



WHY DARA SHIKOH MATTERS

Centenary Dara Shikoh Conference
Brochure

28th December, 2021



**DARA SHIKOH CENTRE FOR INTERFAITH
UNDERSTANDING & DIALOGUE
ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY**



A/c - 658

Foreword

Aligarh Muslim University has established the **Dara Shikoh Centre for Interfaith Understanding and Dialogue** aimed at strengthening the values of national integration, composite culture and social harmony. For realising its objectives, the Centre is undertaking initiatives to popularize the legacy of Dara Shikoh enshrined in finding commonalities of religions, assimilation, spirituality and interfaith dialogue.

We are organizing an International Conference "Why Dara Shikoh Matters" on 28 December 10:30 am onwards at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi in which eminent personalities, religious leaders and scholars will participate.

On this occasion we decided to publish this monograph about the theme of the Conference and a short introduction of our Centre

	<p style="text-align: center;">MESSAGE by VICE-CHANCELLOR Aligarh Muslim University</p>	
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WHY DARA SHIKOH MATTERS¹

Dara Shikoh was a champion of interfaith understanding, philosopher, artist, architect, translator, poet and administrator. Although in 1655 his father and Mughal emperor Shah Jahan declared him the Crown Prince, he was assassinated by his younger brother, Aurangzeb, in a bitter struggle for the throne on August 30, 1659. Dara Shikoh was 44 at the time of his death. Even though he lost the battle against Aurangzeb, he won the war for India. It is that victory we are celebrating as a proud nation, representing the best example in the world for unity in diversity.

Though Dara Shikoh had very little military experience as Shah Jahan had kept him in the court, his father chose him as successor over his other sons who were sent as governors of various states. Shah Jahan was aware that due to India's deep spiritual roots, it could not be governed by force alone, but only by upholding the ideals of peaceful coexistence, tolerance and winning the hearts of people. It is these values that bind the people of a nation together. What might have been the history of the Indian subcontinent had Dara Shikoh prevailed over Aurangzeb in the battle for succession has been debated for centuries. Though he could not become an emperor, his imprint on Indian civilisation is no less than that of any emperor in the subcontinent's history.

¹ From 'The Indian Express Newspaper', Opinion Page, 31st August, 2021

Dara Shikoh, who had a deep understanding and knowledge of major religions, particularly Islam and Hinduism, is known as a pioneer of the academic movement for interfaith understanding in India. He strove to develop cordial relationships between people by finding commonalities between Hinduism and Islam and bringing their cultures into dialogue. His most important works, *Majma-ul-Bahrain* (Mingling of Two Oceans) and *Sirr-i-Akbar* (Great Mystery), are devoted to the cause of establishing connections between Hinduism and Islam. He not only discovered commonalities but even said that the foundation of the two religions is the same, which is the belief, "One Reality and One God." He had a pluralistic outlook and understood India's syncretic culture.

Dara Shikoh acquired proficiency in Sanskrit and Persian, which enabled him to play a key role in popularising Indian culture and Hindu religious thought. He translated the Upanishads and other important sources of Hindu religion and spirituality from Sanskrit to Persian. Through these translations, he was responsible for taking the Hindu culture and spiritual traditions to Europe and the West. During those years, the Europeans did not read Sanskrit but were able to read Persian, and so they read the texts in Persian that were later translated into Latin. This is how a new movement of studying India's religious and cultural texts spread in the world. After this, the Europeans also started to study Sanskrit. In this way, it was Dara Shikoh's pioneering work that led to the dissemination of India's culture outside the Subcontinent. This is his outstanding contribution to India's intellectual and religious heritage. Subsequently, it became fashionable among the philosophical circles to admire the Upanishads.

Dara Shikoh had a keen interest in the fine arts and architecture. An album he dedicated to his wife is a treasure of Indian art. A rare miniature painting showing him with his spiritual masters is preserved in the library of the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). As a talented architect, he designed the beautiful Pari Mahal Garden Palace in Srinagar, and many other monuments.

The importance of interfaith connections cannot be overemphasised in our multi-religious and diverse society. At the centenary celebrations of AMU recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, like a true statesman, delivered a speech that has been much appreciated globally, wherein he portrayed AMU as a unique symbol of India's composite culture by labeling it as "Mini India." Modiji also exhorted AMU to undertake study and research in India's rich cultural heritage to give new energy to India's cultural relations with the world.

