

# ALFAAZ KI MEHFIL

Select Urdu Poetry with  
English Interpretation



**SATYA PRABHAKAR**

FOREWORD BY UMAIR ULLAH KHAN

بزمِ سخن  
BAZM-E-SUKHAN

CDPP

CENTRE FOR  
DEVELOPMENT  
PRACTICE

DEF  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

ACODE

Lamakaan

# **Alfaaz ki Mehfil**

Select Urdu Poetry with  
English Interpretation

**Satya Prabhakar**



## **CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE**

Office Address: 10-3-303, 3rd Floor,  
Serene Heights, Humayun Nagar,  
Masab Tank, Hyderabad - 500 028, Telangana, India  
Email: [info@cdpp.co.in](mailto:info@cdpp.co.in), Website: [www.cdpp.co.in](http://www.cdpp.co.in)

Published in India in 2022  
by Centre for Development Policy and Practice

Copyright © Satya Prabhakar, +91 63812 93765.  
All rights reserved.

The author has asserted his moral rights.

The views and opinions expressed in the work are the authors' own and the facts are reported by them. The publisher is in no way liable for the same.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in a retrieval system, in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from the author.

ISBN: 978-81-953449-7-0

Printed at Sharp Computers, Malakpet, Hyderabad.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way or trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published.

# GRATITUDE AND THANKS

*With gratitude to those who made me...me:*

My wife: **Sangeeta**

My parents: **Anasuya & Venugopala Rao**

My kids: **Priya, Divya, Joe**

My sisters: **Suseela, Padma, Sai**

My teachers, especially **VVG, MJR & Dr. Sham Navathe**

My partners / colleagues, esp. **Param, Promod, Harish, Srin, Krishnan**

My friends, esp. **@ RT84, Madras Club, Gators, Pink Flamingos, Summit, Group e4**

My in-laws: **Prasan Lata & Shambhu Nath**

My inspirers: **Shunryu Suzuki, Epictetus, Lao Tzu, Paul Morphy, Warren Buffett, P.V. Narasimha Rao, Barack Obama, Roger Federer**

*With thanks to those who helped Alfaaz ki Mehfil happen*

**Amir Ullah Khan**

**Umair Ullah Khan**

**Syed Moin Afroz**

**Shyam Sundar Vembar**

**Dev Prasad**

**Suresh Luthria**





## SATYA PRABHAKAR

He is originally from Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Satya Vankamamidi Prabhakar graduated with a degree in engineering from NIT, Trichy. He completed his M.S. in Computer Science and an MBA in International Finance from University of Florida, Gainesville.

He was recognized as a Distinguished Alumnus by NIT, Trichy. He won the AT&T Cabinet Award & Honeywell Spirit for business and technical excellence.

He worked at Honeywell and AT&T in the US; before that, at Philips and TCS in India. He founded Sulekha with his wife Sangeeta Kshetry and serves as its CEO.

Satya was featured in 500+ media stories and was invited to speak at Wharton, Goldman Sachs, Nanyang U., NITs, IITs, IIMs & ISB. He published 50+ technical, business & general interest articles. He was published by Penguin in its anthology *Black, White and Various Shades of Brown*.

Satya serves on the Board of United Way (Chennai) and is a Charter Member of TiE. His interests include tennis, chess, investing, philosophy, writing, and drumming.

Sangeeta and Satya live in Chennai and have two daughters: Divya, married to Joe Silvestro, and Priya.

Satya can be reached at [satyaprabhakar@gmail.com](mailto:satyaprabhakar@gmail.com) or via WhatsApp (text only) at **+91 63812 93765**.

# PREFACE

You must pardon me for I am a rank impostor in the realm of Urdu poetry – with about 18 months of learning for about 15 minutes a day – and here I am with the audacity to release a book on the same.

The prime accused for this high crime and misdemeanor is my publisher Dr. Amir Ullah Khan, an economist/consultant from Hyderabad and an accomplished student of Urdu, who convinced me the charm of a book like this is exactly that: a novice filled with *mohabbat* for the Urdu *sher*, making it accessible to other unschooled *aashiqs* (lovers) just like him.

Well, who am I to argue with an *Urdu ustad*! And this is how you find yourself reading this *Alfaaz ki Mehfil* with its uniqueness: a total lack of either erudition or scholarship, typically the hallmark of any book.

*Alfaaz ki Mehfil* is the faltering journey of an enthusiastic learner, presented with all its faults, warts and imperfect edges.

This *mohabbat* for Urdu got lit fortuitously during Covid confinement when my wife, Sangeeta, and I happened to catch an Urdu sitcom *Taana Baana* on YouTube. The ring of Urdu, just like that of Italian, sounded like music to my ears. I started to learn a few words a day. Soon, I realized that there is a better way: translate Urdu couplets into English and learn the words as part of that process.

And, *mashaallah*, did I hit a gold mine! The Urdu *sher*, I realized, is revealing, enriching, transformative, life-changing.

In many languages and cultures, poets devoted their intellect and creative energies to praise or appeal to the divine, portray

royal fiction, translate mythological epics, or in appreciation of nature, mostly.

Not so in Urdu poetry. Mostly agnostic, largely progressive, predominantly secular, unabashedly loving, innately rebellious, Urdu poets captured the essence of life with all its yearnings, enthusiasms, ecstasies, pathos, pains, struggles, trials, triumphs, and, flowing from all the above, transcendent wisdom.

Urdu poets observed life and captured the feelings and principles that hold true across time and space, both within ourselves and without. They had, for example, more interest in the relaxing, revealing power of a drink than in the imagined comfort of the divine.

Urdu poetry also emerged as the voice of revolt against religious orthodoxy, fundamentalism, injustice, despotism, and tyranny. It powered the Indian freedom movement and then turned its ire against oppression and authoritarianism.

The compelling beauty of the *sher* is that the poet's learning of a lifetime is distilled and compressed into two short lines, expressed in supremely evocative and rich Urdu, a language synthesized from four remarkable languages: Khariboli (Hindustani), Persian, Sanskrit, and Arabic.

As a student of Zen Buddhism and Stoicism, I found particular resonance with and striking parallels in Urdu poetry for two reasons: one, no axiomatic beliefs (such as God, soul, karma); two, observing life as is and figuring out how to make the best of it.

So, still investing my 15 minutes a day, I have been inflicting the translations of select couplets on my helpless hostages who suffered with a smile and encouraged me nevertheless: my wife, kids, family and friends, especially in RT84, my NIT, Trichy alumni group.

*Alfaaz ki Mehfil* is this compendium of couplets, curated and translated over the last 18 months.

Hope you enjoy reading them as much as I did in compiling them.

**Satya Vankamamidi Prabhakar**

Chennai, September 2022

satyaprabhakar@gmail.com

WhatsApp: +91-63812-93765



## FOREWORD

I am very pleased to write this introduction to Satya Prabhakar's *Alfaaz Ki Mehfil* book of his translation of more than a hundred and fifty selected Urdu couplets. A translator's work has been described as someone who builds bridges between languages- with the literal meaning from the original 'trans'-across; and 'latio/latus'- ferry or bring- and Satya, in his book, manages to bring across the beauty of Urdu very well. In both prose and poetry there is a lot of debt owed to translations - and translators. One can readily applaud Samuel Putnam for his wonderful English translation of Don Quixote, possibly the first modern novel, written by Spanish author Cervantes.

Similarly the *Mahabharata* – translated from Sanskrit and the epic poems of Iliad and Odyssey, translated from Greek, and the *Shahnameh*, translated from Persian (includes the stirring exploits of *Rustom* and *Sohrab*) are other remarkable works enjoyed across the world. *Rumi's Masnavi*– one of the greatest poems of the Persian language, is another example where it was Nicholson's translation in eight volumes that has led to *Rumi* being such an oft quoted poet in all parts of the world.

Urdu poetry has also benefited from very talented translators ensuring those unfamiliar with the language are still able to appreciate the meaning of the *ghazals* and *nazms* of great Urdu poets. An example of a fine translation is how Khushwant Singh preserves the delicate similes in this wonderful quatrain from Faiz:

***Raat yun dil mein teri khoji hui yaad aayi,  
Jaise viraane mein chupke se bahaar aa jaye,  
Jaise sehraon mein haule se chale baad-e-naseem,  
Jaise beemaar ko be-wajhe qaraar aa jaaye.***

*At night your lost memory stole into my mind  
As spring silently appears in the wilderness;  
As in desert wastes morning breeze begins to blow  
As in one sick beyond hope, hope begins to grow.*

I am aware that there are other attempts by experts and scholars of this particular quatrain and my reason for mentioning Khushwant Singh's effort here is precisely to highlight this particular truth- that there will be and should be an encouragement for all translators to carry out their art. Each one will bring out slightly different interpretations, and in their artistry will arrange the bouquet (of words and thoughts) in several beautiful ways. It is the reader who has the luxury of savouring each effort knowing that by getting to sample different translations they are that much closer to the sublime beauty of the original work.

While highlighting the importance and beauty of the translator's work it is also important to look at the challenges that are faced by someone taking up the task of 'creating the bridge' across languages. Nabakov, who himself wrote in three different languages- Russian, English and French- summarises the difficulties of translating an author's work after he translated into English Alexander Pushkin's Eugene Onegin which was written in Russian- a novel in verse made up of 389 fourteen-line stanzas (5,446 lines!):

*O Pushkin, for my stratagem.  
I travelled down your secret stem,  
And reached the root, and fed upon it;  
Then, in a language newly learned,  
I grew another stalk and turned  
**Your stanza, patterned on a sonnet,  
Into my honest roadside prose—**  
All thorn, but cousin to your rose.*



(The Art of Translation by Vladimir Nabokov, The New Republic, 1941).

Nabokov goes on to say about the qualities of a good translator: he must have as much talent as the author he chooses. Also he must be well acquainted with the two languages involved and their places of origin and he must..‘possess the gift of mimicry and be able to act, as it were, the real author’s part by impersonating his tricks of demeanor and speech, his ways and his mind’...Certainly an arduous and challenging task this- for the translator.

Some examples to highlight, in the Urdu poetry context, of why knowledge of the language alone is not enough- a good understanding of the religious, historical and cultural background of the poet is also essential, is highlighted in the selections below:

**Religious:**

***Ik sarkhushi-e-ishq hai ik be-khudī-e-shauq***

***āñkhoñ ko khudā jaane mirī kyā nazar aayā ...***

***Qurbān tirī shān-e-ināyat ke dil o jaāñ***

***is kam-nigahī par mujhe kyā kyā nazar aayā***

- Jigar Moradabadi

The tasawwuf poetry, as a genre, is difficult to translate. Here *Jigar’s ashaar* with the references to God in ‘*tiri shaan-e-inaayat*’ and his own condition of ‘*sarkhushi-e-ishq*’ and ‘*be-khudi-e-shauq*’ and the subtle ‘*khuda jaane*’ insert tie it all together as a great example of love for God that is enabling the poet to actually see the Unseen/ the invisible. Explaining this in the same brief manner of the *ashaar* in a different language is difficult, if not impossible.

### **History:**

***be-khatar kuud padā ātish-e-namrūd meñ ishq  
aql hai mahv-e-tamāshā-e-lab-e-bām abhī***

-Allama Iqbal

To understand this couplet one would need to have knowledge of *Namrud* (Emperor Nimrod) and his *aatish-e-namrud*; and the story of Prophet Ibrahim and his love for God that enabled him to make the literary '*be-khatar kuud pada*' jump. Again a brief explanation to someone not familiar with the historical context would be impossible.

### **Culture:**

***Qaasid ko pahle humne be minnat kiya rawaan,  
Saaman e jumla aish faraaham kiya yahaan.  
Aahat pe kaan dar pe nazar thi ke naagahan,  
Aayi khabar wo paaon mein mehndi laga chukey..***

-Unknown

The '*paaon mein mehndi*' cultural reference is a difficult one to explain for those unfamiliar with the pre wedding rituals that spell doom for the unaware poet above eagerly awaiting the arrival of his beloved.

An aside here- the *Hyderabadi/Dakkani* dialect would be a huge added problem to any translator of course! Woe betide the poor translator if very common everyday words like '*parsun*' or '*chup*' or '*baingan*' are introduced by some mischievous poet in their *ashaar*! And worse if terms like '*kisi ke baap ka kya jaara*' which bizarrely may translate (or NOT) to 'who's father, what goes' are used!!

As seen above Urdu poetry presents several challenges for the translator. Another one that the translator faces, in common

with translators of poems of other languages, is the problem when translating the *ghazal*, of trying to maintain the rhythm / metre and the question whether rhyme should be preserved at all? While there can be different views I agree with James Ross (great translator of Persian poetry and translated Shaikh Sadi's poem *Gulistan* in English) - who said "A translation, to succeed, must not violate simplicity on the onehand, nor sink into tameness on the other; and for this purpose a prose translation, even of poetry, is preferable either to rhyme or blank verse". Satya Prabhakar, in his translation of the couplets remains faithful to the original text and conveys simple and elegant meaning of the couplets without venturing into rhyme or verse and thus fulfils Ross's dictum above. An example of this is where he translates Fani Badayuni's couplet (helpfully each translation of a couplet is followed by meanings of difficult / complex words so the reader has a chance to piece together in their own mind the *sher* in the best way):

***Suni hikayat-e-hasti to darmiyan se suni***

***Na ibtida ki khabar hai na inteha maaloom***

Heard the story of life but from the middle

Don't know how it started nor know where it will end

***hikayat:*** story, tale

***hasti:*** life, existence

***darmiyan:*** between

***khabar:*** news, information

***ibtida:*** beginning

***inteha:*** ending, finale

Another difficulty with translating Urdu poetry is the question about which gender to use. A few examples here may help in understanding why this may be a complex issue:

***kab yaad meñ terā saath nahīñ kab haat meñ terā haat nahīñ***

***sad-shukr ki apñī rātoñ meñ ab hijr kī koī raat nahīñ***

-Faiz

***na gul khile haiñ na un se mile na mai pī hai  
ajiib rañg meñ ab ke bahār guzrī hai***

- Faiz

In the 2 examples above it is fairly straightforward for the translator- the '*tera saath*' and '*tera haath*' can easily translate to 'you beside me' / 'your company' and 'your hand in mine'. However in Faraz's sher:

***shiddat-e-tishnagī meñ bhī ghairat-e-mai-kashī rahī  
us ne jo pher lī nazar maiñ ne bhī jaam rakh diyā***

The '*us ne jo pher li nazar*' is more complex- this could mean 'when she turned away' or 'when he turned away'- however the *saqi* traditionally refers to a female- so safe to use 'she' here#. One could use for support Frances W. Pritchett who in her introduction to translations of Ghalib's poetry states: 'Choosing a gender for the beloved is one of the worst ordeals, when you set out to translate ghazals into English. No matter what choice you make, it can't really be satisfactory. For the purposes of this commentary I have chosen to make the beloved female, whenever a choice must be made. One of the main reasons for this decision is practical convenience: since the lover and almost all other ghazal characters are male, making the beloved female means that she stands out.' This doesn't however quite help where the poet is female- like Parveen Shakir below:

***rasta bhī kaThin dhuup meñ shiddat bhī bahut thī  
saae se magar us ko mohabbat bhī bahut thī  
is tark-e-rifāqat pe pareshāñ to huuñ lekin  
ab tak ke tire saath pe hairat bhī bahut thī***

The '*saae se us ko mohabbat bhi bahut thi*' could translate to both he / she as: ' but (alas) he / she preferred to be in the shade'.

