

# SACH

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He used to call himself a phoenix. 'I rise from my own ashes', he would say. A fighter, a friend, a colleague, a mentor, a guide and so much more he was to so many people. He was chhote bhaiya, khur, khurshid, khurshid da, borda (elder brother in Bangla), anna (elder brother in Tamil), khurshid sir, comrade khurshid, yaar khurshid and to some he was khurshid sahab, guru ji, khurshid ji.

Some see him as a man of contradictions (so full of friends and so lonely, so strong and so vulnerable). Others consider him as a tireless promoter of peace. A Lover of poetry. A sharp analyst and core intellectual. Story teller, poetry reciter, full of drama/theatrics, full of energy. A beautiful human being full of warmth. His infectious smile, beautiful voice, powerful personality, strong values and ideological commitments, his wit, his humour, his compassion, his care and love, his honesty marked his personality.

He was a mobile dictionary for many of us. People envied his memory, he remembered everything; old songs, poems, stories, exact reference on exact page number of books he read long back. From Marx, Lenin, Plekhanov, Dostoyevsky to Nirala, Sankrityayan, Parsai, Bhawani Prasad Mishra, Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Ismat Chughtai, Muktibodh, Ghalib, Mir Taqi Mir to Ali Sardar Jafri, Sahir Ludhianvi, Faiz Ahmad Faiz to Neruda, G.B. Shaw, Mahmoud Darwish, Maya Angelou, and the list can go on and on. Such was his canvas and he painted fearlessly.

He would trust people very easily and make friends and with child-like innocence would open up his life to all. His friendship was his wealth, assets of his life. How often do we find someone with such diversity of friends from all walks of life and all age groups?

He would always tell us, 'don't be afraid of making mistakes, I am there, I will take care of it. Go ahead make mistakes, there is no problem in making mistakes, but, you need to learn from those mistakes.' He gave us freedom and space to explore ourselves, encouraged us to do things differently, experiment. He would proudly say, 'I always challenge myself to do things differently, bring in new dimensions, otherwise, I will become repetitive, stale.' He infected all of us with his enthusiasm.

In the present times with the conservative right chosen to power in India and with escalated conflicts globally, Dr. Khurshid's analysis and his guidance would have generated more learning opportunities. He had a vision of a peaceful society and would strongly advocate against war and the ideology of war. He would often quote from Sahir Ludhyanvi's 'Ae Shareef Insano', in his powerful voice, 'jung to khud hi masla hai ek, jung kya maslon ka hal degi', (war is a problem itself, what solutions will war give). In these dark times we need many more Khurshids (the word literally means the sun) with the light of their vision.

His death is a huge loss for all those people who believe in and strive for a just, peaceful, harmonious society.



*23<sup>rd</sup> November 1958 – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2013*

*Though these poems were written before. I want to dedicate these poems to Khurshid.*

*Regards, Volga*

# Spring will not Come

No more will spring come to this town.  
Wheat sprouts may bloom again in fields  
    wearing small, tiny ears  
but spring will not come here again.  
Men will take birth and go around  
    they'll weep and they'll laugh,  
but spring will not come here again.  
    Unpolluted wind blowing  
Crossing the smell of charred flesh  
    butterflies flying in soft sun  
pigeon-wings flapping to warm rays —  
    spring will not look in here again.  
Except for freezing cold or scorching sun  
    As *mandaras* bloom  
to this town blossoming death  
spring at least will not come.

    Upon charred bodies  
boils of distrust erupt oozing pus  
    but here no trees wear buds.  
As the singing birds were flung into flames  
    through closed windows slits  
and the moans floated unrestrained  
to the mango buds blooming here  
    *koels* do not open their throats.  
Here where blood red *mandaras* bloom  
spring at least will not come.

VOLGA

*[Translated by Vasanth Kannabiran]*

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# The Farmers Wife

You are virtuous and you are gone.  
Poor sinner that I am remain  
Before your creditors  
Unable to bend your head  
Or stretch out your hand  
Or sell your crops  
You crossed over.  
But I was born with a head bent  
A hand out stretched  
Not unused to being sold  
Knowing all this did you leave me?  
You found release with poison  
Poisoning my bitter existence  
The cotton crop is but yesterdays  
But our family?  
How often have I drowned in it  
How many times have I escaped death  
Whether you abused or reviled me  
Kicked me when you were drunk  
I thought he is but a man  
Little did I dream you would deal  
Me a death blow like this!  
True the crop was gone  
The debt remained  
Our dignity hit the dust our  
Our hearts turned to water  
But how did you imagine  
My back would bear the burden of four children?  
You saw your crop destroyed  
What of the harvest of my womb?  
Can I leave them to the wind  
Like worm eaten cotton pods?  
It takes a moment to die  
But to open your mouth and ask  
What of this?  
Why is this?  
Needs a firm heart.  
To teach my children  
to clench a fist  
not merely for a handful of rice  
but in battle  
I must live  
I must embrace life not death  
Embrace life and the struggle for life.

Volga  
[Translated by Vasanth Kannabiran]

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# Dr. KHURSHID ANWAR

## A Great Soul of Time

**ARSHAD KARIM**

Al-Bilal Falahi Tanzeem Nawjawanon Regd,  
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, PAKISTAN

The untimely death of Dr. Khurshid Anwar is an irreparable loss for Institute for Social Democracy (ISD). Such a versatile soul is born once in centuries. Dr. Khurshid Anwar was a “man” in the real sense of the word; a well-wisher of humanity and a sincere friend of the plebeians.

His death is really a death blow to the cause of the progressive movement of the sub-continent. He was a common asset to them all. The blood thirsty vampire of the bourgeoisie cum landowner class “state” finish his life through conspiratical tactics.

Dr. Khurshid Anwar worked for peace. I had a chance of meeting him twice in HOPE Center, Dhaka, Bangladesh training in 2011 and 2012. Really he was a burning candle of hope for the future of the people of this sub-continent. We shall carry aloft the flag of hope and peace that was hoisted by this great soul.



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# KHURSHID SIR

## My Dear Friend !

**BARBARA MULLER**

sapis - consulting - coaching - management  
Wahlenau, GERMANY

I have a picture of you. Taken last year. Our ASHA - workshop, Advanced Socio-Historical Analysis. We did not say farewell at that time. You did not want to wake me up so early in the morning when you had to catch the flight to Delhi. I was very sad then, but I knew our work together will continue even if half of the world would be between us. So I was not too sad.

Now our work together will not continue. You are no more there. And I could not embrace you to say good-bye. I did not understand Buddha's words I had read recently:

"Death is certain.

Death is unexpected.

Life is uncertain.

Life is dangerous.

Death is certain.

Therefore, I can die any moment." <sup>1</sup>

I did not realize how close death had come to you.

Again, I look at the picture – and I feel the emptiness of the space to my side. You are missing. Your smile, this slight glimmer of irony in your eyes, your embrace – closeness and distance at the same time. Your presence.

This space, your space, will not be filled again. Who will be able to see the complexities the way you did? Where are all the stories and experience you have spent your lifetime gathering? For almost every problem and question you had a story to tell.

