SAARC

Sufi Festival

October 10, 11, 12, 2015
Diggi Palace, Jaipur

REPORT

Organized by
FOUNDATION OF SAARC WRITERS AND LITERATURE
SAARC Apex Body

in collaboration with
ETV
&
DIGGI PALACE
SAARC SUFI FESTIVAL
October 10, 11, 12, 2015
Diggi Palace, Jaipur

Sufism is our great civilizational heritage, spreading over Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, North Africa and West Asia, providing an infinite space for spiritual and human bonds of love and compassion, a great path for promoting pluralism, compassion, love and brotherhood, underlining the imperative of reconciliations and centrality of common man. The message of Sufism transcends all social, religious and political boundaries negating any kind of fundamentalism.

The essence of Sufism is that the only way to love God is to love His creations. His creations mean all beings – living and non-living. Love is more powerful and profound than any idea or ideal. Love is universal, so is Sufism.

Ajeet Cour, the President of the Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature, has a sufi bent of mind. It has always been in her sub-consciousness. She shapes her ideas accordingly. As early as 2006 she put the idea into action.

In South Asia, particularly in the SAARC countries, Sufism has been a powerful social factor contributing to the growth of an inclusive and accommodative civilization. We need Sufism far more in modern times than ever before. Keeping in mind the significance of Sufi thought and practices in integrating of people of various ways of life under common ethos and value system she organized a three days International Conference on Sufism : Sufi Traditions, Poetry and Philosophy, at India International Centre on March 18, 19, 20, 2006.

In this disorderly world under threat of terrorism and intellectual suppression no one thought of Sufism as an antidote for peace and love except Ajeet Cour, and once she initiated it there were many more to market it.

The International Conference on Sufism 2006 witnessed the participation of about 200 eminent Sufi scholars, poets and experts from fourteen countries from Turkey, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Azarbaijan, Uzbekistan,
Iran, Italy, Poland, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Canada, France, Lebanon and U.S.A. It also had soul-stirring performances by eminent vocalist Shanti Hiranand, Gulfam Sabri’s group from Delhi, Baul singers from West Bengal, and Sufi singers Mr. Iqbal Bahu and Dr. Azhar Mahmood from Pakistan.

Delhi’s first Sufi conference was not an event only but a running process. The Sufi Festival of October 10, 11, 12, 2015 is the eighth Sufi Festival. Kind courtesy of Thakur Ram Pratap Singh, his generous wife and enthusiastic collaboration of Diggi Hotels Pvt Ltd; ETV; Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan; Ministry of Culture, Government of India; Sahitya Akademi; State Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Sri Lanka; India-Bhutan Foundation; B.P. Koirala India-Nepal Foundation; India-Afghanistan Foundation; India-Bangladesh Foundation; Arpana Caur; we again organized the Festival at Diggi Palace Hotel, Jaipur.

INAUGURATION

The enthusiastic delegates from several SAARC countries reached Jaipur a day in advance on 9th October. After the breakfast on the 10th morning the delegates of the SAARC Sufi Festival from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives, Sri Lanka and India got themselves registered outside the Darbar Hall of the Diggi Palace, the venue of the Festival. The delegates were very cooperative. Inspite of the rush and heavy presence of media and security persons the registration was done peacefully. Thanks also to
the office of FOSWAL. The Registration was completed before the arrival of the Guest of Honour His Excellency, Shree Kalyan Singh jee, the Honourable Governor of Rajasthan, and the Chief Guest, Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee.

Keeping in mind the Protocol on account of the presence of the Governor the schedule of the Inauguration was as under:

His Excellency Shree Kalyan Singh jee, the Honourable Governor of Rajasthan, Chief Guest Shrimati Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee were received by Smt. Ajeet Cour, President of Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature, Shri Jagdeesh Chandra ji, President of ETV, and Thakur Ram Pratap Singh ji, at Diggi Palace Durbar Hall.
The distinguished guests His Excellency Shree Kalyan Singh jee, Shrimati Tara Gandhi jee, Justice S.S. Kothari, H.E. Shri Kalyan Singh jee, Governor of Rajasthan, the Guest of Honour; Smt. Ajeet Cour, President FOSWAL; Prof. Refaqat Ali Khan, Director SAARC Sufi Festival; Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, the Chief Guest of the Festival.

All the dignitaries on the dais stand in attention for the National Anthem. From left Mr. Jagdeesh Chandra, President of ETV; Justice S.S. Kothari, H.E. Shri Kalyan Singh jee, Governor of Rajasthan, the Guest of Honour; Smt. Ajeet Cour, President FOSWAL; Prof. Refaqat Ali Khan, Director SAARC Sufi Festival; Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, the Chief Guest of the Festival.

The function as per protocol started with National Anthem followed by Ganesh Vandana by Meghwal singers.

Smt. Ajeet Cour, President of Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature welcomed individually the honourable guests on the Dais and learned delegates from the SAARC.
Presenting the ceremonial shawl to the Chief Guest
Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee

Presenting the ceremonial shawl to Justice S.S. Kothari.

Thakur Ram Pratap Singh jee offering flowers to Ajeet Cour, President of Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature
countries. She said that the Sufi Festival was being organized by FOSWAL. She said that Sufism is a way of life that binds regions through not only culture but also civilizations. That was why FOSWAL chose Sufism in bringing together the hearts and minds of the people of SAARC countries.

Shree Jagdeesh Chandra jee, the President of ETV also welcomed the honoured guests and participants.

Justice S.S. Kothari spoke for two minutes.

