

“Zubaan – e – Delhi” organised by Dr Rakhshanda Jalil

# ZUBAAN-E-DILLI

**Urdu is far from dying. What was once seen** as a glorious expression of nostalgia, romance and poetry is now viewed as a language of wit, satire, even banality. The renewed interest in Urdu has been sparked by a flood of events in Delhi in recent years



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Good , bad, indifferent, patchy, uneven, excellent – there is a range of Urdu – inspired events crowding the cultural calendar of any big city; and almost all of them draw huge crowds.

Delhi offers an embarrassment of riches; at least three mega mushairas with lavish pandals and corporate sponsors, a flood of dastangoi performers, numerous stand-alone events and the **Urdu equivalent of the Jaipur Literature Festival**, Jashn-e-Rekhta, in its third year now.

AN “URDU SAMPLER”

**Hindustani Awaaz** founded 2003, seeks to create space for Urdu in mainstream cultural hubs across Delhi, has done its bit to pull Urdu out of the thrall of ghettos-the anjumans, academies and department – who have, for far too long, been either benevolent despots or unimaginative plodders. **Run with no resources except ingenuity and**

**persistence**, Hindustani Awaaz relies solely on the goodwill of a growing band of Urdu enthusiasts. Its latest offering **Afreen Afreen** 04.02.2017 has been conceptualized as a taster’s menu, a sampler, *a smorgasbord of the many flavours*, voices, themes, tones and topics in Urdu. It will have day – long sessions comprising readings and recitations (and) no panel discussions or paper readings on themes as diverse as wit, humour and satire, dissent, erotica, piety and modernism.

As Urdu’s best-loved poet, **Mirza Ghalib**, put it:

*“Dekhna taqreer ki lazzat ke jo uss ne kaha  
Maine yeh jaana ke goya yeh bhi mere dil mein hai”*

*Look at the pleasure of speech for what she / he said  
I began to feel that this, too, is in my heart*

source: Hindustan Times 04.02.2017 *adapted*

[click](#) Rakhshanda Jalil’s translation of Gulzar’s short story Dhuaan wins the inaugural Jawad Memorial Prize for Urdu-English translation