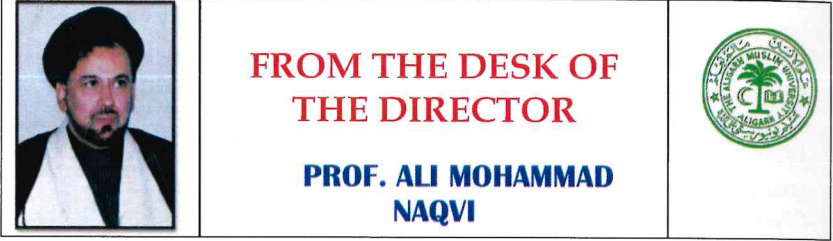
AMU is committed to the development of interfaith understanding among all the religions of the world. To foster a culture of tolerance and national integration by bringing communities together, AMU, in its centenary year, has started the Dara Shikoh Centre for Interfaith Understanding and Dialogue. While history may not have given Dara Shikoh his due, AMU has initiated course correction by taking up the task of popularising his legacy. The Centre has started undertaking important milestones such as translation of Dara Shikoh's works in other languages, creation of a repository of writings and research undertaken in India and abroad on the life and works of Dara Shikoh, formulation of bibliographies of works done on Hindu religious texts by Muslim authors and vice-versa, among others. This is an initiative undertaken with a liberal mind and vision. AMU's founder Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, himself undertook the work of understanding scriptures of other faiths by writing commentaries on them.

Dara Shikoh, as a true child of India, is an icon for tolerance, harmony and togetherness. It is due to these values that we Indians, despite many diversities, have been living in unity and oneness for centuries.

Professor Tariq Mansoor

Vice-Chancellor

and Chairman, Board of Management,
Dara Shikoh Centre, AMU



WHY DARA SHIKOH MATTERS TODAY: REMEMBERING HIS WORKS AND PERSONALITY²

Dara Shikoh's Imprint on the Indian Civilization

Dara Shikoh was a prince who never became an emperor, but he has made a lot of contribution in the Indian civilization. He was a prince with a multi-faceted personality in the field of interreligious dialogue, in the field of arts and architecture. Dara Shikoh was an enlightened thinker. He started the movement for interfaith understanding and was a champion of harmonious co-existence of Faiths and cultures. At the same time, he was connoisseur of fine arts and a patron of India architecture. Though he never became an emperor but he left his footmarks on the Indian civilization. No one can deny his contribution to the enrichment of Indian culture and civilization.

Dara Shikoh can be considered as the founder of academic movement for Interfaith Understanding. Though Amir Khusro, Akbar, Abul Fazl and Kabir, all had worked for that, but Dara Shikoh was the first person who gave Interfaith Movement a solid intellectual foundation by working on commonalities of religions, especially Hinduism and Islam. He was the first known personality who embarked on comparative and sympathetic study of the Scriptures of different religions. He not only

² The Summary of the Author's Introduction on "*Muntakhabat-e Asar-e Dara Shikoh*"

translated fifty Upanishads from original Sanskrit, but interpreted them with a comparative perspective.

Importance and the Relevance of Dara Shikoh

(A) Interfaith Understanding Between Faiths, Especially Hindus and Muslims is of Vital Importance Today

Through Dārā Shikoh's books, Muslims may realize that followers of other religions share the same worldview, philosophical outlook, and spiritual goals of life which they hold. Dārā Shikoh's works impress that the message of *Touhid* (Oneness of God), which is the fundamental belief of Islam, is also preached by the Hindu Holy Books. The publication of Dārā Shikoh's work in original Persian and translating them in Urdu, will make Muslims realize that Veda and Upanishad's teachings are not alien to Islam. Likewise, the translation of Dārā Shikoh's works in Hindi and other Indian languages will show the Hindu intellectuals and the public that the beliefs and teachings of Islam resemble their religious philosophy. This realization will bring Hindus and Muslims nearer. They will become less hostile and not consider each other aliens and enemies. Both great communities that constitute the Indian nation may recognize that they share the overall spiritual, philosophical and religious perspective.

(b) The Importance Dārā Shikoh's Works for National Integration

The realization of commonalities in the beliefs and culture will result in interfaith understanding and facilitate national integration. Attaining the unity and understanding among the Hindu and Muslim communities who constitute the bigger and smaller majorities in India was, and is, a big project towards cultural unity and national integration of the people of India.