And very often these were stories of suffering. You did not turn away from sorrow. No, you accepted suffering and pain in the way how you interacted with people. You invited them with all their sorrow. And in return you gave courage. You gave people courage to face the suffering they had gone through. You showed them how to share their life and by doing so they were able to grow. I remember one moment during one of the seminars. Again, a woman told about the injustice she had suffered. You touched my hand and whispered: "Another

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experience of abuse.”

In some moments I could sense how much you were wounded by all these stories of vulnerability, how much pain there was inside you. But I believed your strength and your passion for life, your passion for life in dignity for all people, your passion for justice would shield you. Your sense of humour would give you resilience. I believed the sources of strength in your life – companionship, music and singing – would carry you safely across the abyss.

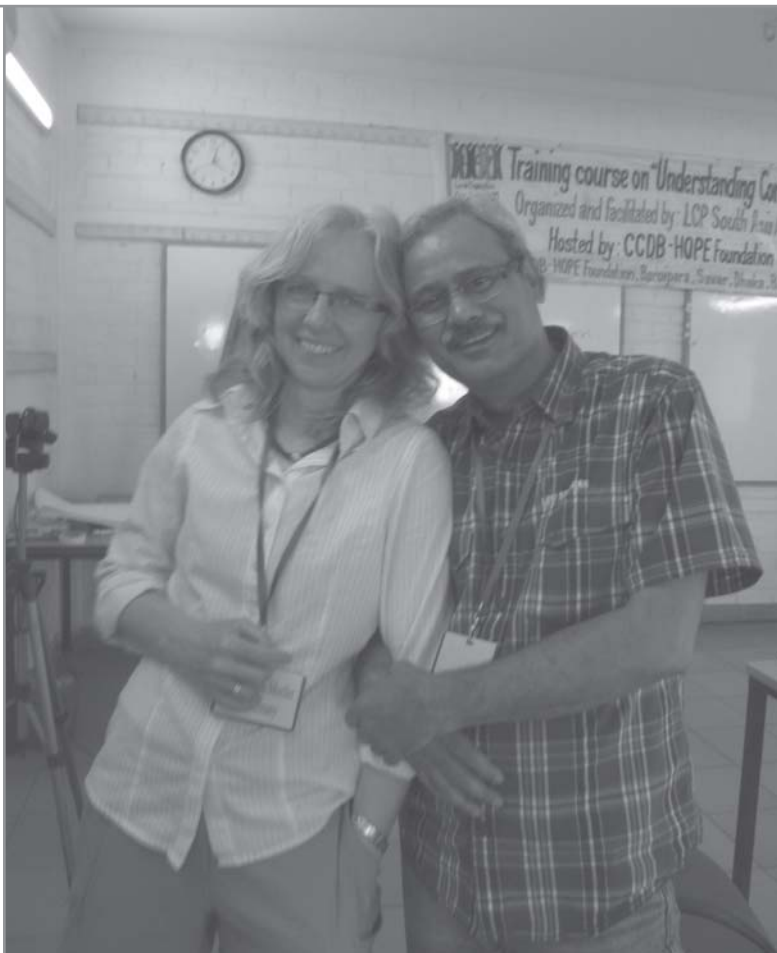
Who will now put his finger into the sore spots? Who will now rigorously “unpack” until all the details have been discovered and exposed? Whose mind will now be as sharp as a knife and without restraint? I have met only very few men who were as enraged and infuriated as you were about discrimination suffered by women. It was as if you suffered the same discrimination as they did. As if you

were an open wound. You allowed no excuses. You have raised my awareness. Thank you for that.

What remains for me to do is to thank you. Thank you for the little time and the few opportunities we had to share our thoughts, to transform our ideas and dreams into opportunities for learning. Thank you for including me in this creative collaboration, for sharing your experiences. Our joint creation – ASHA – is your legacy.

When you return to life to enrich human existence again, do let me know. Until then your star no longer shines in the sky. But in my heart.

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1. *Vipassana-Meditation, 1. Book. Own translation from the German Edition by Thomas Michael Zeh (2003), re-edited by Ven. Ariya Nani, 2005.*





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# KHURSHID ANWAR

## The Voice of South Asia

**DALJIT GHARTI** / Shanti, NEPAL

I met Dr. Khurshid Anwar, Shruti and Kalipada Sarker for the first time in Dhaka, Bangladesh at CCDB Hope Foundation. They were the facilitators' team and I was a trainee of basic training on Composite Heritage in 2011. It was first visit to Bangladesh for me and it really turned into fruitful. Because that was the training which encouraged me to claim myself that I was a peace building officer. Otherwise I did not have any idea for peace building at local level where communities much suffer by conflicts. After that I had many opportunities to be with, talk to him and learn from Dr. Khurshid. I found him a good mentor, leader and scholar in South Asian region. South Asia is the fertile land of many conflicts. He was the man of thoughts to address such conflicts or tensions in the region by developing the concept of Composite Heritage, a cultural tool that has been built to address sectarian conflicts and promoting DNH-Local Capacity for Peace. His important contribution made for peace building to bring about peace, harmony and Democracy must be acknowledged. I exactly do not know the reason behind his death. May be there are several factors playing important role in the episode. All of sudden, I heard that Dr. Khurshid was no more; I was so shocked and grieved from the depth of my heart. I could not talk or ask more about the incident. I had really hard time to ask about to ISD team too. I still feel that he is with us alive. It is hard to believe. It is like nightmare or dream. I never ever thought that he would be taken way so early. I always miss him among us and pray that his soul may rest in peace forever. It is a huge loss for ISD, India, and South Asia to lose such guide and writer who supported us holding both hands in each and every steps of our every day journey. He raised the voice against injustice supporting marginalized, oppressed, and ultra poor communities for their identities and rights. He loved people, touched them, listened them, worked with them as co-worker, served people with exemplary life and sacrificed his life at the end. Perhaps, the villain was jealous for all these good things taking place in the communities for change. I support and stand up for justice against injustice imposed on Dr. Khurshid Anwar by any means. The Villain must be brought into justice.



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# A Tribute to Dr. Khurshid Anwar

**Dr. Richard Devadoss** / Cornerstone, Chennai, INDIA

Whenever I think of Khurshid, there is an avalanche of thoughts, memories and visuals. Walking around with white board markers of different colours in capacity building sessions; clarity of analysis and powerful articulation of current affairs; the emotions and tears wherever there was violence, be it Gujarat, Bihar, Tamilnadu, Manipur, Nagaland or any other place; his conflict resolution skills; commitment to train future leadership; solidarity with struggles against injustices. The workshops on Composite Heritage and LCP – DNH that he facilitated for activists in Kanyakumari and Madurai in Tamilnadu; and Adoni and Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh, though a few years back, are still etched in my memory. Poetry and literature flowed from him. There was always laughter and fun when he was around. He was always surrounded by friends and well wishers. Khurshid's presence and personality was so overwhelming.

I like to highlight a few of the several enduring memories I have of Khurshid.