However again there is help from Frances W. Pritchett when she quotes Bekhud Mohani: 'In brief, only this much needs to be said (about gender references in the ghazal): that the beloved is the one whom the heart desires, and this is the basic principle. Many verses are such as to present praise of a male (beloved), and many are such as to present praise of a woman; and the largest number of verses are such that both man and woman can be used on appropriate occasions (as the beloved), and both aspects, human (*majāzī*) and divine (*haqīqī*) (love), can emerge. Thus it is that in Persian and Urdu poetry the beloved has been kept ambiguous (*mub'ham*), and ought indeed to be kept just so.'

An example of how Satya Prabhakar deals with the gender reference is in his translation of the following couplet, where the 'be-hijab' reference makes it less ambiguous:

***woh shab ko be-hijab jo mehfil mein aa gaya  
kyaa noor tha ki shama ko parvaana kar diya***

-Waheed Allahabadi

*when that evening she came, unveiled, to the gathering  
oh, what a glow... that turned the flame into a moth*

***shab:*** evening

***noor:*** light, luminescence;

***be-hijaab:*** without a veil

***shama:*** flame

***mehfil:*** gathering, assemblage

***parvaana:*** moth

Mr. Satya Prabhakar is a self confessed, self taught learner of urdu language and must be lauded for his enthusiasm and hard work as much for his artistry. As readers browse through the book they will be struck by his excellent selection of urdu couplets. The book itself is a literary fest which does well to highlight the work of Mir, Ghalib, Iqbal, Faiz, Faraz and also gives prominent place to a galaxy of the 'lesser known' poets. This is a great strength and a mark of Satya's vast reading of Urdu

Shaayri. He has successfully managed to convey the meaning of the couplets very clearly and in the process has effectively navigated all the above mentioned complexities in translation. I have mentioned the translator's work serving as a bridge between two languages- in addition, for the novice to Urdu poetry, I think this book will serve as a piton, a useful device to enable the reader to climb uphill and venture into the wonderful heights of Urdu poetry. For the more experienced, expert Urdu reader this book will be a wonderful one to surf through and delight at the many well remembered couplets, rediscover forgotten ones and learn new couplets to add to their own repertoire of Urdu Shaayri - to be able to use at appropriate times and improve the quality of their text and speech. Happy reading!

**Umair Ullah Khan**

United Kingdom, 2022

uukhan@yahoo.com



## UMAIR ULLAH KHAN

Umair Khan grew up in Hyderabad and is based in UK. He is a Paediatric critical care consultant in Scotland and teaches medical students at the University of Edinburgh. He has a keen interest in Urdu & English poetry and enjoys translating poems in both languages.

# URDU: A DELICIOUS PACKET OF INDIAN COOKIES

If Urdu were a packet of cookies sold in a grocery store anywhere in the world, its wrapper would say: "Product of India." And, oh, what a delicious, nutritious packet of cookies!

Urdu is as Indian as Hindi is. Or Bengali is.

Nearly 50% of the global population speaks one of the Indo-European family of languages of which the most popular are: English, Hindi-Urdu, Spanish, Bengali, French, Russian, Portuguese, German, Punjabi. (Persian and Sanskrit belong to this family too.)

Of the Indo-European languages, about 75% speak a language that belongs to the Indo-Iranian (Indo-Aryan) branch of languages: Hindi, Urdu, Bhojpuri, Bengali, Pashto, Kurdish, Balochi, Gujarati, Awadhi, and, of course, Sanskrit and Persian.

Sanskrit and Persian are the two oldest Indo-Aryan languages. The earliest form of Sanskrit, around 1500 BC, used in the Rig Veda, was first recorded in inscriptions found not on the plains of India but in what is now northern Syria. Mitanni kings of that era there had Sanskrit names: Purusa (man), Suvadanta (given by heaven). The first inscriptions of Persian are from 500 BC from what is today Iran. Both Sanskrit and Persian originated millennia ago, it seems, from the same geographical area of the world in the Middle-East.

Now, fast forward to the 12th century. Kariboli, also a member of the Indo-Aryan clutch, originated in Delhi and surrounding areas around that time within what is known as *Ganga-Jamuna tehzeeb* (culture), a poetic Awadhi phrase denoting the syncretic Hindu-Muslim culture, as reflected in the fused spiritual connotations, forms, symbols, and aesthetics. (Wiki)



Khariboli evolved into a more sophisticated Hindustani, gaining acceptance in the powerful royal courts along with Persian.

Khariboli, the mother, had two daughters, Hindi and Urdu, with two different fathers. Khariboli mated with Sanskrit to conceive Hindi; parallelly, it mated with Persian to produce Urdu. (Urdu, over time, also has absorbed words from Sanskrit and Arabic.)

Both Hindi and Urdu, like Bengali, were conceived and delivered in India. Interestingly, both the fathers -- Sanskrit and Persian -- originated a long, long time ago from the same geographical area of the world in the Middle-East.

The grammar, structure of Hindi and Urdu are identical, and so is about 75% of the vocabulary. 25% of Hindi are Sanskrit words and 25% of Urdu are Persian words\*. Urdu developed in military camps -- the word 'urdu' means a 'camp' -- when soldiers from different geographies lived and fought together.

Hence, Urdu is an Indian national treasure -- just like Telugu and Marathi are -- to be cherished and preserved, particularly for its most amazing poetry and the profound secular wisdom that Urdu poetry uniquely captures.

\* Vocabulary difference examples

| <b>English</b> | <b>Hindi</b> | <b>Urdu</b> |
|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| test           | pariksha     | intehaan    |
| sky            | aakash       | asmaan      |
| love           | pyaar        | ulfat       |
| difference     | bhed         | fark        |
| concern        | chinta       | fikr        |
| near           | paas         | nazdeek     |

# GHAZAL AND SHER: A FRIENDLY INTRODUCTION

A basic understanding of the structure of a *ghazal* and *sher* adds to the joy of Urdu poetry as it is the most popular form of Urdu poetry. (The following is drawn from various sources on the web and not based on any scholarly research done.)

- The history of a *ghazal* can be traced back to 7th-century Arabic poetry which evolved from *qasida*, an older pre-Islamic poetry, often written as a praise and a plea to the king.
- It then spread to and evolved into *ruba'i* in Persia (now Iran) to South Asia in the 12th century with the influence of Sufi mystics, growing into the current form of the hugely popular *ghazal*. The most popular being the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam (1048–1131 A.D.)
- The *ghazal* inherited the formal structure from the *qasida* which included adherence to a meter and complying with the *qaafiya*, the ending rhyme of each couplet. This structure A-A-B-A is explained below).
- A *ghazal* comprises between five to fifteen couplets or *shers*. What you get from or see, mostly, in *Alfaaz ki Mehfil* are these couplets drawn from larger *ghazals*.
- The structure for strict adherence is this: A-A-B-A (example below). The two lines of the first *sher* must end with the same word(s) and then the second line of every subsequent *sher*.
- The individual *shers* of a *ghazal* are independent but are connected, abstractly, to a unifying theme.

- This A-A-B-A structure of the *ghazal* has become popular in multiple Indian languages, including Gujarati, Bengali, Telugu and others.

Let us look at the first three *shers* of Allama Iqbal's immortal ghazal where ***kya hai*** is the refrain; English translation follows.

(1)

*khird-mandon se kya poochhun ki meri ibtida **kya hai**  
ki main is fikr mein rehta hoon meri inteha **kya hai***

What will I ask of the wise as to where I have come from  
My only concern is where I am going from here

(2)

*khudi ko kar buland itna ki har taqdeer se pehle  
khuda bande se khud poochhe bata teri raza **kya hai***

I make myself so strong that every turn of fate  
God himself asks of his child...tell me what is it that you want

(3)

*maqam-e-guftagu kya hai agar mein kimiya-gar hoon  
yahi soz-e-nafas hai aur meri kimiya **kya hai***

If I am an alchemist myself, how does it matter where I am  
I obsess in asking myself...what is unique about me

# KEY MOTIFS IN URDU POETRY

Urdu poetry is not what it seems on the surface. Our enjoyment will be highly limited if we only take the literal meaning of the words and fail to catch their symbolic significance. An understanding of the metaphors is essential to enjoying the *shers*.

Here is a short primer on a few oft-recurring motifs of Urdu poetry and their typical metaphorical import.

## ***mohabbat, ishq, tamanna, arzoo***

- *Mohabbat* (love) with its various synonyms – *ishq, ulfat, junoon, unsiyat, qurbat* ... so on – occupies a central role in Urdu poetry as the prime driver of all things great in life.
- To construe 'love' as just romantic love of a man for a woman, or vice-versa, would be silly and highly limiting. Love is for all things around us... people, skills, tasks, activities, even things. Anything that can make the heart sing.
- Without love, joy doesn't exist. Without love, there is no quality in the work we do. Without love, life is effete, meaningless. It is the elixir of all existence. It is the power that propels us forward. It is what causes pain and also what helps us endure it. Love ennobles. It completes us.
- This has a rough parallel to the Zen principle of identifying and becoming one with what we do such that the line between the object and subject is erased. As Robert Pirsig, author of *Zen in the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, implies: Love leads to caring.

*Caring leads to quality. Quality is Buddha.*

- Love is filled with trials and tribulations but also with its share of triumphs. It is endless. Often unrequited and the object of love unattainable.
- *tamanna* or *arzoo* is the desire, borne of *mohabbat*, to attain the object of affection.

### ***aashiq, yaar, qaatil, qatl, koo-e-yaar***

- An *aashiq* is a lover. The literal meaning is one who is in love with another person. But again, that is a highly constraining interpretation.
- A broader interpretation is one who approaches everything with a sense of tenderness and affection. An *aashiq* has the earnest, ardent, eager mind of a child. For an *aashiq*, life is full of possibilities and endless wishes and things to do. Warren Buffet who said he tap dances to work and wants to retire five years after he dies, is surely an *aashiq*.
- The beloved is often referred to as *yaar*.
- *Qaatil* (assassin) is, ironically, the beloved, the one who kills the *aashiq* with her looks, her indifference, her separation (*hijr*), and, sometimes, with the union (*vasl*).
- *Qatl* is assassination, the killing; that's correct, this is what a *qaatil* does to an *aashiq*.
- *Koo-e-yaar* (lane of the beloved) is the company of the beloved or object of affection.

### ***maikhana, mai, saaqi***

- The *maikhana* (tavern, bar) is a place where the *shaayar* (poet) goes to be transported to a state of ecstasy and blissfulness, blunting the tyranny of rationality, even if briefly. A haven where he can think for himself. Think different.

- The *maikhana* sometimes is used as a metaphor for the world itself.
- The enjoyment of *maikhana* and *mai* (wine) are also seen as ways to thumb the nose at the religious priests who cite drinking as *haraam* (prohibited).
- The *saaqi* (bartender) is the 'presiding deity of this temple of intoxicatedness' and who serves the *mai*. For the poet, *saaqi* is one who listens to his aspirations, agonies and aphorisms patiently with empathy. Symbolically, often, *saaqi* also refers to the beloved or the divine. A life-giver, a *saaqi* offers solace, doles out gifts.

### ***aaina, aks***

- *Aaina* (mirror) is the mind's eye, metaphorically, in which we can see ourselves, observe and reflect.
- *Aks* (reflection) is of ourselves as we observe ourselves.

### ***chaman, gulzar, gul, viraana, baghbaan, bahaar, barsaat***

- *Chaman* or *gulzar* (garden) is life itself or a community.
- *Gul* (flower) is the beloved.
- *Viraana* (wasteland) symbolizes hopelessness, loneliness, and despondence in life.
- *Bahaar* (spring) is rejuvenation, revival of hope, and the arrival of *mohabbat*.
- *Baghbaan* (gardener) is used to refer to one who nurtures, helps growth.
- *Barsaat* (rain) is used to refer to something good happening.

### ***mehfil, shama, parvaana***

- Mehfil (gathering, party) refers to life itself and the world.
- Shama (candle) symbolizes the beloved, a *junoon* (passion).
- Parvaana (moth) is usually the *aashiq* who is helplessly drawn, yes, to the *shama*. *Parvaana* is typically a *deewana* (innocent, stupid, helpless) who sacrifices for the sake of his love.

### ***hijr, vasl***

- *Hijr* (separation): referring to growing apart from the object of affection.
- *Vasl* (union) referring to attaining the goal, joining with the beloved.

### ***safar, manzil, qaafile, karwaan, humsafar***

- Safar (journey) is the journey of life itself, often long and endless.
- Manzil (destination) is the union with the beloved, the achievement of the goal, often portrayed as an unachievable mirage.
- *Qaafile, karwaan* (caravan) is the society, the community in whose company we go through life.
- *Humsafar* (fellow traveler) is our companion in life.

### ***zaahid, waeez, mullah***

- The typical *shaayar* (poet) is a rebel, a free thinker, struggling with life surely, given to enjoying a drink now and then, and always fighting with religious orthodoxy and its suffocating constraints and edicts.



- The words *zaahid* (pious person), *waiz* (preacher), and *mullah* (priestly scholar) are often used as symbols of religious authoritarianism.

***mahtaab, falak, sitaare***

- *mahtaab* (moon) is often compared to or is the beloved
- *falak* (sky) is the universe, life, world, and the unknown
- *sitaare* (stars) is sometimes use to reflect our aspirations

# TAKHALLUS

One of the interesting devices of a *ghazal* is *takhallus*. *Takhallus* is somewhat like the pen name of the poet, but not exactly.

