

Kabul Remembers Maulana Azad



A section of the audience at the lecture-cum-discussion on the life and times of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Seated on the dais (from right to left) Ambassador Rakesh Sood, Maulvi Zeinollah Manalai, Najib Manalai, Senior Advisor to Minister of Information & Culture, and Golnoor Bahman, poet and writer.

For many in Afghanistan, both young and old, the name of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of India, has a familiar ring. For a younger Afghan generation, ICCR, or the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, is a household name with its much coveted scholarships. Maulana Azad was the founder president of ICCR.

For the older generation, Maulana Azad represented the sublime values of Muslim intellectual renaissance, and symbolised the finest aspects of progressivism.

Maulana was also an important figure in India's freedom struggle. This was the focal theme of the special presentation made by the 83-year-old renowned Afghan poet, scholar of jurisprudence and writer of repute, Maulvi Zeinollah Manalai.

The lecture-cum-discussion was organised by the India Cultural Centre (ICC), Kabul, and attracted around 70 eager listeners.

Inaugurating the function, Ambassador Rakesh Sood spoke about the life and achievements of Maulana Azad and his contribution to

the education sector in India.

In an erudite and detailed presentation on Maulana Azad, Maulvi Manalai touched on various aspects of his life.

Maulvi Manalai then reflected on the thoughts and philosophy of Maulana Azad with specific reference to Azad's work 'Gubar-e-Khatir' (Fog of Thoughts). Maulvi Manalai has himself translated 'Gubar-e-Khatir' into Pashto.

The audience clung to every word of the Maulvi's hour-long presentation.

On the occasion, Nilab Rahimi, Director, Public Libraries, Ministry of Information & Culture, and Golnoor Bahman, a well-known poet and writer, also spoke about the life and times of Maulana Azad.

For many, the session was an interesting and educative experience.

For Maulvi Manalai, this was a remarkable experience. The gentle octogenarian said: "This is a memorable day for me. I never thought there would be an occasion like this. I want to thank ICC and the Indian Embassy for giving me this opportunity."

INDIA CULTURE CENTRE EVENTS FOR JANUARY 2008

JAN 15 'Cry of History' Theatre performance by Simorgh Film Association of Culture & Art, Herat. Dialogues in Dari.

JAN 22 Screening of Shyam Benegal's film 'Making of Mahatma', in English

JAN 26 Patriotic songs by students of India Culture Centre

