

Report of the Conference

International Conference on

'Politics of the Poetry of Muhammad Iqbal'

21-22 February, 2018 New Delhi.

Institute of Indo Persian Studies (IIPS), in collaboration with Afarinesh Social Development Centre, Iran, organized a two-day international conference on ***'Politics of the Poetry of Muhammad Iqbal'*** from 21-22 February, 2018 at India International Centre (Annexe), New Delhi. **It was sponsored by NCPUL, MHRD, Govt. of India, New Delhi.** Renowned Scholars from **Bangladesh, Iran, USA** and academicians and scholars from various parts of India participated in the conference and deliberated on the various aspects of the poetry of Iqbal.

The inaugural function of the conference began at 11 A.M with the recitation of a verse from the Gitanjali by **Ms. Pratima Sharma**, a student of Persian from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Prof. Syed Akhtar Husain, President, IIPS, delivered the Welcome Address. Besides welcoming the guests, Prof Husain said that Iqbal offered much more than poetry and Iqbal's vision of an educated Afghanistan, the heart of Asia, deserved to be understood for peace in Asia. He affirmed the commitments of IIPS in strengthening the cause of Persian Studies in India.

Dr. Syed Khodayar Mortazavi Asl, Dean, Faculty of Law & Political Science, Islamic Azad University, South Branch, Tehran, Iran graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour. In his remarks Dr. Asl said that the conference would surely open a new chapters in the relation between eastern nations especially India and Iran. He discussed the influence of Iqbal on radical Iranian thinkers viz. Dr. Ali Shariati and Mortaza Motahheri and others. He also said that we should look at the political thinkers from critical perspective instead of idolizing them.

Dr. Pardis Minuchehr from Academy for International Culture, USA, delivered keynote address. In her speech Dr. Minuchehr focused on the influence of Rumi on Iqbal as the Flute of Rumi and Iqbal conveyed the same message. Moreover, their yearning for reunion with the God was universal. She also threw light on the various dimensions of the poetry of Iqbal as a statesman and placed his poetry in world literature.

Mr. Come Carpentier De Gourdon, Convener, World Affairs Journal, New Delhi, presided over the inaugural function of the conference. He enthralled the audience with his erudite presidential address. He focussed on Tagore and Iqbal for their immense contributions to Indian independence movement. Mr. De Gourdon said that Iqbal's meaning of nationhood could be equated with that of Ambedkar's as the later advocated Dalit nationalism in the same manner of Iqbal's Islamic nationalism. Mr. De Gourdon expressed that Iqbal presented a conflicting idea of nationhood as he oscillated between the issue of kashmiriyat, his Muslim identity and Hindu heritage at the same time. He also discussed the impact of Western thinkers like Nietzsche and Schopenhauer and others on Iqbal.

The inaugural function of the conference concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by **Prof. Aleem Ashraf Khan**, Vice President, IIPS. On behalf of IIPS, he expressed his deep sense of gratitude to the participants of the conference who came from India and abroad and particularly NCPUL, MHRD, Govt. of India for sponsoring the event to take place successfully.

Five academic sessions were held in the two day's conference. Eminent scholars of Urdu and Persian chaired the sessions in which sixteen papers were presented by the experts of Iqbal and a few were taken as read. The valedictory session of the conference was graced by **Prof. Abdul Haq, Dr Syed Zafar Mahmood, Dr.Pardis Minuchehr, Prof. Pratap Bhanu Mehta** and ably conducted by **Dr.Md. Arshadul Quadri**.

Prof. Abdul Haq appreciated the efforts of IIPS to engage the Urdu scholars of Iqbal Studies in the conference. He shared his thoughts with the audience that Iqbal was a poet well ahead of his time and taught people to write their own destiny. Till date 4500 books were written on Muhammad Iqbal. **Dr Syed Zafar Mahmood**, Chirman Iqbal Academy of India spoke about the Islamic perspective of the poet's personality and discussed Iqbal's view that man was the co-worker with God to develop nature and civilization in the world. **Dr.Pardis Minuchehr** , Academy for International Culture, USA in her remarks lauded the activities of the IIPS in promoting Persian Studies in India and claimed a global place for Iqbal in world literature. **Prof. Pratap Bhanu Mehta**, Vice Chancellor Ashoka University delivered the valedictory address and said that Iqbal was too important a philosopher – poet and must not be left to Iqbal scholars alone. He ranked Iqbal with Nietzsche and Aurobindo and accorded him a significant place in 20th intellectual history of South Asia. He spoke very high of the poetic achievements of Iqbal who tried to bring the ideas of *Self* and *Action* to revitalize South Asians in the face of the 20th century modernity. The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor finally concluded that the greatest tribute to the

poet would be to overcome *Iqbalism* in order to ease the tension in the region by giving an objective reading into the works of the philosopher–poet. **Dr Md. Arshadul Quadri**, Vice President, IIPS proposed a vote of thanks and invited the guests and the audience to the high tea served outside the Lecture Room I, India International Centre (Annexe), New Delhi.