

Chapter 2

Sindhiyat in India

Apart from other individual and centers of activities which must be many and diverse, the two institutions in India, Sindhi Academy and Indian Institute of Sindhology, seem to reflect the overall Sindhiyat in India. For any well-wisher the signs are encouraging. The human spirit is working. In fact human spirit never stops its work, whatever the adversities.

To the extent I have gone through the activities for Sindhi language in India and abroad, in spite of the fact that compared to Pakistan's Sindhis there are 'few' Sindhis in India and abroad, I tend to feel as if 1947 had not only separated Hindus from Muslims but the mind of the Sindhi language from its body as well.

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What follows is what Sindhi Academy tells about itself and its activities:

Sindhi Academy

Introduction

The Sindhi Academy was established by the erstwhile Delhi Administration now Govt. of NCT of Delhi as an autonomous organisation in the year 1994 for propagation, promotion and development of Sindhi language, literature and culture as an integral part of composite culture of Union Territory of Delhi. Ever since its inception the Academy has been playing a catalytic role in the proliferation of the Sindhi literary and cultural activities in the sphere of music, folk dances, seminars, symposia, short story, poetry, novel, literary criticism, drama etc. Our goal is to achieve all-round development of Sindhi language, literature and culture in the Union Territory of Delhi. During the last few years, the Academy has assumed a significant role and status of premier organisation in the field of Sindhi language, literature and culture.

To plan the schemes and activities of the Sindhi Academy, the Chairperson of the Academy (hon'ble Chief Minister) nominates 20 members to its Governing Council for two years. The members of the Governing Council include renowned litterateurs, authors, poets, journalists and cultural activists. All the schemes and budget of the Academy is approved by Governing Council. Besides Sub-Committees are constituted which ensure that selection of the beneficiaries is transparent.

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The main objective is to implement the various programmes for development and promotion of Sindhi language, literature and culture in Delhi.

Activities

Sindhi Academy organises Seminars, Conferences, Workshops, Kavi Sammelan and Cultural Programmes etc. Besides this, elocution contests and competitions for the Schools and College students as well as young poets and writers are organised. The other activities are as under:

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The following financial assistance is given by the Academy:

- a. Prizes & Awards
- b. Publication of books
- c. Libraries
- d. Research Centres
- e. Research Fellowship
- f. Financial assistance for publication of books for writers amounting to Rs.10,000/. Sponsorship of programmes to the NGOs depending on the nature of the programmes.

Publications

To attract the general Sindhi public in the programmes, all the programmes of the Academy are publicized through newspapers, pamphlets, posters, banners and hoardings.

http://www.delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/doiit_art/Art+Culture+and+Language/Home/Sindhi+Academy/

The list of books published by the academy include 7 books in Sindhi script (i.e. Arabic as in Pakistan), 24 in Devanagari script (as used for Hindi language) and 3 in both these scripts.

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And this is what the Indian Institute of Sindhology tells about itself:

Indian Institute of Sindhology

Indian Institute of Sindhology, Adipur-Gandhidham is the premier institute in India for the preservation of Sindhi culture. From its inception, it has conceived the idea of developing itself into a Cultural University. For giving a proper shape to the idea, several symposia were held with the active participation of a number of well-known scholars, writers and educationists of Sindhi Language. Established in October, 1989, the Indian Institute of Sindhology (I.I.S.) is a centre for advanced studies and research in the fields related to Sindhi Language, Literature, Education, Art and Culture. Its primary aim is to preserve and promote the Cultural heritage of Sindhi Community and ensure its continuity by disseminating it in the younger generation. The Indian Institute of Sindhology is established under a Registered Trust. The Trust looks after the policies and programmes of the Institute. **Our Mission:** Promote Sindhi Language, Preserve Vocal Culture.

The website is bi-lingual: Sindhi and English. There is a list of CDs, books in Sindhi, English and Hindi.

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And Dr. Satish Rohra Chairman of Sindhology Trust writes:

Sindhayat and Role of Sindhology

What is Sindhayat, and why should we preserve it? This is the question uppermost in the minds of the young generation of Sindhi Community all over the world.

As per our understanding, 'Sindhayat' pertains to the distinct characteristics of Sindhi community which distinguish it from other communities, and give it a

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particular identity. Thus 'Punjabi' and 'Kashmiri' are the cultural identities of Punjabis and Kashmiris, who too are striving hard to preserve them.

In fact, one can easily perceive this growing phenomenon of ethnic revival pervading all over the world. The colossal U.S.S.R. has recently fragmented into 15 parts,; and has thus yielded to the aspiration of many ethnic races belonging to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan etc. Overburdened by the ideology of one nation, one race, one language, one secular (non-religious) society, these ethnic groups were at the brink of losing their distinct identity and culture.