## **I) KHURSHID WAS HUMANENESS PERSONIFIED**

Khurshid was always willing to lend a shoulder to anyone in need. He counselled people, he nurtured them. He was compassionate and helped people. His friendship was genuine. He spoke up for people who were in pain. He was gentle and wouldn't hurt a fly. Those at ISD were not mere staff, but part of a large family. Knowing Khurshid closely for close to two decades, and having been with him as co-trainer for LCP – DNH and Composite Heritage in several Workshops in which there were mostly more women than men participants, I can vouch that he was a gender activist to the core, treating women as his equals, and with courtesy, dignity and respect; and standing with them in their struggle for their assertion and equality.

I am therefore shocked by the accusations against him. The powers and the persons; and the real reasons behind the heinous accusations to malign the name and

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integrity of such a humane person as Khurshid, I believe should be thoroughly investigated and the truth brought out.

## II) KHURSHID WAS A CREATOR

Khurshid was an ideologue, an organic intellectual and an activist all rolled into one, the essence of which was evident in his facilitation in workshops. His animated sessions in which the wisdom gained from his experiences and expertise were brought out, enabled the participants to gain new insights and capacities; and motivated them to strive to actualise their potentials. Khurshid was a Creator – he created not only good learners of the participants; but converted them as trainers. His own teammates at ISD, he did not make them good workers, but chiselled and moulded them to become creative leaders; capable of facing challenges and fighting injustices. Khurshid also played a key role in sowing the seeds for creating and nurturing the URAVUGAL (meaning relationships) Network for issue based Peace Building in Tamilnadu through workshops and, both personal and professional

relationships.

## III) KHURSHID WAS A CRUSADER FOR JUSTICE

Khurshid was always one with Dalits, Adivasis, the violated and the victimised. His heart went out to those who were oppressed and marginalised. He became depressed when atrocities were unleashed to violate the rights of the vulnerable in the name of money power, Caste, Religion or Gender. He visited the areas and met the victims and survivors; demanded justice, and channelized support for them. He boldly spoke out in meetings and wrote articles condemning the perpetrators, irrespective of whom or how powerful they were. He always believed that Peace can only be achieved only through Justice.

I still find it difficult to believe that Khurshid has left us. He will always be remembered for what he was. A genuine friend and a great human being. We at CORNERSTONE and URAVUGAL Network have lost a mentor and a co-traveller for Peace with Justice, Dignity and Equality.





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# Celebrating Composite Heritage

**EDDA KIRLEIS**

Bread for the World-Protestant Development Service,  
Berlin, GERMANY

When I was introduced to India and its many forms of social action in the early 1980ies, I was impressed by the high importance given to training and capacity building of activists, the learning spaces provided by those promoting social change. However makeshift they may have been, their existence was born out of the understanding that analysis and reflection are key to successful social struggles. Inspired by Marxist social analysis for understanding injustices in Indian society class was the central category. Feminists struggled hard to bring gender injustice and the system of patriarchy into this understanding as well and Dalit activists claimed caste as a crucial category of injustice to be looked into in order to understand and change realities marked by exploitation, violence and social exclusion.

The fact that social activists in South Asia approached social analysis with an intersectional approach most probably before this term was becoming important and intensively debated in social sciences lies in the historical realities that have shaped colonial politics and the unfinished post-colonial nation building projects in South Asia. Religious, caste and ethnic identities have defined communities, and these identities have been continuously being used by political and economic interest groups to establish their access to resources, control labour, people and markets and, with representative democratic structures, securing votes keeping them in power positions to pursue these interests.

The interface of identity and politics is therefore nothing new to South Asia. However, it is today shaped by an international discourse. The increasing power of international capital worldwide in controlling political decision making leads to clearly visible changes in this arena. To ensure that these economic interests of making and concentrating profits in the hands of a few, the disadvantages masses need to be distracted and divided. The battlefield for control and power therefore increasingly can be found the symbolic and cultural realm, using people's identities in order to divide and rule.

Globalized communication adds new dimensions to the shape of the power game of South Asian identity



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politics. Identities are newly created in ways earlier alien or unknown to South Asia. When visiting South Asia today, it becomes obvious how much particularly women and their dress codes become a visible sight of international identity politics. Muslim dress codes can serve as an example: In Bangladesh, the hijab, earlier an entirely unseen dress for Bengali Muslims, has become a common sight particularly among lower middle class women. In Dhaka, women are invited to a hijab fair, where they learn about different 'fashions' and techniques. Wahabi Islam, playing an entirely minor role in South Asia, is being promoted with huge outside investment in this region as mainstream school of thought in a region where Sufism was dominantly shaping the manifold practices of Muslim communities

Hindutva ideology reduces the wealth of beliefs and practices within plural Hinduism to a limited and rigid set of beliefs, re-establishing caste divides and making Hinduism a project of nationalism.

Christian communities, informed by tendencies in North America, witness a revival of narrow minded not inclusive forms of Christian fundamentalism. In Europe these groups turn against migrant communities, often from a Muslim background.

Buddhism becomes centre to the ethnic nationalism project in Sri Lanka.

These trends are not about people's choices of how to practice and define their beliefs. They are marked by features of ensuring a sense of belonging to some by excluding others, they create division and cater to the myth of religiously or ethnically 'clean' nation states. They cannot be understood as expressions of spirituality, but need to be analysed in the framework of renegotiating power relations locally, nationally and internationally. Complex and often syncretic religious and cultural practices and beliefs, as widespread in South Asia, are rather immune to these power games: either are very local and have only a very limited outreach or they blur and transgress the borders between different identities. These are therefore not useful for a political project of divide and rule. Only reductionist dichotomic definitions of 'us' against the 'other' serve the purpose of

giving a meaning in life of particularly the losers of the current economic system, tapping their emotions to turn violently against other communities rather than against powerful economic and political actors.

Dr.Khurshid Anwar and his team, has brought these South Asian heritage together: social analysis and training for processes of social change with the composite cultural heritage and its potential in South Asia. Coming from long experience of social analysis training and accompaniment of people's struggles, have been leading in developing approaches of analysis and social action that respond to the challenging identity related realities of South Asia, adding training on the analysis of power dynamics of culture and identity to the well researched ones relating to political economy.

The Gujarat pogrom in 2002 had been such a traumatic blow to all South Asians struggling for the establishment of a just and inclusive pluralist society, that it became a trigger to develop new approaches of social analysis and mobilisation among Indian activists. EED (now Bread for the World – EED) has been privileged to be approached by Dr. Khurshid Anwar and his team of Institute for Social Democracy in New Delhi for cooperating in ISD's endeavour to work on social change by strengthening the resilience against political power games by understanding and strengthening the compositeness of South Asia's culture(s).

The approach centres around the term of 'composite heritage': instead of focussing on what divides society ISD chooses to explore what unites people of South Asia beyond the assigned identities. It was not by coincidence, that in Gujarat, the onslaught on those religious sites which are revered both by Muslims and Hindus, were the first to be attacked and destroyed.

