

REPORT OF THE PERSIAN SUMMER SCHOOL 6-19 JULY 2017

Department of Persian, Lady Brabourne College, Kolkata in collaboration with Institute of Indo-Persian Studies (IIPS), New Delhi has organized the Two-Week Persian Summer School from 6 to 19 July 2017.

The inaugural function of the Summer Classes was held on 06th July, 2017 in the auditorium of the College. Professor Siuli Sarkar, Principal, of the College delivered welcome address. While welcoming the guests and the participants, she spoke at length about the universal appeal of Persian literature in the context of present day scenario. She further remarked that the richness of Persian literature had always attracted Bengali intelligentsia Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Debendra Nath Tagore, Rabindra Nath Tagore and Raja Nabo Krishan Deb Bahadur and others. She expressed her happiness over hosting the Summer School in the College and said that it was the first ever programme in West Bengal.

Professor Jayasri Ray Chaudhuri, DPI, Education Directorate, Govt. of West Bengal was the Chief Guest on the occasion. She lauded the efforts of IIPS and Lady Brabourne College, Kolkata towards the promotion of rich Indo-Persian literary, cultural heritage in the State. She felt that the Two Week Persian Summer School would definitely provide an opportunity to the participants to peep into the magnificent worlds of Firdausi, Rumi, Hafiz, Khusro and others. She called upon the participant to explore the message of love, amity and fraternity in the works of the Persian stalwarts.

Prof. Syed Akhtar Husain, President of the IIPS, gave a brief introduction of IIPS and its objectives to promote Indo-Persian literature, culture and heritage in India. He said that Persian language which was prevalent in the sub continent for hundreds of years produced valuable books, records and documents which unfolded the glorious past of our country. It was a pity that the current generations kept themselves away from the vast treasure troves of Persian literature preserved in various libraries and archives in Bengal. Prof. Husain expressed optimism that the present Summer School would definitely create an interest among the students of West Bengal to learn Persian in a proper academic milieu.

Prof. Gopa Dutta, Former Vice Chancellor, Gaur Banga University, was the Guest of Honour in the function. She discussed commonalities between Bengali and Persian languages. She also spoke on the influence of Persian on Bengali language and discussed many Persian words used in Bangla till date and of which common people of Bengal were unaware. She recited Bangla

translation of the Persian works of Rabia Basari, Mansoor Hallaj, Firdausi, Rumi, Saadi, Hafiz, and etc. much to the delight of the audience.

Dr. Nahid Morshedlou, Department of Education, Varamin, Iran spoke as a resource person at the Summer School. She emphasized on the importance of a millennium Old Persian literature which originated in Iran and blossomed in the Indian sub-continent. She highlighted the contribution of the people of India and Iran to flowering of the common heritage of Persian in the world.

Dr. Maryam Papi, journalist and film critic from, Iran, appreciated the efforts of the Department of Persian, of the College and IIPS to jointly host the Summer School in the State. She focused on the importance of films in learning foreign language. Teaching language through films would show nuances of language to the learners and films also shed light on understanding the society and culture of Persian speaking nations. Interestingly she has done ample research on Majeed Majeedi and Satyajit Ray as film directors for her Ph.D. thesis.

Prof. S. Manal Shah Al Qadri, Vice Chairman, West Bengal Urdu Academy, presided over the function. In his presidential remarks, he appreciated the efforts of IIPS and Dept. of Persian, of the College for organizing such a wonderful program. He felt that the Summer School was the need of the hour as the beautiful land of Bengal had produced great scholars of Persian of whom India was proud. It was the Bengal King, Ghayasuddin Azam Shah who had invited the great Hafiz to his court. But Hafiz could not come to the Court and instead sent his Persian candy (*Ghazal*) to Bengal which still sweetening the mouths of the connoisseurs of Persian poetry all over India.

Last but not the least, Prof. Jahan Ara, Director of the Summer School proposed vote of thanks on the occasion and expressed her deep sense of gratitude to the DPI, Urdu Academy, Government of West Bengal and Iran Cultural House, New Delhi. The inaugural was conducted by Dr. Md Arshadul Quadri and Dr. Parna Ghose.

The Persian Summer School began immediately after the inaugural function. 54 students from different colleges of Kolkata such as Lady Brabourne College, Maulana Azad College, Government Girls' General Degree College and Alia University, Kolkata registered themselves for the course. The classes held between 10.00 am and 5.00 p.m. from 6th July 2017 to 19th July 2017. 20 faculty members from different universities and colleges of Kolkata, Delhi and Hyderabad were invited to deliver lectures on various aspects of Persian language, literature and culture. 3 faculty members from Iran were invited to interact and teach the students proper accent nuances and power of words of Persian.