In his Preface on *Sirr-i-Akbar*, Dr. Tara Chand suggests that Dārā Shikoh, who has a keen intellect and vast learning, may have some big political vision of unifying India. Dārā Shikoh came to the conclusion that real unification and national integration can only happen if the worldview and the culture of all people become the same and the hearts and minds meet. Dārā Shikoh realized that most Muslims in India and South Asia are affiliated with the Sufi orders; on the other hand, most Hindus have the Vedic and Vedantic teachings as determining factors of their thought and action. Therefore, the best way to achieve the broad unity of India and its people was to bring Hindu and Muslims together by proving that the Islamic Sufi thought and the Hindu Vedantic perspective are the same.

There is no doubt that Dārā Shikoh's work can play a significant role in the national integration by strengthening the feeling of sharing a common culture and common religious perspective. There is no more firm foundation for National integration than religious understanding and commonalities in the ideology and the culture.

**(c.) Importance of Dārā Shikoh's Works in
Strengthening Indo-Iran Relations and Solidarity
with the Persian-speaking Countries.**

Dārā Shikoh can be a bridge between Iran and India and, in fact, between India and all the Persian speaking countries (like Afghanistan, and Tajikistan³.) Dārā Shikoh is a personality that is important for the scholars of Persian language not only in India and Iran but in all Fārsī-speaking countries. Dārā Shikoh and his works may become an influential factor in promoting the cultural and political unity among the important countries of Asia.

³ The Fārsī language is called Darī in Afghanistan and Tajik in Tajikistan.

Dārā Shikoh's books about Hinduism and Indian Culture in the Persian language can become an excellent bridge between India, Iran, Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries.

(d) Importance of Dārā Shikoh's Works in Outreach to the Muslim World

All the works of Dārā Shikoh are about Sufism or Indian spirituality. His works on Sufism make Dārā Shikoh an important personality who may be loved by the Sufis of Qādrīya, Chishtīya, Suharwardīa, and other orders. The Sufi tradition and thought are not confined to the Persian-speaking world (India, Afghanistan, Iran, Tajikistan), but are dominant in the whole Islamic world.

So Dārā Shikoh's work may be attractive and exciting for a wide range of countries in Asia and Africa.

(e.) Dārā Shikoh's Importance for Europe

In America and Europe, there has been a great interest in spirituality and Sufism. Dārā Shikoh's work may become an instrument of the impact of Indian thought in the Western hemisphere- in Europe and America. Publishing his works in English and the other Western languages may be significant globally.

(f.) Dārā Shikoh's Role in Spreading Tolerance and Moderation in Religion

Dārā Shikoh is an icon of the liberal religious thought based on interfaith understanding. In today's world when the religious extremism and a culture of hatred are on rise, Dārā Shikoh has a special relevance. Dārā Shikoh can be an inspiration for preventing fanaticism and promoting dialogue. Religious fanaticism and extremism is a curse for every society. It generates conflict and a culture of hatred. Cultivating the culture of tolerance requires a mutual respect and reciprocal knowledge. Dārā Shikoh was a

champion of that at a time Muslims were ruling, and not in a weak position.

In the trouble-torn world where atmosphere has been vitiated by conflicts, inter-religious understanding and interfaith dialogue has become a matter of paramount importance. It is rightly said there can be no peace in the world without peace among communities and there can be no peace among communities without inter-religious understanding and dialogue. The relevance of Dārā Shikoh is all the more today.

THE LIFE OF DĀRĀ SHIKOH (1615-1659)

Dārā Shikoh was born on 11th March 1615/ 29th Safar, 1024 in Ajmer. He was the first son of Prince Khurram (ShāhJahān) and Mumtāz Mahal.

We find little detail about Dārā Shikoh's early life in the primary sources. The first mention of his name is when he was handed over to Jahāngīr' as a hostage on behalf of his rebel father, Khurram, and jealously guarded by his step-grandmother, Nūr Jahāh. Dārā was detained at Lahore up to the date of Shāh Jahān' succession (1037 A.H/1627 A.D.) Emperor Jahāngīr passed away in October 1627. Prince Khurram became the new emperor with the new name of Shāh Jahān in January 1628. After a while, he directed Asaf Khān, the grand vizier to bring Dara Shikoh back from Lahoe.