It is a self-reference used by the poet to address herself / himself in the last *sher* of the *ghazal* called the **maqta**. (The first *sher* of the *ghazal* is called the **matla**.)

Some example *takhallus*:

**Ghalib** - Mirza Asadullah Khan

**Firaq** - Raghupati Sahay

**Zafar** - Bahadur Shah II

**Mir** - Mir Taqi Mir

**Shakir** - Ganpat Rai

Let us take the **matla** (first *sher*) and **maqta** (last *sher*) of the famous *ghazal* of Mirza 'Ghalib':

## **matla**

*dil-e-nadaan tujhe hua kya hai*

*akhir is dard ki dava kya hai*

o my foolish heart. what has happened to you  
alas, what medicine for this pain

## **maqta**

*maine maana ki kuch nahi 'ghalib'*

*muft haath aaye to bura kya hai*

i agree 'ghalib' is worthless  
but what's the harm if you get him for free?

***justuju jis ki thi  
us ko to na paaya hum ne***

***is bahaane se magar  
dekh li duniya hum ne***

what i was looking for  
i could not get

with this as excuse, however,  
i got to see the world

## **Shahryar**

1936 - 2012, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh

1987 - Sahitya Akademi Award

2008 - Jnanpith Award

**justuju**

search, quest

**paaya**

to gain, to secure

**bahaana**

excuse

***ankh bhar aayi***

***kisi se jo mulaqaat hui***

***khushk mausam tha***

***magar tuut ke barsaat hui***

eyes welled with the  
reunion of the loved one

after a long season of drought  
the sky broke to rain down

### **Manzar Bhopali**

1959, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

**mulaqaat**

meeting

**khushk**

dry, drought

**mausam**

season

**tuut**

heavy

**barsaat**

rain

***nigah buland sukhan dilnawaz  
jaan pur soz***

***yahee hai rakht-e-safar  
mir-e-karwan ke liye***

lofty vision, heart-warming speech  
soul on fire

this is all that is needed  
from the leader of the caravan

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Pakistan

|                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>nigah</b>         | vision                |
| <b>buland</b>        | tall, lofty           |
| <b>sukhan</b>        | speech                |
| <b>dilnawaz</b>      | attractive            |
| <b>soz</b>           | burning, passion      |
| <b>rakht-e-safar</b> | needed for travel     |
| <b>mir-e-karwan</b>  | leader of the caravan |

***itni shiddat se maine tumhe  
paane ki koshish ki hai***

***ki har zarre ne mujhe tumse  
milaane ki saazish ki hai***

with so much dedication  
did i strive and struggle to win you  
that every atom of the universe  
conspired to help me achieve it

### **Mayur Puri**

1974, Ajmer, Rajasthan

|                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| <b>shiddat</b> | dedication, devotion |
| <b>paane</b>   | to get               |
| <b>koshish</b> | attempt, effort      |
| <b>zarre</b>   | particle, atom       |
| <b>saazish</b> | conspiracy           |

***na humsafar***

***na kisi humnasheen se niklega***

***hamaare paanv kaa kaanta***

***hamein se niklega***

neither our companions nor  
our dear friends can help

the thorns in our feet  
we got to take them out ourselves

## **Rahat Indori**

1950 - 2020, Indore, Madhya Pradesh

|                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| <b>humsafar</b>   | travel companion |
| <b>humnasheen</b> | dear friend      |
| <b>paanv</b>      | feet             |
| <b>kaanta</b>     | thorn            |

***chal saath ki hasrat  
dil-e-marhoom se nikle***

***aashiq ka janaaza hai  
zara dhoom se nikle***

let's walk along...as wishes  
spring from the heart of the dead

it's a lover's funeral procession  
let it be with pomp and celebration

### **Fidvi Lahori**

1729 - 1780, Lahore, Pakistan

|                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| <b>hasrat</b>  | wish, desire         |
| <b>marhoom</b> | dead                 |
| <b>aashiq</b>  | lover                |
| <b>janaaza</b> | funeral procession   |
| <b>dhoom</b>   | blast, noise, uproar |



***mohabbat karne vaale  
kum na honge***

***teri mehfil mein lekin  
hum na honge***

there will be no shortage  
of those that love you  
but in your celebration  
alas, i won't be there

**Hafeez Hoshiarpuri**

1912 - 1973, Hoshiarpur, Punjab

**mehfil**

gathering, celebration

***agar baazi ishq ki baazi hai  
jo chaho lagado dar kaisa***

***agar jeet gaye to kya kahna  
haaray bhi to baazi maat nahi***

if the gamble is of love  
bet what you want, why fear

if you win, nothing like it  
even if you lose, it is not a loss

### **Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911 - 1984, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

1962 - Lenin Peace Prize

1984 - Nobel Prize nomination

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| <b>baazi</b>  | gamble       |
| <b>ishq</b>   | love         |
| <b>haaray</b> | defeated     |
| <b>jeet</b>   | win, victory |

***zindagi gul hai***

***naghma hai, mahtab hai***

***zindagi ko faqat***

***imtihaan mat samajh***

life is beautiful  
with melodies and moons

don't think life is just  
trials and troubles

## **Mohsin Bhopali**

1932 - 2007, Karachi, Pakistan

**naghma**

melody

**mahtab**

moon

**faqat**

only, simply

**imtihaan**

trials, tests

***ham ko bharam ne  
bahr-e-tavahhum bana diya  
dariya samajh ke kuud pade  
hum saraab mein***

doubt has turned me into  
an ocean of superstition  
thinking it is a river,  
i jumped headlong into a mirage

**Jawahar Nath Saqi**

1864 - 1916, Delhi

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>bharam</b>   | doubt            |
| <b>bahr</b>     | body of water    |
| <b>tavahhum</b> | superstition     |
| <b>dariya</b>   | river            |
| <b>saraab</b>   | mirage, illusion |

***zindagi yun hui***

***basar tanha***

***qaafila saath***

***aur safar tanha***

life has transpired  
as a lonely vision

moving with the caravan  
but traveling alone

## **Gulzar**

1934, Dina, Pakistan

2002 - Sahitya Akademi Award

2004 - Padma Bhushan

**basar**

basar

**tanha**

tanha

**qafila**

qafila

**safar**

safar

***andar ki duniya se  
rabt badhao 'aanis'***

***baahar khulne vaali  
khidki band padi hai***

build a closer bond  
with the world within, aanis,  
to the world outside  
the window is closed shut

### **Aanis Moin**

1960 - 1986, Multan, Pakistan

|               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| <b>rabt</b>   | bond, contact |
| <b>badhao</b> | increase      |
| <b>khidki</b> | window        |

***kis se shikwa karen  
veeraane-e-hasti ka, 'hayat'***

***ham ne khud apni  
tamannaon ko jeene na diya***

to whom will i complain, hayat,  
about this life of desolation

i myself did not let my  
aspirations live and thrive

### **Masooda Hayat**

1956, Ayodhya

|                 |                              |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>shikwa</b>   | complaint                    |
| <b>veeraane</b> | desolation, deserted, lonely |
| <b>hasti</b>    | existence, life              |
| <b>khud</b>     | myself                       |
| <b>tamanna</b>  | desire, wish, aspiration     |

***main akela hi chala tha  
janib-e-manzil magar***

***log saath aate gaye  
aur karwan banta gaya***

i started alone  
towards the destination  
people kept joining  
a caravan started forming

### **Majrooh Sultanpuri**

1919 - 2000, Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh

1993 - Dada Saheb Phalke Award

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| <b>akela</b>  | alone       |
| <b>janib</b>  | towards     |
| <b>manzil</b> | destination |
| <b>karwan</b> | caravan     |



***jaan leni thi  
saaf saaf keh dete***

***zaroorat kya thi  
muskurane ki***

if the wish is to take my life  
could have said so plainly

where was the need  
to smile

### **Anonymous**

|                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| <b>jaan</b>      | life            |
| <b>saaf saaf</b> | simply, plainly |
| <b>zaroorat</b>  | needs           |
| <b>muskurane</b> | mile            |

***jise anjaam  
tum samajhti ho***

***ibtidaa hai  
kisi kahaani ki***

that which you think  
is the ending

is perhaps the start  
of another story

**Sarvat Husain**

1949 - 1996, Karachi, Pakistan

**anjaam**

ending

**ibtidaa**

beginning

***aashiqi se  
milegaa, aye zaahid***

***bandagi se  
khuda nahin milta***

through love,  
you will find, o priest

through worship,  
you won't find God

## **Daagh Dehlvi**

1831 - 1905, Delhi

**aashiqi**

love

**zaahid**

priest, pious person

**bandagi**

worship

***maana ki teri deed ke  
kaabil naheen hoon main***

***tu mera shauq dekh  
mera intezar dekh***

understand I am not  
worthy of your attention

but look at my zeal  
and at my patience

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Pakistan

**maana**

agree, conceded

**kaabil**

worthy

**shauq**

enthusiasm, passion

**intezar**

wait

***be-takalluf woh  
auron se hai***

***naaz uthane ko  
hum rah gaye***

she is friendly  
with all others

only i am left  
to bear her whims and airs

### **Fana Nizami Kanpuri**

1922 – 1988, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh

**be-takalluf**

without formality

**auron**

others

**naaz uthana**

to bear with airs, indulge

***hazaaron khwahishen aisi ki  
har khwahish pe dum nikle***

***bahut nikle mere armaan  
lekin phir bhi kam nikle***

thousands of aspirations  
each would consume a life

many desires came true  
but still just not enough

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>khwahish</b> | aspiration, wish |
| <b>dum</b>      | breath, life     |
| <b>armaan</b>   | wish, hope       |
| <b>kam</b>      | less             |

***umr-e-daraaz maang ke  
laaye they chaar din***

***do aarzoo mein kat gaye  
do intezaar mein***

from this long life, I  
got myself four days

two spent in wanting,  
and two in waiting

**Bahadur Shah Zafar** (Last Mughal Emperor)  
1775 - 1862, Delhi

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| <b>umr</b>      | life    |
| <b>daraaz</b>   | long    |
| <b>maang</b>    | seek    |
| <b>arzoo</b>    | desire  |
| <b>kat gaye</b> | spent   |
| <b>intezar</b>  | waiting |

***maazi-e-marhoom ki  
naakaamiyon ka zikr chhod***

***zindagi ki fursat-e-baaqi  
se koi kaam le***

don't anguish about  
the failures of the dead past

make something useful  
of the time that's left

### **Seemab Akbarabadi**

1880 - 1951, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>maazi</b>       | past            |
| <b>marhoom</b>     | dead            |
| <b>naakaamiyan</b> | failure         |
| <b>fursat</b>      | leisure, time   |
| <b>baaqi</b>       | remainder, left |



***yeh na thi hamari qismat ke  
visaal-e-yaar hota***

***agar aur jeete rehte  
yahi intezaar hota***

it wasn't in my fate  
to be with my beloved

had i lived longer, i would  
only have waited in vain

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

**qismat**

fate, destiny

**visaal-e-yaar**

union with the beloved

**jeete**

living

**intezaar**

waiting

***nishaan-e-mard-e-momin***

***ba too goyam***

***choon marg aayad***

***tabassum bar lab-e-ost***

what is the sign  
of a man of faith?

when death comes,  
has a smile on his lips

**Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Pakistan

**nishaan**

sign

**mard**

man

**momin**

believer

**tabassum**

smile

**lab**

lips

***jaanta hai ki  
woh na aayenge***

***phir bhi  
masroof-e-intezaar hai dil***

i know  
she will not come  
  
but yet,  
my heart is busy waiting

### **Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911 - 1984, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

1962 - Lenin Peace Prize

1984 - Nobel Prize nomination

**masroof  
intezaar**

busy  
waiting

***manzil milegi***

***bhatak kar hi sahi***

***gumrah to wo hain***

***jo ghar se nikle hi nahi***

destination will be reached  
even if we stray a while

truly lost are the ones who  
don't even come out of home

### **Anonymous**

**manzil**

destination

**gumrah**

lost

**bhatak**

stray, meander

**nikle**

emerge, come out

***dekh zindan se pare  
rang-e-chaman, josh-e-bahaar***

***raqs karna hai to phir  
paon ki zanjeer na dekh***

look beyond the prison walls, at the  
colors of the garden, the joy of spring

if you wish to dance, don't look  
at the shackles on your feet

### **Majrooh Sultanpuri**

1919 - 2000, Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh

1993 - Dada Saheb Phalke Award

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| <b>zindan</b>  | prison  |
| <b>chaman</b>  | garden  |
| <b>bahaar</b>  | spring  |
| <b>raqs</b>    | dances  |
| <b>zanjeer</b> | hackles |

***mausam-e-abr ho***

***suboo bhi ho***

***gul ho, gulshan ho***

***aur tu bhi ho***

the season of clouds  
a flask of wine too

the rose, the garden  
and you too

### **Meer Taqi Meer**

1722 - 1810, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

**mausam**

season

**abr**

cloud

**suboo**

flask, glass, pitcher

**gulshan**

garden

***musafir hi musafir***

***har taraf hain***

***magar har shakhs***

***tanha ja raha hai***

travelers all around  
travelers everywhere

but each of them  
traveling alone

**Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi**

1916 - 2006, Lahore, Pakistan

**musafir**

traveler

**shakhs**

individual, person

**tanha**

alone

***khudi ka raazdaan ho kar***

***khudi ki daastan ho jaa***

***jahaan se kya gharaz tujh ko***

***tuu aap apnaa jahaan ho jaa***

by being your own confidant  
you become your own story

why so obsessed with this world  
you become your own universe

## **Arsh Malsiyani**

1908 - 1979, Jalandhar, Punjab

**raazdaan**

confidant

**daastan**

story

**jahaan**

universe

**gharaaz**

desire, wish



***hasrat ye us  
musaafir-e-bekas ke roye  
jo thak ke baith jaata  
ho manzil ke saamne***

hope we shed some tears  
for that helpless traveler  
who sits tired by the road  
with his destination in sight

**Mushafi Ghulam Hamdani**

1747 - 1823, Amroha, Uttar Pradesh

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>hasrat</b>   | desire, wish            |
| <b>musaafir</b> | traveler                |
| <b>bekas</b>    | hardship, toil, trouble |
| <b>manzil</b>   | destination             |
| <b>saamne</b>   | near                    |

