indian translation industry. Of course, this is an occasion to celebrate, but I foresee many tasks ahead.

Since years in India translators and language professionals have been trying to form an Association of this kind, but it took so long to finally give a shape? What do you say about this?

CMR: Yes, there was a long felt need for such an association in India. All of us who have been in language profession felt such a need because we realized that there were many Translators Associations across the world, but none existed in India to voice our concerns. It took us so long because we didn't have persons who could take the responsibility of bringing the language professionals on one platform, nor we had persons who could devote on preparatory works needed for formation of ITA in India. It was indeed a Herculean task which needed visionary and dedicated persons and the required space, manpower and funds.

Who were the people who took visible initiatives?

CMR: First of all I would like to thank Ms Gita Madhu for organizing the first Indian Meet held in 2004. It was indeed a milestone in the history of translation in India when more than 100 translators from all over Indian gathered and the idea of forming a translators association in India was mooted. Keeping similar lines of thoughts in the year 2005, a forum called Translators Initiative was created to stimulate Indian Translators to join hands to form ITA. Translators Initiative under the able convenorship of Mr. Ravi Kumar organized Indian Translators Meet in the year 2005. This meet saw principal sponsor like Microsoft India followed by a few leading

domestic agencies, in which more than 150 language professionals and delegates from various diplomatic missions, agencies participated. For creation of ITA India, Mr. Ravi Kumar supported by a core team consulted many translators and language professionals and prepared and presented a draft proposal for formation of ITA INDIA during Indian Translators Meet 2005. The proposal received overwhelming response, comments and criticism. Keeping into account the importance ITA may gain in due course of time, the draft proposal saw many amendments, and it was put live on the website of Translators Initiative for more than a year. Again many new changes were incorporated so that in times to come ITA India becomes voice of Indian Translation Industry. Further Mr. Ravi Kumar took the responsibility to carry out all administrative and other formalities to get approval and registration of Indian Translators Association done.

What role did Translators Initiative play in stimulating translators to form this association and identify leaders for a common cause?

CMR: The forum called Translators Initiative was formed and started under the able stewardship of Mr. Ravi Kumar who as a torch-bearer put in all his efforts to see that it starts functioning for the welfare and betterment of the Indian Translators community. Its sole purpose was to stimulate the translators to form ITA and identify leaders for a common cause. Mr. Ravi Kumar nurtured and nourished the idea of forming ITA. We all saw the idea taking shape gradually. He formed a group of organizers who were willing to put in efforts, time and money. He put in the major efforts and also contributed by providing his office space, creating a website, as well as giving his valuable time and money. Finally with his efforts we were able to create a core team of able translators and administrators who are founder members of Indian Translators Association.

What steps were taken to finalize aims and objectives of the association and carry out administrative and other formalities with the government?

CMR: The core group, of which I also happened to be a member, made all necessary preparations for giving the ITA its present form. All aspects were discussed in various meetings attended by the members of this core group which even included veterans like Dr. S.K. Ray. They put in their resources with a view to fulfill the long-cherished mission of forming Indian Translators Association. As already mentioned, during Indian Translators Meet 2005 and even afterwards, like-minded leaders were identified and a core group was formed to get approval as well as registration done with the government authorities. Mr. Ravi Kumar was entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out the administrative and other formalities. No doubt, it was a very difficult task to accomplish but Mr. Ravi Kumar put in all efforts to ensure that the required clearance was obtained from the government as early as possible. Finally, the approval was received from the government on December 19, 2006.

India is a vast country, how do you feel that ITAINDIA shall be able to address issues concerning translation and language industry of India?

CMR: You are right. India is a vast country. It is very difficult for the translators residing in different parts of the country to physically attend even the annual meet to interact and meet each other personally. However, I feel that ITAINDIA would be able to address issues concerning translation and language industry of India because it would have its own interactive website as well as regional representatives that shall allow translators to inter-exchange information as well as share thoughts and business. Moreover, in the world of communication revolution we have many other ways to keep ourselves informed of activities going on in our surroundings. Of course, one has to be vigilant. I also agree that there could be differences in thoughts, but in principal we shall be united by a bond created by ITAINDIA.

Your association aims at promotion of Translation, Interpretation, Language Teaching and Localization activities. Why is it that you have not restricted to only Translation Industry? Or do you feel that all these activities collectively make translation industry?

CMR: Yes, all these names apparently look different, but in reality they all revolve around language and collectively make translation industry. While doing translation one makes use of writing skills, while doing interpretation one makes use of listening and oral skills, while using Translation tools one optimizes his/her own capacity of delivery of work with quality control, and above all these one learns through a system called language teaching. All these activities are inter-related and inter-dependent. However, we shall be happy to encourage initiatives for formation of separate associations.

