**A Report on the Foundation Day of**

**IRAN SOCIETY, Kolkata - India**

**Iran Society’s** 77th **Foundation Day Celebration** organized on *LIVE WEBINAR* on Wednesday, the 27th August, 2021, at 7.00 p.m.

**Mr. Kawal Singh Walia**, Vice-President of the Society presided over the programme, which was conducted by **Dr. Fuad Halim**, a Council Member of the Society magnificently.

**Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed**, Assistant General Secretary of the Society recited his self-composed verses and paid his tributes to the Iran Society and its founder Dr. M. Ishaque. It was followed by a Welcome Address by **Mr. Kawal Singh** **Walia.**

**Mr. Khwaja Jaweed Yusuf,** General Secretary of the Iran Society presented a brief his of the Society and its activities from the day of inception and contributions and commitments of the Founder of the Iran Society **Dr. M.** **Ishaque** towards the Society. He also highlighted the aims and objects of the Iran Society. The following text of his speech:

“The Iran Society is 77 years of age today. I warmly congratulate all the members through whose efforts the Society has successfully completed all these years of its existence.

We are meeting today online against the convention of Celebrating the Foundation Day as continuing pandemic situation and difficulties being faced to holding physical programmers.

Sir William Jones founded the Royal Asiatic Society in 1784. This great orientalist’s efforts gave fresh impetus to Persian studies. In 1 932 Rabindra Nath Tagore visited Iran and paid respects at the shrines of Hafiz and Saadi. The visit of Tagore to Iran opened the door of cultural contact between the two countries. Prof. Poure Doud was the first Iranian scholar to visit Santiniketan. An Iranian cultural mission led by the scholar Dr. Ali Reza Hekmat, visited India in 1 944 and stressed the bonds of fraternity, love, brotherhood, and friendship between two ancient countries.

In the same year 1944**, Dr. Mohd. Ishaque** founded the Iran Society in Calcutta on August 27 exactly 77 years ago.

Dr. Mohd. Ishaque’s personal contribution to Persian studies was no less important. He compiled in two volumes the anthology of modern Persian poets of Iran under the title ***Sukhanwaran-i-Iran dar Asr Hazir*** which won him the ***Nishan-i-Ilmi*** Medal from the Government of Iran. He wrote and edited ***Four Eminent Poetesses*** ***of Iran***, ***Haft Iqlim*** and ***Rauzat-ul-Jannat fi*** ***Awsafi Madinati Herat.*** He delivered the Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy Lecture of Calcutta University in 1 935 on ***The Persian Alphabets.*** In 1967, theIranian Government decorated Dr. Ishaque with Gold Medal, Class 1, and also awarded a Royal Casket in recognition of his services to Persian studies and the Indo-Iranian Friendship.

Dr. Ishaque founded the Iran Society, with the objects of the promotion of the study of language and literature, religion and philosophy, art and science, so as to make the Society – a center of intellectual collaboration and cultural understanding between India and Iran.

Our quarterly organ Indo-Iranica flourished as the unique Bi-lingual Journal of its kind on Indo-Persian studies. The Council of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland by a unanimous resolution praised the contribution of the Indo-Iranica for the Iranian studies. I have no hesitation to say that it was entirely due to the efforts of Maulana Azad. It can safely be said that the Indo-Iranica has now become a store-house of knowledge on Iranalogy as well as Indo-Persian Studies.

Besides the publications, the activities of Iran Society include the holding of public lectures, seminars and, symposia on various subjects and conducting Persian Language classes.

The Iran Society has a specialized library on Iranian and Persian studies with special reference to Zoroastrianism.

It is enough to say that the Society during its 77 years of existence has earned a place of pride among the literary and cultural societies of the world.

The members of the Society deserve all credit and congratulations on all the success.

In the end, we pay homage to those our Patrons, benefactors and members, who are no more with us today. Their moral and material support enabled this institution to find a place of honour in the literary world.”

**Dr. Mohammad Ali Rabbani, Cultural Counselor**, I. R. Iran and Head of the Iran Culture House, New Delhi, graced the occasion as the Guest-in-Chief. The following are his text of speech delivered by Dr. Rabbani on the occasion of Foundation Day:

“Today it is a great privilege and pleasure for me to find myself associated with the Culturally and intellectual luminaries for 77th Iran Society foundation day and I am thankful to President Iran Society and especially to Mr. Khwaja Jaweed Yusuf the General Secretary of Iran Society for extending me an invitation for this memorable event.

The identities of the wisest and most cultured nations of the world are based on thought, language, literature and Art. India and Iran had this privilege and characteristic that they have been constantly associated with poetry, literature and artistic Culture over the past centuries.

Undoubtedly the philosophy, folklore, tradition, history, archaeology, cosmology and especially the hospitalities of India and Iran are sources of inspiration to many neighbouring countries of the world. India and Iran are the cradle of ancient culture, civilization and tradition. They had given new creative vigor to the world civilization.

Eminent writers and thinkers of every society played an important role in preserving and promoting the Culture and legacy and by keeping this in mind the eminent luminaries have formed the Iran Society on 27th August 1944 with a constitution that included its memorandum of Association and Regulations.

The aims and objectives of the society enshrined in this constitution were the promotion of the study of the language and literature, philosophy and arts pertaining to Iran so as to make the society a centre of Intellectual collaboration and cultural understanding between India and Iran and the maintenance of a Cultural liaison between India and Iran.

I really appreciate the initiative of Iran Society Kolkata for fulfilling the objectives for strengthening the existing friendly relation between India and

Iran, promoting and developing the relationship in educational, Cultural and Social fields.

We really appreciate the initiative of Iran society in encouraging students and scholars for learning the Persian language and to acquaint them with the significant historical perception of Indo - Iran Cultural and academic relations.

Various activities of Iran Society like memorial lectures, Recitation competition in Persian multilingual poetical symposium and its first issue of Indo-Iranica English – Persian Journal in 1946 was also laudable and was also appreciated by the first education minister late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and subsequently special issues on Hafiz, Sa’di, Avicenna and many others is indeed a great literary contribution. I also feel great to see that many eminent and distinguish Personalities are associated with it.

We have to revive and further strengthen the Indo-Iran friendship. The Bhakti movement and the Persian language are the perfect flowers of Indo-Iranian composite culture.

Iran Culture House, New Delhi always encourages the academic and Cultural initiative of Iran society and will appreciate if a new dimension is given for Iranian film festival, Book Exhibition, webinar, conferences and seminars and joint publication of Indo - Iranica Journal with the teaching of Persian language and literature.

I feel privilege to extend my best wishes to the Iran Society and distinguished peoples who are associated with it on its 77 foundation day.

Doosti-e-Hind-o-Iran Zindabad wa payndabad.”

**Professor (Dr.) Syed Ainul Hasan**, Vice-Chancellor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad, inaugurated the Foundation Day Celebrations and presented his Foundation Day Oration. Prof. Hasan spoke elaborately and discussed the Indo – Iranian Cultural relations with special references of historical background. Prof. Hasan, in his speech, laudably appreciated the role that the Iran Society has been playing in the promotion of the Persian language in India for last the 77 years. He said that the Society’s contributions needed to be highlighted more and more at a wider level. Prof. Hasan offered academic exchanges between University and Iran Society.

The function ended with a hearty vote of thanks proposed by **Dr. M. Firoze**, Treasurer of the Iran Society.

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