When Dārā Shikoh returned to the Capital, Shāh Jahān appointed Mullā Abdul Latīf Sultānpūrī as his teacher. While studying language, grammar, theology, Dārā Shikoh was also interested in spirituality and mysticism. He studied both the Muslim Sūfism and Hindu spirituality. Jalālī Nāinī says that evidence shows Dārā Shikoh studied the Sufi texts, Sanskrit language, and some Holy books of Hindus, even at that early age. Dārā Shikoh was also interested in the arts; so he learned the art of calligraphy and also painting. He was a disciple of Mullā

'Abdur Rashīd Khushnavīs, a disciple of Mīr 'Imād, the famous Iranian calligrapher.

When Dārā Shikoh reached the age of adolescence, his mother and father decided to get him married to Nādira Begum, daughter of Sultān Parvez. There remained excellent love between Dārā Shikoh and Nādira, and unlike general practices of polygamy among princes, he never married any other women.

Dārā and Nādira had seven children. However, only two sons- Sulaimān Shikoh and Sipehr Shikoh, survived. They were also imprisoned and killed by the order of Aurangzeb.

Interest in Spirituality:

Since his early childhood, Dārā Shikoh would have been told that he was born in the sacred town of Ajmer as a result of Shāh Jahān's *duā* and prayer in the shrine of Khwaja Moīnuddīn Chishtī. At the age of twenty-one, he accompanied Shāh Jahān in the meeting with Hazrat Miyān Jīo, the great Qādirīya Sūfī master. However, Dārā Shikoh was formally admitted in the Qādirīya Sufi order only in 1049 AH, when he met Mullā Shāh in Kashmir. He was committed to the Qādirīya Sufi Order but had a wide circle of spiritual masters and friends. Shāh Muhibullāh, Shāh Dilrubā, Shāh Mohammad Lisānullāh, Bābā Lāl Dās Bairagī and some followers of Kabīr Dās, were among them.

Political Carrier

(a.) Valī 'ahdī (Crown Prince)

Dārā Shikoh was named the heir-apparent in 1633. In 1642, Shāh Jahān again formally confirmed Dārā Shikoh as the Crown-Prince giving him the title of *Shāhzada-e-Buland Iqbal*.

(b.) Manṣab (Rank)

In the Mughal State, the power and rank (*manṣab*) of the nobles was indicated by the command of the cavalry and infantry which was placed at their disposal. The higher ranks were known as five

hazārī, ten hazārī, twenty-hazārī and so on. The *fifty hazārī* was one of the topmost positions reserved for the few highest nobles and princes. Dārā Shikoh rapidly rose in ranks and reached to the *mansab of Sixty-hazārī* and was given high positions.

(c.) *Šūbedārī* (Governorships)

Dārā Shikoh was entrusted with important governorships. In 1645 was appointed *sūbedār* (governor) of Allahabad and Gujarat; in 1652 *subedar* (governor) of Multan and Kabul and in 1657, was made the governor of Bihar. He was given governorship (*Sūbedārī*) of important regions, including Punjab, Gujarat, Allahabad (which included Banaras), but never left the capital and ruled in proxy through his officers.

(e) The Last Phase and the War of Succession

Shāh Jahān perhaps knew the ambition and abilities of his other sons, and he wanted to leave no stone unturned to make Dārā Shikoh his successor and the emperor of the Mughal Empire. So in 1642, he again formally confirmed Dārā as the heir-apparent giving him the title of *Shāhzada-e-Buland Iqbal*.

On 6th September 1657, the illness of Emperor Shāh Jahān triggered a desperate power struggle. The first person to move was Shāh Shuja, who mobilized the army and moved towards the capital, Shujā' was defeated by Sulaimān Shikoh, the son of Dārā Shikoh, in the battle of Bahādarpūr on 14th February 1658. However, at the same time, Aurangzeb and other brother Murād united against Dārā Shikoh and moved with their armies towards the capital. Dārā Shikoh was defeated in the Battle of Samugarh by Aurangzeb and Murād Baksh. On 30th May 1658. Aurangzeb captured Agra, and Dārā Shikoh's tragic flight began. He returned and fought with Aurangzeb but only to be turned back after an embarrassing defeat. The flight of Dārā is a harrowing episode of suffering, deprivation, and misery. His sufferings, however, were soon to end. He was captured by Malik Jīwan of

Dādar, his Afghan host, and handed to Aurangzeb's commanders. Dārā Shikoh was brought to Delhi under the escort of Aurangzeb's generals and paraded through the streets on a filthy elephant.

