

## Press Release

### Jashn-e-Rekhta London: Virtual Urdu festival on September 5-6

London: In Urdu, there are seven stages of love - beginning with hub (attraction) and culminating in maut (death). On September 5 & 6, Urdu will shrink to three virtual stages where legends and luminaries will step discuss, ideate, and render the intricacies of hub, uns (infatuation), ishq (love), akeedat (trust), ibadat (worship), junoon (passion) and maut. And every other emotion in between. Not merely in lyrical poetry and prose but in the tempo of the tanpura, the clank of the ghungroo, the eloquent dialogues of playwrights and the logical discourse of scholars. On September 5 & 6, legends and leading lights of Urdu will walk into your living rooms to keep alive the language that was developed in the 12th century.

Jashn-e-Rekhta (JeR) London will have 32 sessions across three stages where the venerable Farida Khannum's dulcet voice will resonate along with Ali Sethi, Shilpa Rao and Fifi Haroon; Raza Ali Abidi and Yawar Abbas will walk down the memory lane and relive the golden years of radio and its legends; Sania Saeed and film director Tanuja Chandra will discuss threadbare the contribution of Urdu to the world of cinema and television. All this and more interspersed with storytelling, dance performances, ghazals and poetry recitation, discussions by prominent artistes including Javed Akhtar, film maker Vishal Bhardwaj, Gulzar, Nandita Das, Danish Iqbal, amongst several others.

An initiative of Rekhta Foundation UK Charity, JeR London will cater to the long-standing desire of the nearly 2 million British South Asians living in the UK, most notably in Greater London. Originally, purported to be a live festival showcased in the heart of the capital city, JeR was modified into a virtual show in keeping with the rigours of the current pandemic. The virtual Urdu festival will replicate the immersive nature of JeR, a popular annual marquee Urdu festival held in New Delhi.

JeR London will be no ordinary virtual festival. Not the cliched presentation of participants boxed within squares on the screen and performances dreary in a 2-D rendition. JeR London will break the proverbial fourth wall with an immaculate 3-D presentation. On your device, you can virtually walk through the lobby and help desk, switch between the three auditoriums with a quick movement of the cursor. Added to this state-of-the-art technical presentation will be a Rekhta bazaar, resource centre with digital literature, live interaction with audience, Q&A, polls and much more. JeR London will be an unusual experience - a virtual festival as splendid and as immersive as a live festival.

"JeR London will be in pursuance of Rekhta Foundation UK Charity's professed objective of cultural preservation & promotion, education & advocacy around Urdu's existing rich literary and cultural heritage, and showcasing the beauty of Urdu language through cultural events, musical programmes, seminars and educational courses. The two-day festival is a microcosm of curated content representing the sociocultural matrix of Urdu in the UK. It will be a celebration of Urdu language, its literature and culture and the myriad art forms that the language lends itself to," says Sanjiv Saraf, Founder, Rekhta Foundation.

**Ticket:** Priced at £18.00 and £15.00 (for students), JeR London's All-access Festival Pass includes 2 full days of virtual experience, 15 day on-demand viewing access, 30 hours of exclusive sessions and host of virtual event features.

**Timing:** On September 5 & 6, JeR London will premiered live between in Britain 3pm to 8pm (BST), USA: 10 am to 3 pm (EDT), UAE: 6 pm to 11 pm (GST) and India: 7.30 pm to 12.30 am (IST).

**Urdu & Rekhta in the UK:** Urdu is no stranger to the United Kingdom - it was listed as the fourth main language in England and Wales, and ranked third in the top 10 most spoken languages in London. Urdu's popularity can also be gauged from Rekhta's follower count. [rekhta.org](http://rekhta.org), the world's largest repository of Urdu literature, is followed by nearly 226,000 people in the UK region including 211,000 in England and 84,000 followers in the city of London alone.

**About Rekhta Foundation UK:** A registered charity, Rekhta Foundation UK aims at preservation & promotion of languages, literature and culture of South Asia with a particular focus on Urdu. The Foundation is also working towards engaging the ecosystem of renowned academics and cultural leaders in Urdu across the globe and increasing awareness of Urdu language and culture and its interrelatedness and relevance to life in the United Kingdom.

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