Chief Guest Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee presented the Keynote Address covering several social and spiritual aspects of human mind. She said, “Religions and faiths have originated in many ways from divine spiritual enquiry. Divine spirituality is the soul / fulcrum of every faith and religion. Perversion of human mind gets religions and faiths distorted in various violent forms. Inspite of violent negativities truth cannot be destroyed.

“The spiritual and human evolution in life's journey of the Sufi philosophers reached the ultimate and influenced the human society for ever.”
Ajeet Cour, President Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature, presenting her Welcome Address. Shri Kalyan Singh jee, the Governor of Rajasthan, is listening to her attentively.

Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, the Chief Guest, presenting her Keynote Address.

Darbar Hall was overflowing with delegates and special invitees.
She concluded that the Sufi Festival would “help in spreading Sufism and Culture among the masses”.

Prof. Refaqat Ali Khan the Director of the Festival said that Sufism cut across all religions. It adds to the richness of religions. This also enables people of different cultures and countries to interact with one another for peaceful co-existence.

His Excellency, the Governor addressed at the end. He hoped that the Festival would open ways for learning'. He added that Sufi Saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti spread the philosophy of Sufism and today people from every corner of the world come to the dargah of the saint of Ajmer.

Spiritual devotion, love and harmony would take the society to new heights, the governor concluded.

Thakur Ram Pratap Singh thanked the distinguished guests and the delegates.

The inaugural function came to an end with the National Anthem.

Welcome Speech by Ajeet Cour

I welcome with all my heart our Chief Guest writer and scholar Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, the grand daughter of Mahatma Gandhi; and our Guest of Honour Hon'ble Shri Kalyan Singh jee, the Governor of Rajasthan; Justice S.S. Kothari, Mr. Jagdeesh Chandra, the President of ETV; Thakur Ram Pratap Singh, the President of this Festival; Prof. Refaqat Ali Khan, the Director of this Festival; all other Guests of Honour, all Ambassadors and Heads of Delegations from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and SAARC Division of Ministry of External Affairs.

The FOUNDATION OF SAARC WRITERS AND LITERATURE is a journey of 30 years, when I launched my lonely endeavour which had a million hurdles, the biggest being getting sponsors, and the other biggest getting visas.

The endeavour was to bring together the hearts and minds of this turbulent region which seemed impossible in 1986, because, to start with, Culture was not a part of the SAARC Charter. And, no Pakistani writer or musician had ever been
given a visa since Partition of the country in 1947.
It was like swimming against the current.
The driving force behind this endeavour was simply LOVE.
Love for the people living in the politically turbulent
neighbouring countries who are so alike in many many ways.
Love for the whole humanity ! Love for the one Infinite
Presence merged in the Universe like a soft fragrance !

In 30 years, our organization FOUNDATION OF SAARC
WRITERS AND LITERATURE, has been honoured again
and again, with the unique status of being the only SAARC
APEX BODY dealing with culture and literature.

I will like to share with you that our, now yours too,
FOUNDATION of SAARC Writers and Literature has the
unique honour of being the only SAARC APEX BODY,
responsible for literary and cultural programmes across the
countries of South Asia under SAARC banner and SAARC
logo, minus their financed support.

We have organized 49 Conferences and Festivals and
Academic Seminars for deep deliberations about what binds
us emotionally and culturally : our literature, our music, our
beliefs, our myths and legends, our sensitivities and deep
mystic beliefs, our poetry and our melodies.

Our Conferences and Festivals of Sufism and Buddhism, of
Folklore and of Environment, of Violence and Peace, of
Fiction and Poetry and Performances ! Cutting across
borders and boundaries.

The current International Conference on Sufism is our 50th
mega event and therefore more special, and our third event
at beautiful Diggi Palace.

Our focus has been especially on subjects which bind our
region culturally and civilisationally. Binds us through our
oriental, deep understanding of Life and beyond, Love and
Compassion, Reconciliation and Understanding, and
Respecting the Otherness of the Others.

We found Sufism as the great binding force.
Sufism is a feeling of pure elevation ! Of merging your Self in
One Creator, the Omnipresent Being !
Sufism is a great philosophy of deep, infinite feelings, but it is not a religion. One can be a Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Christian, Jew, yet be a Sufi too, because Sufism is an exalted state of mind where love and peace, a new ideological state of mind overflowing with love!

Sufism is an infinite melody which keeps the Universe enthralled! In a warm embrace!

That is the only way to unravel the great mystery of Life, and the greatest mystery of that Masterly Magician who created it all, and is keeping all of it in a delicate balance!

The luminescent vision and the sweep of Sufism and Bhakti movements, the two cultural-literary-poetic-mystic streams that taught us the everlasting lesson of tolerance, pluralism, love, compassion and reconciliation.

Sufism is a worldview, a refined and perceptive way of looking at things that are often expressed in soul-stirring mystical verse and music. It can also be very, very rational, earthy and this-worldly because all the Sufi and Bhakti poetry is written in the language of common people and not in the exclusive language of a few.

The Director of this Conference Prof. Refaqat Ali Khan did an excellent job, and made this SAARC Conference on Sufism, Sufi Traditions, Poetry and Philosophy a well-deserved success.

I am grateful to Mr. Jagdeesh Chandra, President of EVT, to Thakur Ram Pratap Singh of Diggi Palace, to Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan, my painter daughter Arpana Caur, and all other friends who have helped us. Above all, the participants: all Sufi Scholars and poets, and Sufi Performers from India and the neighbouring countries of the SAARC Region.

This Conference is an attempt to keep alive the fire of yearning and love that burns deep within human hearts, despite the growing universal violence.