After a mock trial, Aurangzeb promptly gave the order to kill him without any delay. The main reason for this hurry was that Aurangzeb was afraid that such was the sympathy of people for Dārā Shikoh and their support for him, that some general revolt may occur in Delhi. The execution took place on the night of Wednesday, 21st *Zulhajah* 1069/ 1659.

So died Dārā Shikoh, the eldest son of Shāh Jahān and the would-be emperor of Hindustan.

WORKS OF DĀRĀ SHIKOH

The work of Dārā Shikoh can be divided into two categories:

1. works about Sufism and the Sūfis. They are about the principles of Islamic mysticism, the Sūfī path, and the life of Sūfī masters.

2. Works about interfaith studies; mainly the works about the Hindu theosophy and the similarities between Islam and Hinduism.

The first category includes the following books:

- *Safīnatul Aulīyā*
- *Sakīnatul Aulīyā*
- *Risāla Haq Numā*
- *Hasanāt al 'Ārifīn*
- *Dīwān Dārā Shikoh (Iksīr-e A'zam)*

The second category of works about Hinduism, include:

- *Majma'ul Bahrain*
- *Sirr-ul Asrār* or *Sirr-i Akbar* (translation and explanation of the Fifty Upanishads)
- *Openkhat Mundaka*
- *Mukālīma Dārā Shikoh w Bābā Lāl Dās*

Following are some of his main books:

(1.) *Safīnatul Aulīyā*

This book is the first work of Dārā Shikoh. It was completed in 1049 AH. *Safīnatul Aulīyā* consists of the account of about 400 saints and Sufi masters.

(2.) *Sakīnatul Aulīyā*

Sakīnatul Aulīyā is the second work of Dārā Shikoh which he compiled when he was 28 years old in the year 1056 AH. This work consists of the accounts of the life of Haḍrat Miyān Mīr, his sister Jamāl Khātūn, Haḍrat Mullā Shāh and some other disciples of Haḍrat Miyān

(3.) *Risāla Haq Numā*

Risāla Haq Numā was the third work of Dārā Shikoh. Dārā Shikoh considered it as the companion volume for the book *Futūhāt* and *Fuṣūṣ al Hikam* of Ibn' Arabī as well as the Sufi text *Lawāih* and *Luma'āt*.

(4.) *Hasanāt-ul' Ārifīn*

Hasanāt-ul' Ārifīn is the compilation of the sayings of Sufi masters in the state of ecstasy which are called *Shathīyāt*.

5. *Majma'-ul Bahrain*

MAJMA' UL BAHARAIN or The Mingling Of Two Oceans, was authored as treatise in Persian in 1654-55.

It was one of the earliest works to explore both, the diversity and unity of Islam and Hinduism as well as other religions. In this book, he argues for the harmony of Muslim Spiritual Philosophy and Vedanta philosophy of Hinduism. Dara Shikoh reached to the conclusion that there could be congruence of the two great oceans of Hindu and Muslim Faiths.

Majma'-ul Bahrain is among the most famous books of Dārā Shikoh. It can be said that this is the first book on the commonalities of Islam and Hinduism, the Vedantic Philosophy and the Islamic Sūfī theosophy.

6. Sirr-i Akbar or Sirr-al Asrār

Dara Shikoh's greatest intellectual project was undoubtedly his Persian translation of the Upanishads. Dara Shikoh himself was a scholar of Sanskrit. He also invited several pundits from Banaras to Delhi, After six strenuous months, project was completed on of 28 June 1657,

His translation is called *Sirr-e-Akbar*, (*The Great Secret*). This was the translation of 50 Upanishads from the original Sanskrit to Persian. This can be considered an interpretive study. The preface that Dara wrote for the book was in itself a treatise in Interfaith Studies. He mentions in it his spiritual journey, reflections on sūras of the Qur'an how the Upanishad and the Qur'an have similar message.

The choice of language was significant. Persian was not only the official language of the Mughal court, even that of the Hindu intelligentsia, but also the international language at that time. Dara Shikoh wanted to popularize this treasure of the Indian knowledge and spirituality. He was rewarded as even the West was acquainted with Upanishad through this translation. The West was acquainted with Upanishad through the Latin Translation by Anquetil Duperron of Dara Shikoh's *Sirre Akbar* in 1801. Sir William Jones, the great Indic scholar, read Upanishads, in this Persian translation by Dara Shikoh, then popularized it. Thus, Dara Shikoh spread the spiritual message of India throughout the world This was the great contribution of Dara Shikoh, this remarkable Muslim Prince to the Indian intellectual and religious heritage.