In Pakistan too, the five different groups-Sindhis, Punjabis, Pakhtoons, Balauchis and Mohajirs--are at war with the State to preserve their own distinct cultural identities. One common Islamic identity with one dominating Urdu language is not acceptable to them. Bangladesh ceded from Pakistan on this vital issue.

The Fathers of Indian Constitution however had visualised these separatist pulls and evolved a Federal Structure of nation with pluralistic pattern of society, where every minority group would have an equal right to preserve its language and culture, as well as maintain its separate identity. In India, there are 18 languages including Sindhi, recognized in the 8th Schedule of Constitution, enjoying equal status along with Hindi, (the national link language) and English (the international link language).

The Constitution of India has given Sindhi community full protection as well freedom to assert its right in maintaining cultural identity. It is now for us to feel the need and love for our culture our language. We should preserve our cultural heritage and disseminate its knowledge among the younger generation.

What are the distinct cultural traits which are to be maintained for the total development of Sindhi personality? The mind of a Sindhi has been moulded by the Sufi Poetry of Shah-Sachal-Sami which contain the intrinsic essence of human wisdom. A Sindhi Firmly believes in Universal Brotherhood. He abhors violence, shirks the caste taboos, and possesses a sweet refined temperament. Possessing these cultural gifts in ample measure inherited from his forefathers, a Sindhi today finds himself equally at home in Hongkong and Honolulu.

Culture cannot be imposed from outside or learnt in schools and colleges. it grows within. The rich inheritance of Sindhi culture has taken thousands of years to evolve. It is the sacred duty of every generation to preserve and pass it on to next generation. Our customs and beliefs, faith and tradition, thinking and behaviour which us feel Sindhi and love Sindhi.

it is to be understood very clearly that one cannot sustain for long, on a borrowed culture. The plants of tropical region cannot survive for long in snowy regions. They flourish only in their own congenial surroundings. To love meaningfully one has to develop all his mental potentialities. It is possible mainly in those environments where one is deeply rooted.

To preserve our own cultural heritage or "Sindhayat", a group of writers, artists and scholars met at Pune on 10th October 1989, and decided to establish Indian institute of Sindhology at Adipur. This Institute which started functioning from December 1990 has now spread its wings far and wide. It is doing excellent work for preservation and promotion of Sindhi language, literature, art and culture. It is now being upgraded into a Sindhi Cultural University named "Bharati Sindhu Vidhyapeeth" on 30 acres of land acquired at Gandhidham in Kutch. It is hometown of Sindhis, who settled here after partition of the country. Maharaja of Kutch on advice of Gandhiji, gave 15000 acres of land to Bhai Pratab, who founded Sindhu Resettlement Corporation to rehabilitate Sindhi Hindus uprooted from their motherland.

A modern township for Gandhidham along with major port Kandla was developed with the unmatched Sindhi enterprise.

Indian Institute of Sindhology established at Adipur, Gandhidham (Kutch) is a centre for advanced studies and research in the fields related to Sindhi language, literature, art and culture.

To preserve cultural heritage, Sindhology has developed reference library, collecting thousands of books pertaining to Sindh & Sindhis.

The Scholars are preparing dictionaries and encyclopedia to preserve the form of language and all information related to Sindh & Sindhi way of life.

Sindhology publishes books and periodical including quarterly literary magazines "Rachna" and bulletin "Sindhology". It organizes seminars, Symposia, International Cultural festivals to bring all the likeminded people on common platform, to interact and share their views on the preservation and promotion of Sindhi Cultural heritage. Artists at Sindhology are promoting vocal culture through music, dance and drama. The cultural groups 'Natya Kanwar' and 'Sangeet Kanwar' present their programs all over India and abroad. Hundreds of audio and video cassettes of music, Sindhi films, and dramas are also preserved at Sindhology. The classes to train the budding artists are also being held.

Many writers, scholars and artists from different parts of the country have settled here to lend their voluntary services Sindhology. A writers' village named 'Maleer' has been set up on three acres of land to accommodate them.

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Sindhology has also started a very ideal International Residential School named "Sadhu Hiranand Navalrai Academy". It is an English medium school with Sindhi as a compulsory subject. This school is devoted to the academic, moral and cultural development of children.

Sindhology Chapters have been opened at Bombay, Indore, Hongkong and London. Many distinguished NRIs impressed by the wonderful job being done by Sindhology to preserve our cultural heritage, have lent their full support. <http://www.sindhology.org/sindhijat.asp>

Library

There is a huge library in Indian Institute of Sindhology with Thousands of Sindhi Books, many of them the rare ones, on various topics. All the Sindhi magazines published in India and abroad are also displayed and collected in bound volumes. The library is being run by the competent Sindhi knowing staff. The library is open for the scholars and public on all working days.