Thank you for being here and sharing with us what we have to offer in all humility.
ACADEMIC SEMINAR PROGRAMME

SESSION I

Books Released by Ajeet Cour
1. Dr. Shaikh Musak Rajjak : A History of Sufism in Deccan
2. Dr. Sigma G.R. : Summer Dreams

SPEAKERS / PAPERS

Chairman : Mr. Pran Nevile (India)

1. Mr. Kamala Wijeratne (Sri Lanka)
   Topic : Expressing Love And Compassion And Respect For The Otherness Of The Others In Three Sufi Poets
2. Rev. Ven. Dampahala Rahulo (Sri Lanka)
   Topic : Sufism Goals In Buddhistic View
3. Mr. M. Mansoor Nassimy (Afghanistan)
   Topic : Building Peace and Love from Sufism Perspective
4. Prof. Abhi Subedi (Nepal)
   Topic : Earthquake And Sufi Consciousness : A Short Personal Quest
5. Mr. Pran Nevile (India)
   Topic : Sufi Music For Peace And Harmony

Mr. Pran Nevile (third from left), an outstanding scholar and author, presiding over Session I
SESSION II
SPEAKERS/PAPERS

Chairman : Mr. Daya Dissanayake (Sri Lanka)

1. Mr. Jharna Rahman (Bangladesh) 
   Topic : The Idol Of Lalon Fakir
2. Prof. Muhammad Nurul Huda (Bangladesh) 
   Topic : Portrait Of An Aesthetic Sufi
3. Dr. Ahmad Khan (India) 
   Topic : Saiyid Mohammad Gesudaraz Of Gulbarga (Deccan) Symbol Of Communal Harmony
4. Dr. Madhu Trivedi (India) 
   Topic : The Syncretic Ethos Of The Awadhi Sufi Tradition
5. Mr. Daya Dissanayake (Sri Lanka) 
   Topic : Sufi Dhamma, The Green Religion

POETRY SESSION

Chairperson : Ms. Tarannum Riyaz (India)

1. Mr. Bob D'Costa (India)
2. Dr. Samantha Herath (Sri Lanka)
3. Dr. Pranjit Bora (India)
4. Mr. Hasan Mahmud (Bangladesh)
5. Ms. Zohra Zaheer (Afghanistan)
6. Ms. Tarannum Riyaz (India)
SESSION III
4.30 - 06.15

SPEAKERS / PAPERS

Chairman : Mr. S.M.G.N. Dharmasekara (Sri Lanka)
Additional Secretary, State Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Sri Lanka

1. Dr. Praneeth Abhayasundere (Sri Lanka)
   Topic : Friendship : The Emotional Bondage, Sufi Promotes a Peaceful World

2. Prof. Keshab Sigdel (Nepal)
   Topic : Between Terrorism and Tolerance: A Sociological Approach to Rethinking Sufism

3. Dr. Alauddin Khan (India)
   Topic : Love and Service to Humanity in Bhaktism and Sufism
Durbar Hall overflowing with delegates.

From left: Syed Shahid Hussain Bukhari from Pakistan, Dr. Sanjay Garg (India), Ms. Farheen Chaudhry from Pakistan, Ms. Arpana Caur

Ajeet Cour with Ms. Jharna Rahman and Mr. Farid Ahmad Dulal from Bangladesh
4. Mr. Farid Ahmad Dulal (Bangladesh)
   Topic: Theme of Sufism in the Poetry of Bangladesh

5. Mr. S.M.G.N. Dharmasekara
   Topic: Sufism

POETRY SESSION

Chairman: Dr. Sanjay Garg (India)

1. Prof. Keshab Sigdel (Nepal)
2. Mr. Syed Shahid Husain Bukhari (Pakistan)

3. Ms. Tanni Bose (Bhutan)
4. Dr. Sigma G.R. (India)
5. Mr. Vinod Bhardwaj (India)
6. Dr. Sanjay Garg (India)

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SESSION IV
09.30-11.30 am

SPEAKERS / PAPERS

Chairperson: Dr. Bal Bhandari (Bhutan)

1. Prof. Liaqat Hussain Moini (India)
   Topic: Relations of Chishti Saints with Government

2. Prof. Megharaj Adhikari (Nepal)
   Topic: The Path Of Mysticism: Reading Sufism In Selected Poems About Common People
3. Sheikh Rabiul Haq (Bangladesh)
   Topic: Sufism And Peace Are Inseparable

4. Prof. Samantha Ilangakoon (Sri Lanka)
   Topic: “Nobody Can Separate One Another” - Implementing The Budhist Theory Of Dependent Origination For A Peaceful Co-Existence.

5. Dr. Bal Bhandari (Bhutan)
   Topic: Acceptance – The Culture Of Humanity

POETRY SESSION

1. Ms. Shabnam Virmani and Vipul Rikhi (India)
   Special discourse on Kabir

2. Dr. Anand Kumar (India), special presentation on Malik Jaisi
SESSION V
11.45 - 01.30

SPEAKERS / PAPERS

Chairman : Prof. Akhtarul Wasey India)

1. Prof. Yaqub Ali Khan (India)
   Topic : Gagraun: A Junction Of Bhakti-Sufi Credence During Medieval Period

2. Dr. M. Idris (India)
   Topic : Towards Composite Culture, Peace And Interfaith Dialogues: Studying The Travels Of Guru Nanak

3. Mr. Ahmad Farid (Afghanistan)
   Topic : Sufism As A Way Of Life, Celebrating Life Through Love, Compassion, Forgiveness, And Good Neighbourliness

4. Dr. Saima Iram (Pakistan)
   Sufism And Vedantism: A Comparative Study

5. Prof. Akhtarul Wasey (India)
   Topic : Sufi Influence on Society

POETRY SESSION

Chairman : Mr. Jayanta Mahapatra (India)

