

Corporate

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Islamabad

**Mehfil-i-Sukhan brings together big names in poetry**

ISLAMABAD: A Mehfil-i-Sukhan, a much missed traditional celebration of the art of poetry and recitation, was the highlight of the weekend at the Islamabad Serena Hotel.

The event marked the beginning of a slew of activities to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the hotel and was attended by a large number of dignitaries, including President Dr Arif Alvi and First Lady Begum Samina Alvi.

The stars of the evening were renowned poets from across the country including Anwar Masood, Iftikhar Arif, Kishwar Naheed, Khurshid Rizvi, Amjad Islam Amjad, Anwar Shaoor, Dr Pirzada Qasim, Yasmeen Hameed, Akhtar Usman, Abbas Tabish, Shaukat Fehmi, Nasira Zuberi, Wasi Shah, Ambreen Hasib Ambar, Fazil Jamili, Rahman Hafeez, Atfab Abrak, Ashfaq Nasir, Faisal Hashmi and Farjad Mehdi. After many years, Islamabad society had the opportunity to enjoy master poets, men and women, young and old, at a single gathering.

Shakeel Jazib welcomed all the guests and said, “Ladies and gentlemen, poetry is a vocation that enraptures everybody in every age in its enchantment, and mushaira is a tradition that has kept our culture alive and has kept our past connected to our present and future.”

As is custom, the host of a mushaira initiates the recitation with his own verses. Jazib began the evening with his poem, “Jab kabhi dil kay mazafaat mein aa jaata hun, Mein kharabay say kharabaat men aa jaata hun; Tu na dekhay to ajab habss may dum ghut-ta hay, Terray dekhay say mein barsaat may aajaata hun”.

Farjad Mehdi’s recitation included a beautiful poem, stating, “Sada-e-Kun ka peechah kartay kartay, Makaan say La-makaan tak aa gaya hun, Meray ajdad ki sunnat samajhna, Jo khud chal kar kamaan tak aa gaya hun”.

Faisal Hashmi recited his poem beginning, Mujhe intezaar tha sham say, “Mein bhara hua tha kalaam say, Meri apnay aap say guftugu, Koi dekhta dar-o-baam say”.

Dr Ashfaq Nasir won the hearts and applause of the audience with his couplet, “Ishq mein nay bhi kiya hai, meray ajdad nay bhi, Nasal dar nasal kiya hai to ye kaam aaya hai”.

Rahman Hafeez, an Islamabad-based poet, narrated, “Hum ko khushi taalaash to karwani chahiye, Ghar may he kho gaee hai to mil jaani chahiye.”

Anwar Masood is known for his mastery of humourous poetry and his unique use of everyday, commonplace phrases.

Iftikhar Arif is a prominent Urdu poet, scholar and literary personality, who is the former head of the Pakistan Academy of Letters, National Language Authority and the National Book Foundation, amongst numerous other accolades, awards and designations.

Kishwar Naheed is a feminist Urdu poet whose iconic poems trace the struggle for gender equality.

Dr Pirzada Qasim, a noted Pakistani scholar, poet, scientist and educationist, has served as vice chancellor of the Ziauddin University, Federal Urdu University and University of Karachi, and as the Chancellor of Nazeer Hussain University. Abbas Tabish is well known for the sensibility and relatability of his work, such as the famous “Ek muddat say meri maa nahin soi Taabish, Main nay aik baar kaha tha mujhe dar lagta hai.”

The distinctive styles, perspectives and lyricism of the poets was a rare treat to experience, bringing home how essential it is for the arts to have patrons.