

In the name of God



INDO-IRAN SOCIETY

**SPECIAL ISSUE ON
NIRMALA DESHPANDE
THE EX-PRESIDENT OF
INDO-IRAN SOCIETY**



**DIDI AT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
ON 30TH APRIL 2008**

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Editorial:

The eminent personalities like poets, writers, thinkers and servants of society, art, culture and literature, infact, do not belong to a particular nation or geographical boundary but they belong to the whole world of humanity. They reflect the wise thoughts in their works, which play an important role in promoting the noble culture and cause of humanity. Their thought and actions are sufficient to enlighten the soul and to spread the fragrance of unity and universal brotherhood. Dr. Nirmala Deshpande popularly known as 'Didi' in fact, played a very important role in promoting human values all over the globe. In pursuance of her principle of unity and brotherhood, she took over as the President of Indo-Iran Society with firm conviction and commitment and had said "after Pakistan and China, now I will work for Iran too to promote "people to people relation" between the two ancient nations i.e. India and Iran."

The sudden and sad demise of Didi, a renowned Gandhian and a parliamentarian has indeed created a great void which is difficult to fill. In her inaugural speech during the release ceremony of Indo-Iran journal she had expressed her views about Iran in these words "the age-old ties between India and Iran go back to the Vedic period. The relationship got strengthened century after century in such a way that Indians do not feel that Iranians are foreigners."

The news of her death shocked her followers not only in India but all over the world. The Iranian Vice President His Excellency Esphandiyar Mashaei the Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran in India alongwith Prof. Mahdi paid homage to the departed soul

by placing a wreath on her dead today. With a heavy heart and profound sorrow, I accompanied the funeral procession.

Besides, the Indo-Iran Society organized a condolence meeting at the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran which was attended by His Excellency Ambassador Mahdi Nabizadeh, the father of Persian in India, Prof. Amir Hasan Abidi, Prof. Mushirul Hasan, V.C. Jamia Millia Islamia and Vice-President of Indo-Iran Society, Prof. A.W. Azhar, a group of Iranian diplomats and members of the society. After paying glorious tributes to the departed soul, the executive committee proposed the name of Prof. Mushirul Hasan as the new President of Indo-Iran Society, which was seconded by all the members and office bearers. Prof. Mushirul Hasan Finally accepted the proposal. It was further resolved to publish the second issue of Hind-o-Iran Journal in commemoration of late Dr. Ms. Nirmalaji, which is now in your hands. Though, she is no more alive yet her soul, ideas and last wishes are with us, which we will make efforts to translate into practice from the Indo-Iran Society platform in the days to come. In the words of Sa'di:

سعديا مرد تڪو نام نميرد هرگز مرده آنست كه نامش به نكويي نبرند

Oh Sa'di, a man with good name dose not perish.

The dead is one who is not remembered with goodness.

Karim Najafi



President Pratibha Patil Condolence

President Pratibha Patil of India in her message expressed her deep sorrow over the demise of Dr. Nirmala Deshpande and described Ms. Pande as an eminent freedom fighter and social worker.

Mr. Manmohan Singh Prime Minister of India said “Nirmalaji was a living Gandhian..... Her life will continue to inspire young and old alike in our fight against poverty, ignorance and disease and

our struggle for just and equitable society.

Madam Sonia Gandhi the Congress President and UPA Chairperson expressed her sorrow over the demise of Dr.Nirmala Deshpande in these words “ For me, Nirmalaji was an abiding and cherished source of guidance, support and steadfast friendship whose loss leaves a void that will be hard to fill”.



Dr. Najafi Attends Madam Pande's Funeral Indo-Iran Society plunges into the ocean of sorrow

The renowned Gandhian, Social Activist, Writer, Parliamentarian and a true lover of humanism Dr. Nirmala Deshpande breathed her last on May 1, 2008. She was the President of Indo-Iran Society and presided over society's first meeting one day before her death at the Art and Aesthetic Auditorium of Jawaharlal Nehru University. While delivering her presidential address "Didi" referred to modern challenges and serious threat to human society. She further expressed her determination to work for the promotion of human values all over the globe and asked the audience to raise the slogan of "Jai Jagat" alongwith "Jai Bharat". The news of her sad demise shocked the Indo-Iran Society. The Vice President of Iran Dr. Rahim Mashaei, Ambassador of Iran Mr. Nabizadeh and General Secretary of Indo-Iran Society Prof. Akhtar

Mahdi laid a wreath on her body at her residence and expressed their deep sorrow.

Dr. Karim Najafi the Cultural Counsellor of the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi participated in her funeral and on behalf of Indo-Iran Society laid a wreath on her body. He further conveyed his sincere condolence to Mr. Rahul Gandhi, Member of Parliament, Mr. Subodh Kant Sahay, Minister of Food Processing Govt. of India, Mr. Buta Singh, former Minister of Home Affairs, Govt. of India and presently the Chairman of Dalit Minorities Commission Dr. Syeda Sayeidian, Member of Planning Commission, Smt. Sheila Dixit, Chief Minister of Delhi and other followers of Didi who were present at the cremation ground. On the request of media people he addressed T.V. peoples covering NDTV, India News and Journalists.