Starting from this insight, several workshops all over South Asia have proven that this region has a huge wealth of cultural practices where people are coming together in their everyday life, transcending their identity based divides, be it folk traditions, languages, poetry and theatre, dances, festivals, agricultural practices or food habits, just to mention a few. ISD has made an amazing collection of these uniting factors, a wealth of knowledge to be tapped, which has

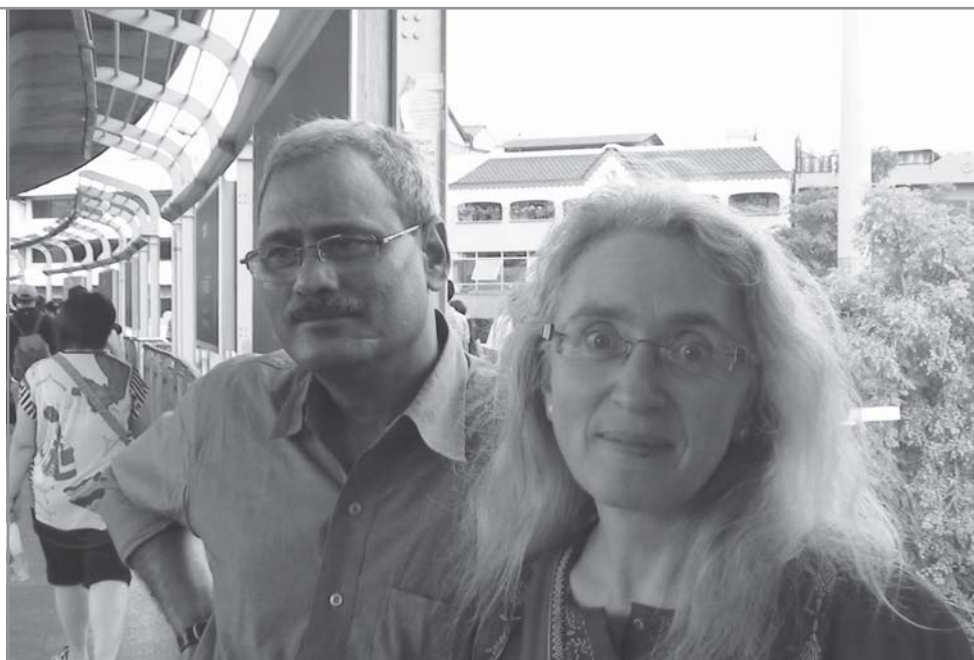
been documented in booklets and ISD's website. Furthermore, three training manuals have come out of ISD's initiative, which are being used by a pool of trainers ISD has developed and trained in the last ten years.

Dr. Khurshid Anwar has made it his personal mission to encourage activists from all over South Asia to question divisive identity politics, analyse its root causes and celebrate this heritage, to overcome divides and unravel and strengthen the inclusive culture that has sustained South Asian societies.

He has brought Pakistani and Bangladeshi activists together to break the taboo of speaking

about and reflecting on the role of the Pakistani army during the Bangladesh liberation war in Pakistani societies as well as the widespread prejudices against Pakistanis in Bangladeshi society. In North East India, he challenged the violent divides between different communities of different ethnic backgrounds by exploring the strong and intertwined heritage of the peoples in the region. Even at the Kumbh Mela ISD created a space celebrating the wealth of spiritual expression which was amazingly well received. I always recall when in one of ISD's workshops Christian and non-Christian Adivasi from Jharkhand who were not in talking terms with each other, came forward to dance together, arm in arm, "when the dhol drum was calling". We join Khurshid in his dream of many dhol drums in many places irresistably calling us to a united and collective celebration of our humankind.

With him passing away much too early, it is now up to us to step into his far too large footsteps and take up the cause of strengthening and celebrating a collective pluralistic and inclusive South Asia and beyond. A composite understanding of one's own identity is probably the most effective starting point to contribute to societies not falling victim to power games through identity political mobilising. Let us continue this important task.



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# KHURSHID ANWAR

## Ray of Light

**FAIZA SALEEM** / Karachi, PAKISTAN

The name itself speaks for the kind hearted and selfless person I came to know in 2005 at Dhaka, Bangladesh - Mr. Khurshid Anwar : Ray of Light. It was not just heartening to read what came to me via social media and electronic press sitting here so far but it changed my perception of viewing media not just in India but all over the world. Khurshid Sahab was a dear friend, though I met him ages ago but we always remained in contact because of the same cause Peace, Harmony and spreading love and not war in the world. What inspired me about Khurshid Sahab was his modesty, his love for reading and his strength to fight against injustice but I never in my wildest dream imagined that the cruelty of media power will break him in this manner where justice will be served in such treacherous ways. I recall his love for Iqbal's poetry and how excited he used to get on small things such easily. In what little time I had the pleasure to meet Khurshid Sahab and his team I got to know that he is a fighter and was never afraid of life, and his leaving us also depicts the same. I wish many things in life but I really wish he should not have been so tough on himself. May his soul rest in peace! His leaving us has also given a new perceptive to many people and his friends to keep fighting for what he fought.





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# Dr. KHURSHID ANWAR : The Enduring Memory

IMRAN MUNAWAR / CSC, PAKISTAN

My earliest memory of him was reference in absentia in conversations of Mr. Mehboob Sada, late director of CSC and Ms. Romana Bashir, former staff member. The discussions invariably involved fondness and reverence of man who was intellectually at elevated plane and yet so accessible and approachable. Then it was my ex-colleague Mr. Javed Sharif who went to Dhaka to attend training on Composite Heritage facilitated by him. On his return, he too was full of praise for a scholar who had conceived the idea of Composite Heritage. All this had naturally developed in me curiosity and a desire to meet him in person, listen to him and learn from him about Composite Heritage. I didn't had to wait much afterwards when plan for another international training was made in which I was part of delegation that went to Nepal in 2008. As we landed at the Kathmandu International Airport and were retrieving our luggage Javed appeared with balancing his backpack on his shoulder and brimming with extra joy that he had seen Dr. Khurshid Anwar and took us to meet him. It was then among the countless regular faces at the international arrival lounge of Kathmandu Airport, I for the first time saw Dr. Khurshid Anwar wearing white T-shirt and blue denim, there was something very eerie (as if there was a profound yearning in him perhaps resultant of conflict between idealism and pragmatism in him) behind his boyish look and warm smile. In the training, the following week, I came to know the reason why people who meet him become so much fond of him and respect him. He had unequivocal command over his subject and his knowledge of history and contextual realities of South Asia was impeccable. His ability to relate socio-historical analysis to present day contexts was simply amazing and his perpetual optimism, one could even say was both contagious and sublime.