***woh dil-nawaz hai, lekin  
nazar-shanas nahi***

***mera ilaaj mere charagar  
ke paas nain***

my beloved is caring  
but not discerning

the cure for my ailment  
my healer doesn't have

### **Nasir Kazmi**

1925 - 1972, Ambala, Haryana

|                     |                            |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>dil-nawaz</b>    | caring, considerate        |
| <b>nazar-shanas</b> | discerning, discriminating |
| <b>ilaaj</b>        | treatment                  |
| <b>charagar</b>     | doctor, healer             |

***ab ke ham bichhde to shaayad  
kabhi khwabon mein milen***

***jis tarah sukhe hue phool  
kitabon mein milen***

as we part ways now, perhaps  
we may meet again in our dreams

just as we find dried flowers  
within the pages of an old book

### **Ahmed Faraz**

1931 - 2008, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
2005 - Sitara-i-Imtiaz

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| <b>bichhde</b>  | disperse, part way |
| <b>shaayad</b>  | perhaps, may be    |
| <b>khwaabon</b> | dreams             |
| <b>sukhe</b>    | dried              |
| <b>phool</b>    | flower             |
| <b>kitabon</b>  | books              |

***kuch iss tarah se  
guzri hai zindagi jaise***

***tamaam umr kisi  
doosre ke ghar mein raha***

in this way  
life has passed  
  
all the years  
i lived in someone else's home

**Ahmed Faraz**

1931 - 2008, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
2005 - Sitara-i-Imtiaz

|               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| <b>guzri</b>  | spent, passed |
| <b>tamaam</b> | entire, all   |
| <b>umr</b>    | age, years    |

***kisi manzil mein bhi  
haasil na hua dil ko qaraar  
zindagi khwahish-e-nakaam  
hi karte guzri***

with no achievement in life did  
my heart capture peace  
my life was spent through a  
series of unrequited desires

## **Qaisar Shameem**

1936 - 2021, Hooghly, West Bengal

|                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>manzil</b>   | destination |
| <b>daastaan</b> | story       |
| <b>haasil</b>   | achieve     |
| <b>qaraar</b>   | peace       |
| <b>khwahish</b> | desire      |

***uske chehre ki chamak  
ke saamne saada laga***

***aasmaan pe chaand pura tha  
magar aadha laga***

it seemed so plain  
against the sparkle on her face  
the moon was full in the sky  
but it appeared to be half

### **Iftikhar Naseem**

1946 - 2011, Lyallpur, Faisalabad, Pakistan

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| <b>chehre</b>  | face        |
| <b>chamak</b>  | sparkle     |
| <b>saamne</b>  | in front of |
| <b>aasmaan</b> | sky         |
| <b>chanda</b>  | moon        |
| <b>adha</b>    | half        |

***aaj dekha hai tujh ko  
der ke baad***

***aaj ka din guzar  
na jaye kahin***

have seen you  
after so long

hope the day  
doesn't end

**Nasir Kazmi**

1925 - 1972, Ambala, Haryana

**guzar**

**pass**

***gham aur khushi mein  
fark na mehsoos ho jahan***

***main dil ko us mukaam  
pe laata chala gaya***

where the difference between  
joy and sorrow is not felt

i kept taking my heart to  
that place again and again

### **Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921 - 1980, Ludhiana, Punjab

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

|                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>fark</b>    | difference          |
| <b>mehsoos</b> | feeling, experience |
| <b>makaam</b>  | place               |
| <b>laata</b>   | bring               |



***justajoo ho to safar  
khatam kahan hota hai***

***yoon to har mod pe  
manzil ka gumaan hota hai***

for the seeker  
the journey never ends  
though at every turn  
the delusion of destination

## **Ghulam Rabbani Taban**

1914-1993, Farukhabad, Uttar Pradesh

|                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>justajoo</b> | quest       |
| <b>safar</b>    | journey     |
| <b>manzil</b>   | destination |
| <b>gumaan</b>   | suspicion   |

***zulmaton mein roshni ki  
justuju karte raho***

***zindagi bhar zindagi ki  
justuju karte raho***

in deep darkness,  
keep looking for light

all through life,  
keep looking for life

**Anwar Sabri**

1901 - 1985, Delhi

**zulmaton**  
**roshni**  
**justuju**

darkness  
brightness  
search

***zamane mein aaye hai to  
jeene ka hunar rakhna***

***dushmanon se koi khatra nahi  
bas apne par nazar rakhna***

having arrived in this world  
figure out the art of living

there is no danger from enemies  
just keep a watch on yourself

**Rajinder Manchanda Bani**

1932–1981, Multan, Pakistan

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| <b>hunar</b>  | art, skill |
| <b>khatra</b> | danger     |
| <b>nazar</b>  | sight      |

***akele to hum***

***pehle hi jee rahe the***

***kyu tanha se ho gaye hum***

***tere jaane ke baad***

I was living by myself  
even earlier

why am I now lonely,  
after you left?

**Anonymous**

**akele**  
**tanha**

by oneself  
loneliness

***main apne saath  
rehta hoon hamesha***

***akela huun magar  
tanha nahi hoon***

i always  
keep myself company

i am by myself  
but am never alone

### **Anonymous**

**hamesha**

always

**akela**

by oneself, single

**tanha**

alone, lonely

***sau baar band-e-ishq se  
aazaad hum huye***

***par kya karen ki  
dil hi aduu hai faraagh ka***

a hundred times, i have  
broken free from the bonds of love  
but what can i do...  
for my heart is freedom's enemy

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

**band-e-ishq**

bond of love

**aazaad**

free

**aduu**

enemy

**faraagh**

freedom, leisure

***hum dard ka afsaana  
duniya ko suna denge***

***har dil mein mohabbat ki  
ek aag laga denge***

I will make the world  
hear the tales of woe  
  
in every heart i will  
light a fire of love

**Shakeel Badayuni**

1916 - 1970, Badayun, Uttar Pradesh

*(when asked the purpose of his poetry)*

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| <b>dard</b>     | pain  |
| <b>afsaana</b>  | story |
| <b>duniya</b>   | world |
| <b>mohabbat</b> | love  |
| <b>aag</b>      | fire  |

***dil ki viraani ka  
kya mazkur hai***

***ye nagar sau martaba  
luta gaya***

of this heart's desolation  
what's there to say  
a hundred times has  
this city been plundered

**Mir Taqi Mir**

1722 - 1810, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| <b>viraane</b>   | desolation |
| <b>mazkur</b>    | mention    |
| <b>martaba</b>   | times      |
| <b>luta gaya</b> | plundered  |



***mere junoon ka nateeja  
zaroor niklega***

***isi siyah samundar se  
noor niklega***

the results of my passion  
will surely emerge

glowing light will spring from  
the depths of the dark ocean

## **Ameer Qazalbash**

1943 - 2003, Delhi

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>junoon</b>   | passion         |
| <b>nateeja</b>  | result, outcome |
| <b>zaroor</b>   | surely          |
| <b>niklega</b>  | emerge          |
| <b>siyah</b>    | dark            |
| <b>samundar</b> | ocean           |
| <b>noor</b>     | light           |

***sunī hikayat-e-hastī  
to darmiyan se sunī***

***na ibtida ki khabar hai  
na inteha maaloom***

heard the story of life  
but from the middle

don't know how it started  
nor know where it will end

### **Fani Badayuni**

1879 - 1941, Badayun, Uttar Pradesh

|                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>hikayat</b>  | story, tale       |
| <b>hastī</b>    | life, existence   |
| <b>darmiyan</b> | between           |
| <b>khabar</b>   | news, information |
| <b>ibtida</b>   | beginning         |
| <b>inteha</b>   | ending, finale    |

***tu sirf dashna-e-nafrat  
hi laharaata raha***

***tu ne kabhi dushman se  
lipat kar nahi dekha***

you have only been waving  
this dagger of hate

you haven't tried ever  
embracing your enemy

### **Ahmed Faraz**

1931 - 2008, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
2005 - Sitara-i-Imtiaz

|                  |         |
|------------------|---------|
| <b>sirf</b>      | only    |
| <b>dashna</b>    | dagger  |
| <b>nafrat</b>    | hate    |
| <b>dushman</b>   | enemy   |
| <b>lipat kar</b> | embrace |

***yahaan har shakhs har pal  
hadsa hone se darta hai***

***khilona hai jo mitti ka  
fana hone se darta hai***

everyone here is always  
fearful of a calamity happenin

all of them toys... always  
fearful of becoming dirt

### **Rajesh Reddy**

1952, Nagpur, Maharashtra

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>shakhs</b>  | person             |
| <b>hadsa</b>   | accident, calamity |
| <b>darta</b>   | fearful            |
| <b>khilona</b> | toy (made of clay) |
| <b>mitti</b>   | dirt, clay, earth  |
| <b>fana</b>    | sacrifice          |

***dil na-umeed to nahi***

***nakaam hi to hai***

***lambi hai gham ki shaam***

***magar shaam hi to hai***

the heart is not hopeless  
just not sorted for now

long is the night of sorrow  
yet, it is just a night (that'll pass)

### **Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911 - 1984, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

1962 - Lenin Peace Prize

1984 - Nobel Prize nomination

**na-umeed**

without hope

**nakaam**

without success

**lambi**

long

**gham**

sorrow

**magar**

yet

***is se pehle ki  
log pehchane***

***khud ko pehchan  
lo to behtar hai***

before others  
figure you out

better you  
figure yourself out

**Raghubeer Saran Divakar Rahi**

1914 - 1968, Rampur, Uttar Pradesh

|                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| <b>pehle</b>    | before               |
| <b>log</b>      | people               |
| <b>pehchane</b> | identify, figure out |
| <b>khud</b>     | yourself             |
| <b>behtar</b>   | better               |

***woh shab ko be-hijab  
jo mehfil mein aa gaye***

***kyaa noor tha ki  
shama ko parvaana kar diya***

when that evening she came,  
unveiled, to the gathering

oh, what a glow...  
that turned the flame into a moth

### **Waheed Allahabadi**

1829 - 1892, Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh

|                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>shab</b>      | evening               |
| <b>be-hijaab</b> | without a veil        |
| <b>mehfil</b>    | gathering, assemblage |
| <b>noor</b>      | light, luminescence   |
| <b>shama</b>     | flame                 |
| <b>parvaana</b>  | moth                  |

***aane waali naslein  
tum par fakhr karengi humasron***

***jab bhi unko dhyan ayega  
tum ne firaq ko dekha hai***

generations to come will  
proud of you, my contemporaries  
when they come to know  
that you have seen firaq

### **Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896 - 1982, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

1960 - Sahitya Academy Award | 1968 - Jnanpith Award

1997 - Commemorative Stamp by India

**naslein**

generations

**fakhr**

proud

**humasron**

contemporaries



***waqt ne kiya  
kya haseen sitam***

***tum rahe na tum  
hum rahe na hum***

what a beautiful tragedy  
time has produced

you have not remained the same  
nor have i remained myself

### **Kaifi Azmi**

1918 - 2002, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh

|               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>waqt</b>   | time              |
| <b>haseen</b> | beautiful         |
| <b>sitam</b>  | tragedy, disaster |
| <b>rahe</b>   | remain            |

***na jaane kis ki hamein  
umr bhar talaash rahi***

***jise qareeb se dekha  
woh doosra nikla***

that which i sought  
my entire life

when i saw it up close  
turned out to be quite different

### **Khaleel-ur-Rahman Azmi**

1927 - 1978, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh

**umr bhar**  
**talaash**  
**qareeb**  
**doosra**  
**nikla**

life long  
search, quest  
close  
other, something else  
turned out, came out

***khud se***

***guzre to***

***qayamat se***

***guzar jayenge hum***

if i can get  
through myself

i can get through  
any calamity

**Meer Ahmad Naved**

1955, Multan, Pakistan

**khud**

myself

**guzre**

pass, go

**qayamat**

disaster, calamity

***mere taaviz mein***

***jo kaaghaz hai***

***us pe likha hai***

***mohabbat karna***

on the piece of paper  
in my lucky amulet

it is written...  
just love

**Swappnil Tiwari**

1984, Mumbai, Maharashtra

**taaviz**

amulet worn for luck

**kaaghaz**

paper

**likha**

written

**mohabbat**

love

***awaazon ki bheed mein  
itne shor-sharaabe mein  
apni bhi ik raae rakhna  
kitna mushkil hai***

in this crowding of voices  
amid all this tumult and furor  
to listen to your own voice  
how hard it is

**Naseem Sahar**

1944, Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan

|                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| <b>awaaz</b>   | voice                |
| <b>bheed</b>   | crowd                |
| <b>shor</b>    | noise, clamor        |
| <b>mushkil</b> | difficulty, hardship |

***itna to bata jao  
khafa hone se pahle***

***vo kya karen jo tum se  
khafa ho nahin sakte***

please, at least tell us this  
before you get angry

what do those people do  
who can't get angry with you?

### **Asad Bhopali**

1921 - 1990, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| <b>bata</b>  | Speak, tell  |
| <b>khafa</b> | anger, upset |
| <b>pahle</b> | before       |
| <b>karen</b> | do           |

***gham mujhe, hasrat mujhe  
vahshat mujhe, saudaa mujhe***

***ek dil de kar khuda ne  
de diya kya kya mujhe***

sorrow, unfulfilled desires  
craziness, passion, and frenzy

by giving me a heart, o god,  
what all have you set me up with?

### **Simab Akbarabadi**

1882 - 1951, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>gham</b>    | sorrow             |
| <b>hasrat</b>  | unmet desires      |
| <b>vahshat</b> | craziness, madness |
| <b>saudaa</b>  | frenzy             |
| <b>khuda</b>   | god                |

***rau mein hai rakhsh-e-umr  
kahaan dekhiye thame***

***naey haath baag par hai  
na paa hai rikaab mein***

this horse of life is galloping away  
not knowing where it will stop

the reins not in my hand  
nor my feet in the stirrup

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| <b>rau</b>          | gallop, rhythm |
| <b>rakhsh-e-umr</b> | horse of life  |
| <b>thame</b>        | stay, stop     |
| <b>baag</b>         | reins          |
| <b>paa</b>          | feet           |
| <b>rikaab</b>       | stirrup        |



***phenk de***

***khushk phool yaadon ke***

***zid na kar***

***tu bhi bewafa ho ja***

throw away

the dry flowers of memories

don't be stubborn

you be unfaithful too

**Tauqeer Taqi**

1981, Karachi, Pakistan

**phenk**

throw

**khushk**

dry

**phool**

flowers

**zid**

obstinate, stubborn

**bewafa**

unfaithful

***sun ke saari  
daastaan-e-ranj-o-gham***

***kah diya us ne ki  
phir hum kya karen***

after listening to my entire  
story of sorrow and despair

she said  
well, what can i do?