राष्ट्रपति
भारत गणतंत्र
PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF INDIA

May 1, 2008

Dear Smt. Paranjpe,

I am deeply saddened to learn about the passing away of Kumari Nirmala Deshpande who was a veteran Gandhian, eminent social worker and a Member of Parliament.

Kumari Nirmala Deshpande was a close personal friend in whose passing away, the nation has lost a person who dedicated her life for bringing people together. She also relentlessly worked for communal harmony as well as peace, amity and understanding in the world.

Kindly accept my condolences and convey them to the other members of your family.

With regards,

(Pratibha Devisingh Patil)

Smt. Kalpana Paranjpe,
AB-98, Shahjahan Road
New Delhi-110003.



Translated text

**The Members of Indo-Iran Society
and
The bereaved family of Dr. Nirmala Deshpande**

The news regarding the sad demise of a prominent thinker a known figure of India's politics & culture Dr. Nirmala Deshpande shocked all of us. She made commandable efforts for the promotion of friendship between India and Iran and also took initiative for the development of human values all over the globe. Her face will remain immortal in the eyes of the culture loving nations of India and Iran.

Through this letter, I convey my sincere and heartfelt condolences to the members of Madam Pande's bereaved family, the members of the Indo-Iran Society and to all those who are interested in the promotion of friendship between India and Iran.

We pray Almighty to bestow His mercy upon her and patience for those who are left behind.

Mahdi Mustafvi
Advisor to President
&
Head of the Organisation of
Culture and Islamic Relations
Islamic Republic of Iran



सत्यमेव जयते

उप-राष्ट्रपति, भारत
VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA

May 1, 2008

Dear Kalpanaji

It was with a deep sense of sorrow that I received the shocking news of the passing away of Kumari Nirmala Deshpande, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

An eminent Gandhian, social worker and a respected public figure, Kumari Nirmala Deshpande served the country with distinction. Her immense contributions to the empowerment of women, promotion of communal harmony and towards rural development were undertaken within the framework of Gandhian thought and philosophy.

In this hour of grief, my wife joins me in conveying our heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

We pray to the Almighty to give you strength and fortitude to withstand this tragedy.

Yours in grief,

(M. HAMID ANSARI)

Ms. Kalpanaji,
AB-98, Shahajahan Road,
New Delhi-110003.



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
नई दिल्ली-११००६७
NEW DELHI-110067

Professor B.B. Bhattacharya
Vice-Chancellor

vc/558

Condolence Message

The University community is shocked to learn the sad demise of Dr.Nirmala Deshpande, popularly known as 'Gandhian Lady'. Nirmala Deshpande was the only Gandhian Lady who worked as true patron for the organizations engaged in the works of nation's father Mahatma Gandhi. She was one of the staunch follower of Acharya Vinoba Bhave.

It is only recently that Nirmala Deshpande visited the Jawaharlal Nehru University campus on Wednesday, 30th April 2008 where she delivered her last speech in her capacity as the President of Indo-Iran Society. During her speech, she specifically mentioned that she will continue working for the promotion and upliftment of human values not only in India but all over the globe.

In the death of Nirmala Deshpande, the Jawaharlal Nehru University has lost a philosopher and scholar of high standing. The University community joins me in conveying our heart felt condolences to the bereaved family.

(B.B. Bhattacharya)

Family Members
98, Shahjahan Road
New Delhi - 110001

Tel. : 26717500, 26704001, 26717676, Ext. 4001 □ Res. 26717555, 26704733, 26177641
□ Gram : JAYENU □ Fax : +91-11-26717580 □ E-mail : vc@mail.jnu.ac.in; bbb@mail.jnu.ac.in



सत्यमेव जयते

प्रणव मुखर्जी
PRANAB MUKHERJEE



विदेश मंत्री, भारत
MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
INDIA

No. 4674 /EAM/2008

May 1, 2008

Dear Smt. Paranjpe,

I am deeply shocked to hear the sudden demise of your sister Kumari Nirmala Deshpande. Apart from being a distinguished parliamentarian, she was a noted Gandhian and a social activist who assiduously served India for many years. Please accept my heartfelt condolences and I pray to the Almighty to give you and the family fortitude and strength to bear this irreparable loss.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

[Pranab Mukherjee]

Smt. Kalpana Paranjpe,
Sister of Lt. Km. Nirmala Deshpande,
AB-98, Shahjahan Road,
New Delhi.



प्रियरंजन दासमुंशी
P.R. Dasmunsi

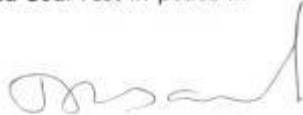
सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री
भारत सरकार
शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली-110001
Minister of
Information & Broadcasting
Govt. of India
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110001

01 MAY 2009

CONDOLENCE MESSAGE

I am shocked to hear about the sudden demise of Ms. Nirmala Deshpandey, Member of Parliament. It is a sad news to us, that the long serving Congress M.P. and a veteran Gandhian is no more with us. She was a thoroughly committed Congress worker, who devoted her entire life for the welfare of the downtrodden, depressed and have-nots. Her spartan life style, simplicity, honesty and integrity are indeed an example for all of us to follow.