1. Mrs. Khaleda Tahseen (Afghanistan)
2. Mr. Aryan Aroon (Afghanistan)
3. Mr. Daya Dissanayake (Sri Lanka)
4. Ms. Shahida Shaheen (Pakistan)
5. Mr. Jayanta Mahapatra (India)

SESSION VI
2.30 – 4.00

Chairperson: Dr. Sadia Dehlvi (India)

PAPERS / SPEAKERS

1. Dr. Jibrael Hayat (India)
   Topic: Role Of Sufi Bhakti Saints In The Making Up Of An Inclusive Civilisation In Medieval Rajasthan

2. Prof. Samantha Herath (Sri Lanka)
   Topic: Role Of Media In Fostering Ethnic Harmony With Special Reference To Sri Lankan Cinema

3. Dr. Parwez Nazir (India)
   Topic: Culture of Charity in Sufism
POETRY SESSION

Chairman: Prof. Abhi Subedi

1. Dr. Gopal Parajuli (Nepal)
2. Ms. Sayar Wajiha (Afghanistan)
3. Mr. Bimal Guha (Bangladesh)
4. Ms. Jharna Rahman (Bangladesh)
5. Dr. R.K. Das (India)
6. Ms. Akanksha Chaudhary (India)
7. Prof. Abhi Subedi (Nepal)
8. Mr. Shaikh Rabiul Haq (Bangladesh)
9. Prof. Abhi Subedi (Nepal)

SESSION VII
4.30 - 06.00

SPEAKERS / PAPERS

Chairperson: Ms. Farheen Chaudhry (Pakistan)

1. Dr. Shaikh Musak Rajjak (India)
   Topic: Bhakt Saint and Sufis in Mahipati's (1715-1790 AD) Marathi Literature During The Mughal Deccan
2. Ms. Chador Wangmo (Bhutan)
   Topic: Respect for the Otherness of the Others
3. Ms. Farheen Chaudhry (Pakistan)
   Topic: Khulq and Twadu

POETRY SESSION

Chairperson: Ms. Farheen Chaudhry (Pakistan)

1. Ms. Pema Gyaltshen (Bhutan)
2. Mr. Kushal Datta (India)
3. Dr. Thakur Belbase (Nepal)
4. Mr. Aju Mukhopadhyay (India)
5. Mr. Syed Ahmed Ali Aziz (Bangladesh)
6. Bal Bhandari (Bhutan)
7. Ms. Farheen Chaudhry (Pakistan)

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SESSION VIII
09.30-11.30 am

SPEAKERS / PAPERS

Chairman: Dr. Iqbal M. Chawla (Pakistan)

1. Mr. Saeed Ahmad (Pakistan)
   Topic: Hazrat Mian Muhammad Bakhsh
2. Dr. Sanjay Garg (India)
   Topic: Puhupawati – A Rare Sufi Work of the 17th Century
3. Dr. Ahmad Salim (Pakistan)
   Topic: Bridging Hinduism And Islam: Partners in Bhakti Movement

4. Dr. Iqbal M. Chawla (Pakistan)
   Topic: A History of The Marginalised People: Female Sufism in Pakistan: Bibi Pakdaman

POETRY SESSION

Chairman: Dr. Bimal Guha (Bangladesh)

1. Ms. Somaya Ramish (Afghanistan)

2. Mr. Amit Kalla (India)
3. Ms. Nasima Hamdard (Afghanistan)
4. Mr. Gautam Priyam Mahanta (India)
5. Mr. Arpan Kumar (India)
6. Mr. Ikraam Rajasthani (India)
SESSION IX

Chairman : Mr. Mithilesh Shrivastava

Surprise visit of star actor Om Puri and the meeting with the delegates of eight SAARC countries. The delegates, specially of Pakistan, were quite thrilled with his visit.

POETS
1. Ms. Lutfia Hanum Salima Begam (India)
2. Mr. Mithilesh Shrivastava (India)

CONCLUDING SESSION

The concluding event of the Festival was the presentation of a Resolution which was unanimously approved.

Prof. Akhtarul Wasey on behalf of Ms. Ajeet Cour the President of FOSWAL and
Ajeet Cour and Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee

Delegates from Nepal: From left: Dr. Megharaj Adhikari, Dr. Belbase Thakur, Dr. Gopal Parajuli, Prof. Abhi Subedi, Prof. Keshab Sigdel
Ajeet Cour with Smt. Jyotika Singh

Exhibition of books published by FOSWAL, with Farheen Chaudhry and Parveen of FOSWAL
Refaqat Ali Khan, the Director of the Sufi Festival, thanked the participants of each country separately with comments on the significance of each SAARC country in the world. All the delegates were provided Airconditioned coaches for visiting important places of Jaipur from 2 pm to 7 pm. They enjoyed the trip very much.

RESOLUTION

“We the delegates and participants of the SAARC SUFI FESTIVAL, held on 10th and 11th of October, 2015 at Diggi Palace, Jaipur, India, assembled from countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and India agree:

- That all humankind is born equal and has a right to equality in practice of religion, culture, traditions and rituals.
- We affirm that it is now time to declare the beginning of the era of 'no war'. Let the entire earth be declared a 'no war' region.
- We accept that Sufism, the teachings of the great Sufi Saints and the practice of Sufism are the right counter to terrorism. Hence it has to be brought to the fore-ground and propagated as a doctrine of love, peace, brotherhood, mutual respect and co-existence.
- We wish that this SAARC Sufi Festival is made an Annual Event that it is held in different countries of SAARC every year and when it is held in India it should be held at Diggi Palace, Jaipur. Seminars and Conferences can be held any other city of India.
- We are happy and proud that the International Conference on Sufism was organized by FOSWAL, under the able guidance of Ajeet Cour and her untiring effort to bring peace and unity to the SAARC Region through Literary and Cultural efforts.
- We request that the grant for this Annual International Sufi Festival is included in the Annual Financial Budget of the concerned Ministry.
PERFORMANCES

The medieval period of Indian history underwent an enriching experience that two different and well developed musical systems, Persian and Indian, interacted and complemented each other, leading to the growth of new vocal forms. Sama music synthesized Indo-Persian musical traditions which in fact are the soul and practice of Indian music.

