**Prof. Lokesh Chandra – President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, felicitates the 5th “Kusumanjali Sahitya Samman” 2016**

**Award bestowed to Dr. (Mrs.) Kusum Khemani for her novel “Lavanya Devi” (Hindi) and Shri Veerendra Kumar for his** travelogue “**Danube Sakshi” (Malayalam)**

**New Delhi, 01 August, 2016:** The 5th **Kusumanjali Sahitya Samman 2016**, an annual initiative by Kusumanjali Foundation, was recently organized to recognize contributions by renowned authors in the field of Hindi and Malayalam literature. Kusumanjali Foundation, founded and established by the well-known writer Dr. (Mrs.) Kusum Ansal, seeks to promote and support the artistic, literary, and cultural activities in the country.

**Prof. Lokesh Chandra – President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations** was the Chief Guest at the occasion to give away the awards to:

Dr. (Mrs.) Kusum Khemani for her novel **“Lavanya Devi” (Hindi).**

The literary and social contributions of Dr.Kusum Khemani have played an important role in the growth of Hindi. In her writings she has made the life of women her main focus. She has published several volumes of novels, short stories, travelogue, criticism and literature for children. She has been Secretary of Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad for 30 years and is also Editor of Vagarth, a noted Journal of Hindi.

Shri Veerendra Kumar for his travelogue “**Danube Sakshi”**

In a career spanning over six decades, Shri M.P. Veerendra Kumar has been a dominating presence in the intellectual, cultural, social and political life of Kerala. He is the author of 21 volumes of works in Malayalam and recipient of several awards including that of the Sahitya Akademi and Kerala Sahitya Akademi. His stewardship of Mathrubhumi since 1979 is a lesson in corporate leadership. From two editions and two periodicals, the group has since evolved into one among the largest media houses in the country with 16 editions, including two overseas, 11 periodicals, Television, Online, Radio & Events platforms. He served thrice as the Chairperson of PTI and was a former President of INS

The awards, which carry a cash prize of Rs 2.50 lakhs each, citation, a shawl and the award statuette was instituted in 2012. The Kusumanjali Foundation is supported by Ansal API. As part of its promotional programmes, the Foundation established the Kusumanjali Sahitya Samman in 2011 to present every year two National Awards on the best literary works. The works to be considered for the award include fiction, poetry, drama and short stories. One award is given on a literary work written in Hindi and the second award is given on a literary work written in one of the remaining recognised Indian languages mentioned in the Schedule VIII of the Indian Constitution.

The Governing Board of the Kusumanjali Foundation, Chaired by Prof. Indra Nath Choudhuri and other members including Prof. Syed Shahid Mahdi, Smt. Kusum Ansal, Smt. Sunita Jain, Shri Kashi Nath Memani, Smt. Archana Luthra, Shri Narender Mohan and Dr. H. K. Kaul (Member-Secretary) approved the selections made by the Selection Boards for Hindi and  Malayalam.

Please find attached images of the same.

Regards,