Her passing away is not only a loss to her near and dear ones, but also to the Congress Party and the country as a whole. I convey my heartfelt condolences to her sister Smt. Kalpana Paranjpe, other members of the deceased leader's family and all those associated with her. May the departed Soul rest in peace in Heaven.


(P.R. DASMUNSI)

Smt. Kalpana Paranjpe
AB-98, Shahajahan Road
NEW DELHI – 110 001.



एच डी देवे गौड़ा
H.D. DEVE GOWDA
Former Prime Minister of India

May 12, 2008

Dear Dr Muniratnam,

I was shocked and saddened by the news about the sudden demise of veteran Gandhian leader Nirmala Deshpande. In this hour of social, political and economic crisis, the country needed her balanced and selfless guidance. She had devoted over six decades of her life towards promoting communal harmony and serving the cause of women, tribals, the underprivileged, downtrodden and the dispossessed.

Her firm belief in Gandhian principles stood the test of time and witnessed her undertaking the arduous but eventful 40,000 km 'Padyatra' across the country to carry the Father of the nation's message of Gram Swaraj. Her peace marches in Punjab, peace mission to Kashmir and her initiative to organize the India-Pakistan meet in 1996 which contributed immensely towards improving the situation in these difficult times shall remain etched forever in public memory. She was also a popular author.

I salute her uncompromising and indefatigable spirit and pray to the Almighty to bless her soul with eternal peace and inspire millions of Indians to follow the path shown by her. I extend my best wishes to the Akhil Bharat Rachnatmak Samaj to carry forward her message with the same vigour and zeal she epitomized.

With Kind Regards,

Yours sincerely,

[H.D. DEVE GOWDA]

Dr. G. Muniratnam,
Vice-President,
Akhil Bharat Rachnatmak Samaj,
AB-98, Shahajahan Road,
NEW DELHI-110 011.

5, सफदरजंग लेन, नई दिल्ली - 110 011 दूरभाष : 23794499 फैक्स : 23010288
5, Safdarjung Lane, New Delhi - 110 011 Ph. : 23794499 Fax : 23010288



Senator Asif Ali Zardari
Co-Chairman
Pakistan Peoples Party

May 3, 2008

Dear Mr. Shivnath Ram,

I am writing to condole the sad passing away of Ms Nirmala Deshpande.

Ms. Nirmala Deshpande was one of the most respected goodwill ambassadors whose pioneering work in improving relations between the two countries is appreciated by all.

She played an important role to promote peace and stabilities, love and affection between the people of our two countries. Her services in this regard will be long remembered.

I hope that her goodwill mission will be carried forward by her associates.

Please accept my sincere condolences and convey the same to her friends.

I pray that her soul may rest in peace.

Sincerely,

(Asif Ali Zardari)

Mr Shivnath Ram
General Secretary
Akhil Rachanatmak Bharat Samaj
AB-98, Shahjahan Road
New Delhi
India

Didi's Last Speech at JNU



The Indo-Iran Society organized a get-together of lovers of Persian language and literature at Arts and Aesthetics Stadium in J.N.U., New Delhi to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Cultural MOU signed between India and Iran. This Cultural and academic meet was organized under the Presidentship of Dr. Nirmala Deshpande. The Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran H.E. Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei and H.E. Syed Mahdi Nabizadeh, the Ambassador of Iran in India participated in this celebration as Guest of Honour. It may be recalled that the tragic death of Dr. Nirmala Deshpande (Popularly known as Didi) occurred next early morning and the whole nation especially the lovers of Gandhian way of life plunged into the ocean of sorrow. Following is the text of the last*

speech of Dr. Nirmala Deshpande popularly known as Didi :

Excellency the Vice President of Iran, Excellency the Ambassador of Iran, Excellency the Cultural Counsellor of Iran and all the distinguished members of the dias and all the distinguished members in the audience.

It is my immense pride and pleasure to welcome the friends this morning. The Indo-Iran Society had been blessed by the eminent personalities of India like our former President Dr. Zakir Hussain, Prof. Nurul Hasan, Prof. Bishambhar Nath Pande and others. I am too small a person but all that I can claim is this that I love Iran and the people of Iran. The age old ties between India and Iran go back, God knows to what time, centuries and centuries back. Even during the

Vedic times, there were very close ties and since then century after century these ties were strengthened. And somehow, we have become so close in the culture and the language, poetry, search for knowledge that sometimes one does not feel that Iranians are foreigners in India. We just feel that they are one of us. And may I take you back to the eldest son of Emperor Shahjahan i.e. Darashikoh who translated the Upanishad from Sanskrit into Persian and it was not an ordinary job. For me only great people with the knowledge of both the languages as well as spiritual pursuits can alone do that job. And I would like to request the dept. of Persian J.N.U. that if that book is available here it should be published in Urdu, Hindi and other Indian languages so that, people will know the great work that has been done centuries back. May I also take you back to the great poets of recent centuries Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal and our various poets, how many names can I take. They have written both in Urdu and Farsi. Farsi we can proudly say has been the court language of India. So it is one of our own languages and we should continue to promote Farsi by learning Farsi and also by the publication of the literature of

Farsi. These ties have been strengthened in every century and now we are looking forward, may I say, to Iran, Pakistan and India Gas Pipeline which will benefit all the three countries and we would all three be together not only for our economic benefit but also for strengthening our cultural ties of centuries together.

