

Babita Sharma's 'The Fateful Night' Becomes the Winning Story at PAHAADI-3

, Jan 15, 2024 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Pahaadi-3, the third installation of Pahaadi- the short story contest was recently conducted where Babita Sharma emerged as the new winner of the season. Pahaadi is a contest for short stories for writers who have roots in Uttarakhand. The recent one was the third installation of the hit writing contest where Babita's craft won first position. A young, talented writer, Babita Sharma's "The Fateful Night" has been adjudged the best story in Pahaadi-3. Due to her impressive writing performance, the story is now featured along with six other women writers in a book called 'The Tiger in the Mountain and Other Stories', released on 20th December 2023, now available on online platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, and Pothi.

The other two stories among the top three selected stories from the contest are 'The Ashwathama's Back Pain' by Veena Kedila and 'Thirst with Snake Deity' by Suman Rawat. Ratna Pandey is the first author to feature in all three editions of Pahaadi, the short story writing contest for writers from Uttarakhand. This year, on the third edition, Pandey is also featured in the book with her latest heartwarming short stories, 'Miracle and Mayhem' and 'The Tuip Queen'. However, it was Babita Sharma's "The Fateful Night" was judged the best in Pahaadi-3- the book. This draws its title from the story by Sunandini Pande.

The story of Pahaadi started in 2021, by founder Sanjeev Kotnala, who started this short story contest in memories of his father the Late Shri Ram Ballabh Kotnala. In just three years, this grew out to be something so much bigger, and so much more respectful. In a total of three seasons of Pahaadi, a total of 40 stories by 30 authors have been published. In these years, the competition has seen diverse participation, starting from a 92-year-old person to a 6-year-old kid, both of whom participated in the writing contest. Not just in age, but in experience and writing style as well. Among the participants, first-time writers were also there with published authors. Writers from different cities of Uttarakhand like Dehradun, Haldwani, Almora, Nainital, Kotdwar, Rishikesh, and Haridwar, along with people from the state residing in other parts of the country have also participated. Simultaneously, global writers from Singapore, New Zealand, and Canada have also participated in the contest.

Pahaadi is not just a writing contest or a book, but it is an emotion that the founder Sanjeev Kotnala is taking forward with profound passion. About the participants and such great stories, Kotnala expressed his feelings and said there is repeated participation by many writers. According to him, this is a clear indication of something good, something creative and free being present in the contest. Kotnala pointed out that there has been a dominant skew of women participation, with approximately 80% of the participants in Pahaadi-3 being women. This is also the reason why the third edition of the book also ended up being an all-women edition. The founder at the same time said that with the trust building up over time and the regularity of both the book and the contest, he has high hopes for the growth of Pahaadi.

The contest is treated without any bias and maintains transparency throughout the entire process. The judgment follows a blind evaluation process where the jury members stay unaware of the authors, their names, ages, locations, or genders. For Pahaadi-3, the team of the jury included a vast list of Aditya Amar, a trained Transcendental Meditation Teacher, Nirvana Organic founder, and OCS Foundation President. Dr. Alok Saklani, Advisor on Quality & Academic Processes at Swami Rama Himalayan University, Dehradun, Dr. Dwarika Uniyal, Pro VC and founding Dean with RV University, Bengaluru. Sanjeev Kotnala, an IIM Ahmedabad Alumnus and a brand and marketing consultant, facilitator,

columnist, and author.

Sanjeev Kotnala added that though he is the sole initiator of the contest, Pahaadi is not just a contest, but is a movement that is owned by every person in Uttarakhand. The registration for Pahaadi-4 has already started; the last date for submitting the entries is 31 March 2024. The early bird registration closes on 15th Jan 2024, and the last date for registration is 14th Feb 2024. Interested participants can register at <https://www.townscript.com/e/pahaadi4-213420> where this year women under 30 and children will get a special offer.

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Source : INTRADIA WORLD

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