## **Bekhud Dehlvi**

1863 - 1955, Bharatpur, Rajasthan

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>saari</b>    | entire, all of |
| <b>daastaan</b> | story, tale    |
| <b>ranj</b>     | grief, hurt    |
| <b>gham</b>     | sorrow         |

***kya kahen aur  
dil ke baare mein***

***hum mulaazim hain  
is idaara mein***

what else can i say  
about the heart

i am just an employee  
in this organization

**Kashif Husain Ghair**

1979, Karachi, Pakistan

**mulaazim**  
**idaara**

worker, employee  
institution, organization

***kitni deewarein uthi hain  
ek ghar ke darmiyan***

***ghar kahin gum ho gaya  
deewar-o-dar ke darmiyan***

how many walls have arisen  
within a home

the home is now lost somewhere  
within these walls and doors

### **Makhmoor Saeedi**

1938 - 2010, Tonk, Rajasthan

|                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| <b>deewarein</b>    | walls                  |
| <b>uthi</b>         | rise                   |
| <b>ghar</b>         | home, house            |
| <b>darmiyan</b>     | amid, between, betwixt |
| <b>gum</b>          | lost                   |
| <b>deewar-o-dar</b> | walls and doors        |

***qaasid, payaam unka  
na kuchh der abhi suna***

***rahne de  
mahv-e-lazzat-e-zauq-e-khabar mujhe***

oh messenger, do not yet  
read me the note she sent

let me for a moment be immersed  
in the joy that she wrote to me

### **Asar Lakhnavi**

1885 - 1967, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

1962 - Padma Bhushan

|               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| <b>qaasid</b> | messenger, courier  |
| <b>payaam</b> | message             |
| <b>mahv</b>   | absorbed, charmed   |
| <b>lazzat</b> | pleasure, joy       |
| <b>zauq</b>   | expert, connoisseur |
| <b>khabar</b> | news, message       |

***mujhe khabar thi mera  
intezaar ghar mein raha***

***ye haadsa tha ki main  
umr bhar safar mein raha***

i knew that those at home  
were waiting for me

the misfortune was that i spent  
my whole life out traveling

### **Saqi Faruqi**

1936 - 2018, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>khabar</b>   | message, news |
| <b>intezaar</b> | wait          |
| <b>haadsa</b>   | misfortune    |
| <b>umr</b>      | life          |
| <b>safar</b>    | journey       |

***ghazal mein bandish-e-alfaaz  
hi nahin sab kuchh***

***jigar ka khoon bhi kuch  
chaahiye asar ke liye***

just a string of words is  
not enough to make a poem

you also need a drop  
of your heart's blood for it to last

### **Anonymous**

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| <b>ghazal</b>  | poem           |
| <b>bandish</b> | stringing      |
| <b>alfaaz</b>  | words          |
| <b>jigar</b>   | heart          |
| <b>khooon</b>  | blood          |
| <b>asar</b>    | effect, impact |

***dekh***

***raftaar-e-inquilab 'firaq'***

***kitni aahista***

***aur kitni tez***

watch

the pace of revolution, firaq

how deliberate

and, yet, how swift

## **Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896 - 1982, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

1960 - Sahitya Academy Award | 1968 - Jnanpith Award

1997 - Commemorative Stamp by India

**raftaar**

pace, speed

**inquilaab**

revolution

**aahista**

deliberate, slow

**tez**

fast, quick



***hum aman chaahte hain  
magar zulm ke khilaaf***

***gar jang laazmi hai  
to phir jang hi sahi***

we desire peace  
but by vanquishing tyranny  
if what is needed is a fight  
so be it...that fight is right

### **Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921 - 1980, Ludhiana, Punjab

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>aman</b>    | peace             |
| <b>zulm</b>    | tyranny, inequity |
| <b>khilaaf</b> | against, opposed  |
| <b>laazmi</b>  | necessary         |
| <b>jang</b>    | fight, struggle   |

***hargiz raha na kafir-o-momin  
se usko kaam***

***dil ne kiya qubuul  
jab islam husn kaa***

it becomes indifferent to  
both the infidel and the pious  
when the heart chooses  
to accept the religion of beauty

**Ghulam Hamdani 'Mushafi'**

1747 - 1824, Amroha, Uttar Pradesh

|               |                           |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| <b>hargiz</b> | in any way                |
| <b>kaafir</b> | infidel, heretic          |
| <b>momin</b>  | religious believer, pious |
| <b>qubuul</b> | accept, adopt             |
| <b>islam</b>  | religion                  |
| <b>husn</b>   | beauty                    |

***kis kis tarah ki dil mein  
guzarti hai hasratein***

***hai vasl se zyaada  
mazaa intezaar ka***

so many kinds of unmet desires  
keep coursing through the heart

but there is more fun in waiting  
than there is in the fulfillment

**'Taban' Abdul Hai**

1715 - 1749, Delhi

**hasratein**

desires

**vasl**

fulfillment, meeting

**intezaar**

waiting

***nahin tera nasheman  
qasr-e-sultani ke gumbad par  
tu shaheen hai basera kar  
pahaadon ki chattanon mein***

your place is not on  
the dome of the royal palace  
you are an eagle, find your  
place on the rocks of the mountain

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Punjab

|                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| <b>nasheman</b>       | home, residence  |
| <b>qasr-e-sultani</b> | palace of royals |
| <b>gumbad</b>         | dome             |
| <b>shaheen</b>        | falcon, eagle    |
| <b>basera</b>         | rest             |
| <b>chattanon</b>      | rocks            |

***zaahid, sharaab peene de  
masjid mein baith kar***

***ya wo jagah bata de  
jahaan par khuda na ho***

oh priest, allow me to drink  
sitting here in the mosque

or, show me a place  
where there is no god

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

|                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| <b>zaahid</b>  | priest           |
| <b>sharaab</b> | wine, liquor     |
| <b>masjid</b>  | mosque           |
| <b>jagah</b>   | place            |
| <b>bata de</b> | tell me, show me |
| <b>khuda</b>   | god              |

***achchha hai dil ke saath  
rahe paasbaan-e-aqal***

***lekin kabhi kabhi ise  
tanha bhi chod de***

it's good that your mind  
stands guard to the heart

but, on occasion,  
do leave the heart alone

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Pakistan

**paasbaan**

guard, sentinel

**aqal, aql**

mind, intellect

**tanhaa**

alone

**chod**

to leave

***muskuraahat hai***

***husn ka zavar***

***muskuraana na***

***bhuul jaaya karo***

smile is  
beauty's treasure  
don't forget  
to keep smiling

**Abdul Hamid 'Adam'**

1909 - 1981, Gujranwala, Punjab, Pakistan

**muskuraahat**

smile

**husn**

beauty

**zavar**

jewelry, ornament, treasure

**bhuul**

forget

***sheikh saahab sey  
rasm-o-raah na kee***

***shukr hai zindagi  
tabaah na kee***

i didn't have the priest  
perform rituals and customs

happy that i didn't  
waste my life thus

### **Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911 - 1984, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

1962 - Lenin Peace Prize

1984 - Nobel Prize nomination

|                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>sheikh</b>      | head, priest, learned man |
| <b>rasm-o-raah</b> | customs and traditions    |
| <b>shukr</b>       | happiness, gratitude      |
| <b>tabaah</b>      | wasted, ruined            |



***woh kare baat toh  
har lafz se khushboo aaye***

***aisi boli wohi bole  
jise urdu aaye***

when she speaks, from every word  
a delightful fragrance

she speaks like those  
who know urdu

**Ahmad Wasi**

1943, Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh

**lafz**

word, syllable

**khushboo**

fragrance

***mere raahbar, mujh ko  
gumrah kar de***

***suna hai ki manzil  
qareeb aa gayi hai***

my guide,  
lead me astray

heard that my destination  
has drawn closer

### **Khumar Barabankavi**

1919 - 1999, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| <b>raahbar</b> | guide, leader |
| <b>gumrah</b>  | lost          |
| <b>manzil</b>  | destination   |
| <b>qareeb</b>  | near          |

***aql mein yun to  
nahi koi kami***

***ik zaraa divangi  
darkaar hai***

there is nothing lacking  
in intellect and reason

but you still need  
a touch of madness

### **Firaq Gorakhpuri**

1896 - 1982, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

1960 - Sahitya Academy Award | 1968 - Jnanpith Award

1997 - Commemorative Stamp by India

**aql**

intellect

**divangi**

madness

**darkaar**

necessary required

***'jamaal' har shehar se hai pyaara  
vo shehar mujh ko***

***jahaan se dekha tha  
pehli baar aasmaan main ne***

jamaal, of all the cities  
that city is dear to me

from where i saw the sky  
for the first time

### **Jamaal Ehsani**

1951 - 1998, Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan

**shehar**

city

**pyaara**

beloved

**pehli baar**

for the first time

**aasmaan**

sky

**'bedaar' raah-e-ishq**

**kisi se na tai hui**

**sahraa mein 'qais'**

**koh mein 'farhaad' rah gaya**

in the path of love, bedaar,  
who ever attains his goal?

majnu remained in the wilderness  
and farhad in the mountains

## **Meer Mohammadi Bedaar**

1732 - 1797 , Delhi

**raah-e-ishq**

path of love

**tai**

traverse, pass through

**qais**

another name for Majnu

**sahraa**

wilderness, desert

**koh**

mountain

***Majnu and Farhad are two lovers of legend.***

***hum parvarish-e-lauh-o-qalam  
karte rahenge***

***jo dil pe guzarti hai raqam  
karte rahenge***

we will keep nurturing  
the pen and the paper

we will continue to capture  
that which flows through our heart

### **Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911 - 1984, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

1962 - Lenin Peace Prize

1984 - Nobel Prize nomination

|                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| <b>parvarish</b> | nurturing, bringing up |
| <b>lauh</b>      | tablet, board, paper   |
| <b>qalam</b>     | pen                    |
| <b>guzarti</b>   | passes through         |
| <b>raqam</b>     | chronicle              |

***nahi nigah mein manzil  
to justaju hi sahi***

***nahi visaal mayassar  
to arzoo hi sahi***

if the destination is not in sight  
the quest is the way

if union with the beloved is not possible  
just the desire is the way

### **Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911 - 1984, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

1962 - Lenin Peace Prize

1984 - Nobel Prize nomination

|                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| <b>nigah</b>    | sight, vision       |
| <b>manzil</b>   | destination, goal   |
| <b>justaju</b>  | quest, search       |
| <b>visaal</b>   | union               |
| <b>mayassar</b> | possible, available |
| <b>arzoo</b>    | desire              |

***hoti kahan hai dil se judaa  
dil ki aarzo***

***jaata kahan hai shama ko  
parvaana chhod kar***

where does the heart  
separate from its own desires?

where does the moth go  
leaving the flame behind?

### **Jaleel Manikpuri**

1866 - 1946, Manikpur, Uttar Pradesh

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| <b>aarzo</b>    | desire    |
| <b>judaa</b>    | separated |
| <b>shama</b>    | flame     |
| <b>parvaana</b> | moth      |



***ye roshni tere kamre  
mein khud nahi aayi***

***shama ka jism pighalne  
ke baad aayi hai***

this light hasn't come into  
your room all by itself

it has come after burning  
the body of a candle

**Indira Varma**

1940 , Delhi

|                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>roshni</b>   | light       |
| <b>khud</b>     | by itself   |
| <b>shama</b>    | candle, wax |
| <b>jism</b>     | body        |
| <b>pighalna</b> | melt        |

***meri allah se bas  
itni dua hai rashid***

***main jo urdu mein  
wasiyat likhoon, beta padhle***

of god, rashid has  
just this small prayer

when i write my will in urdu  
my son can read it

## **Rashid Arfi**

1943 , Dehradun, Uttarakhand

**dua**

personal prayer, supplication

**wasiyat**

will (of inheritance)

***dhoop ne guzaarish ki  
ek boond baarish ki***

the searing sunlight  
sought a drop of water

**Mohammed Alvi**

1927 - 2018, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| <b>dhoop</b>     | sunlight, heat |
| <b>guzaarish</b> | request        |
| <b>boond</b>     | drop           |
| <b>baarish</b>   | rain           |

***sadiyon se zamaane ka  
ye andaaz rahaa hai***

***saaya bhi juda ho gaya  
jab waqt pada hai***

for ages  
it has been this way  
even your shadow leaves  
when bad times fall

**Jamill Murssapuri**

1931, Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh

|                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| <b>sadiyon</b> | ages             |
| <b>andaaz</b>  | style, mannerism |
| <b>saaya</b>   | shadow           |
| <b>juda</b>    | separate, leave  |
| <b>waqt</b>    | time             |

***bachche jhagad rahe the  
mohalle mein, na jaane kis baat par***

***sukoon is baat ka tha  
na mandir ka zikr tha, na masjid ka***

the kids were fighting  
in the neighborhood, not sure about what  
it was such a relief that there was  
neither the mention of temple nor mosque

## **Anonymous**

|                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| <b>mohalle</b> | neighborhood         |
| <b>jhagad</b>  | fight                |
| <b>sukoon</b>  | relief, peace        |
| <b>zikr</b>    | mention, remembering |

***jab kaha maine ki  
tum bedaadgar na-aashnaa  
be-mohabbat bewafa  
begana-e-ahbab ho***

***to phir usne hans ke farmaya  
ki main jo hoon so hoon  
tum bhee to bechain ho  
besabr ho, betaab ho***

when i told her...

you are unfair, act unfamiliar,  
with no love, unfaithful,  
a strange friend indeed

she replied with a smile

i am what i am

you too are anxious, impatient  
and oh so restless

**Momin Khan Momin**

1801 - 1852, Delhi

***kalkatte ka jo zikr kiya  
tu ne hum-nasheen***

***ek teer mere seene  
pe mara, ke hai***

when you mentioned Kolkata  
oh my dear friend

you shot an arrow  
straight into my heart

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| <b>zikr</b>       | to mention, think of |
| <b>humnasheen</b> | dear friend          |
| <b>teer</b>       | arrow                |
| <b>seene</b>      | heart                |