I would not take much of your time but I would just like to say that there is a saying in the old Vedas that, let me look at the world with friendly eyes so that the world will look to us with friendly eyes.

With this prayer I would like to appeal to all of you that for us the whole world is our friend and we do not have any enemy. Let us look to every country with friendly eyes. Thank you. And may I say the new slogan that Mahatma Gandhi's spiritual successor Acharya Vinoba Bhave, my Guru, who had given to the world "Jai Jagat" i.e. Victory to the world which includes victory to India, Victory to Pakistan, Victory to Iran and Victory to all countries – "Jai Hind, Jai Jagat".

* Next morning i.e. May 1st 2008
Dr. Nirmala Deshpande left for her heavenly abode leaving behind her followers plunging in the ocean of sorrow.

Golden Jubilee Celebration of Indo – Iran Society

The Indo-Iran Society held a function on April 30, 2008 at Arts and Aesthetic Auditorium, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Indo – Iran Cultural Agreement and to release Indo – Iran journal after a gap of more than 30 years.

At the outset, Dr. Nirmala Deshpande, the President of Indo – Iran Society delivered her welcome address. While welcoming the honorable guests Madam Pande referred to age-old relations between India & Iran and said that both India and Iran have been maintaining friendly relation from Vedic period. We should work for the promotion of human values all over the world.

Dr. Pande also said that Iranian civilization is of great importance not only for India but also for the whole world and with the completion of Indo-Iran Gas pipe line project, our historic relations will also be strengthened.

While concluding her brief and meaningful speech, Dr. Nirmala Deshpande made an appeal to the audience to raise slogan of “Jai Jagat” alongwith “Jai Bharat”

and to work for peace and harmony among the world masses.

At the welcome address, flower bouquet were presented to Vice-President His Excellency Esfandiar Mashaei and members of his entourage. The bouquets were also presented to His Excellency Er. Mahdi Nabizadeh, the Ambassador of Iran in India.

Later the Vice-President of Islamic Republic of Iran Dr. Esphandiar Rahim Mashaei delivered his inaugural speech herein he referred to multi-dimensional friendly relations between the two nations and said “Indo-Iran relations have deep historical, cultural and civilisational roots, which can not become weak due to small events and happenings. Both nations have rich cultural values, which can not be compared with any other civilization in the world.

Expressing his concern over the existing situation all over the world Dr. Mashaei said the whole human world is based on economy and economic standards are used in evaluating the performance of human world. But this is wrong as economy is a minor part of human

life not the goal or object of life. He further stated that the two nations are having different geographical boundaries but the people of India and Iran understand the sentiments of each other on the basis of mutual respect and honour. Dr. Mashaei further emphasized that India and Iran should make use of their capabilities for promoting their mutual social, economic and cultural cooperation. This will definitely result in growth and development of the two nations.

While delivering his speech, His Excellency Er. Mahdi Nabizadeh, the Ambassador of Iran in India said Iran being an ancient civilisation played important role in the promotion and completion of other civilizations. The Indo – Iran Society has been revived and revitalised for strengthening bilateral cultural relations between the two nations.

Prof. Harbans Mukhia, the well known historian and Vice-President of Indo-Iran Society also delivered a speech. In his brief but meaningful speech, Prof. Mukhia referred to the historic relation between the two nations and the role of Persian Language in the promotion of these relations.

At the end, Dr. Karim Najafi moved a vote of thank to all the dignitaries and scholars present in this function. He conveyed

society's special thank to Prof. Azermidakht Safavi who came from Aligarh Muslim University and successfully compered the programme in her own style.

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful His Excellency Mr. Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei, the Hon'ble Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hon'ble Mr. Mahdi Nabizadeh, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Respected dignitaries, Professors and my dear friends.

It is indeed a blessing of Almighty and good wishes of my well wishers especially the eminent historians of India Prof. Harbans Mukhia and Prof. Mushirul Hasan who were a source of strength and inspirations for me when I was a student of J.N.U. Their valuable viewpoints, contributions and suggestions have empowered me to such an extent that today I am in the midst of great scholars and personalities.

Prof. Amir Hasan Abidi popularly known as Father of Persian in India was also source of inspiration for me.

As you must be knowing that Iran and India have emerged high in the realms of history as the two culturally rich and the oldest civilizations in the world. Both these countries have influenced and

enriched each other to such an extent that it is impossible to study of either without reference to each other. The recent visit of Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadi Nejad, the Hon'ble President of the Islamic Republic of Iran to India yesterday has sent a message of goodwill, peace and love for the peoples of two nations.

