



**Press Release**

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Dara Shikoh initiated interfaith dialogue in India - Prof. Tariq Mansoor

**Hyderabad:**

Dara Shikoh, the Mughal Prince and Son of Emperor Shahjahan, is credited to have introduced interfaith dialogue in India. He invited Hindu Scholars from Banaras, Mirzapur to his court and himself went to Banaras to learn Sanskrit. He also invited Muslim and Christian scholars to initiate interfaith dialogue. Prof. Tariq Mansoor, Vice-Chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University today said at the inaugural of two day International Conference on “Majma-ul-Bahrain of Dara Shikoh Harbinger of Pluralistic Approach towards Religion and Spirituality” organized by Department of Persian & Central Asian Studies (DP&CAS), Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) to mark Silver Jubilee year of MANUU. The conference is supported by National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL). Majma-ul-Bahrain (Confluence of two Oceans, is a path breaking book written by Dara Shikoh).

Mr. Mumtaz Ali, Chancellor, MANUU delivered keynote address and Prof. Syed Ainul Hasan, Vice-Chancellor presided over the inaugural.

Prof. Mansoor said that the translation of Upanishad from Sanskrit to Persian by Dara Shikoh had a great impact not only in India but also in Europe. The religious thoughts of India were exposed to Europe for the first time. Dara Shikoh was also a Philosopher, who manifested his thought in the book Majma-ul-Bahrain which we are discussing today, he added. Dara Shikoh, a crown prince, never become an Emperor but he left his footprints on various aspects of Indian Civilization such as Indian thought, philosophy, tolerance etc. Dara Shikoh has multi-facet personality and his thoughts are as relevant as today.

Mr. Mumtaz Ali reminded that Dara Shikoh even though was a prince called himself a ‘Fakir’ (Beggar) in his biography. He lived with royalty but his mind was always that of Religious mendicant. There are various other text books written by Dara Shikoh but with his translation of Upanishad western world by and large came to realize about unheard culture of our country. Great people like Dara Shikoh either saw or met people who saw undefinable and it is from them he gathered that truth is infinite, there is none comparable. This great understanding comes only when one has spiritual depth, he said. Coming together of these two oceans is still worth to look into, we should live together in this country where they declared 1000 years ago that truth is one and we called it by different names. Let us practice what we say and what we preach, added Mr. Mumtaz Ali (alias Shri M).

Prof. Ainul Hasan in his presidential remarks said the great scholar Dara Shikoh taught us so many things, language appreciation, his ancestral language was turkish, his language of expression was Persian, the religious zeal of Arabic language cannot be over looked, Sanskrit is the language of his ideas. He described Dara Shikoh as a universal man who loves all and hates none. Often it is believed that had Dara Shikoh been the Successor of Shahjahan, the socio-cultural, socio-religious chemistry of India would have been different. Had he been alive for another 20 to 30 years he might have become Mahatma for the benefit of mankind and humanity, he remarked.

Mr. Mahdi Shahrokhi, Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hyderabad, Haji Syed Salman Chishti, Gaddi Nasheen, Dargah Ajmer Sharif, Mr. Sirajuddin Qureshi, President, India Islamic Cultural Centre, New Delhi also spoke.

Dr. Mir Asghar Hussain, Former Director, ED/EP, UNESCO, Paris, Prof. SK. Ishtiaque Ahmed, Registrar, Prof. Azarmi Dukht Safavi, Advisor, Persian Research Institute, AMU and others were also present occasion.

Book, comprising letters of and addressed to Dara Shikoh, translated for the first time in Urdu by the Department of Persian, MANUU, another book published from AMU and a documentary were also released on the occasion.

Dr. Krishna Gopal, Scholar, Dara Shikoh Studies will the chief guest and keynote speaker for valedictory session scheduled to be held tomorrow.

Prof. Aziz Bano, Dean, SLL&I delivered welcome address. The Conference Director, Prof. Shahid Naukhez Azmi, Head, DP&CAS convened and proposed vote of thanks.

**(Abid Abdul Wasay)**  
Public Relations Officer