Interestingly the Sufi sama music, vocal, instrumental and dance were audience-oriented where people of different religions or social strata shared culture. Sufi dargahs resounded with verses, sharing the culture for more many centuries.

Mrs Ajeet Cour, the President of FOSWAL has been weaving a strong net of cultural connectivity among SAARC peoples. For achieving her object she has used every medium including sufi music and dance. Sufi Festival at Diggi Palace not far from the dargah of Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti at Ajmer is adding additional charm to the Sufi Sama, making the Festival more vibrant and richer.

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VISHESH KALIMERO : SUFI MUSIC

The melodius music performances of the Sufi Festival started with the heart-capturing instrumental music of Vishesh Kalimero. He is a multi instrumentalist and a singer. A group of young musicians made a chorus making sound without words.

SUHAIL BHAN : SUFI BHARATNATYAM DANCE

Suhail Bhan’s Sufi Bharatnatyam dance was a new experience at the Sufi Festival. All love poems of Punjab, Sindh and Central Asia including Awadhi Padmawat are included in Sufi literature. Dances like Bharatnatyam and Odissi are also expressions of love. These dances, like
Vishesh Kalimero's group performing the Sufi Instrumental Music

Vishesh Kalimero singing.

Suhail Bhan doing a Sufi Bharatnatyam dance.
poetry, adorn the glorious sufi texture. Suhail Bhan the young classical dance performer combined modernity in many ways. His dance combined delicacy, strength and satisfaction and expressed lyricism, vibrancy and dynamism through his performance.

WAHEED BAKHSH MALANG FROM PAKISTAN : SONGS AND MUSIC AND DANCE PERFORMANCE

Waheed Bakhsh is a sufi singer from Pakistan. He is a solo player and singer, a performer of extraordinary calibre. His solo performance was superb. He had a brief performance the next day also.
ZIA NATH : SUFI DANCE

Zia Nath is a solo dancer who has mastered the two separate forms of dance, the whirling sufi dance of Turkey and Odissi dance of India. It was a beautiful presentation. Her performance at Diggi Palace was fascinating and amazing.

Ms. Zia Nath performing her Sufi dance.

Mangniyar group singing in ecstasy.

A section of the audience.
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SHABNAM VIRMANI AND VIPUL RIKHI AND GOPAL : 
SUFI PERFORMANCES AND MUSIC

Shabnam Virmani has directed several documentaries and edited several music Ods and books. Her documentary on Kabir is a prized production. She with her companions made a beautiful presentation of six songs of Kabir representing his life and teaching.

HARSHDEEP KAUR IN CONCERT : SUFI SONGS

Harshdeep Kaur is a playback singer famous for her Sufi songs. She was a great crowd gatherer. People listened to her sufi songs with attention and enthusiasm.
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Arpana Caur in intimate conversation with Hon’ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan Smt. Vasundhara Raje.

Hon’ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan Smt. Vasundhara Raje enthralled with the books published by FOSWAL. She is holding a book of Arpana Caur’s paintings.

Sufi Singers from Rajasthan
TOM ALTER AND GROUP (Pierrot's Troupe)
Performing a very popular play
'LAL QILE KA AAKHRI MUSHAIRA'

Tom Alter is a film and theatre actor, and is very popular in India and abroad. The Writer and Director of the play is the famous Mr. Sayeed Alam.

The Urdu play was directed by Mr. Sayeed Alam which is based upon Mirza Farhatulla Beg's Dilli Ki Aakhri Shaam. It was an extraordinary presentation. The city audience had a chance to witness the great past glory of the Mughal days, the enchanting atmosphere, charming mannerism and Mughal humour. The audience of Jaipur of course had a difficulty—the poetic Urdu. But certainly it was a pleasure to see great poets like Mirza Ghalib, Dagh, Momin and Bahadur Shah Zafar in their usual dress and appearance.

Glimpses from the play 'Lal Qile Ka Aakhri Mushaira'
RESPONSES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Dear Ajeet Cour,

SAARC Sufi Festival created spiritual and literary atmosphere. It was a celebration of secular thought. Goddess Durga may bless you for your great work. I agree with you and add that the day of Vijaya Dashami shows the direction for our SAARC nations to overcome terrorism.

You will be here always in my memory. Thank you for your invitation, hospitality and affectionate love.

Regards,

Gopal Parajuli, Nepal

Respected Didi

And all friends of FOSWAL

I returned richer, happier and more confident after the great historic SAARC Sufi Festival. Nothing but that comes to my mind now.

Regards

Abhi Subedi, Nepal

Respected Ajeet Madam,

Hope you all reached back to the station safely. I thank the organizer for giving the golden opportunity to be part of that program, wish good health to Madam Ajeet Caur and all the respected team members.

Today I am back to station and resumed my normal duty.

Kind regards

Dr. B. B. Bhandari, Bhutan

My dearest didi,

Starting to write with the best regards to you. Hope you become little free after the business to hold the great
program of SAARC SUFI FESTIVAL! It was really a wonderful program enriched with talent, knowledge and amusements! I am so happy and grateful to you to be invited to this graceful and prestigious program.

Best respect and LOVE!