India and Iran are the cradle of ancient cultures and mysticisms for more than eight hundred years. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has said in his book Discovery of India, "among the many people and races that have come in contact with and influenced India's life and culture, the oldest and most persistent have been the Iranians".

Persian language has got many similarities with the Sanskrit words and it is related to Vedic period. Hon'ble Madam Dr. Nirmala Deshpande and Member of Parliament and the President of Indo-Iran Society have rightly said that "the age old ties between India and Iran go back to the Vedic period".

The relation got strengthened century after century in such a way that Indians do not feel that Iranian are foreigners.

We are thankful to Mr. Arjun Singh the Hon'ble Minister of HRD, Govt. of India for his

valuable message for the 2nd Sa'di Award Function.

After joining as the Cultural Counsellor of the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi various steps were taken for strengthening the cultural and academic relation between the universities of Iran and India, Most important was the signing of the MoU between the Indian Council for Cultural Relation and the Cultural Heritage Organisation of Iran.

Today important event of the Golden Jubilee of Indo-Iran Cultural Agreement and release of Indo-Iran Journal is the result of the sincere efforts of Dr. Ali Asghar Hikmat and Dr. Tara Chand the Ambassador of India and Iran respectively.

At the end, I want to convey my sincere thanks to Prof. Bhattacharya the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of J.N.U. for his kind attention and cooperation in the promotion of Persian Studies through the Centre of Persian and Central Asian Studies in JNU.

I am extremely thankful to Prof. Shahid Mahdi, the Vice President of ICCR for his valuable suggestions and views.

It is my strong conviction that Indo-Iran Society will surely carry the aims and objectives for which it has formed.

I want to end my speech with a couplet of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi which Mahatma Gandhi used to frequently quote in his speech.

ما برای وصل کردن آمدیم

نی برای فصل کردن آمدیم

We are here to create bonds and ties, and not to break them.

With love and respects for all.

Doosti-e-Hind-o-Iran Zinda
o Payandabad

It may be mentioned that because of his pre-occupation in the Academic Council, J.N.U. Vice Chancellor Prof. B.B. Bhattachary welcomed the Iranians delegation at his chamber and offered all cooperation in promoting academic and cultural ties between the two nations.

Prof Mushirul Hasan Unanimously Elected as the President of Indo- Iran Society.

The tireless efforts of the Executive Members of Indo-Iran Society and valuable suggestions of Dr. Karim Najafi the Cultural Counselor of the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi, the Society is revived and reactivated after a gap of 30 years. With the tragic end of Dr. Nirmala Deshpande the members of Indo-Iran Society and the followers of Didi plunged Indo-Iran Society into the ocean of sorrow as she was enjoying the status of first President of the Society after its revival.

At the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi, a condolence meeting took place in which Prof. (Emeritus) Amir Hasan Abidi, His Excellency Mr. Mehdi Nabizadeh the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi, Prof. Azhar, Dr. Karim Najafi the Cultural Counselor of the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi, Prof. Akhtar Mahdi General Secretary of Indo-Iran Society and other members expressed their sorrow on the sad demise. The condolence message from Dr. Mehdi Mustafavi the advisor to the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Chairman of the Islamic Cultural Relation Organizations was read out at the Culture House of Islamic

Republic of Iran, New Delhi. The Ambassador and the members remembered the contribution of Dr. Nirmala Deshpande in the revival of society and her efforts in strengthening the Indo Iran relations. The name of Prof. Mushirul Hasan the Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia and the Vice President of the Indo-Iran Society was proposed for the post of President which was unanimously accepted.

A Journal “Indo-Iran Society” which was released few months back by the Vice President of Iran was given to Prof. Mushirul Hasan by the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi.

New Governing Body of Indo-Iran Society

Patrons :

Prof. Nazir Ahmed
Prof. Amir Hasan Abidi
Syed Shahid Mahdi

President:

Prof. Mushirul Hasan

Vice-Presidents:

Prof. Harbans Mukhia
Dr. G. Muniratnam

General Secretary:

Prof. Akhtar Mahdi

Treasurer:

Prof. M.S. Prasad

JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA

Professor Mushirul Hasan

Vice-Chancellor Ph. D. (Cantab)

Maulana Mohammed Ali Jauhar Marg, New Delhi-110025 Tel : 26984650, 26985180 Fax: 00-91-11-26981232
Email: mushirulhasan@yahoo.com - vc@jami.net.in Gram : JAMIA website : <http://www.jmi.nic.in>



Vice-Chancellors:

Mohamed Ali
1920-23

Abdul Majeed Khwaja
1923-25

Zakir Husain
1926-48

Mohammad Mujeeb
1948-73

Masud Husain Khan
1973-78

A. J. Kidwai
1978-83

Ali Ashraf
1983-89

Syed Zahoor Qasim
1989-91

Bashiruddin Ahmed
1992-96

M. A. Zaki
1997-2000

Syed Shahid Mahdi
2000-04

No. VC/08/DR-180

16 May 2008

Dear Dr. Najafi,

Thank you very much for your letter of 16th May 2008. I am grateful to the Executive Members of the Society for electing me as their President. I accept their decision with utmost humility.

