

# A PhD on journey to promote Urdu

A passion to understand Urdu was the inspiration

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A desire to decipher his father's diary and a passion to understand the language inspired Amar Nath to learn Urdu. While being proficient in the language was just one of the outcomes, the scholar went ahead to write a dissertation and was recently awarded a doctorate in Urdu literature.

"My topic of research was *Azadi ke Baad Dehli Mein Urdu Afsanay ka Tanqeedi Tajzia*, meaning 'A Critical Analysis of Urdu Short Stories in Delhi after Independence'. As part of my research, I critically analysed works of around 50 short story writers. These included women writers such as Raziya Sajjad Zaheer, a progressive Urdu writer, and Shameem Nikhat, a poet and short story writer," he said, adding that the works of other Urdu authors such as



Amar Nath ■ ARRANGEMENT

Hansraj Rahbar, Balraj Komal and Prakash Pandit, too, have been analysed.

## First spark of interest

Mr. Amar Nath has adopted the *nom de plume* of 'Rahgeer', meaning wayfarer, and works as a freelance editor of manuscripts of Urdu as well as Hindi. "We are from *Puraani Dilli* (Old Delhi). My father and grandfather lay emphasis on the *talaf-fuz* (pronunciation) of Urdu words. That is what first sparked my interest. Then, there was this desire to read and understand my father's journal. It had entries about

his daily life and some poetry as well. Unfortunately, I could not locate the journal because we moved out of the old house. I am still looking for it," he said.

Interestingly, a large part of his education was in Hindi medium. It was much later that he began opting for Urdu courses. "I did my MA in sociology in Hindi medium. I then enrolled in a masters programme in Urdu at Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), and managed to complete my PhD," he said.

MANUU Vice-Chancellor Syed Ainul Hasan said Mr Amar Nath's case demonstrates that Urdu does not belong to people of a particular faith. "Urdu has no religion. There are a large number of teachers from different backgrounds here who have full knowledge of Urdu. MANUU is open to all," he said.