***tum takalluf ko bhi  
ikhlas samajhte ho 'faraz'***

***dost hota nahin  
har hath milane vaala***

you mistake a gesture of formality  
for sincere affection, 'faraz'

not every one who shakes your hand  
is a friend

### **Ahmed Faraz**

1931 - 2008, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
2005 - Sitara-i-Imtiaz

**takalluf**

formality

**ikhlas**

sincerity

**samajhna**

understand



***agar dard-e-mohabbat se  
na insaan aashna hota***

***na kuchh marne ka gham hota  
na jeene ka maza hota***

if one is not familiar  
with the pain of love

he feels neither the sadness  
of death nor the joy of life

### **Chakbast Brij Narayan**

1882 - 1926, Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| <b>aashna</b> | familiar, friend |
| <b>dard</b>   | pain             |
| <b>gham</b>   | sorrow           |
| <b>mazaa</b>  | joy              |

***khuda bachaye tere  
mast mast aankhon se***

***farishta ho to behak jaaye  
aadmi kya hai***

god help us with  
your intoxicating eyes

those than can get angels drunk  
what hope does a man have

### **Khumar Barabankavi**

1919 - 1999, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh

**bachaye**

save

**behak**

drunk

**farishta**

angel

***ishq par zor nahin  
hai ye wo aatish, ghalib***

***ki lagaye na lage  
aur bujhaye na bane***

we have no power over love,  
it is a burning fire, ghalib

lights up without being lit, and  
once lit, can't be extinguished

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

|                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| <b>zor</b>     | strength, force  |
| <b>aatish</b>  | fireworks, flame |
| <b>bujhaye</b> | extinguish       |

***na sataish ki tamanna***

***na silay ki parwah***

***agar nahi hain mere ashar***

***mein maane na sahi***

no craving for appreciation  
nor a concern for reward

if my words makes no sense  
it is what it is

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

**sataish**

compliment

**tamanna**

desire

**silay**

reward

**parwah**

concern

**ashar**

wisdom

***koi aisi dava de,  
chaaragar***

***bhool jaaun main  
aashna chehre ko***

give me medication,  
dear doctor

that let's me forget  
my lover's face

**Nishanth Shrivastava 'Nayab'**

1977, Mumbai, Maharashtra

**chaaragara**

doctor

**ashna**

lover

**chehre**

countenance, face

***mohabbat ko samajhna hai to  
naaseh khud mohabbat kar***

***kinaare se kabhi  
andaaza-e-toofan nahi hota***

to understand love  
you should first fall in love

from the shore, how can you  
ever get a sense of the storm

### **Khumar Barabankavi**

1919 - 1999, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh

**kinaare**

shore

**andaaz**

estimate, experience

**atoofan**

storm

***humko maloom hai  
jannat ki haqeeqat lekin  
dil ke khush rakhne ko 'ghalib'  
yeh khayaal achchha hai***

i do understand  
the truth about heaven, but  
to keep my heart happy, ghalib  
it is a comforting thought

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh  
December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>jannat</b>   | heaven        |
| <b>haqeeqat</b> | reality, fact |
| <b>khush</b>    | happy         |
| <b>khayaal</b>  | thought       |

***woh afsaana jise anjaam tak  
lana na ho mumkin***

***use ek khoobsurat mod  
de kar chodna achcha***

where not possible to find  
the story a fine ending

it is best to find a beautiful turn  
and leave it there with grace

### **Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921 - 1980, Ludhiana, Punjab

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

**afsaana**

story, tale

**anjaam**

result, end, completion

**mumkin**

possible

**mod**

turn



***aqaa'ed vahm hai mazhab  
khayaal-e-khaam hai saaqi***

***azal se aql-e-insaan  
basta-e-auhaam hai saaqi***

religion is a superstitious belief  
a regressive thought, my friend

forever the human mind  
has thus been held captive

### **Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921 - 1980, Ludhiana, Punjab

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| <b>vahm</b>   | superstition     |
| <b>mazhab</b> | religion         |
| <b>khaam</b>  | stray, meander   |
| <b>nikle</b>  | emerge, come out |

***donon laazim hai  
laa-zawal bhi hain***

***ek tera husn  
ek mera ye ishq***

both are essential  
and both everlasting

one, your beauty  
and this love of mine

**Farhat Abbas**

1956, Lahor, Pakistan

**laazim**

necessary

**la-zawal**

eternal, imperishable

***raste mein mil gaya to  
shareek-e-safar na jaan***

***jo chhanv mehrban ho  
use apna ghar na jaan***

whoever you find along the way  
mistake them not as friends of life

that free shade you find  
mistake it not as your home

### **Parveen Shakir**

1952 - 1994, Karachi, Pakistan

**shareek**

companion

**safar**

journey

**chaanv**

shadow

**mehrban**

benevolent, complimentary

***khulta kisi pe kyon  
mere dil ka mamla***

***she'ron ke intikhaab  
ne ruswa kiya mujhe***

why should my heart's matters  
be open for all to see

my selection of poetry  
has brought me enough infamy

### **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

**khulta**

open

**mamla**

affairs, matters

**intikhab**

selection

**ruswa**

bad reputation, infamy

***bahaaron ki nazar mein  
phool aur kaante barabar***

***mohabbat kya karenge  
dost dushman dekhne waale***

in the eyes of nature  
flowers and thorns are the same  
how can one ever love, thinking  
in terms of friends and foes

### **Kaleem Aajiz**

1924 - 2015, Patna, Bihar

|                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>bahaaron</b> | spring, nature    |
| <b>barabar</b>  | equal, equivalent |
| <b>mohabbat</b> | love              |
| <b>dushman</b>  | enemy             |

***na dunga dil use main  
ye hamesha kahta tha***

***vo aaj le hi gayaa, aur  
'zafar' se kuchh na hua***

i will not give her my heart,  
i kept telling myself

she walked away with it today,  
and Zafar was helpless

**Bahadur Shah Zafar** (Last Mughal Emperor)

1775 - 1862, Delhi

**doonga**  
**hamesha**

give  
always

***be-kaif jawani***

***be-dard zamana***

***nakaam-e-mohabbat ka***

***itna hi fasana***

joyless youth,  
painless life

for those unsuccessful in love,  
this is the only story

**Sarwar Alam Raz**

1935, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

**be-kaif**

without joy

**be-dard**

without pain

**nakaam**

failure

**fasana**

story

***tera imam be-huzoor***

***teri namaz be-suroor***

***aisi namaz se guzar***

***aise imam se guzar***

your priest is absent  
and your prayer joyless

find your way out of  
that priest and that prayer

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Pakistan

|               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>huzoor</b> | present, graceful |
| <b>suroor</b> | joy               |
| <b>namaz</b>  | prayer            |
| <b>imam</b>   | priest            |



***koi kya jaane ki hai  
roz-e-qayamat kya cheez***

***doosra naam hai  
meri shab-e-tanhai ka***

what does anyone know  
about the day of apocalypse

it is another name for  
my night of loneliness

**Jaleel Manikpuri**

1866 - 1946, Manikpur, Uttar Pradesh

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| <b>qayamat</b> | crisis, danger |
| <b>roz</b>     | day            |
| <b>shab</b>    | evening, night |
| <b>tanhayi</b> | loneliness     |

***mohabbat rang de jaati hai  
jab dil dil se milta hai***

***magar mushkil to ye hai  
dil badi mushkil se milta hai***

love makes life colorful  
when two hearts meet  
  
but what is difficult  
is for two hearts to meet

**Jaleel Manikpuri**

1866 - 1946, Manikpur, Uttar Pradesh

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| <b>mohabbat</b> | love      |
| <b>rang</b>     | color     |
| <b>mushkil</b>  | difficult |
| <b>dil</b>      | heart     |

***khwabon ki tarah aanaa***

***khushbu ki tarah jaana***

***mumkin hi nahi lagta***

***ai dost tujhe paanaa***

arriving like a dream, and  
leaving with fragrance behind

it seems difficult, o friend,  
to find someone like you

**Athar Shakeel**

1968, Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh

**khwaab**

dream

**khushbu**

fragrance

**mumkin**

possible

**paana**

to get

***mere talvon ke lahu se  
hogi raushan har jihat***

***rah-ravaan-e-raah-e-manzil  
honge shashdar dekhna***

the blood of the soles of my feet,  
spreads light in all directions

that followers to the destination,  
watch them be amazed

**Mahfuzur Rahman Adil**

1949 - 2019, Dhaka, Bangladesh

**talvon**

soles

**lahu**

blood

**jihat**

direction

**raah**

path

**shashdar**

follower

***main lautne ke irade se  
jaa rahaa huun magar***

***safar safar hai  
mera intezaar mat karna***

i am leaving with the  
intent to return, but  
journey is a journey,  
don't wait up for me

### **Sahal Sahri Nainitali**

1994 - 2012, Karachi, Pakistan

**safar**

journey

**irada**

desire, wish

**intezaar**

waiting

***dard ko dil mein  
de jagah, shaayar***

***ilm se shayari  
nahi hoti***

find a place for pain  
in your heart, o poet

no poetry comes  
from just knowledge

## **Anonymous**

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| <b>dard</b>    | pain      |
| <b>jagah</b>   | place     |
| <b>shaayar</b> | poet      |
| <b>ilm</b>     | knowledge |
| <b>shayari</b> | poetry    |

***aur bhi dukh hain zamaane mein  
mohabbat ke siva***

***rahatein aur bhi hain  
vasl ki raahat ke siva***

there are other sorrows  
in this life than love's longing

there are other comforts too  
than the union with the beloved

### **Faiz Ahmed Faiz**

1911 - 1984, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

1962 - Lenin Peace Prize

1984 - Nobel Prize nomination

**raahat**  
**vasl**

comfort  
union

***itna kyun sikhaye  
jaa rahi hai zindagi?***

***humne kaunsi sadiyan  
guzarni hai yahan***

why is life teaching me  
so many lessons?

how many ages am I  
going to spend here?

**Anonymous**

**sadiyan  
guzarni**

ages, years  
spend



***doosron par agar  
tabsira kijiye***

***saamne aaina  
rakh liya kijiye***

as you get ready  
to criticize others

keep a mirror  
handy

**Khumar Barabankavi**

1919 - 1999, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh

**tabsira  
aaina**

criticism  
mirror

***koshish bhi kar***

***ummeed bhi rakh, raasta bhi chun***

***phir is ke baad***

***thoda muqaddar talaash kar***

work hard too, keep faith too

find a path too

after all this...

look for a little luck

## **Nida Fazli**

1938 - 2016, Delhi

2013 - Padma Shri

**koshish**

effort

**ummeed**

hope

**muqaddar**

fate, luck

**talaash**

search

***na kar 'sauda' tu shikva  
hum se dil ki be-qaraari ka  
mohabbat kis ko deti hai, miyaan,  
aaram sukoon duniya mein?***

don't complain, sauda,  
about your heart's restlessness

for whom has love given  
peace and quiet in this world?

**Sauda Mohammad Rafi**

1713 - 1781, Shahjahanabad (Lucknow)

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <b>shikva</b>    | complaint |
| <b>be-qaraar</b> | restless  |
| <b>aaraam</b>    | rest      |
| <b>sukoon</b>    | peace     |

***mujh ko thakne nahi deta  
ye zaroorat ka pahaad***

***mere bachche mujhe  
budha nahi hone dete***

the mountain of needs  
won't let me get tired

my children  
won't let me grow old

### **Meraj Faizabadi**

1941 - 2013, Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh

**thakhne  
zaroorat  
pahaad**

tired  
necessity  
mountain

***paani mein aks  
aur kisi aasmaan ka hai***

***ye naav kaun si hai  
ye dariya kahan ka hai***

the mountain of needs  
won't let me get tired  
my children  
won't let me grow old

**Ahmad Mushtaq**

1933, Lahore, Pakistan

|                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| <b>aks</b>     | reflection |
| <b>aasmaan</b> | sky        |
| <b>naav</b>    | boat       |
| <b>dariya</b>  | river      |

***khudi ko kar buland itna  
ke har taqdeer se pehle***

***khuda bande se khud pooche  
bata teri raza kya hai***

strengthen yourself so much  
that before every turn of fate  
god asks of his child  
tell me, what is your wish?

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Pakistan

|                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| <b>khudi</b>   | yourself         |
| <b>buland</b>  | strong, strength |
| <b>taqdeer</b> | fate             |
| <b>bande</b>   | men, human       |
| <b>raza</b>    | wish             |

***dhoop mein niklo***

***ghataon mein naha kar dekho***

***zindagi kya hai***

***kitabon ko hata kar dekho***

get out into the sun

take a bathe in the bearing clouds (rain)

figure out life

by first closing the book

**Nida Fazli**

1938 - 2016, Delhi

2013 - Padma Shri

**dhoop**

sunlight, heat

**ghataon**

bearing clouds (rain)

**naha**

bathe

**kitabon**

books

***insaan ki khwahishon ki  
koi inteha nahi***

***do gaz zameen bhi chahiye  
do gaz kafan ke baad***

there is no limit  
to the human need

after two yards of shroud  
needs two yards of land

### **Kaifi Azmi**

1919 - 2002, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh

1975 - Sahitya Akademi Award

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| <b>khwahishon</b> | aspirations, wishes  |
| <b>inteha</b>     | limit, utmost point  |
| <b>zameen</b>     | ground, land         |
| <b>kafan</b>      | shroud, grave-clothe |



***aarzo hai ki  
tu yahan aaye***

***aur phir umr bhar  
na jaaye kahin***

my wish is  
for you to come  
and then  
you don't leave ever

**Nasir Kazmi**

1925 - 1972, Ambala, Haryana

**aarzo**  
**umr**

wish, desire  
span of life

***ye iltija dua  
ye tamanna fuzool hai  
sukhi nadi ke paas  
samundar na jaayega***

this request, supplication  
this desire is futile  
the sea will not  
go to the dry river

## **Hayat Lakhnavi**

1931 - 2006, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>iltija</b>     | appeal, request |
| <b>dua</b>        | supplication    |
| <b>tamanna</b>    | wish, desire    |
| <b>fuzool</b>     | futile, useless |
| <b>sukhi nadi</b> | dry river       |
| <b>samundar</b>   | sea             |

***masjid mein bulaate hain  
hamen zaahid-e-na-fahm***

***hota kuch agar hosh to  
mai-khane na jaate***

the foolish devotee  
asks me into the mosque

if i have any sense, won't i  
find my way to the tavern

### **Ameer Minai**

1829 - 1900, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>masjid</b>    | mosque            |
| <b>zahid</b>     | devout            |
| <b>na-fahm</b>   | foolish, ignorant |
| <b>hosh</b>      | sense             |
| <b>mai-khane</b> | tavern, bar       |