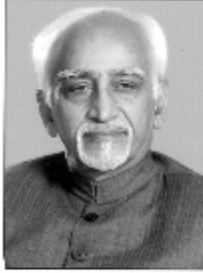
I have already sent our proposal for the setting up of a Centre for Iranology to His Excellency the Ambassador of the Embassy of Islamic Republic of Iran.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,


(Mushirul Hasan)

Dr. Karim Najafi,
Cultural Counsellor,
Iran Culture House,
Embassy of Islamic Republic of Iran,
18, Tilak Marg,
New Delhi 110 001



सत्यमेव जयते

उप-राष्ट्रपति, भारत

VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that Indo – Iran Society is bringing out the Special Issue of its quarterly magazine.

Indo - Iran Society has been playing a significant role in strengthening the relations between India and Iran in the areas of education, culture, economic and social arenas. The Special issue of the quarterly magazine, I am sure, shall be quite helpful to reflect on critical issues of importance to both the countries through various genres of writings.

I extend my good wishes to the Indo - Iran Society and wish it all success in its endeavours.

(M. HAMID ANSARI)

New Delhi
23rd May, 2008

Old Memoirs

Participation of the
Late Dr. Nirmala Deshpande
In Programmes held in
Iran Culture House, New Delhi

Late Madam Nirmala Deshpande in the Seminar on “Dialogue among Islam and Hinduism”

In the month of March 2007 a two day seminar on Dialogue among Islam and Hinduism was organized in India Habitat Centre by Iran Culture House, New Delhi

The Late Madam Nirmala Deshpande was the Chief Guest of the Seminar. In her inaugural speech. She said that there are lots of similarities between Islam and Hinduism and other religions. The main purpose of religion is to call human to spirituality.

She added that, today some scholars think Islam has dominated itself on Indian society with the force of sword, how ever if there were wars that were between the rulers and kings of Muslim and Hindus and because of their interests. Islam came to India through Sufism and great saints and because their message was based on peace, friendship and justice, Islam spread in sub-continent.

The themes and nature of all religions and faiths, is on spirituality, if there are differences those are in the way of practice, customs and cultures.

She brought the example of Babri Masjid and said this was not the only tension between two communities but all the times these differences and tensions were solved with Dialogue and peaceful way.



Late Nirmala Deshpande in Iran Culture House, New Delhi

A Meeting with Lady Members of Iranian Parliament

On 23rd March 2007, Late Madam Nirmala Deshpande was in the programme of a meeting with lady members of Iranian Parliament. Madam was representing the Indian Parliament. She was accompanied by important Indian ladies, such as Dr. Syeda Sayadain, Dr. Sughra Mahdi, Madam Manurma bava, Prof. Syada Bilqis Fatima Husaini.

Iranian ladies, Madam Fatemeh Laleh Eftekhari and Fatemah Alia had expressed their happiness in the meeting. Then in the question-

answer session, they were exchanging views with Indian delegations.

The late Madam Deshpande as the head of Indian Delegation spoke to the guests in detail and she also referred to all aspects of cultural, political and social relations between the two nations.

She further spoke highly of the active role played by Iranian women in all walks of life specially in the field of education.

Bio-Data of Miss Nirmala Deshpande

Name:	MISS NIRMALA DESHPANDE, Member of Parliament
Date of Birth:	17 th October 1929
Father:	Late Shri P.Y. Deshpande Former Member of Parliament, Freedom Fighter, Writer, Philosopher, Trade Union Leader
Mother:	Late Smt. Vimalabai Deshpande Former Deputy Minister (Madhya Pradesh) Educationist, Writer, Social Activist
Address:	AB-98, Shahjahan Road, New Delhi - 110003 Phone: 23782683, Telefax: 23782781, Mobile: 9868181093 <u>E-mail:nirmala567@yahoo.co.in</u> <u>nirmala.d@sansad.nic.in</u> Website: <u>www.nirmaladeshpande.org</u>
Educational Qualifications:	M.A. Political Science Honorary Doctorates conferred by: 1. University of Patiala, Punjab 2. University of Amravati, Maharashtra 3. Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh Served as Lecturer of Political Science, Morris College, Nagpur
Official Status:	First term from 1997-1999 Second term from 2004 onwards

The activities of Nirmala Deshpande can be divided in two categories

(1) Gandhian constructive work for building a new society, based on non-violence N.P. Peace work in India and abroad.

1. Joined Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan Yatra in India 1952 and walked

more than 40,000 K.M. in India, for Bhoodan movement, propagating the ideology of Non-violent revolution, asking for land-gifts from those who have land for those who are landless agriculture labourers. More than four million acres of land was obtained through this movement, by millions of

donors small and big, which was distributed among the landless poor in all states of India, major share was of Bihar. These allottees of land and other poor, marginalized sections were organized for their rights and Satyagraha movement carried on, under her leadership. There are some shining examples of success of Satyagraha which have helped in building further, the nonviolent movement in India. Akhil Bharat Rachanatmak Samaj, of which she was the founder President, has thousands of dedicated social activists, committed to peace and non-violence, working in all states of India, under her leadership.

