

Manoj Das questions the rationale behind *rasta rokos*

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

Bhubaneswar, Oct. 4: Renowned author Manoj Das on Wednesday expressed surprise as to how no political party in the country raised its voice against holding of rail *rokos* and *rasta rokos* which were detrimental to public interest.

Delivering his speech as the chief guest at the 16th birth anniversary of Oriya daily *Sambad*, Das pointed out that while those holding demonstrations in the name of public interest were in reality causing trouble to the public. No one gains from a rail *roko* or *rasta roko*, rather it affects all commuters, he said.

Stating that the contemporary world has become newshungry, Das said mushrooming of quiz competitions was a pointer to this phenomena. He also expressed displeasure at the manner in which human beings were being alienated from Nature. Speaking about new trends of newspapers, Das stressed that "it was not the newspapers which have become bad, rather it is the reporting which has become greater." The newspapers also publish items which cater to the requirements of the readers, he added.

Editor of *Sambad* Soumya Ranjan Patnaik appealed all newspapers owners in the state to jointly

decide on revising the prices of newspapers keeping in view the interests of the readers and their organisations.

Former deputy chief minister and senior Congress leader Basant Kumar Biswal, president of the Kendriya Sahitya Akademi Ramakant Rath were present.