***din to phir din hai  
guzar jaatia hai***

***raat kathti hai  
badi mushkil se***

day is but a day,  
it passes fast

it is the night that  
is difficult to bear

**Nasir Kas Ganjui**

1928 - 2002, Etah, Uttar Pradesh

**guzar**

to pass

**mushkil**

difficult

***aise hans hans ke  
na dekha karo sab ki janib***

***log aisi hi adaon pe  
fida hote hain***

don't flash your smiles  
at all these men, miss

they fall so easily  
for your mannerisms

### **Majrooh Sultanpuri**

1919 - 2000, Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh

1993 - Dada Saheb Phalke Award

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

**fida**  
**janib**  
**adaon**

drawn towards  
in the direction of  
manner, style

***sab ik charaagh ke  
parvaane hona chaahte hain***

***ajeeb log hain  
deewaane hona chaahte hain***

all wish to be  
moths to a flame  
strange people...  
all seeking to be mad

**Asad Badayuni**

1952 - 2003, Badayun, Uttar Pradesh

|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| <b>charaagh</b> | flame   |
| <b>parvaane</b> | moths   |
| <b>ajeeb</b>    | strange |
| <b>deewane</b>  | mad     |

***dost naaraaz***

***ho gaye kitne***

***ik zara aaina***

***dikhaane mein***

how angry  
friends became

when just shown  
the mirror

**Baqi Ahmad Puri**

1950, Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan

**naaraaz**

angry, offended

**aaina**

mirror

**dikhaane**

shown

***bahakna meri fitrat  
mein nahi par***

***sambhalne mein  
pareshani bahut hai***

drunkenness is not  
in my nature, but  
practicing moderation  
is quite difficult

**Muzaffar Abdali**

1971, Delhi

|                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>bahakna</b>   | to be drunk          |
| <b>fitrat</b>    | nature               |
| <b>sambhalna</b> | balanced, moderation |
| <b>pareshani</b> | difficulty           |



***jo mil gaya usi ko  
muqaddar samajh liya***

***jo kho gaya main  
usko bhulata chala gaya***

that which i got in life  
i thought of it as my good fate

those that i lost  
i moved on, forgetting them

### **Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921 - 1980, Ludhiana, Punjab

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

**muqaddar**

fate, destined

**bhulaana**

forget

***kuch sitare meri palkon  
pe chamakte hain abhi***

***kuchh sitare mere seene  
mein samaye hue hai***

some stars are  
twinkling in my eyes

some others are  
gathered in my heart

**Arshad Abdul Hamid**

1919 - 2000, Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh

**sitare**

stars

**palkon**

eyelids

**chamakte**

shine, twinkle

**seene**

heart

***aapki tasveer thi***

***akhbaar mein***

***kya sabab hai***

***aap ghar jaate nahi***

saw your photo  
in the newspaper

what is the reason  
you don't seem to go home

**Farooq Nazki**

1940, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir

**tasveer**

photo

**akhbaar**

newspaper

**sabab**

reason

***musafir hain yaaron  
na ghar hai na thikaana***

***mujhe chalte jaana hai  
bas chalte jaana***

i am a traveler, my friends  
with neither home, nor shelter

i just need to keep walking  
keep walking

## **Gulzar**

1934, Dina, Pakistan

2002 - Sahitya Akademi Award

2004 - Padma Bhushan

**musafir**  
**thikaana**

traveler  
shelter

***masaael ek hai sabke,  
to mazhab mukhtalif kyon hai?***

***jo khaaliq ek hai subka,  
to khalkat mukhtalif kyon hai?***

***koi pandit, koi gyani,  
koi father, koi mullah;***

***jo manzil ek hai sub ki,  
to rehbar mukhtalif kyon hai?***

if the problems are the same for all  
why are religions so different?

if the creator of us all is the same  
why are the forms so different?

some pandit, some guru,  
some father, some mullah,

if our destination is the same  
why are the guides so different?

**Inder Singh**

Delhi

***tamaam umr mera mujh se  
ikhtilaaf rahaa***

***gila na kar jo kabhi  
tera humnava na hua***

my entire life, i struggled  
and fought with myself

so, don't complain that  
i couldn't be there for you

### **Lutf-Ur-Rahman**

1941, Patna, Bihar

|                  |                         |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>tamaam</b>    | entire                  |
| <b>umr</b>       | life                    |
| <b>ikhtilaaf</b> | in opposition           |
| <b>gila</b>      | complain                |
| <b>kabhi</b>     | on occasion             |
| <b>humnava</b>   | fellow songster, friend |

***sarfarooshi ki tamanna  
ab hamare dil mein hai***

***dekhna hai zor kitna  
baazu-e-qaatil mein hai***

the desire to sacrifice  
is raging in my heart

we shall see how much power  
there is the assassin's arms

## **Bismil Azimabadi**

1901 - 1978, Azimabad, Bihar

*Song that was a rallying cry of Indian independence.*

|                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>sarfarooshi</b> | sacrifice             |
| <b>tamanna</b>     | desire                |
| <b>zor</b>         | power, strength       |
| <b>baazu</b>       | arms                  |
| <b>qaatil</b>      | assassin, executioner |

***jis bhi fankaar  
ka shahkaar ho tum***

***us ne sadiyon  
tumhen socha hoga***

whichever artist created  
the masterpiece that's you

(s)he must have  
thought of it for ages

**Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi**

1916 - 2006, Sargodha, Pakistan

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>fankaar</b> | artist, craftsman |
| <b>shahkar</b> | masterpiece       |
| <b>sadiyon</b> | ages              |
| <b>socha</b>   | think             |



***aqaa'ed vahm hai mazhab  
khayaal-e-khaam hai saaqi***

***azal se zehn-e-insaan  
basta-e-auhaam hai saaqi***

religion but a fanciful belief  
a string of delusions

forever the human mind has been  
hostage to a bundle of superstitions

### **Sahir Ludhianvi**

1921 - 1980, Ludhiana, Punjab

1971 - Padma Shri

2013 - Commemorative Stamp by India

|                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>aqaaed</b>          | belief                     |
| <b>mazhab</b>          | religion                   |
| <b>khayaal-e-khaam</b> | silly ideas                |
| <b>azal</b>            | from beginning to eternity |
| <b>zehn-e-insaan</b>   | human mind                 |
| <b>basta</b>           | bundle                     |
| <b>auhaam</b>          | superstition               |

***chalta hoon thodi door  
har ik tez rau ke saath***

***pehchaanta nahin hoon abhee  
raahbar ko main***

let's go a little far  
with every strong wave

i am yet to find someone  
a guide to show the way

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

**tez rau**

fast-moving

**pehchaanta**

spot, identify

**raahbar**

guide

***muskuraye baghair bhi***

***woh hont***

***nazar aate hain***

***muskuraye huye***

even without a smile  
those lips

seem to be smiling  
all the while

**Anwar Shuoor**

1943, Seoni, Madhya Pradesh

**muskuraye**

smile

**baghair**

without

**hont**

lips

**nazar**

see, sight

***duniya mein wohi shakhs hai  
taazim ke qaabil***

***jis shakhs ne halat ka  
rukh mod diya ho***

that person is worthy  
of reverence in this world

who changes the  
course of fate

### **Ali Sardar Jafri**

1913 - 2000, Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh

1997 - Jnanpith Award

1967 - Padma Shri

|               |                            |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| <b>shaks</b>  | person                     |
| <b>taazim</b> | respect, reverence, praise |
| <b>qaabil</b> | worthy, deserving          |
| <b>haalat</b> | circumstance, fate         |
| <b>rukh</b>   | direction                  |

***zara ek tabassum ki  
takleef karna***

***ki gulzar mein  
phool murjha rahe hai***

do take the trouble  
to smile once

for the flowers  
in the garden are wilting

**Abdul Hamid 'Adam'**

1909 - 1981, Gujranwala, Punjab, Pakistan

**tabassum**

smile

**gulzar**

garden

**phool**

flower

**murjha**

wane, wilt

***jin aankhon se  
mujhe tum dekhte ho***

***mein un aankhon se  
duniya dekhta hoon***

those eyes through  
which you see me

through those eyes  
i see the world

**Rasa Chughtai**

1928 - 2018, Jaipur, Rajasthan

**aankhon**

eyes

**dekhna**

see

**duniya**

world

***inquilaab aayega raftaar se  
mayoos na ho***

***bahut aahista nahin hai  
jo bahut tez nahin***

the revolution will come soon  
don't be despondent

it doesn't come too slowly  
not does it come too fast

### **Ali Sardar Jafri**

1913 - 2000, Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh

1997 - Jnanpith Award

1967 - Padma Shri

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| <b>inquilaab</b> | revolution  |
| <b>raftaar</b>   | soon, fast  |
| <b>aahista</b>   | slow        |
| <b>tez</b>       | fast, speed |

***awaaz de ke dekh lo  
shaayad woh mil hi jaye***

***varna ye umr bhar ka safar  
raaigaan to hai***

call and reach out...maybe  
you will get to meet her

else, the life's journey  
would be in vain

### **Muneer Niyazi**

1928 - 2006, Hoshiarpur, Punjab

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>awaaz</b>    | voice           |
| <b>shaayad</b>  | perhaps, maybe  |
| <b>varna</b>    | or else         |
| <b>umr</b>      | life            |
| <b>safar</b>    | journey         |
| <b>raaigaan</b> | wasted, in vain |



***zaroor teri gali se  
guzar hua hoga***

***ki aaj baad-e-saba  
beqarar aayi hai***

surely, it must have  
passed through your street

for today, the morning zephyr  
arrived here a bit restless

### **Kausar Niyazi**

1964, Mianwali, Pakistan

|                    |                         |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>zaroor</b>      | for sure                |
| <b>gali</b>        | street                  |
| <b>guzar</b>       | pass through            |
| <b>baad-e-saba</b> | morning breeze (zephyr) |
| <b>beqarar</b>     | restless                |

***jaanta hoon ek aise  
shakhs ko mein bhi 'muneer'***

***gham se pathar ho gaya  
lekin kabhi roya nahin***

i too know of  
one such person, 'muneer'  
whom sorrow has turned into a stone  
but he never shed a tear

### **Muneer Niyazi**

1928 - 2006, Hoshiarpur, Punjab

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| <b>shaks</b>  | person |
| <b>gham</b>   | sorrow |
| <b>pathar</b> | stone  |
| <b>roya</b>   | weep   |

***kitna hai badnaseeb 'zafar'***  
***dafn ke liye***

***do gaz zameen bhi na mili***  
***koo-e-yaar mein***

how wretched is your fate, 'zafar'  
that for your burial

you couldn't get two yards  
in the lane (land) of the beloved

**Bahadur Shah Zafar** (Last Mughal Emperor)  
1775 - 1862, Delhi

|                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| <b>badnaseeb</b>  | unfortunate         |
| <b>dafn</b>       | burial              |
| <b>zameen</b>     | ground              |
| <b>koo-e-yaar</b> | lane of the beloved |

***tod diya tasbeeh ko  
is khayaal se 'faraz'***

***kya gin gin ke nam lena uska  
jo behisaab deta hai***

i broke the prayer rosary  
with this thought, 'faraz'

why count and pray to one  
who gives without keeping an account

### **Ahmed Faraz**

1931 - 2008, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
2005 - Sitara-i-Imtiaz

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| <b>tod</b>      | to break           |
| <b>tasbeeh</b>  | rosary             |
| <b>khayaal</b>  | thought            |
| <b>gin</b>      | count              |
| <b>behisaab</b> | without an account |

***dekhun to jurm***

***aur, na dekhun to kufr hai***

***ab kya kahun***

***jamal-e-rukh-e-fitnagar ko mein***

it is a crime if i see  
lacking in grace if i don't

what shall i call this  
beautiful, mischievous face

### **Panna Laal Noor**

1925 - 1972, Indore, Madhya Pradesh

|                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| <b>jurm</b>     | crime                |
| <b>kufr</b>     | ungrateful, impious  |
| <b>jamaal</b>   | beautiful            |
| <b>rukh</b>     | face                 |
| <b>fitnagar</b> | mischievous, playful |

***hoshwalon ko khabar kya  
bekhudi kya cheez hai***

***ishq kijaye phir samajhiye  
zindagi kya cheez hai***

how can sane people know  
what ecstasy is all about

love and figure out  
what life is all about

### **Nida Fazli**

1938 - 2016, Delhi

2013 - Padma Shri

|                  |                         |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>hoshwalon</b> | those who are sane      |
| <b>bekhudi</b>   | delirium, senselessness |
| <b>cheez</b>     | matter                  |
| <b>ishq</b>      | love                    |
| <b>samajhiye</b> | understand              |
| <b>zindagi</b>   | life                    |

***fareb-e-nazar hai  
sukoon-o-sabaat***

***tadapta hai  
har zarra-e-kayanaat***

this peace and permanence  
are but a deception and illusion

every atom of the universe  
is endlessly pulsating (for change)

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Pakistan

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>fareb</b>    | deception      |
| <b>nazar</b>    | vision         |
| <b>sukoon</b>   | comfort, peace |
| <b>sabaat</b>   | permanence     |
| <b>tadapta</b>  | pulsate        |
| <b>zarra</b>    | atom, particle |
| <b>kayanaat</b> | universe       |

***aaina dekh kar***

***woh ye samjhe***

***mil gaya***

***husn-e-bemisaal hamein***

looking into the mirror  
she said to herself

i have found  
an unexampled beauty

## **Bekhud Dehlvi**

1863 - 1955, Bharatput, Rajasthan

**aaina**

mirror

**samjhe**

understood

**husn**

beauty

**bemisaal**

incomparable, unexampled



***raah-e-talab mein  
kise aarzoo-e-manzil hai***

***shuoor ho to safar  
khud safar ka haasil hai***

in the path of love and desire  
who wishes for the end?

if the path makes sense  
journey is journey's reward

### **Ghulam Rabbani Taban**

1914 - 1993, Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh

1979 - Sahitya Akademi Award

|                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>raah-e-talab</b>   | path of desire               |
| <b>arzoo-e-manzil</b> | desire for destination (end) |
| <b>shuoor</b>         | sense                        |
| <b>safar</b>          | journey                      |
| <b>haasil</b>         | outcome, gain, product       |