2. Work for Peace – As Director of Peace Training Institute (Shantisena Vidyalaya) at Kasturbagram, Indore, she had been a pioneer in peace work and had to her credit many success stories of women and young girls, plunging in peace activity in any situation and establishing peace.

In militancy-ridden Punjab in the decades of eighties, she organized huge Peace Marches, with thousands of peace activists for India who helped the local people in keeping peace and communal harmony. These peace activists were spread in every nook and corner of Punjab and have set an example of courage, fearlessness by committed peace workers, who

could gain the confidence of every section of the society. She would travelled alone in a jeep all over the state taking great personal risk under the shadow of people's dua i.e. good wishes 'God is with you'.

In the difficult days of militancy in the state of Jammu & Kashmir, she organized peace work by enlisting a few outsiders and many local friends to work continuously for maintaining peace and communal harmony, making an appeal to those young men with guns to throw away the guns and adopt peaceful means. A large number of young men and women, belonging to all communities joined this movement and today one can find local friends in every corner of Jammu & Kashmir who are committed to Gandhi and Peace.

Communal conflicts and spread of communal poison has been a serious problem of India in last two decades. Akhil Bharat Rachanatmak Samaj, under her leadership had organized interfaith prayers, meets, big conferences in various parts of India. The inter-faith conference at Chennai was inaugurated by H.H. Dalai Lama. Continuous work to build bridges of understanding between different communities especially between Hindus and Muslims is being carried. She played an active role with the same objective during the recent carnage in Gujarat, and was

instrumental in saving many lives. She organized continuous protest marches in Delhi against Gujarat carnage, involving social activists and leaders of various opposition political parties. Her associates were the first to take a peace march in Orissa after the horrible murder of Christian missionary Graham Stanes.

After Gujarat, she along with some friends formed various forums to fight communalism and help forces of Secularism.

1. Sanjhi Virasat -- Forum of writers, artists, all members of creative community to uphold India's tradition of composite culture, pluralism.
2. Adhyatma Jagaran Manch - with Swami Agnivesh and Rev. Val san Thampu. This Forum was formed to spread the philosophy of spiritual and ethical values and counter the misuse of religion.
3. Peoples integration Council - to mobilize all sections of society for national integration and communal harmony.

Peace Work abroad - Through her organizations, Akhil Bharat Rachanatmak Samaj & Association of Peoples of Asia, she had established friendly relations with neighbors, specially with Pakistan. Organized 'Indo-Pak Amity Meet' in 1996, attended by academics,

artists, social activists, journalists etc. from both the countries and led Indian delegation to Karachi, Pakistan in 1997 for a similar meet. In 1999 she again led Indian delegation to Pakistan Peace conference, organized by Pakistan Peace Coalition and visited many places. In March 2000 she had led a women's bus of Peace from Delhi to Lahore [Pakistan], comprising of eminent women from every field of life, which proved to be a very big event. She also hosted the same year two buses of peace women from Pakistan to Delhi, as a founder Chairperson of 'Women's initiative for Peace in South Asia'. This was a big event and created a lot of goodwill.

Another important initiative by her was helping the retired senior officers of Army, Navy, Air Force of India to form 'Indo-Pak Soldiers' Initiative for Peace' in India and its counterpart in Pakistan. She led a delegation of India chapter of this organization to Pakistan in 2001 and was received very warmly in Pakistan. It was a sight for God to see, those who fought each other in three wars, now embracing each other and pledging to work for peace.

South Asia Peace Conferences were also organized by her in Calcutta, Chennai & Jalandhar, attended by hundred delegates from Pakistan

and planned strategies to work for peace and better understanding. She was a Bureau member of 'South Asians for Human Rights'.

One of her major activity was to work for the cause of Tibet through friendship associations. She has led a Satyagraha on Indo-Tibet border in 1997, organized and participated in conferences, marches, seminars, for the case of Tibet. She was close to H.H. Dalai Lama, who had blessed her peace initiatives. She attended world conference on Tibet in Berlin by Tibet Support Groups from more than 55 countries.

She was also helping Burmese refugees and important personalities close to Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar, by organizing and participating in conferences, seminars, marches to support the nonviolent movement for democracy in Burma.

She attended Global Assembly of United Religions Initiative 2002 at Rio {Brazil} as Indian delegate and spoke on Gandhi. She unveiled the first statue of Gandhi in Bali {Indonesia} in Gandhi Ashram, Denpasar.