Don't you feel that the interest of freelancers and agencies are different?

CMR: Perhaps, translators and agencies co-exist since the translation activities started in the history of humankind. In reality, it is much like a symbiotic relationship where both survive alongside each other. In the Indian context majority of the translators community some way or the other is linked to agencies mainly run by a translator or a group of translators, so it becomes mandatory to put joint efforts to be part of a common platform to share experiences and resources together.

How far ITAINDIA is democratic?

CMR: This too is no less a ticklish issue. First of all, I fail to understand as to how a society can afford to be undemocratic when it is formed and registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and it has to abide by certain rules and regulations framed by the Registrar of Societies. It is fully accountable to its members and has to work for their benefit and betterment. I find it right time to say that we are accountable only to members of the association. However, we are very receptive and sensitive to views of potential members as well. But, in the name of democracy, we can not allow our efforts to go futile, by allowing its functioning and management to go in wrong hands.

Do you have special provisions to include individuals, agencies or institutions that may serve in extraordinary way to promote aims and objectives of the association?

CMR: Yes, we do have special provisions to extend lifetime membership to individuals, agencies or institutions who have helped us in an extraordinary way in fulfilling our aims and objectives. More details are available in the bylaws of the association.

Have you included some criteria for membership?

CMR: Yes, we have included criteria for membership to all categories. However, it is worth mentioning that these criteria have been included to understand the nature and quality of members and efforts that shall be needed for the betterment and upgradation of their skills.

Do you have plans to initiate accreditation in lines of American Translators Association?

CMR: Yes, we do have plans to do so. But our accreditations shall be based on ground realities and Indian conditions. It could be possible to initiate the accreditation process in future when the ITAINDIA has gained some experience, and provisions of Indian law allow us to do so. However, translators would start reaping the benefits being the first members of ITAINDIA.

Do you plan to have regional offices?

CMR: Once we start functioning on a firm footing, and are able to get ITAINDIA's own independent office, thereafter we could think of having regional offices.

Have you decided some agenda and tasks ahead? Do you have resources to carry out your functions and activities?

CMR: Yes, we have an agenda and some tasks ahead. We are yet to generate funds and resources to carry out our functions and activities. The first agenda is to develop an interactive website that serves as a single point of reference. The second is to increase our membership base, and the third is to get the membership of Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (FIT). We are in touch with FIT since last 2 years when Translators Initiative was created.

Any message for those who are making hue and cry? Or for those who have probably missed the chance of being part of this noble cause?

CMR: As you would have seen, no sooner the news of formation of the ITAINDIA was given, some disgruntled elements started making a big hue and cry and mud slinging. It is very unfortunate. Their unwarranted and irrelevant comments need to be read by the fellow translators with due care and caution. We should not forget to read in between the lines to see if the fellow translator has voiced his/her genuine concern or not. I would like to cite an example where one translator has made a statement to mean that by virtue of getting approval from the Registrar of Societies, the ITAINDIA has become a government body. We all know that if Government grants its approval to a body to be formed as an association, it doesn't become a government body. We can call it a body recognized or approved by the Government. Another translator has simply raised an outcry and started accusing Mr. Ravi Kumar of stealing the show by getting the ITAINDIA formed and registered. There are people who have clearly expressed their inner voice when they said they can't form an association of translators with the name Indian Translators Association since the name has already been registered with the Registrar of Societies. Here I would like to make it clear that if an ITA has been formed in India it is not an end of the road. We can have many more such associations with different names of course. And the membership to an association is not compulsory for any person. Any association is a voluntary organization and the translators are free to join it or not to join it. If it suits their interests, they would definitely join it. We should not forget that if there are two or three persons who are determined to oppose our ITAINDIA for personal reasons, there are a large number of translators who are not opposed to it and are eager to join us. Many of them have already joined.

What is the future of ITAINDIA?

CMR: The future of ITAINDIA is bright. ITAINDIA is exactly what its members make it. Members have the opportunity, at events and over the Internet, to establish strong and lasting links with other fellow members and organizations.

ITAINDIA shall deal with issues that affect the lives of translators, interpreters and theoreticians, and the Association strives constantly to create an environment conducive to encouraging the next generation to enter the profession, and last but not the least by equipping them with a network of supportive colleagues and friends.

ITAINDIA also encourages members to include even those translators and interpreters who are digitally deprived but play significant role in bridging language barriers staying at remote corners of India.

More details Please get in touch with

Secretariat

Indian Translators Association

K-5/B, Lower Ground Floor, Kalkaji, New Delhi –110019

Tel: +91-11-26291676 Telefax: +91-11-41675530

Web: www.itaindia.org E-mail: info@itaindia.org