After my first meeting with him in Nepal I had chance of meeting him three more times, twice in

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Dhaka and once in Kathmandu. Each time I met him I found him to be risen in intellectual stature, more humane and ideologue of democracy, pacifism and humanism. I do not consider myself to be a good reader of people or observer of their personalities but in case of Dr. Khurshid Anwar despite my limited exposure and experience I had figured out to some extent that beneath his nonchalance and cheerful disposition he was a restless spirit with rebellious streak. In my personal view if he had not realized his duty and responsibility towards society in particular and humanity in general he would have been an absolute maverick and contented person. In our last meeting during training in July 2013 in Kathmandu I would often go to him after the training sessions were over and we would sit together to chat about different things for quite a while. It was during those discussions he shared how much his life was in danger, what precautionary steps he was taking to cope with situation including keeping his whereabouts and plans undisclosed. As he was sharing these things with me he remembered interesting video clip he came across recently on social media in which an Egyptian 'Islamic scholar' was denouncing the fact that earth was round and declared it was western propaganda through NASA to show that Earth is round via pictures taken from space. He was

amused by such declarations on part of so-called religious scholars. Later he also showed me on his facebook page how unpopular he was becoming among the Muslims of India as well, as they termed him an apostate and devious person and threatened life lesson to him if he did not recant his views. I was naturally uneasy with his nonchalance and complacent disposition; I wondered how come a single individual could be engaged on so many battle fronts and retain his calm and composure. I did not had to wonder much longer on it as he began discussing another topic that was absolutely close to his heart and brought exquisite radiance and delight on face. It was his love for poetry and literature. He told me the best way for him to relax and take away the worries of world was submersion in poetry. For him poetry was a great source of solace, he truly enjoyed reading good poetry and creating one too. And I think it was natural of him to have such inclination because in his case creativity begat creativity and that too of superlative degree.

I am honored of my association with him. He was a man of exceptional qualities and feats who had an eventful and inspiring life. He was a popular man and had endeared himself to those he met with his liberal thinking; kindness of heart, tolerance and pragmatic approach to life.



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# My 'Borda' (Elder Brother)

MARGARET SNIGDHYA MOUNDAL / Dhaka, BANGLADESH

I want to share something about my 'Borda', Dr. Khurshid Anwar. Now, I am not going to speak about his high academic and intellectual matters but what type of man he was. First, I met him in a LCP workshop that was held in Godavari Village Resort, Nepal. After that LCP workshop every year we met 'Khurshid Bhai in HOPE Foundation, Savar, Dhaka, when he came here to facilitate any workshop or training regarding LCP or Composite Heritage.

He was very fond of our National Poet Nazrul Islam, Fakir Lalon Shah and Bengali Culture. During last few years (except the year 2013) he would arrange LCP or Composite Heritage workshop on our Victory Day. So that he could celebrate the day with us. He had no national barrier; he was a universal human being. He always told me, "Don't call me Khurshid Bhai, call me BORDA." 'Borda' is a Bengali word, which means 'Elder Brother'. He also told my son Shotodru, "Don't call me uncle; call me MAMA (maternal uncle)." I am not going to share how much he loved me or my son. Everyone who came in touch with him s/he knows very well how much he could love every one personally.

When we were in HOPE Foundation we all keep waiting for LCP workshop or Composite Heritage workshop. Because that time we would meet 'Khurshid Bhai who will bring some gift as a token of love. I kept all the gifts carefully. When I wear any dress given by 'Khurshid Bhai I always remember him.

I did not cry when I heard about the news of his sudden demise, because it was hard for me to believe. But now, when I am writing about 'My Borda' I cannot stop my tears. "BORDA! My Elder Brother! Can you hear me from 'that world'??? I just want to say you one sentence which I did not share with you while you were in 'this world' that is **I LOVE YOU.**" On behalf of HOPE Foundation, LCP partners and Composite Heritage participants we all love you very much.







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# MY ANNA...

## An Immortal Legend...

P. BALA MURUGAN / INDIA

I heard a lot about the peace lover through my friends – Ajith and Rajen. They acknowledged him for his simplicity, dedication and commitment for peace and harmony. I aspired to meet him and expressed the same to my friends and was looking forward to the opportunity. Ajith and Rajen assured me for a meeting with him. Finally, Ajith who worked with ISD earlier made me meet him. He kept his promise and created an opportunity to meet him but he was not aware that we are going to meet each other. Yes, I met him in Ajith's funeral. When I met him for the first time, I saw him crying. All of us were shocked by hearing Ajith's sudden demise. I could realize that Khurshid was burst out of tears because Ajith was always special to him. Being in grief, we couldn't speak to each other.

After sometime, Shurti and I met in Tuticorin during training on Composite Heritage. I expressed her my desire to meet him. She assured me to do the needful. She discussed with him and invited me for Social Analysis Training in Bangladesh where I went with an eagerness to meet him. The training was dedicated to our beloved friend Ajith and we paid homage to him during the inaugural session. When he started the training, I realized that my friends had told me very little about him. He was more than what I heard about him. His treasure of knowledge made me admire him. I went with the determination to be in good books of Khurshid. But I realized my fault when I interacted with him. He showered love and affection on all of us and accepted us as we are. He kept each and everyone in his good books and respected every one. It was a great experience for me to be with him even though it was for a very short time i.e three days. Later, I had several opportunities to be with him and enjoyed every moment.

He had never been a conventional trainer. His entire training was designed in such a way that the participants learn with fun and without any pressure. He was also very keen on motivating others to exhibit their talents – singing, dancing, cracking jokes. He himself was a humorous person and I always enjoyed his satirical speech.

We had good evenings with him during our stay. We enjoyed singing, dancing, cracking jokes, teasing each other etc.. He brought oneness among us. It is an ISD family. Being the head of the family, he made sure that each member's expectation was fulfilled. Attention to each individual was always given by him. When, we were planning to go for shopping, I asked him "Anna... you are arranging for shopping and who will give money?"... he never hesitated to give his purse. I said thanks Anna, I asked you for fun. But he instructed Shruti to give each member a hundred rupees at least. He was always very generous in his approach. Even if somebody argues, he nurtured them and respected their feelings. Many a time, we speak about empathy but fail to practice it, but he always had empathetic outlook and consciously practiced it.

Our relationship further strengthened when he included me in the editorial board of SACH newsletter and trainers team for Composite Heritage. He encouraged me to be part of ISD. He was good at recognizing other's potential and using them appropriately.

When we were alone at his room in Nepal last year, he was sharing about his health and told me, " Bala, I don't know how long I will live, I interfered him and said, "please anna don't talk like this, we want to learn more from you so you have to live for a longer time. He continued, I will do Bala... but, even if I die now, I am happy that there are people across

the world who can carry on what we have initiated. He ended the conversation that he would be happy whatever happens to him.

In the evenings, we used to discuss several things apart from the training topics from which I could understand he had high respect and regards for women. I found him treating everyone equally with respect and dignity. I always love to meet him whenever possible. When visited Delhi in September 2013, I went to ISD and had good time with him. When I informed him about my visit, he replied me, "waiting for you thambi". I had taken photograph with him and uploaded in the website. That was the first and last photo I put on facebook. He was a multifaceted person – guru, guide, philosopher, poet, journalist, brother, head of the institution, writer, trainer etc... and he excelled in all his roles perfectly. He never expected anything from us except love and affection.

When I received a mail from ISD about his sudden demise, I didn't believe it and thought that it was a fake mail. When Shruti confirmed it when I called her, I had a mental agony and felt helpless. Most of our ISD extended family members shared our grief and felt that it was an irreparable loss to all of us.

However, I strongly believe that merely his physical absence does not mean that he is not with us anymore. He is with us always. He had sown the seeds among the followers like me and we will strive hard to make his dreams a reality.

