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Sahitya Akademi



India International Centre

invite you to

**meet the author**

Anand Narain Mulla





**D**O not take him to court. Give him to me," implored the poet Jigar Moradabadi with the leading legal luminary Jagat Narain Mulla as he was taking his young son Anand Narain to the Lucknow High Court. Eventually, Anand Narain served both, the law and the muse, and rose to eminence in public life, with one term in the Lok Sabha and another in the Rajya Sabha. He has publish-

ed six volumes of verse, two collections of prose, translated one and edited another.

*Meri Hadis-e-Umr-e-Gurezan* won for him the Sahitya Akademi Award for 1964 for "its deep humanism and its polished diction and verse" as the most outstanding work published in Urdu in 1961, 62 and 63. Ale Ahmed Suroor hailed it as "a major work by a major poet". Syed Abid Husain observed that Mulla "is undoubtedly one of the best Urdu poets of the 20th century and shares with Iqbal the distinction of weaving a definite philosophy of life which gives a new dimension to his poetry, imparting the depth of serious thinking to the aesthetic charm of the work of art. His revolutionary moral fervour, softened and sweetened by his profound humanism, is both inspiring and refreshing."

Mulla's introduction to this prize-winning collection embodies his views on values in poetry and literature: "I do not think that a poet is only an artist, he has to be a pathfinder, a prophet blessed with foresight. No writer can rise to the level of greatness unless he is deeply in love with mankind. I believe that



With President Radhakrishnan, Vice President Zakir Husain and Sahitya Akademi Award winners. 1964



Addressing a seminar, 1989; also seen are Rafique Alam, Syed Hamid and Khaliq Anjum

literature which ignores human suffering may offer a flight or two in fancy but it will not enrich human intellect or emotion."

Commenting on Mulla's contribution to Urdu poetry, Khaliq Anjum says: "It has been a kind of tradition in Urdu poetry that a poet aspiring to write *nazm* begins with *ghazal*. Even Iqbal and Josh are no exception. But Mulla showed a marked difference. He burst on the literary scene with a *nazm* and then turned to *ghazal* with a broader canvas. In fact, no subject which concerns humanity is alien to him."

In Mulla's own words to *ghazal*: *Dulhan thi tujhe maine saathi banaya/shabistaan se maidan mein kheench laya/tere narm lahje ko lalkar de di/tere dast-e-nazuk mein talwar de di/diya dard-i-insan ka ahsas tujhko/khada kar diya nazm ke paas tujhko*. You were a bride, I made you companion; from the solitary confinement I brought you to fields wide open; to your tender voice I lent force fiery; in your delicate hands I gave a sword; of human suffering I

made you aware; I gave you place next to *nazm*.

Appraising Mulla's poetry, Gopi Chand Narang says: "Mulla's faith in man is unshakable. It lends remarkable vigour and vitality to his poetry. Though classical in diction, his poetry is essentially contemporary in its political concerns and possesses a unique individual quality. He does not subscribe to any ism, nor does he go by



Zaukh Research Institute Award; also seen in the picture are Mir Mushtaq Ahmed and Gopi Chand Narang

accepted norms and popular views. For his writing, Mulla draws on his own experience and presents the reality uncompromisingly. For each question that life confronts him with, he seeks an answer himself. Humanity is the quintessence of Mulla's poetry in which one hears not only the delicate heartbeats of love in all its enchanting rhythm but also the sufferings and woes of millions striving for a more just social order."



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ings and woes of millions striving for a more just social order."

For Mulla, "life is a river of which neither the beginning nor the end is known. On its banks humanity has made its dwelling for generations together. This river is forever moving onwards. From the banks it is an everchanging scene which one gets to see through the limitations of one's individual perception. Only a few people are blessed with the foresight to visualise the distant. Even they do not get the full picture of life, and this precisely is the reason for divergence in perception. Everyone thinks that his own view is the perfect view, and that is why truth differs from person to person."

Mulla's contribution to Urdu literature has been acknowledged by several literary organisations with their highest awards. He presided over the Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu



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Combining legal career with public life has distinguished precedents in pre-Independence India, but what is rare, as in Mulla, is the added facet of the muse. The tender lover, the fair judge and the political crusader could be fiercely secular: *Mera bas ho*

*to har masjid se ru-e-jaminko pak karun/har mandir ko mis-mar karun/har ek kilisa khak karun.* If I could I would, from the fair earth wipe off every mosque, destroy every temple, reduce every church to ashes.



With wife Annapurna, daughter Chitra and son-in-law Vinay.

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### TRANSLATION

- MAZAMEEN-E-NEHRU. Allahabad: Indian Press Pvt. Ltd., 1939. 254p. 17.5 cm.

### EDITED

- YADGAR-I-CHAKBAST. Allahabad: Indian Press Pvt. Ltd., 172p. 17.5 cm.

## A Chronology

- 1901 Birth
- 1939 *Mazameen-e-Nehru*
- 1946 Chairman of Indo-Pak Commission
- 1949 *Jue Sheer*, first collection of Urdu poems
- 1954 Judge, Allahabad High Court
- 1959 U.P. Ghalib Award shared with Firaq Gorakhpuri
- 1963 Member, Sahitya Akademi Urdu Advisory Board for five years
- 1964 Sahitya Akademi Award for *Meri Hadis-e-Umr-e-Gurezan*
- 1967 Elected to Lok Sabha
- 1968 Member, Sahitya Akademi Urdu Advisory Board for five years
- 1969 President, Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu (Hindi)
- 1972 Elected to Rajya Sabha
- 1980 Zaukh Research Institute Award; Chairman, Jail Reforms Commission
- 1983 Vice-Chairman, Taraqqi Urdu Board, Government of India; Chairman, Uttar Pradesh Urdu Academy
- 1986 Atlas Ghalib Award
- 1989 Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Award; Member, Executive Committee, Jamia Millia Islamia.