1 Books and Magazines

In the library there are three types of books available.

- (a) Sindhi books (in both, Sindhi and Devnagri scripts)
- (b) Books on Sindh and Sindhis in English and other languages.
- (c) Books written by Sindhi authors in English and other Vernacular languages, original as well as the translations.

All books are classified and catalogued as per the rules of Library Science. Lately the two separate sections of literary classics in English and Hindi have been opened.

2 Magazines

In this section the present as well the old magazines published in Sindh, during pre-partition era have been collected and bound together year wise. The present day magazines like "Koonj", "Sangeeta", "Rachna", "Sipoon" and older ones like "Naeen Duniya", "Kahani" and of pre-partition era like "Sindhu",

"Phuleli" and "Mehran" are available in the library. Many magazines published by Government and Semi- Government organisations and also by different Sindhi associations, like "Halchal", "Moomal", "Pushp" "Jahazrani", "Alka", "Sorath", "Jeejal" and their annual numbers are preserved in this library.

3 The Rare books

There are many volumes of rare books preserved in the library. These books have been collected from the personal collection of elderly writers as well from those libraries which had to close down the shutters.

There are many books of historical importance, published in 19th century.

4 The Scanning of Rare books

There are many rare books in a very delicate condition. The worn out pages are so brittle that they get torn by mere touch of the hand. The pages of the books are being scanned to preserve them for posterity. Three / five copies of such books including old title page and advertisements, are preserved for safe keeping in Sindhology. Printed on best quality of paper, they shall last for another hundred years, without getting damaged. These books scanned by computer are also preserved in CDs, so that more copies of these books are printed whenever demand arises. There are scores of such books already preserved by this modern technique.

5 Search for rare books and manuscripts scattered all over India and overseas to preserve them by Photo coping or Type setting

The literature of many old and new writers in printed form or in manuscript form has remained untraced. Sometimes it is available in old magazines and has not appeared in any collection. Sindhology has tried to tackle it in two ways:

(a) The unpublished works have been obtained from the heirs of the authors. These have been printed in book form with the help of computer type setting. 3/5 copies of such unpublished books have been printed and preserved at Sindhology as reference material for scholars. The matter has also been recorded in CDs. At present scores of such rare, unpublished works are available at Sindhology.

(b) Short stories / Poems / articles of the writers who have passed away, have been searched from various magazines and compiled in collections and are printed in book form. 3/5 copies of such works are now available at Sindhology for future reference of scholars.

6 Script Bank

Sindhology has collected one act and full length plays from various sources and stored in a Script Bank. Anyone who wishes to perform any play on the stage can get the photo copy of the script of play on nominal charge. The

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photographs of many play writers along with Bio data is also available with Sindhology.

7 Historical Events

Related to history, geography of Sindh and other cultural events have also been compiled in chronological order after thorough research.

8 Writer's Corners

Corners of many eminent writers furnishing all the information of their life and works is made available here including the

- (a) Details of all books written (both published and unpublished)
- (b) Details of all the articles written by the author and scattered in various magazines / books including those which have remained unpublished.
- (c) The articles written by other writers on the author, both published and unpublished.
- (d) The letters of the authors, both published and unpublished.
- (e) Photographs of the author with his family and friends.
- (f) All the information about the authors collected from his friends and relatives, obtained orally or in writing.
- (g) The prizes, Shields, Certificates, felicitation bestowed on the author.

9 Manuscripts

It is a different task to procure the manuscripts of the authors, who have passed away. But Sindhology has succeeded in obtaining few, some of them in a very deleterious condition, which have been restored by proper lamination etc.

<http://www.sindhology.org/Jul-Dec%202014.pdf>

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Marsoon Marsoon, Sindh Na Desoon*

A book named 'Something About Sindh and Sindhis' by Sahib M. Bijani is available on the website of the Institute. It has lot of information in brief form about Sindh and Sindhis. I have gone through it and present some selections

from this information. This is really inspiring. It brings historical Sindh live in your imagination. It connects you with the soil of Sindh.