*His thambi (brother), Tamilnadu*



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# Remembering Khurshid

Prof. SALIL MISRA / INDIA

When I was asked by Shruti and Utpala – Khurshid’s colleagues at the Institute for Social Democracy (ISD) – to write something for a volume on Khurshid, I was in a dilemma. What should one write? Should it be a personal account or a politico-ideological one? There was a certain background to it covering the last few months. There was a whole chain of events – evoking anger, outrage, helplessness and loss among his friends at various points – which culminated in Khurshid deciding to end his life. All this was also connected to his activism, his tireless and persistent campaigns against communal violence and violence against women. Was I to write about the ‘cause’ Khurshid had come to be identified with, or the person himself (and as I understood him)? Indeed, in the context in which all the happened, was it all possible to separate the two?

The many events surrounding Khurshid’s life since December 2013 happened so rapidly that we found our emotions chasing the events. The close personal friends of Khurshid went through a range of emotion ranging from anger to loss. It all started with tremendous anger and helplessness. Anger at what was being done to him on TV channels and social media, and helplessness because we could do nothing about it. Some of us (me included) even underestimated the extent of trauma and stress he was going through.

All the anger and helplessness gave way to a sense of numbness on 18-19 December. On 19-12 at the Nigam Bodh Crematorium, in the midst of collective outrage and sadness, I could not prevent a momentary thought of ‘consolation’ from entering my mind. If indeed Khurshid had been there on the 19<sup>th</sup> he would have wholly approved of the way he was being remembered at the Nigan Bodh Ghat. Hundreds of people, all of them his friends, shouting *Comrade Khurshid ko Lal Salaam*, would certainly have gladdened his heart. He loved his friends and he loved being called a Comrade. The Communist in him had often gone beneath the surface but never into oblivion. Being called a Comrade mattered a great to him. He would certainly have endorsed being remembered as Comrade Khurshid. It was indeed strange that in the midst of all that, I could still experience a feeling of some kind of satisfaction. We really are slaves to our emotions. They come as and when they like.



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All the sadness and despair soon gave in to a sense of emptiness at the various meetings that were held at different places. The meetings were devoted to a cause and Khurshid virtually drowned in all the slogans, condemnations and angry outbursts. His enemies – some social activists, TV channels and social media – had managed to kill him again. His close personal friends were looking for their dear old friend Khurshid. But Khurshid had either been sublimated or reduced to a cause, a cause obviously larger than life. But what about the Life? The life that had gone out of our lives was very precious indeed. Weren't we entitled to mourn that in our own ways?

This was indeed a great injustice Khurshid had done to his close friends like me. He made it difficult for me to remember him the way I wanted to. And so I must therefore write the way I wish to remember him. I do not wish to write about the cause and Khurshid's own courage and conviction. But I also do not want to write about how I felt and feel about him. After all, it is to be his story, not mine. But if my narrative of Khurshid is emptied of the ideological and the personal, what is left of it? I don't want to write about how I feel, because that would not be Khurshid's account; that would be my account. That would be unfair to him. And I am extremely reluctant to reduce or elevate him to abstract causes. Khurshid was after all my very dear personal friend for three decades, with whom I had spent some very exciting, intoxicating and wonderful times together. His home was one place, perhaps the only place, where I could feel truly free and uninhibited and unwind myself.

I should then write about Khurshid as I would like to remember him now that he is not there. This would also be my way of introducing him to those who don't know him. I would certainly remember Khurshid as someone who carried multiple contradictions and inconsistencies within himself. His life was also lived in very contradictory ways. Conflicting and inconsistent situations came to him quite naturally and he dealt with them without trying to resolve the inconsistencies.

There was a time in the early 1980s when he loved smoking but also loved denying himself the pleasures of smoking. He seemed to derive some vicarious satisfaction from trying to

overcome temptations. He would often hide his cigarettes behind the bookshelf in his room in Sutlej hostel. He would then pretend to forget that there were cigarettes in his room. In moments of penury, he would indulge his moments of pining for his cigarettes, then look for them all over and feel great joy at finding a cigarette hidden somewhere behind the bookshelf.

A committed Communist, he was proud of being one. Even when he was not very active as a Communist, he would still make it a point to wear his Communism on his sleeve. If you really wanted to offend him, you could easily do it by simply practising some standard Communism-bashing. His Reason was also his Faith. But for a faithful Communist, the list of his friends was amazingly diverse. It included traditionalists, Congressites, BJPites, a-political characters, bureaucrats, and just about anyone. How did he manage it? In JNU, he had more friends outside AISF than inside. How did he get along with them? Were some of his friendships false and superficial? It really didn't seem so. Khurshid relished all his friendships and above all enjoyed the great diversity of his friendships. It was not very unusual for Khurshid to be in a close friendship with two people who could not stand each other.

An extremely sharp and perceptive scholar of Urdu, Khurshid never, never wrote in Urdu outside the requirements of an academic degree (M.Phil and Ph.D). He did all his serious writings either in Hindi or in English. Yet he possessed an understanding of Urdu poetry that was amazingly profound to the point of rarity. He had a keen insight into Urdu. I discovered Mir Taqi Mir on my own, but was led to Ghalib, Nazir Akbarabadi and Faiz by Khurshid. One important trait he shared with Ghalib was aesthetic self-praise and never missed an opportunity of indulging in it with zest. One morning he called me to indulge in a similar self-praise but in irony, ala Ghalib :  
*Qatra apna bhi haqeeqat mein hai dariya lekin  
Hamko taqleed-i-tunuk zarfi-e-Mansoor nahi*  
(*Divan-e Ghalib*, 101.4)

(A drop from me truly speaking is nothing short of an ocean. But I am no follower of the pettiness of self-praise practised by Mansoor [when he declared himself to be creator and was hanged for it])

Rarely does one come across the combination of a literary appreciation with a

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sociological understanding. Khurshid had plenty of it, yet did not ever write anything *in Urdu* or *on Urdu* (outside his Ph.D). Why did he exclude Urdu, which was so dear to him, from his cultural, literary, political, academic universe? The only explanation I have is that such contradictions happened naturally to him.

A great friend and a fine human being, he was gifted with a good understanding of people (though he revised his understanding quite often). He understood imperfections well and generally looked upon this imperfection in people (including his own) with compassion and empathy. And yet, for all that, he had a remarkable sense of intolerance. This intolerance showed up in flashes of anger and occasional fights with friends and colleagues. It seems to me that soon after he met a person, he developed an intuitive fondness for that person. The fondness was followed by some expectations of moral conduct. Quite invariably he would find people failing to live up to those standards of moral conduct. He could either display contempt for this weakness in others or view it with generosity. But either way, I sensed this great contradiction between his love of people and an equal intolerance for them, or some of them at any rate.

His notions of friends and family too were somewhat mixed up. Or rather they appeared mixed up to me. His immediate family – Meenakshi and Samar – were not like his close friends; they *were* his close friends. Samar, his son, called him *Khurshid* and not by the name of the relationship, till he was seven or eight. I think Khurshid encouraged Samar to call him by his first name, as a friend would do. Samar eventually shifted to calling him *Baba* only out of social obligation and not because of any parental socialization. Meenakshi too was a friend, albeit a very very special friend, who understood him better than anyone else did. I think at times it unnerved him. There were times when he made wrong choices. Or so I thought. I wanted Meenakshi to intervene and persuade him to take what I thought was the correct decision. She understood the current situation, and his mindset at that point in time, better than anyone else could, and stood by him. I am convinced that he was able to take some courageous steps because she stood by his side and thus helped him take big decisions.