Such was the greatness of this scholar-mystic Prince. That is why AMU named its Centre for Interfaith Understanding on Dara Shikoh's name and is organizing this memorable AMU Centenary Conference to revisit his life, thought and relevance to our Age.

ESTABLISHMENT OF DARA SHIKOH CENTRE FOR INTERFAITH UNDERSTANDING AND DIALOGUE AT AMU



OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR
(COUNCILS SECTION)
ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH
June 1st, 2020

OFFICE MEMO

On the recommendation of the Director, Centre for Inter-Faith Understanding and after discussion with eminent persons engaged in study and research on issues of Inter-Faith harmony, the Vice-Chancellor, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 19(3) of AMU Act 1920, on behalf of the Academic Council and the Executive Council has approved that the name of the "Centre for Inter-Faith Understanding" be "Dara Shikoh Centre for Inter-Faith Understanding and Dialogue".

Explanatory Note:

Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan was a Prince with a multifaceted personality who had a deep understanding and knowledge of all major religions of the world.

Dara Shikoh was the first well-studied person who tried his best to develop a cordial relationship between the various faiths of his times. He also recognized the basic philosophical concept of respect for other religions of this land.

He was the first known personality who started Inter-Faith dialogue & understanding and highlighted some of the commonalities of great religions of the world.

The University is submitting a proposal to the MHRD/UGC/Ministry of Minority Affairs for further development of the Centre. It will be appropriate and helpful for the growth and development of the Centre if it is named after the Philosopher and Thinker of Inter-Faith understanding such as Dara Shikoh.

(Abdul Hamid, IPS)

Registrar

Dated: 01/06/20

D.No.(C) 2710

Distribution:-

1. Director, Centre for Interfaith Understanding, AMU
2. All Deans of Faculties/ USW
3. All Chairmen of the Department of Studies
4. All Heads of the Offices/Institutions/Centres
5. Principals of Colleges/School/Polytechnics
6. Controller of Examinations, AMU/Proctor, AMU
7. Deputy Registrars/Deputy Finance Officers/Deputy Controllers/Internal Audit Officer
8. Asstt. Registrar, VC's Secretaries/ PRO
9. Section Officer (Council Section) for report to the EC & AC.
10. P.S. to Registrar/Controller/ Finance Officer
11. Guard file

1. OUR VISION:

In the trouble-torn World Today, Interfaith Understanding: the only Way. As it is said: there can not be peace in the world without peace among communities and there can not be peace among communities without interfaith dialogue and understanding. Following is he famous saying of our Founders, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan:



**SIR SYED:
FOUNDER OF ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY:
A PIONEER OF INTERFAITH HARMONY AND UNDERSTANDING**

Sir Syed said:

اے ہندو اور مسلمانو!
کیا تم ہندوستان کے سوا اور ملک کے رہنے والے ہو؟ کیا اسی زمین
پر تم دونوں نہیں بنے؟ کیا اسی زمین میں تم دفن نہیں ہوتے؟ کیا
اسی زمین کے گھاٹ پر جلائے نہیں جاتے؟ اسی پر مرتے ہو اور
اسی پر جیتے ہو یا دیکھو ہندو مسلمان ایک ہی لفظ ہے اور نہ ہندو
مسلمان اور عیسائی بھی جو اسی ملک میں رہتے ہیں اس اعتبار سے
ایک ہی قوم ہیں۔
سید احمد خان
شعبہ اورنگ آباد ۱۲ جنوری ۱۸۵۵ء



"OH HINDUS AND MUSLIMS"
"DO YOU BELONG TO A COUNTRY OTHER THAN INDIA? ARE NOT YOU
BURIED IN THE SAME SOIL? OR ARE NOT YOU CREMATED ON THE RIVER
BANKS OF THIS LAND? YOU DIE ON THIS LAND AND LIVE ON THIS LAND.
THEREFORE, REMEMBER THAT "HINDU" AND "MUSLIM" ARE WORDS
DENOTING RELIGIOUS TERMS OTHERWISE HINDUS, MUSLIMS AND
CHRISTIANS TOO, LIVE IN THE SAME COUNTRY AND ARE THUS IN THIS SENSE
A SINGLE NATION."
SYED AHMAD
07 JANUARY 1860