Satish Rohra, the Director writes about this book: It is a matter of great pleasure for us to present the second edition of **‘Something about Sindh and Sindhis’**. The first edition of 2000 copies published in 1997 was sold in no time, as the book provided a lot of information about Sindhi culture to younger generation of Sindhis, who are quite keen to know about their roots. Even non-Sindhis readers showed lot of interest to know about Sindhis and their culture.’ Some of that information is given below in edited form – mam:

- In ancient days Sindh was known as Sindhu Sauveer.
- Abu-Al Fazal and Faizi of Akbar’s court both brothers hailed from Sehwan, Sindh.
- Hosh Mohamed was the brave soldier who fought the British in 1843 when Sindh was conquered. His slogan was: Marsoon Marsoon, Sindh Na Desoon.
- The original name of Makhdum Qalander Lal shahbaz was Syed Usman Rahmat Al Ullia.
- Some well-known sindhi folk songs: Laado, Lolee, Sakhee, Chhallo, Belanu, Upangu, Oranno, etc.
- Before the present standardized script, the main scripts used for Sindhi language were: Arabic, Devanagari, Gurmukhi, and Hatvaniki.
- Dr. Ernest Trumpp published ‘Shah-Jo-Risalo’ for the first time in Leipzig, Germany in 1866.
- The seven folk tales in ‘Shah-Jo-Risalo’ are: Leela Chanesar, Moomal Raano, Suhinee Mehaar, Sasuee Punhoon, Nooree Jam Tamaachee, Beejal Raaidiyaach and Umar Maaruee.
- The real name of Sachal Sarmast was: Abdul Wahaab.
- The Cheti Chand (New Year) day is celebrated as SINDHIYAT DAY for preserving Sindhi culture, language and unity among communities.
- Shah Abdul Latif was born at Halla Haveli in 1689 and died in 1752 at Bhit Shah.
- Mirza Qalich Beg wrote the first novel ‘Dilaaraam’ in Sindhi in 1888.

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- The History of Sindhi Hindus (1946-47) was written by Bherumal Mahirchand Advani.
- The oldest Sindhi newspaper in India is 'Hindustan'.
- After Partition the literary magazines/periodicals in Sindhi which started their publication and are still being published are: Koonj, Rachna, and Sippoon.
- The two eminent Sindhi poets in Sindh and Hind after partition: Shaikh Ayaz (1923-1997) and Narayan Shyam (1922-1989).
- The first Sindhi film was Ekta in 1942.
- 'Aror' was the capital of Sindh at the time of Arab attack.
- Mohamed Tughlaq the emperor of Delhi is buried at Makli in Sindh.
- The ancient name of Hyderabad was Niran Kot.
- The original name of Karachi was named after the community of fishermen called 'Kalaachi'.
- After the partition 'Gandhidham-Kutch' was developed as new homeland for settling Sindhis.
- The biggest fort of the world is at Ranikot in Sindh.
- During the British rule Khairpur was the only 'state' in Sindh ruled by a different ruler.
- The Sindhi language in the present form evolved during 10th century.
- The origin of the present Sindhi language is believed to be from 'Vrachad Apbhransh'
- The first known poet of Sindhi was Qazi Qazan. Initially his only seven verses were available.
- In 1976 112 verses of Qazi Qazan were found in village Ranela of Haryana, India.

- English writer Dr. H. T. Sorley has included Shah Abdul Latif in the seven greatest poets of the world.
- Jethmal Parsram (1885 – 1948) wrote the book ‘Sindh and its Sufis’.
- Sindhi population in India 1991 Census: 2,122,848. This is govt. figure. It is assumed that the total population of Sindhis in India is 45 to 50 lacs.

http://www.sindhology.org/images/books_sindhology/Something%20about%20Sindh%20&%20Sindhis.pdf

*This title has been given by me – mam

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Sindhi in India

A part of Sindhi language is in India. This part is cut off from its mainland Sindh in Pakistan. “According to the Indian Census of 2001, there are over thirty-one lakh mother-tongue speakers of Sindhi in India. An unofficial estimate of the number of Sindhi speakers in India is almost double the official figure. It is well-known that a large number of ethnic Sindhis in India do not declare Sindhi as their mother tongue. In the absence of a Sindhi speaking region, Sindhis are scattered all over the country and learn to communicate with their local interlocutors in languages other than Sindhi. Whatever the actual number of Sindhi speakers, a very small number of Sindhis in India receive education through the medium of Sindhi. Although Sindhi is a recognized national languages, it is taught in very few schools in the country. Over the years, since 1947, Sindhi has become largely a spoken language. All attempts at enthusing native Sindhis to learn to read and write their language have been unsuccessful. The primary reason for this situation appears to be the script in which Sindhi is written.”

This is how Rajesh Lakhani describes the unfortunate situation of Sindhi in India. I understand that by the ‘script in which Sindhi is written’, he means Arabic/ Persian script used in Pakistan. Away from its script, Sindhi has become largely a spoken language in India. In the case of Punjabi, Muslims are illiterate in Punjabi because it was never their official language. From the day one in school their children are taught in Urdu or English. On Indian side Punjabis are literate in Punjabi.