Positions held:

Committees

1. Member, Standing Committee on Information & Broadcasting
2. Member, Standing Committee on Rural Development
3. Member, Central Social Welfare Board

4. Member, Committee on Empowerment of Women

Others

1. National President, Akhil Bharat Rachanatmak Samaj (ABRS)
2. National President - Harijan Sevak Sangh (HSS)
3. Chairperson, Association of Peoples of Asia (APA)
4. Chairperson - India-Pakistan Forum of Parliamentarians
5. President, Indo-Pak Soldiers' Initiative for Peace (IPSI) - Both of India and Pakistan
6. Founder Trustee, Women's Initiative for Peace in South Asia (WIPSA)
7. President, Rashtriya Seva Samithi (RASS) Tirupati
8. President, Hanuman Vyayam Prakash Mandal (HVP), Amravati, Maharashtra oldest organization of physical education and sports which has trained over 50,000 youth of all the States of India.
9. President, Vinoba Janmasthan Pratisthan (Birthplace of Vinoba Bhave) Trust
10. Chairperson, Bapu Sadhbhavana and Shiksha Trust
11. Editor - Nityanutan - Hindi fortnightly
12. Member, National Integration Council
13. Member, Central Advisory Board of Education.
14. President, Indo-Iran Society

AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST

Wrote novels in Hindi, one of which entitled “*Chingling*” was given National Award. Written novels, plays, travelogues, commentary on Isha Upanishad, biography of Vinoba Bhave published by National Book Trust, and other books. Was Editor of Maitri, a journal on service and spirituality, published from Paunar Ashram founded by Acharya Vinoba Bhave. Currently, editing ‘Nityanutan’, in Hindi from New Delhi and in some other Indian languages.

TRAVELS

Extensively traveled in India. Also visited Russia, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Taiwan, Japan, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Brazil, United States, Canada & China.

Akhil Bharat Rachanatmak Samaj has been awarded ‘National Communal Harmony Award – 2004’ by the President of India.

Has been awarded ‘Padma Vibhushan’

14th Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Puraskar – 2005

‘Order of Friendship’ awarded by President Putin of Russia on 26th January 2007, at a special function in Russian Embassy, New Delhi.

Works done through Akhil Bharat Rachanatmak Samaj

Akhil Bharat Rachanatmak Samaj, a federation of Gandhian institutions and social workers was formed in 1982 under the leadership of veteran Gandhian and Parliamentarian Miss Nirmala Deshpande. The core of activities of the Samaj lies in the field of **communal harmony and national integration.**

The Samaj organized a campaign for peace and harmony in 1983, the peak period of terrorism in Punjab, taking two thousand workers from all parts of India and an equal number from Punjab joined them. The Samaj has taken exemplary steps in promoting communal harmony and peace in the strife-torn state of Jammu and Kashmir and the message was reached to the grassroots level. The volunteers had done this at a great personal risk.

Another noteworthy effort of the Samaj was that of organizing a campaign for harmony & creating public opinion to save the Babri Masjid in Faizabad district, as much as being physically present to prevent the demolition of the Masjid. The work started by the Samaj is being continued in that area and a majority of Sants and Mahants are today supporting the cause of communal harmony and peace.

When inter-caste tensions broke out in Tamil Nadu, the Samaj organized

padayatras, which helped in cooling down the situation.

The Samaj has organized big inter-faith - *sarva-dharma*- Conferences in various places like Ayodhya, Varanasi, Mathura, Rishikesh, Chitrakut, Jammu, Chennai and Aligarh. The conference in Aligarh Muslim University, first of its kind in hundred years, with initiative taken by the Vice Chancellor was inaugurated by Dalai Lama. Prominent leaders from all religions present shared their messages.

During the Gujarat violence in 2002, the Samaj played a major role in reaching out to victims and organized peace marches.

The annual Conferences organized by the Samaj in different parts of the country have come to stay as permanent feature that promotes the cause of peace and harmony. Presidents, Prime Ministers, Governors, Chief Ministers and other dignitaries address thousands of grassroots level social workers from every state at these events.

Empowerment of women through self-help groups and workshops, involvement of youth in national integration and poverty alleviation programs by giving land to the landless, employment generation through Khadi and Village Industries, building peoples' power in the villages through gramswarajya, and helping panchayati raj institutions are other

activities the Samaj is engaged in. The Samaj has taken initiatives every time peace is disturbed and helped in restoring normalcy and helped the victims.

In the field of education, it is running residential schools for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes children. Tribal girls are being educated in most difficult areas like Bastar, Sarguja of Chattisgarh, Gadchiroli of Maharashtra, Koraput of Orissa, thus trying to reach out to the families in troubled areas, giving them the Gandhian alternative to get justice.

People-to-people contacts are another area that the Samaj is specialized in. In collaboration with sister organizations - Association of Peoples of Asia (APA) - and Women's Initiative for Peace in South Asia (WIPSA), it is organizing exchange visits between neighboring countries, especially Pakistan, for establishing and sustaining peace.

The multifarious activities of Akhil Bharat Rachanatmak Samaj have played a dominant role in influencing people at all levels and creating an increased awareness for communal harmony to ensure sustaining peace.

The Samaj believed in Confucian concept of 'not cursing the darkness, but lighting a candle', whenever and wherever needed.

Statement of ownership and other particulars about

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(See Rule 8)

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I, Akhtar Mahdi, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

June 13, 2008

Sd/- Akhtar Mahdi
Publisher