Making no distinctions between friends and

family had its own disadvantages. Samar often gave Khurshid an opportunity to feel discontented. And, rising to the occasion, Khurshid would promptly develop parental anxieties and would want to act like a father and ‘discipline’ the Son. But that turned out to be difficult. Khurshid could either be a father or a friend, but not both at the same time. It was somehow less difficult to be a husband and a friend together, but quite unmanageable to combine the roles of a disciplining father and an indulging friend.

Khurshid’s active life was fairly neatly divided chronologically into days of struggle and those of relative comfort. There is no doubt in my mind that his days of struggle were also the days of tremendous creativity. Life did get routinized in a bureaucratic kind of way once he settled down as the head of ISD. This is however not to deny that he did a lot of important and useful work at ISD. Above all he created and nurtured a nice team of young professionals who are able to combine professional integrity with ideological commitment. But I still have no doubt that Khurshid’s most creative years were not the ones when he was at the helm of affairs in the voluntary organization. His most creative years were the years of struggle and uncertainty, preceding the years of security and confidence. It was quite characteristic of him to live these inconsistencies. He was most generous with money when he had none. It was quite the done thing for him to borrow money from one friend only to give to another! His personal relationships too flourished much better under situations of external strains and deprivations. And they often ran into strain when deprivations gave way to comfort and security. What was it about his personality that lent itself to such conflicting and unusual responses to different situations? Or was it his fate to live such a life?

For me the most painful and unbearable contradiction happened towards the last days of his life. Amidst so many friends, comrades, well-wishers, colleagues, amidst the abundance of human capital he had cultivated for decades, he still found himself to be alone. How was it that he found himself to be so lonely, hounded by TV channels, misunderstood and stigmatized by some others and un-surrounded by his own people? How could he be so alone on the morning of 18<sup>th</sup> December 2013? How could he? Could things

have been different?

Khurshid Anwar was full of life. And he had so much to give. He translated Pablo Neruda out of inner compulsions. And produced some of the finest and most imaginative translation, you will ever come across. He practised his activism out of a self-cultivated, self-conscious commitment. Both his inner compulsions and his self-conscious commitments converged on a single point, to nourish a life that was wholesome and creative and meaningful and socially relevant. It needed to go on.

His involvement with the ISD was of a kind that would have given him tremendous satisfaction. It gave him a rare opportunity to combine his professional life with his ideological life. He could really do what he wanted to do, and not bother about having to fend for his livelihood separately. He prepared a handbook on Composite Heritage for Peace, Harmony and Democracy, to be used by trainers and activists. He would have loved to do something like this, even if he was in some other profession. But now he could do it as part of his professional life. His activism, ideological commitment and professional life nicely blended into one another. He trained a very large number of NGO activists and sensitized them about the common composite heritage of different South Asian societies. He did a great job and enjoyed doing it. Through his work and writings he was creating meaningful spaces of protest, spaces that would get triggered off against any act of injustice. He needed to go on doing this. Why did he surrender to an act of injustice done to him? Through his handbook and workshops, he trained hundreds of activists

to resist and protest against injustice in a sustained way. Why did he forget his own lesson? Was this too one of many contradictions that he was fated to live out. Could he be spared just this one?

The lives of his friends have certainly become poorer without him. He too must be missing his family and friends. Will he remember the lines by Sardar Jafri he taught me? He published the poem in his ISD journal. He taught it to me and we often recited it together. It was his favourite. In *Mera Safar*, Sardar Jafri declared that after he is gone, he would return, though in a different form :

I'll return again  
Will speak through children;  
Will sing through the chirping of the birds;  
....

All the deep and blue rivers of the earth  
and the sky  
Will be full of ME  
And the world will see  
Every love-story is my love story.  
....

I am just a passing moment  
In this magical enchanted world.  
I am a bubbling drop of wine  
Perpetually travelling, always on a move  
From the goblet of the past  
Into the cup of the future.  
I am asleep and I am awake  
And go off to sleep again  
I am the forever game of eternity  
I live and I die  
I become immortal.







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# To Khurshid, My Brother

RENU THAKUR / ARPAN, Uttarakhand, INDIA

With passing time every thing changes, our appearance, our views and also the way of life. Our life experiences are our teachers and we learn from them. What does not generally change easily, is our core values, what we are deep inside.

I have known Khurshid since 1982, when I entered a new world (JNU for me at that time) from a small town. Here I learnt a lot of lessons and Khurshid was my guide. I wish to dedicate these small lessons turned into remembrances, by sharing them with all who have known him in different ways.

Just out of school (XII) for me literature was Mills & Boon. Khurshid's room was full of books, which amazed me but were beyond my interest. He would give me one book at a time (Marx, Lenin, Dostoyevsky...) and this opened a whole new vision of my understanding and knowledge of books, writers and their thoughts. This credit goes to Khurshid. Today my library has many books which have been gifted by him.

1984 Delhi riots – I was one of a JNU volunteer collecting clothes, raising funds and visiting the camps of riot victims. I was very disturbed by seeing all this and would have so many questions – and all were answered by Khurshid. The different dynamics of power, politics, caste, class were practical lessons. I remember after this I fell terribly sick with high fever and could not recover. He informed my parents and came to Dehradun to drop me home. For me he was a local guardian, a caring friend, comrade and a brother.

He was known for not tolerating people who criticized him, but I was a welcome critic. I could speak aloud of what I thought of him, whenever I heard something negative about him. He was very outspoken and straightforward on issues of religion, politics and culture. He could make good friends as easily as he made opponents.

Some 10 years back, when I was very upset, angry and disappointed with things that were going the wrong way in my life, I called him up to share my struggle and tensions – “Khurshid, you sent me a note on katharsis, how it is important in our life – why did you not share what was going on with your life and if you were being framed why did you not face the consequences? A sensitive, knowledgeable person like you did not deserve an end like this.”

Khurshid was the same till the end, his core values and beliefs, his passion for knowledge and music, writing boldly on controversial issues, for making friends and taking life as it comes.

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# A Man's Journey Towards Peace

**SYEDA SOFIA / Dhaka, BANGLADESH**

I address Khurshid Anwar as Khurshid Bhai. I met him first in 2005 in a TOT workshop held at Godavari Resort in Lalitpur, Nepal. The name of the workshop was TOT on 'Do No Harm : Local Capacities for Peace'. We were there for two weeks at the Godavari Resort. It is a wonderful resort in Nepal that I have ever seen in my life. Khurshid Bhai was one of the main facilitators of that course. There, naturally, language was English. This was for the first time that I attended a training in which I had to talk in English. Naturally, I was frightened, confused, and nervous. However, he was with us as an elder brother and mentor as well. When the training session was over, we had gossips during the tea-break time at the balcony of Godavari Resort. And, we enjoyed the green hilly region. I have mentioned that it was a TOT course and residential training. Whenever he met us, he encouraged us telling how to improve ourselves.