Dr. Tanwir Ahmad former COE, Alia University narrated interesting anecdotes from Persian literature. He encouraged students to be hopeful and positive about the subject and learn Persian with full enthusiasm which would certainly pay rich dividends in the long run.

Dr. Md. Mansoor Alam, former member of WBPSA shared his forty years teaching and research experiences with the students. He appreciated the IIPS for taking initiative to conduct the first ever Persian Summer School in Kolkata which was the need of the hour. He said that this workshop would inculcate the real interest and enthusiasm in the Persian students at large. He shared with them his research on Kalyan Singh Ashiq, a Persian scholar of Bengal with the learned audience.

Dr. Iftexhar Ahmed suggested linking Persian with vocational subjects to carve out livelihood to the students. Dr. Md Shahid Jamil in his power point presentation taught Persian grammar to the students.

Dr. Nahid Murshedloo taught Persian language from alphabet with its sound and formation and usage of simple and complex Persian words. She after explaining the alphabets taught the students to read Persian text in proper Persian accent. This repeated exercise helped the students to improve their reading practice. She helped them to memorize the Ghazals of Hafiz and Khosrau and Iqbal. She motivated the students to study Persian in a new method of learning which was used by the students in Iran. She used modern art of teaching and provided the learning materials to the students which IIPS procured from Iran.

Dr. Kingshuk Chatterjee from the department of History, Calcutta University talked about the heritage of Persian in terms of Bengali language. He also discussed about the similarity between Persian and Bengali languages.

Dr. Gholam Sarwar expressed his debt which he owed to Persian his achievements in life. He highlighted the importance of Persian and asked students to have command over Persian and English languages equally which would give them edge in their lives. Ms Yasmin, faculty member at the College taught Persian grammar in friendly environment. She explained various parts of speech to the students.

Dr. Mandana Mangli from Iran taught the students spoken and literary Persian language and also helped the students to develop insight into Persian poetry. She taught in such an innovative manner which was very interesting and effective for the students.

Dr. Arshad ul Quadri taught the methodology of reading Persian prose text. He introduced Persian writers and then read their texts in proper perspective. He then defined the technical terms, grammatical, etc. of the text.

Dr Abid Hossain discussed in detail about the history of Persian language and literature in Bengal and the part played by literary luminaries for the promotion of Persian in the State.

Dr. Aleem Ashraf Khan, Vice President, IIPS and Head, Department of Persian, Delhi University discussed origin and development of Indo-Persian language and literature at length. He discussed the nuances of Indo-Persian literature viz a viz Urdu language and literature.

Dr. Golam Moinuddin, faculty member, Maulana Azad College taught Persian grammar and composition in the Summer School and encouraged the students to study both the language and literature to develop their literary mindset. He extended yeoman service in organizing the Summer School in this College. He acted as a bridge between Maulan Azad and Lady Braboune Colleges.

Dr. Mahmood Alam from EFL University, Hyderabad taught Persian grammar and composition and introduced manuscriptology to the students of the Summer School. He emphasized the importance of manuscripts which are in tens and hundreds available in various libraries and museums of West Bengal and urged the students to learn manuscriptology in order to pursue higher studies.

Professor Syed Akhtar Husain, President, IIPS read the famous Ghazal of Hafiz, *Persian Candy and India Parrots* to the students and helped them to memorize this ghazal. He unveiled layers of meanings couched in the lyric and also taught them to appreciate the message which Hafiz delivered to the people of Bengal in particular and India in general. He emphasized the message of Hafiz is as relevant to us as it used to be during the time of Sultan Ghyasuddin Azam Shah of Bengal.

Professor Jahan Ara was the real resource person of the Summer School who kept herself engage from 10 to 5 seven days a week to make the Summer School useful and meaningful. Dr. Nasreen Hossain shared her teaching of Persian at school level with the students.

The overall feelings of the students of the Summer School is that we have come under one roof of Lady Brabourne College to learn Persian language, literature and culture in two weeks time. We appreciate the efforts of the College and the IIPS who provided us equal opportunities in terms of hospitality and learning in which there has been no difference between the resource persons and the students. The only difference was that *they dispensed knowledge and we imbued the knowledge*. All the participants are highly indebted to the College and the Institute for providing us this rare opportunity of learning and improving Persian language and literature in two weeks time in Kolkata.