

AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

Jashn-e-Khusrau **BOOK RELEASE**

As part of the Humayun's Tomb – Nizamuddin Basti Urban Renewal initiative, a partnership project led by the Archaeological Survey of India and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, it is aimed to document, revive, disseminate the 700 years of intangible living cultural heritage of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti.

The project aims to link culture to socio-economic development through a series of programme components ranging from conservation of the built heritage to awareness amongst school children through heritage walks led by youth from Nizamuddin Basti and publications.

Jashn-e-Khusrau: A Collection compiles the events of Jashn-e-Khusrau, a festival illuminating the genius of Amir Khusrau, held at Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti and India International Centre in March 2010. The festival was funded by the Ford Foundation and organized and produced by Aga Khan Trust for Culture in collaboration with Archaeological Survey of India.

Jashn-e-Khusrau celebrated the mystical poetry of Amir Khusrau as performed in the musical genre of *qawwālī*. Rendered in the shrine of his beloved *pīr* Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, the poetry has been kept alive for over 750 years by the *qawwālī* singers in the shrines of the Chishtiya *silsilā*. The festival put together an exclusive assembly of selected *khānaqāhī qawwāl* with different *dargāh* affiliations in India as well as Pakistan – each with a distinctive style and repertoire. In that way it was singularly unique. It included several other related events such as lectures on the poetry of Amir Khusrau and its contribution to *qawwālī* tradition; a discussion with the *qawwāl* on the development of the *qawwālī* styles and contents; heritage walks in Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti; film screenings on *sūfī* music and on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan – one of the greatest exponents of *qawwālī* of our time; and an exhibition displaying Humayun's Tomb, Sunder Nursery and Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti area urban renewal initiatives.

Jashn-e-Khusrau: A Collection includes three music discs exemplifying the vast repertoire of *khānaqāhī qawwālī*. The book presents, in the first section, three essays with an introduction articulating the history, tradition, and literature of *khānaqāhī qawwālī* as attributed to Amir Khusrau. The second section compiles Amir Khusrau's poetry, as sung by the *qawwāls*, in calligraphy and with transliterations and translations.

Jashn-e-Khusrau: A Collection is published by **ROLI BOOKS**.

The Aalam-e-Khusrau programme, of which this publication is a part, has been and will continue to document the multifarious contribution of this legendary figure in the field of music – from the popular *qawwālī* and folk music genres to Hindustani classical music and contemporary interpretations. Through archiving, research and documentation, public performances, discussions and seminars and a fellowship and scholarship programme, it is bringing forth a deeper and richer understanding of the legacy and relevance of Amir Khusrau in this day and age. Given his contribution to the making of a syncretic and pluralistic Hindustani culture, the Aalam-e-Khusrau programme is doing commendable work which will stand the test of time as a lasting contribution in the cultural field.

The publication was released at the hands of the chief guest Kumari Selja, Hon'ble Minister of Culture and Minister of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation in the presence of Shri Jawhar Sircar, Secretary, Ministry of Culture. Other eminent guests present on the occasion were Shri Farhad Suri, Former Mayor of Delhi and Councillor, Nizamuddin; Pir Khwaja Ahmed Nizami Syed Bokhari, *sajjadanashin*, Dargah Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya; Mr. Cameron Rashti, Director, Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme, AKTC; Dr. Ravina Aggarwal, Programme Officer, Ford Foundation and Pramod Kapoor of Roli Books.

Wajahat Hussain Badayuni Qawwal & Group from Badayun, Uttar Pradesh performed the *kalam* of Amir Khusrau on the occasion.