Jharna Rahman, Bangladesh

Dear Maaji,

It was a huge honor for a budding writer like me to get an opportunity to mingle with great minds during the SAARC SUFI FESTIVAL at Jaipur. Thank you so much for bestowing upon me this grand blessing. I shall remain indebted to you for the knowledge I acquired by simply being a part of this august gathering.

Thank you so much,

Warm regards,

Chador Wangmo, Bhutan

My Dear Ajeet Cour ji,

Thank you for inviting me to the recently concluded SAARC Sufi Festival at Diggi Palace. The event was heart-warming and the experience has been invaluable where the message of love and compassion rang in the air. I've returned with more purity singing in my heart and soul.

Returning from such festivals and the SAARC Sufi Festival is soul cleansing. It's like returning from The Himalayas with the peal of the bells of silence forever ringing.

Thank you once again. Looking forward to the SAARC Festival of Literature in February/March.

Love and regards to you and your entire team.

Bob D'Costa
Dear didi,

I thank you for inviting me to such a wonderful gathering of academics, poets and artists/singers.

This year's Sufi festival too remained a historical event which I am sure is helpful in spreading the message of peace, fraternity and love.

I also would like to give my sincere thanks to Arpana Didi, Prof. Refaqat Ali Khan, Sethi jee, Praveen ji and Harminder for the tremendous effort they have put to make this Festival a grand success.

Warm regards,

Keshab Sigdel, Nepal

•

Respected Madam,

Thank you so much for the warm hospitality at Jaipur. It is an unforgettable moment indeed. I am proud to be a part of Sufi Festival for the first time. I really enjoyed interacting with the academicians, poets and sufi singers. Thank you so much for offering such a wonderful platform to me.

I arrived Kathmandu after one night stay in Delhi. Thank you so much for Praveen jee and Sethi jee. I am very much impressed by their warm hospitality and management of hotel in Delhi.

Your effort in maintaining peace and harmony in the South Asian region is an incredible example as a role of an individual. I wish for you sound health.

I am ready to help FOSWAL in any way you like. Thank you so much once again.

Best Regards,

Megharaj Adhikari, Nepal

•

My dear Ajeet Jee,

Thank you very much for organizing such a successful conference and inviting us to be a part of that. Your
dedication and hard work much appreciate. I would like to express my gratitude for the excellent support you and your staff had given to us.

I wish you good health, long life, happiness and success.

With Metta,

Praneeth Abhayasundere, Sri Lanka

Dear Madam,

I write this letter particularly to express my utmost affection and gratitude for everything that you have done during our stay in Diggi Palace, Jaipur.

It was definitely a memorable experience that would remain in our hearts forever. As we experienced during the last couple of years, this year too, the festival brought us an insightful academic exposure and highly meaningful interaction. We all were very much pleased to meet you, Ms Arpana and other associates of FOSWAL.

I have attended several festivals - both literature and sufi, and I am very much grateful to you for inviting me as well as fellow academics of Sri Lanka who attend regularly. We all understand the strenuous efforts that you make in organizing these events and we always appreciate and very much grateful for the same. Further, we are very much happy to extend our fullest support for all your endeavours in future as well.

Once again, with this small note, I express my sincere thanks and wish to state here that we always with you very warmly and wholeheartedly.

Prof. Samantha Herath, Sri Lanka.
Three-day Sufi festival in city from October 10

Jaipur: A 3-day Sufi festival by the Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL) is being organized at Diggi Palace from October 10 to 12. The festival would be a mélangé of Sufi dance and music performances, poetry, book readings, book launches and interactive sessions.

The 3rd edition of the festival will witness a wide participation of over 50 SAARC Sufi scholars, 40 poets, 80 Sufi musicians, singers and dancers and performers from as many as 8 SAARC countries, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The content of the festival will be academic research seminars and sufiana shayari. Scholars will be speaking on the topic, rediscovering peace and reconciliation, love and compassion, respect for others and secularism: Sufi solution of the contemporary turmoil.

Some of the well known artists that will be performing, include Harshdeep Kaur, Suhail Bhan (India’s Got Talent fame), Malang Waheed Baksh (Pakistan), Zia Nath among others. M Sayed Alam’s famous play ‘Laal Qile ka Aakhir Mushaira’ will also be staged in which cine actor Tom Alter will be portraying the main protagonist. 

Jaipur to get drenched in Sufi fervour

October will be a busy month for Jaipurites. Along with the eight-day jaahunama celebrated in the form of Jaintangram between October 4 to 11, a 3-day Sufi festival is also being organised at Diggi Palace from October 10 to 12. The event will be conducted by Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL) in collaboration with Diggi Palace. As part of the festival a mélangé of Sufi dance and music performances, poetry, book readings, book launches and interactive sessions will be held. The event, that enters its third edition, is said to witness a wide participation of over 50 SAARC Sufi scholars, 40 poets and performers from 8 SAARC countries including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Some of the well known artists expected to perform are Harshdeep Kaur, Suhail Bhan (India’s Got Talent fame), Malang Waheed Baksh (Pakistan), Zia Nath among others. Actor Tom Alter will be seen playing the protagonist in M Sayed Alam’s famous play ‘Laal Qile ka Aakhir Mushaira’ that will be staged at the event.
राष्ट्रीय जयपुर, 17 सितंबर, 2015