'Sindhi culture is on a ventilator'

This is about the Sindhi Hindus who had to leave Sindh in 1947. The question is, is it possible to not partition a language in spite of the physical partition of people on religious ground?:

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Satyanand is a young patriot who just cannot tolerate the British Raj any longer. Responding to the Mahatma's call for satyagraha, he scales up the flagpole at a government office one day and tries to pull down the Union Jack. The young revolutionary faces the wrath of the white cops, and the lathi blows he gets on his head send him into a coma.

The country subsequently gets its freedom at midnight, but, to borrow poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz's famous description, the dawn, accompanied as it is by the horrors of Partition, is sooty and dark. Like millions on both sides of the Radcliffe line, Satyanand's family gets uprooted. Still in a coma, he is brought to **Mumbai** where his wife and son work hard to build life anew. Forty years later, Satyanand gets his senses back. But much water has flowed under the bridge since his family left its beloved "Sindhu desh". Sindh is now part of **Pakistan**, and nobody in Satyanand's neighbourhood speaks Sindhi, his mother tongue. Few among his fellow Sindhis care to know that they trace their roots back to the basin of the mighty ancient Indus river which cradled a great civilization.

This, in sum, is the message of "Haath Na Lagaye" ("Don't Touch Me"), a Sindhi film released last month, which articulates the collective dilemma of a community which lost more than a geographical area many summers ago. It depicts, albeit in the genre of comedy, the identity crisis Sindhis in **India** suffer from. Deprived of the patronage of a state, the biggest victim, as the film powerfully hammers in, is the Sindhi language and culture.

"Hindus from Sindh, after losing their land, fought bravely and prospered. But the Sindhi language in India is on a ventilator, gasping for breath," rues T Manwani, the film's writer-director. "We want a landless Sindhi state with a budget which will protect our language and culture." Manwani isn't alone in his concerns. The one-million-strong Sindhi community in Mumbai and its neighbouring Sindhi hub, Ulhasnagar, are equally pained at the erosion of the Sindhi language, culture and ethos. ...

"The many moneybags in the community who have bankrolled hospitals and housing colonies must share the blame, as they seldom loosen their purse strings to promote Sindhi culture," says Makhija, who has translated iconic Sindhi saint-poet Shah Abdul Latif into English with the help of a Sindhi scholar. "Building hospitals and colleges is good and necessary, but these rich Sindhis have done precious little to preserve Sindhi culture."

[Mohammed Wajihuddin, TNN May 17, 2010
http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2010-0517/india/28309841_1_sindhi-language-satyanand-ventilator]

Roman Sindhi Script

“Stateless and landless Hindu Sindhis” have come up with Roman Sindhi Script to save their language and culture. This is a great initiative and should inspire all Sindhis and more than others Sindhis in Pakistan. That there is a struggle in adverse circumstances outside Sindh to save Sindhi language means that Sindhi language is struggling to remain alive out of its homeland Sindh. This shows the inherent strength of the language. Circumstances will change and these efforts will bear fruit. The day will come when Sindhi language out of Sindh will get connected with its homeland. In the words of the developers of the Roman Sindhi Script: “Following the 1947 partition of India, a large number of Hindu population migrated from Sindh to places of safety and survival. Stateless and landless the Hindu Sindhis are today living in all states of India and almost all countries of the world - scattered as individuals, couples, small families or small regional communities. They have more than survived but at the heavy price of losing on their own traditions, relationship, cultural values and most importantly their language which has remained as the only binding force of the Community. Sindhi language is gradually getting replaced by local languages and is at the danger of becoming extinct. “Language is the soul of the Community”. Indeed language lost means Community lost. “At least at home we must speak Sindhi” to keep the language going. The snag comes when children answer back in English or other language. The Sindhis have almost zero or minimal facilities to teach/learn Sindhi in schools. In India the choice can be Devanagari Script to teach Sindhi but that is not viable for the globally scattered Sindhis. The only viable Script for the globally scattered Sindhis is Roman which all know. With that in view ONE SINGLE STANDARDIZED ROMAN SINDHI SCRIPT VERSION was developed by a dedicated team, which was placed before and overwhelmingly approved by a large gathering of Worldwide Sindhi delegates at the Los Angeles International Sindhi Sammelan in July 2009. The said version was further debated upon, improved, approved, adopted and recommended for global Sindhi use at the Ahmadabad Summit Conference 29-30 March 2010.” <http://www.romanizedsindhi.org/> ■