2. OUR MISSION AND GOALS

- In accordance of our Vision, following are is our mission and goals.
- To promote interfaith understanding, strive for National Integration
- To foster a culture of liberal views and tolerance, s.
- To organize Conferences, Seminars, workshops and collaborate with organizations working for interfaith Dialogue and Understanding, on National and International levels.
- Research in the field of Comparative Beliefs and Inter-Faith Understanding, and about Dara Shikoh,.
- research and publications about the ideas of Sir Syed and contribution of Aligarh Muslim University

3. HISTORY

Though the Centre was created on 6th January 2016, but real steps towards institutionalizing this Centre as an important component of Aligarh Muslim University were **taken by Professor Tariq Mansoor**, after his appointment as the Vice Chancellor of the AMU. **On 26 May, 2017.** Professor Ali Mohammad Naqvi, former Dean of the Faculty of Theology was appointed the first Director of the Centre for Interfaith Understanding, vide Circular Admin/ LD/ 1265?T and a building (4/ Nazir Ahmad Road) was allotted and renovated for the Centre.

On 1st June 2020, Aligarh Muslim University renamed 'Dara Shikoh Centre for Interfaith Understanding and Dialogue, as Dara Shikoh, elder son of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan was one of the first personalities who started movement for interfaith understanding and and highlighted commonalities among religions..

OUR ACTIVITIES

Delhi Interfaith Conference 31st October, 2016

This historic Round-table Interfaith Conference was held in the Constitution Club of India on 31st October 2017

The Conference was held in the Deputy Speakers Hall which usually has capacity of 120 persons. But the Conference was jam-packed with more than 150 delegates, all consisting of elite Faith leaders, religious scholars, University Professors and representatives of Interfaith organizations. There were only a handful of A.M.U students in traditional sherwanis as volunteers. Mahamadeleshwar Gyanand ji Maharaj., Swami Shantatmanandji, Hazrat Maulana Kalbe Sadiq, Hazrat Maulana Mahmood Madani, Hazrat Maulana Mufti Mukarram, President of Ramakrishna Mission, Shree Vrejendra Nandan Das Vice President of ISKCON,, Acharya Dr Lokesh Muni ji a top Jain dharm guru, Swami Shri Hariprasad, chief of Vishnu Mohan Foundation, Giyani Rajinder Singh, Head Priest, Gurdwara Siganj, Chandni Chowk, Dr Karunasheel Rahul Bhikku Lama, the Buddhist leader of Dhamma Movement, Prof. Merajuddin and Prof Shastri



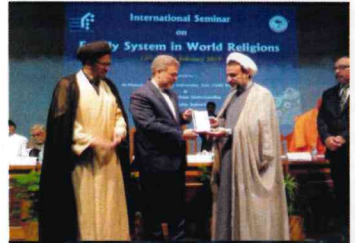
INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON “FAMILY IN WORLD RELIGIONS (13-14-February, 2018



Dr Alamul Huda, the 1st Lady of Iran, delivered the key note Address

The International Seminar on Family System in World Religions” was organized by Centre for Interfaith Understanding, Aligarh Muslim University , in collaboration with Al-Mustafa International University on 13-14th February, 2019.

The Inaugural Function, attended by a galaxy of top Faith leaders and scholars from India and Iran, was held in the J.N Medical Auditorium which was overflowing. from 10 AM to 1 PM. . Attended by distinguished Hindu, Bodh, Christian Faith leaders, eminent scholars from Iran. The Chief Guest was H.H, Ambassador of Iran. The present first lady of Iran Dr Alam ul Huda Raisi delivered the keynote address



INTERNATIONAL WEBINAR THE ROLE OF FAITH IN FACING CRISIS (Dates: 26-27 September, 2021)



In this International Webinar such top faith leaders as H.H. Sri Sri Ravishankara, Hazrat Maulana Vastanvi, former Rector of Deoband, Dr. Haddad Adel, Iranian Philosopher, and, Former Speaker Iranian Parliament, were chief guests.

Prof. Ramesh Kumar Pandey, Vice Chancellor, Sanskrit University, Padam Bhushan Moosa Raza, Dr Zafar Mahmud, Dr Sheikh Aquil Ahmad, Director (NCPUL, Syed Salman Chishty, Gaddi-nashin, Ajmer Prof Rajveer Sharma, Delhi University, Prof Mehrajuddin, Vice Chancellor of the Central Kashmir University delivered speeches.