

**Address By Smt. D. Purandeswari, MoS-HRD(HE) In The
National Seminar On “The Place Of Makhdoom
Mohiuddin In Modern Urdu Poetry As A Revolutionary
Poet” On The
10th November, 2007 At Hyderabad.**

I am extremely glad to come here this morning and deliver the inaugural address to pay my humble tributes on the occasion of 100th birth anniversary of Makhdoom Mohiuddin, a doyen among revolutionary Urdu Poets who created a niche for himself in the history of Urdu literature.

We in India have never regarded Urdu as a foreign language or as a language belonging to a particular region or regions. On the contrary, we regard it very much as an Indian language which has been duly recognized as such and included *ab initio* in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution along with several other national languages. It has the status of an official language in a number of States in the country including A.P., Bihar, Delhi, J&K and Uttar

Pradesh. In India, Urdu is spoken in large parts of U.P., Delhi, Bhopal, Hyderabad and Bangalore etc. Some Indian schools teach Urdu as the first language and have their own syllabus and examination. Indian madrasahs also teach Arabic as well as Urdu. India has more than 2,900 daily Urdu newspapers, such as Daily Salar, Daily Pasban, Siasat Daily, Munsif Daily and Inquilab which are published and distributed in Bangalore, Mysore, Hyderabad and Mumbai. Today, even a cursory look at the Urdu milieu discloses the fact that the language is spoken by a speaker belonging both to an affluent section of people as well as by economically and socially disadvantaged citizens and that it is spoken in nearly every State of the country and it enjoys wide social and cultural patronage and acceptability. We, therefore, decided that we must not allow this language to languish and be relegated to backwaters because it is a language of the masses and a language of idea and emotion that has served to build bridges across nationalities and cultures. It is the language of drama, cinema, poetry, politics and everyday conversations irrespective of caste, creed, religion and the like.

It is, therefore, appropriate that we should from time to time relive the life and contribution of the famous poets in Urdu and assess the contribution they have made to enrich our social scenario and national milieu. One such famous poet in Urdu was Makhdoom Mohiuddin to appreciate whose memory a seminar is being held by National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language. Born in a village in Medak, a district of the former princely state of Hyderabad, on February 4, 1908, Makhdoom Mohiuddin grew up to become a poet of incredible versatility. He is best known for his verse collection *Bisat-e-Raqs* (The Dance Floor). His other published and prominent works include an essay on Tagore and his Poetry, a play, *Hosh ke Nakhun* (Unravelling), an adaptation of Shaw's *Widowers' Houses*, and a collection of prose essays. *Bisat-e-Raqs* is a complete collection of Makhdoom's verse including his two earlier collections *Surkh Savera* (The Red Dawn) 1944, and *gul-e-Tar* (The Dewdrenched Rose) 1961. Makhdoom Mohiuddin was a revolutionary Urdu poet with Marxist background. He was at the forefront of the 1946-47 Telengana revolt against the Nizam. He was also involved with the Progressive Writers' Movement. As a prominent Urdu poet; he got several awards including Sahitya Academy Award in 1969.

In Urdu literature, the first half of the 20th Century emerged as the archway for entry into a new world in order to achieve the unachieved. Some young and spirited Indians like Sajjad Zaheer, Mulk Raj Anand, and Mohammad Deen Taseer who were then studying in London, musing on the role of literature in a fast-changing world, came up with a manifesto for what came to be regarded as the Progressive Writers' Movement. There was a world of new values waiting to be explored by an emotionally charged and intellectually inspired Writers and appreciated by agile readers. The Progressive Writers' Movement was launched at the right time and in the right atmosphere. This was the precise hour to shed the age-old traditions, to take leave of the clichés, to propose new theories, and to discover a brave new world. Munshi Premchand's famous presidential address to the conference of Progressive Writers' Association in Lucknow in 1936, came as a clarion call which gave a fillip to this movement. A very effective representative of this movement, Makhdoom Mohiuddin was in every sense a rebel during those exhilarating days and was basically wedded to the idea of political and social revolution. Although he was influenced inspiration by the philosophy of Marx, Poet

Mohiuddin was inspired more by the spirit of liberation than by mere slogans of Marxism. He is remembered not only for the individual qualities of his poetry but also for his role and importance in the progressive movement at a particular juncture in literary history of Urdu. All said and done, Makhdoom Mohiuddin's creative works and his poetic dedication had made a deep impact on the society as his underlying ideas were thematically interesting, socially innovative and universally acceptable.

By his active participation in the anti-Nizam struggles and heroic role in the peasants' uprising, Makhdoom became near and dear to common people. It was his romantic and revolutionary poetry that had an ever lasting impact on the minds of the people. Generations to come will continue to draw inspiration from his poetry. His worldview for which he lived and died was a comprehensive one. While being a romantic poet, he remained ever committed to the cause of humanity. His resolve to fight the decadent feudalism and its declining moral values and his yearning for a better future for the downtrodden and the exploited remained a constant goal which he fought for and sought to achieve. His poem "***Yeh Jang Hai Jang-e-Azadi***" inspired

millions to join the revolutionary stream of freedom struggle. It is not just an inspiring song but a message for the new world, a socialist India so dear to his heart I quote a few lines:

***“Woh Duniya, Duniya Kya Hogi ---- Jis
Duniya Mein Swaraj Na Ho’
Woh Azadi, Azadi Kya ---- Mazdoor Ka
Jis Mein Raj Na Ho’
Yeh Jang Hai Jang-e-Azadi ---- Azadi Ke
Parcham Tale”***

It is said of Makhdoom that most of his poetry was result of his everyday musings, composed in the midst of his intense political work, including some from even casual conversations. He was a poet of great stature and his poetic talent was recognized by all sections of literary world. No poet or writer, either of his own time, or of today, has ever challenged the poetic greatness of this stalwart of the 20th century. The work of Makhdoom Mohiuddin is a valued treasure of our nation. It is our composite legacy and it is our duty to protect and carry forward this legacy. This is a duty, which we are bound to perform wholeheartedly with all seriousness. We find in it the message of humanity and

universal brotherhood, his solicitude for the underprivileged, his anguish for all forms of social exploitation. Makhdoom Mohiuddin was appreciated deeply by the cross section of society and people and his philosophy revealed new vistas of human values. Makhdoom was not a poet of doom. He was a poet of life and its beauty. There are numerous poems in which he had prayed for peace and prosperity of the common masses. In short Makhdoom will always live in our memory as a person who was multi dimensional. He was a revolutionary, a freedom fighter, a prophet of nationalism and a poet of humanity.

With these words, I would like to appreciate the efforts of National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language in organizing from time to time seminar on renowned Urdu poets and visionaries. I hope that the Council will keep up its efforts in this direction.

Jai Hind