सार्क सूफी फेस्टिवल 10 अक्टूबर से जयपुर, (कांटी)। तीन दिवसीय सार्क सूफी फेस्टिवल 10 से 12 अक्टूबर तक जयपुर के हिंदी पैलेस में आयोजित किया जाएगा। इस फेस्टिवल का आयोजन ‘फाउंडेशन ऑफ सार्क राइट्स एंड लिटरेचर’ द्वारा इंटरनेशनल एवं हिंदी पैलेस के सहयोग से किया जा रहा है। यह फेस्टिवल सूफी नृत्य एवं संगीत, कविता, बुक रीडिंग, पुस्तक विमुख्त और इंटरक्स्च्युल स्थलों का उत्कृष्ट मिश्रण होगा। ‘फोर्व्सवल’ साउथ एशियन एएफसीएसएन फॉर रीजनल कोऑर्पोरेशन की एक प्रभावी संस्था है, जिसका दूसरा पदम अच्छी कीर्ति कर रही है। फेस्टिवल के तीसरे संकरण में 8 सार्क देशों से 50 से अधिक सूफी भिड़न, 40 कवियों एवं बड़ी सँख्या में कलाकार भाग लेंगे। ये देश हैं पाकिस्तान, अफगानिस्तान, बांग्लादेश, भूटान, भारत, मालदीव, नेपाल और श्रीलंका।

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जयपुर में 10 से 12 अक्टूबर तक होगा सूफी फेस्टिवल

सिटी सिक्को में 10 अक्टूबर से 12 अक्टूबर को होगा सूफी फेस्टिवल का आयोजन। इस फेस्टिवल का आयोजन फाउंडेशन ऑफ सार्क राइट्स एंड लिटरेचर पैलेस के सहयोग से किया जा रहा है। हिंदी पैलेस में होने वाले हेमा पैलेस में सूफी नृत्य एवं संगीत, कविता, बुक रीडिंग, बुक लिस्टिंग और इंटरक्स्च्युल स्थलों तक पहुंचे।
Melange of Sufi and Bhakti

Over 50 Sufi scholars, 40 poets and performers from eight SAARC countries will participate at Diesal Palace, Jalore.

A five-day Sufi festival is being organized at Diesal Palace in Jalore from October 10 to 15. The event will be organized by the Foundation of Sufi Writers and Literature (FOWSL). In collaboration with RTV and Jigel Palace, the festival will be a medley of Sufi dances and music performances, poetry book readings, nowa launches and interactive sessions.

The 3rd edition of the festival will witness a wide participation of over 50 SAARC Sufi scholars, 40 international poets and performers from as many as eight SAARC countries (excluding Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka).

Distinguished persons such as Yon Gandhi Bhujbal, the vice-chairperson of Gandhi Trust, and Karun Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Sheshnam Vartma and a documentary filmmaker and artist will also participate in the festival. Some of the well-known artists who will perform include Hanyaboy Kur: Sahil Bhan of India's Got Talent fame, Masoom Waheed from Pakistan, Tia Sudh among others. Milind Apte from Mumbai and Vaibhav Vaidya from Pune will also be staged in which close-to-end Times Afler will portray the main protagonist.

"The idea of bringing together poets from different parts of the world is to foster cultural exchanges and bring people closer to each other, fostering a sense of cultural diversity and unity through the medium of music and poetry."

Rajasthan Patrika
THURSDAY, 17.09.15

अधीन सार्क देशों के फनकार साजिदालों महाफिल
सूफी से बढ़ाइंगों कल्याण हामिनी

Jurnalists, poets from various countries are participating in the festival.

Congratulations to all!
सूफी फेस्ट 10 अक्टूबर से
सिटी रिपोर्टर • सार्क सूफी फेस्ट के तीसरे संस्करण में सूफी कलाकार संगीत, नाटक और शायरियों की प्रस्तुतियां खास होंगी। यह फेस्ट डिग्री पैलेस में 10 से 12 अक्टूबर तक आयोजित किया जाएगा। तीन दिवसीय इस फेस्ट के पहले दिन 10 अक्टूबर को लोकप्रिय सूफी डांसर जिया नाथ ‘सूफी स्लेंडर’ प्रस्तुत करेंगी। दूसरे दिन बॉलीवुड सिंगर हर्वेडॉप कॉर सूफी प्रस्तुतियां देंगी। 12 अक्टूबर को एम. सैद साइद आलम के नाटक ‘जाल किले का आखिरी मुरादा’ का मंचन भी किया जाएगा, जिसमें टॉम ऑल्डर मुख्य भूमिका निभाएंगे।
तीन दिवसीय सार्क सूफी पेरियवल आज से
सिटी रिपोर्टर • सार्क सूफी पेरियवल का तीसरा संस्करण 10 से 12 अक्तूबर के तीन दिनों में आयोजित किया जाएगा। यह पेरियवल का आयोजन ‘फांडेशन ऑफ़ सार्क इन्टरनेशनल’ (फीस्वाल) की ओर से किया जा रहा है। फीस्वाल सार्क इन्टरनेशनल पॉर्ट रीजनल कॉन्फ्रेंस की प्रधान संस्था है जिसकी प्रेजीडेंट पदवी अजीत कौर है। उन्होंने बताया, ‘आप और कलाप किसी भी देश की दूरी में मिटा सकता है।’ फीस्वाल एक जाति है सार्क देशों के लोगों को नज़दीक लाने का मुख्य उद्देश्य हर जगह है बस हम उसे पहचान नहीं पाते। यह पेरियवल हम फिल्म 30 सालों से कर रहे हैं। इसके जरिए इसे विदेशी देशों के सूफी टेलेट को उभारा जा सकता है। साथ ही सूफी लिटेचर को जानने का भी मौका दिया जाता है।’ पेरियवल में भाग ले सार्क, पाकिस्तान, अफगानिस्तान, बांग्लादेश, भूटान, मालदीप, नेपाल, श्रीलंका भाग ले रहे हैं।

The divine connect

Sufi music, dance, poetry recitation, book readings will feature in the three-day SAARC Sufi Festival

Sufi music, dance, poetry recitation, book readings will feature in the three-day SAARC Sufi Festival.