***kahan aa ke rukne the raaste***

***kahan mod tha use bhool ja***

***woh jo mil gaya use yaad rakh***

***jo nahin mila use bhool ja***

where the paths were meant to end  
and where they turned...forget it

remember and cherish what you got  
and what you didn't...forget it

## **Amjad Islam Amjad**

1944, Sialkot, Pakistan

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <b>rukne</b>    | stop     |
| <b>raaste</b>   | path     |
| <b>mod</b>      | turn     |
| <b>bhool</b>    | forget   |
| <b>mil gaya</b> | got      |
| <b>yaad</b>     | remember |

***kahan maikhana ka darwaza, ghalib  
aur kahan waiz***

***par itna jaante hain  
kal wo jaata tha ke ham nikle***

where's the tavern's entrance, ghalib,  
and where is the preacher

i know only this...yesterday,  
when i was coming out, he was going in

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| <b>maikhana</b> | tavern, bar        |
| <b>darwaza</b>  | door               |
| <b>waiz</b>     | preacher, holy man |
| <b>jaante</b>   | know               |

***koi manzil ke qareeb aa ke  
bhatak jaata hai***

***koi manzil pe pahonchta hai  
bhatak jaane se***

as they near the destination  
some get lost

some find the destination  
by going astray first

### **Qasri Kanpuri**

1914 - 1996, Kanpur

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| <b>manzil</b>       | destination |
| <b>qareeb</b>       | near        |
| <b>bhatak jaana</b> | to get lost |
| <b>pahoonchta</b>   | to reach    |

***dar humko bhi lagta hai  
raaste ke sannaate se***

***lekin ek safar par ai dil  
ab jaana to hoga***

i too feel frightened  
by the lonely quietness of the path  
but my heart is set on this journey  
i have no choice but to go

**Javed Akhtar**

1945, Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh  
2007, Padma Bhushan

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| <b>dar</b>      | fear               |
| <b>raaste</b>   | path               |
| <b>sannaate</b> | silence, quietness |
| <b>safar</b>    | journey            |

***kisi ko ghar se nikalte hi  
mil gayi manzil***

***koi hamari tarah  
umr bhar safar mein raha***

some reach their destination  
as they set out of their home  
but some like me  
keep traveling all their lives

**Ahmed Faraz**

1931 - 2008, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan  
2005 - Sitara-i-Imtiaz

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| <b>nikalte</b> | come out of |
| <b>manzil</b>  | destination |
| <b>umr</b>     | life        |
| <b>safar</b>   | journey     |

***kaam hai mera taghayyur***

***naam hai mera shabaab***

***mera naara,***

***inquilaab-o-inquilaab-o-inquilaab***

change is my mission

youth is my name

my slogan,

revolution, revolution, revolution

## **Josh Malihabadi**

1898 - 1982, Malihabad, Uttar Pradesh)

**taghayyur**

change

**shabaab**

youth

**naara**

slogan

**inquilaab**

revolution

***roz kahta hun ke  
ab unko na dekhoonga kabhi***

***roz us kooche mein ik  
kaam nikal aata hai***

i say every day that  
i am never going to see her again  
but every day i find i have  
some work to do in her street

**Seemab Akbarabadi**

1880 - 1951, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| <b>roz</b>       | every day |
| <b>dekhoonga</b> | will see  |
| <b>kooche</b>    | street    |
| <b>kaam</b>      | work      |



**'saif' andaaz-e-bayaan  
rang badal deta hai**

**varna duniya mein  
koi baat nai baat nahin**

the style of narration  
changes everything, 'saif'

if not, in this world  
there is nothing new to say

## **Saifuddin Saif**

1922 - 1993, Amritsar, Punjab

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| <b>andaaz</b> | style     |
| <b>bayaan</b> | narration |
| <b>varna</b>  | or else   |
| <b>baat</b>   | words     |

***jo raah-e-ishq mein  
qadam rakkhe***

***woh nasheb-o-faraz  
kya jaane***

those who choose to  
travel on the path of love

what would they know  
of ups and downs

### **Daagh Dehlvi**

1831 - 1905, Delhi

**raah-e-ishq**

path of love

**qadam**

step

**nasheb-o-faraz**

up and down, rise and fall

**kya jaane**

what will they know

***yaa-rab, woh na samjhe hai  
na samjhenge meri baat***

***de aur dil un ko  
jo na de mujh ko zabaan aur***

oh god, she doesn't understand me  
nor will she ever

either give her another heart  
or give me more eloquence

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

**yaa-rab**

oh god

**samjhe**

understand

**dil**

heart

**zabaan**

tongue, dialect, speech

***kabhi yun tha ki hazaar teer  
jigar mein the to dukhi na the  
magar ab ye hai kisi maharabaan ke  
tapaak ne bhi rula diya***

there was a time when even a thousand  
arrows in the heart did not cause me grief  
but now even the warm handshake  
of a friend makes me weep

### **Daagh Dehlvi**

1831 - 1905, Delhi

|                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>hazaar</b>     | thousand                   |
| <b>teer</b>       | arrows                     |
| <b>jigar</b>      | up and down, rise and fall |
| <b>maharabaan</b> | well-wisher, friend        |
| <b>tapaak</b>     | warmth, affection          |

***raasta hai ki  
katta jaata hai***

***faasla hai ki  
kam nahin hota***

as i keep traveling  
on this road

the distance to my destination  
doesn't seem to reduce

## **Qabil Ajmeri**

1931 - 1962, Ajmer, Rajasthan

**raasta**

path, road

**katta jaata**

to get spent

**faasla**

distance

***anokhi waza hai***

***saare zamaane se niraale hai***

***ye aashiq kaun si basti ke***

***yaa-rab, rahne vaale hai***

such strange mannerisms they have  
so unique in this whole world

these lovers, oh god,  
which city do they come from

## **Mohammed Iqbal**

1877 - 1938, Sialkot, Pakistan

|                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| <b>anokhi</b>  | quaint, odd      |
| <b>waza</b>    | style, mannerism |
| <b>zamaana</b> | world            |
| <b>niraale</b> | unique, strange  |
| <b>aashiq</b>  | lover            |
| <b>basti</b>   | city             |
| <b>yaa-rab</b> | oh god           |

***dil mein na ho jurat  
to mohabbat nahi milti***

***khairaat mein itni badi  
daulat nahi milti***

when there is no boldness in the heart  
love cannot be obtained

in alms, such a treasure  
cannot be obtained

**Nida Fazli**

1938 - 2016, Delhi

2013 - Padma Shri

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>jurat</b>    | boldness         |
| <b>mohabbat</b> | love             |
| <b>khairaat</b> | charity, alms    |
| <b>daulat</b>   | riches, treasure |

***is shahar mein  
jeene ke andaaz niraale hain  
honton pe latife hain  
awaaz mein chhaale hain***

in this city,  
the style of living is so strange  
wit and smile on the lips  
but sharp edges in the voice

**Javed Akhtar**

1945, Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh  
2007, Padma Bhushan

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>shahar</b>          | city            |
| <b>jeene ka andaaz</b> | style of living |
| <b>niraale</b>         | quaint, strange |
| <b>honton</b>          | lips            |
| <b>chhale</b>          | blisters, edges |



***sada ek hi rukh  
nahi naav chalti***

***chalo tum udhar ko  
hava ho jidhar ki***

the boat doesn't travel  
in one direction always

let's sail wherever  
the wind takes us

### **Altaf Hussain Hali**

1837 - 1914, Panipat, Haryana

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| <b>ruk</b>    | direction    |
| <b>naav</b>   | boat         |
| <b>chalti</b> | go           |
| <b>udhar</b>  | there        |
| <b>hava</b>   | breeze, wind |

***yuun 'abroo' banaave  
dil mein hazaar baatein***

***jab ruu-ba-ruu ho  
tere guftaar bhool jaave***

what, abroo, you think of  
a thousand things to say in your heart  
but when face-to-face  
you don't remember anything to say

### **Shah Mubarak Abroo**

1683 - 1733, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| <b>banaave</b>    | make, make up        |
| <b>hazaar</b>     | thousands            |
| <b>baatein</b>    | words, things to say |
| <b>ruu-ba-ruu</b> | face-to-face         |
| <b>guftaar</b>    | speech               |
| <b>bhool</b>      | forget               |

***ghalib chhuti sharaab  
par ab bhi kabhi kabhi***

***peeta hoon  
roz-e-abr-o-shab-e-mehtab mein***

ghalib has given up drinking  
but, still, once in a while

i enjoy a drink  
on cloudy days and moon-filled nights

## **Mirza Ghalib**

1797 - 1869, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

December 27, 2017 - Google Doodle

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>chhuti</b>      | given up        |
| <b>sharaab</b>     | wine, drink     |
| <b>kabhi kabhi</b> | once in a while |
| <b>roz-e-abr</b>   | day of clouds   |
| <b>shab</b>        | evening, night  |
| <b>mahtaab</b>     | moon            |

# KHAT-E-ARZOO

*tum aao gulshan-e-lahore se chaman bardosh  
hum aaye subh-e-banaras ki roshni le kar*

*himalaya ki hawaon ki taazgi le kar  
aur us ke baad yeh poochenge kaun dushman hai?*

you come bearing the beautiful fragrant garden of lahore  
we will bring the bright morning lights of benares  
with us taking in the fresh breeze of the himalayans  
and then we ask: who is the enemy?

***Ali Sardar Jafri***

The shers in Alfaaz ki Mehfil stand as testimony to the priceless treasure of Urdu and Urdu poetry, shared by India and Pakistan. Here's hoping that the two countries find their lost bonds and make them richer, stronger. May they, together, realize a world of greatness in culture and commerce, arts and letters.

And, may, in that glorious world, a thousand flowers of Urdu shaayars bloom, helping us understand and appreciate life in all its pain, beauty, and joy.

*tu sirf dashna-e-nafrat hi laharaata raha  
tu ne kabhi dushman se lipat kar nahi dekha*

you have only been waving this dagger of hate  
you haven't tried ever embracing your enemy

***Ahmed Faraz***

# BAZM-E-SUKHAN

The *Bazm-e-Sukhan* (An assembly celebrating Poetry) is a weekly gathering of a diverse group united by its love for Urdu poetry and prose. The *Bazm* started in December 2018 and was held every Wednesday at Hyderabad's iconic cultural sake, *Lamakaan*, through the year and till March 2020.

When COVID- 19 closed down public spaces, the *Bazm* moved online. Since then, the weekly session has been held every Tuesday at 10:00 pm IST.

A group that now consists of about 150 people spread worldwide tunes every week to listen to and share their favourite Urdu poetry pieces. The prime audience is a bunch of folks who enjoy literature, are entertained by subtle turns of phrase and like to discuss art. They find accomplished Professors of Urdu who help them understand difficult words and translate unfamiliar idioms. Young software professionals recite lines from their favourite poets and get appreciated by some senior aficionados who bring in their memoirs and share their memories of age-old mushairas and poetry sessions.

We now are back with our in-person events, hosting the *Bazm* every second Wednesday each month at *Lamakaan*.

The *Bazm* also publishes anthologies, the first being an iconic account of a life lived in poetry in the Policy force by a retired Director General of Police, R. P. Joshi. This book is available online at [www.cdpp.co.in](http://www.cdpp.co.in) and can also be ordered at Amazon.

[https://www.amazon.in/dp/8195344925/ref=cm\\_sw\\_r\\_wa\\_api\\_i\\_35Y97NH02XNTA85T58D1](https://www.amazon.in/dp/8195344925/ref=cm_sw_r_wa_api_i_35Y97NH02XNTA85T58D1).

## CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE (CDPP)

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP) is a research institute that works on development concerns and contemporary public policy challenges. Working with a team of research professionals and expert consultants, under the guidance of eminent public intellectuals, CDPP conducts research studies, develops policy papers, publishes a peer reviewed quarterly Journal and hosts Conferences, Seminars and Workshops.

## DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION (DEF)

DEF is a Delhi-based nonprofit organization working towards empowering people to gain access to better healthcare, education, skills and livelihood opportunities through digital literacy and digital tools. The organization's main focus is to make technology easily accessible to the masses, to empower women, youth, persons with disabilities and the elderly through providing functional digital literacy, media literacy, and digital up-skilling across agriculture, micro and nano-business, health, education, livelihood, and entrepreneurial skills. Over the last 20 years, the organization has been actively engaged in digitally empowering local communities through its 1,500 Community Information Resource Centers. These centers are supported by a widespread network of 10,000 digital foot soldiers located across 24 states and 135 districts in rural, tribal, marginalized and unreached areas. DEF has directly impacted the lives of more than 30 million people including people from below the poverty line, women, artisans, youth, persons with disabilities, and the elderly.

## A-CODE

A-CODE is an effort of finding ways to enhance collaboration among civil society organizations working in different sectors, and advocating a more pivotal role for the arts in social change. The collective would have several priority issues that cut across the work of civil society organizations and that define and indicate social change.

## LAMAKAAN

Lamakaan is an inclusive cultural space and Trust that promotes and presents the best of arts, literature, theatre, debate and dialogue with a commitment to being open and accessible. As an independent organisation, Lamakaan encourages those hosting events to also work towards independence from corporate and government funds as a sustainable way of achieving independence from their agenda. As result, we do not host programmes that are sponsored by any businesses and governments, also we do not accept any donations cash or kind from government or corporate organization's.

## ***Learn Urdu while enjoying its priceless poetry.***

*Alfaaz ki Mehfil* is a collection of select Urdu *shers* (couplets), translated into simple English. Each page has a helpful mini-dictionary for quick referencing.

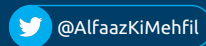
Lovingly curated and interpreted by one amateur aashiq for fellow amateur aashiqs.

Perhaps for the first time ever, we will have a book on Urdu poetry that has been curated by someone who is neither a scholar nor a long-term student of Urdu. *Alfaaz ki Mehfil* is written by Satya Prabhakar who has been learning Urdu for the last eighteen months, devoting about 15 minutes a day on selecting and then translating Urdu couplets into English.

The charm of *Alfaaz ki Mehfil* is exactly this: its lack of pretension and how *mohabbat* for Urdu flows out of every page, be it in the evocative, yet simple, interpretation or in giving a brief introduction to each poet.

Turn to any page. Savor the wit and wisdom of the greatest Urdu poets from the 1600s to now. And then spread the joy: share the *sher*.

WhatsApp Yes to **+91 63812 93765** to subscribe.



CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE

✉ info@cdpp.co.in | 🌐 www.cdpp.co.in

Cover design - Syed Moin Afroz