The festival, which is being held in collaboration with the Diggi Palace, is expected to attract thousands of tourists from different parts of the world.

The programme will include live performances, poetry recitations, book readings, and interactive workshops.

The programme will be launched by the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, on Friday.

The organisers said that the festival is being held to promote Sufi culture and its teachings.

The theme of the festival is ‘Sufi Connect’, which aims to bring people from different parts of the world together.

The festival will be held from 10 to 12 October.
SAARC sufist fest begins in Jaipur

JAIPUR: The SAARC sufist festival, a three-day carnival of sufist dance, music and poetry was inaugurated by Rajasthan governor Kalyan Singh in the city on Saturday.

Artists from several countries will take part in the festival, in which sufist dance, music, poetry recitals, book readings, book launches and interactive sessions will be held.

The governor has expressed hope that the festival will open ways of learning.

"Sufist saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chistii spread the sufist and today people from every corner of the world come to the dargah of Chistii in Ajmer," Singh said. Highlighting the importance of bound peace, Singh said that spiritual devotion, love and harmony can take the society to a new height.

The event is being organ-ised by the Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL).

"Sufism is a way of life that binds regions through not only cultures but also civilisations. This is why FOSWAL, the apex body of SAARC, chose sufism to bring together the hearts and minds of people of SAARC coun-
tries," said president of FOSWAL Ajeet Cour said.
सूफी साहित्य-संगीत-संस्कृति से रोशन हुआ शहर

जलते मयूर

सारण सुफी फेस्टिवल 10 से दिगम्बर पैलेस में

जयपुर (राज.) - तीन दिनों भर सारण सुफी फेस्टिवल 10 से 12 अक्टूबर का जयपुर के दिगम्बर पैलेस में आदर्शत हुआ। इस फेस्टिवल का आयोजन फेस्टिवल और इंडिया टेलिकॉम द्वारा उयुक्त मेलिन हुआ। 'फेस्टिवल' पर प्रदर्शन के प्रदर्शन की संगीत के द्वारा और गीत द्वारा की गई जो यहाँ जरूर देख रहे हैं।

नेशनल तृणोत्तर

देद साल तक लड़ी सरकार से तब जाकर श्रृंखला हुई

जयपुर (राज.) - 30 वें दिन तक रहे हैं सारण में कल्चरल कार्यक्रम। इस कार्यक्रम में अनेक मूल्यवान प्रदर्शन के लिए विभिन्न विभागों ने भाग लिया।

सरकार देश में कल्चरल प्रोग्राम
A trip back in time

SAARC Sufi Festival ends with a bang with a riveting show of the play Lal Qile Ka Aakhri Mushaerah, featuring actor Tom Alter
SAARC sufi festival begins in Jaipur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAIPUR, OCTOBER 10

THE THREE-DAY SAARC sufi festival was inaugurated here by Rajasthan Governor Kalyan Singh on Saturday. Artists from several countries will take part in the festival, in which sufi dance, music, poetry recitals, book readings, book launches and interactive sessions will be held.

The Governor expressed hope that the festival will open ways of learning. "Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti spread the philosophy of sufiism and to-day people from every corner of the world come to the dargah of Chisti in Ajmer," Singh said.

Highlighting the importance of love and peace, Singh said that spiritual devotion, love and harmony can take the society to a new height. The Governor, in his inaugural speech, said that maintaining the feeling of harmony was the need of the hour and appealed to the speakers to find a solution to the problems in the sphere of sufism.

The event is being organised by the Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL). "Sufism is a way of life that binds regions through not only cultures but also civilisations. This is why FOSWAL chose sufism to bring together the hearts and minds of people of SAARC countries," president of FOSWAL Ajeet Cour said.

Granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi and the vice chairperson of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee said that the event will help in spreading sufi art and culture among the masses.
भारत-पाक के बीच हो वीजा सिस्टम खत्म : ओमपुरा

सिटी रिपोर्टर • दिनांक में सार्क सुषी के फैसले में आखिरी दिन ओमपुरा घोषित की गई है। धर्मशाखा के बीच हो वीजा के माध्यम से आवाज की आवेदन करने में निर्विवाद और अनन्त विवाद की बात नहीं आया। इस दिन से पाकिस्तान में वीजा दाखिल करने का स्वाभाविक अधिकार है। भारत सरकार ने वीजा के माध्यम से दोनों देशों के बीच वापसी की चर्चा करने का निर्देश दिया है।

जब वे बिटों और गूच्छों गए तो वहाँ के पाकिस्तानी दुबारों और टैक्सी ड्राइवर ने उनके खाने और टाइमेस के बिल के पैसे नहीं दिये। उन्होंने कहा, भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच वीजा की बातों का समाप्त करना चाहिए। इस सिस्टम को खत्म करने के लिए समझदारी करना चाहिए कि दोनों देशों से कोई भी अनजान सीमा पर ना करे। वीजा सिस्टम पर दोनों देशों के बीच रिश्ते सुधारे और व्यापार में बढ़ोतरी होगी।
SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

This is to certify that the status of a

SAARC Apex Body

has been renewed for

Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (FOSWAL)

at the Thirty-Fourth Session of the Council of Ministers

The aforesaid status will remain valid until 2 April 2017 and is renewable.

Given under my hand on this Eighth Day of December Two Thousand and Eleven.

SAARC Secretariat
Kathmandu, Nepal

Uz. Fathimath Ilhamyana Saeed
Secretary-General

Foundation Of SAARC Writers And Literature
SAARC Apex Body

parent organisation

Academy Of Fine Arts And Literature

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