During the period 2005-2013, he came to HOPE Foundation in Bangladesh on several occasions in order to conduct training on 'Do No Harm : Local Capacities for Peace or Composite Heritage'. Now I got the opportunity to become closer to him. He loved Bangladesh very much. He often told, "Sofia, Bangladesh is my second home." He loved every Hope staff especially Kalipadada, Danny, Margaret and me.

So, this was our Khurshid Bhai. He joined twice or thrice the celebration programmes of our National Victory Day at HOPE Foundation. On the occasions, he was adorned with red and green cloth on his forehead. In his speech, he expressed his deep respect and love for our freedom fighters and martyrs. Once he told that he would speak in Bangla next time during the celebration of Victory Day at HOPE Foundation in Bangladesh. But unfortunately that next time would never come.

Whenever he came to HOPE Foundation in Bangladesh, I felt like one of my relatives came from abroad. He knew that I love sweets very much. Once he brought for me famous Haldiram Sweets from India. Once he gave me a yellow Lakhno Stiched sari (a Bengali woman's dress) as a gift for Spring. He also



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loved my son Ekush very much.

I never thought that Khurshid Bhai would go to eternal world leaving us alone so early. His early departure is a very sad event to us. We deeply mourn his death. We never thought of such unexpected death of him. I hate the conspiracy against this great man and also want proper justice.

I used to meet him even after office hours at HOPE Foundation. We had wonderful adda (chat) at Room 47 in HOPE Foundation. He had deep knowledge on every development issues like gender, peace, environment, etc. He also talked about bi-lateral relationship, and friendship between India and Bangladesh.

Khurshid Bhai was a great personality. He was a very good and strong facilitator in peace programmes. It is an achievement in my life to meet such a great man. If he had

lived more, he would contributed a lot more to the development field. His early departure is such a great loss for the world that could not be measured.



Today, I commemorate him with feelings of deep love and respect. I wish eternal peace for the departed soul of Khurshid Anwar– a great man in the journey of peace.





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# My Dear Friend Khurshid

SARITA CHOUHAN / INDIA

Khurshid Anwar, writing on him when he is no more, who had thought of this day, all his family, friends and colleagues have known Khurshid as fearless, straightforward, raising his voice clear and sharp against fundamentalist and extremist voices, believing and working diligently on peace and secular values. My personal association with him began on the grounds of World Social Forum, 2004 in Bombay where I had displayed an installation against saffronization of saffron colour and messages of peace, brotherhood, harmony, and love from Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity written on fabric scrolls were hung from the ceiling. The idea of a booklet on interfaith came to Khurshid from there and I wrote and illustrated it. After that we worked together on few other projects on Composite Culture and Heritage of India.

In all these years I have seen his passion and commitment for his work leading to spreading of ideas and writings on secularism and peace from marginal, grass root levels to spreading them across south-east Asian region. Khurshid believed from core of his heart in democratic views, respecting each individual's fundamental right to justice and free speech. In my interactions with him, I have seen him not just believing but in practicing himself an atmosphere of open discourse and questioning and being a simple and humble person that he was, he disliked arrogant and authoritarian tendencies.

Khurshid was against all kind of sectarian views and blind faith. At the same time he respected others beliefs and practices. I remember meeting him last on his birthday and telling him I am not taking non-veg and alcohol because I've just done a Reiki meditation seminar and he said there is some juice and vegetarian. Why I'm sharing this, it may seem trivial, but this showed his respecting others space.

On another occasion I was sharing my anger and outburst against some relative who had come

to our house and being an elderly person whom I had respected all this while, when he started speaking in outrageous words against Muslim community, I couldn't tolerate it and was telling Khurshid that I love his children but that moment I felt that I no more want to do anything with them. He so nicely told me that you can't argue with such people, and to change their old mind sets is not easy, but that doesn't mean

you stop loving their children. I told him "no I don't mean it and it was just an emotional outburst"

Being around Khurshid or speaking to him I completely felt at ease and never conscious as a woman and, that was the beauty of his friendship and personality that you felt comfortable and your own self.

With Gratitude, Love and Respect  
I miss you Khurshid.



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# For Sir Khurshid ..!

**SHAISTA FALAK** / Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, PAKISTAN

He is gone... he is no more in this world! The man who gave me the right to call him father without any blood relation, he is gone. I forgot to wish him his birthday this year, but then I consoled my heart that next year I will set reminder for his birthday but ...

I will miss the way he used to call me ... "bitiya", I loved the way you used to speak with me. I always imagined that I am coming to Delhi one day to meet you and Shruti and we are having all the good time there.

All I wish now is that I could find you one more time so that I can tell you how special you were in my life !

We will always love you and will always remember you!



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# A Man of Diversified Qualities and Characteristics

SYED MOAZZAM ALI / Karachi, PAKISTAN

*Aap se tum huwe phir tu ka unwan ho gaye...  
It's a tale of two men from two countries.*

The journey of peace and friendship began in Sri Lanka in 2004. People from South Asian countries were gathered in search of peace in PISA Conference.

Hello Pakistanis....come and join us. A man with frank and smiling face invited us. He was Khurshid. We worked on "Local Capacities for Peace" with him and other friends from South Asian countries. At night under the moon light, at the sand of the beach of Colambo, there was a unique group of friendly faces from Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal. With great feelings of togetherness we shared our joys and sorrows. Along with the music of the ocean waves, we sang, recited poetries and exchanged jokes. That night was very special. It tied us in a life long band of friendship.

Within few beautiful hours of that day and night, Khurshid and I passed the stages from *Aap* to *tu*. We became *Abay o Pakistani....Abay o Indian....*, and many more names we called each other at different occasions.

We talked, laughed, fought, got angry and missed each other. We had many commonalities – Mehdi Hassan, Mukesh, Lata, Abida Parveen, Ghalib, Faiz, Tagore, Krishn Chander, Munshi Prem Chand, Manto and Josh and many more. We fought on Cricket Matches between India and Pakistan though admired the cricketers of both sides but he was a die hard patriot *Hindustani* when there was the matter of winning or losing the match (*Abay tu kitna hi zor laga lay...jeetna to India ne hi hae*).

He was not allowed to visit Pakistan for his political background and views. We only met during meetings and workshops. But whenever we met, the gap was never felt – as if we had met only yesterday. He was full of life and energy. A man of diversified qualities and characteristics. A trainer, philosopher, scholar of Hindi, Urdu, Sanskrit and English and on top of all a friend. Miss you *yaar, aise kaise chala gaya tu...*

*Tera Moazzam*

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# By LOOSING KHURSHID ANWAR, What We The People of South Asia Lost

**TARIQ ZAMAN** / Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, PAKISTAN

I first met with Khurshid Bhai in 2007 in Nepal, where we were participating in the training workshop on Composite Heritage for Peace. Khurshid was an amazing facilitator. After the training we came back to our countries and communities but with a new vision. He taught us to never lose hope for peace in South Asia. Khurshid Bhai was also in love with Pakistan. He always had a wish to visit Lahore. In addition to the professional relationship, he was very compassionate to me as he was a great admirer of our Pashtun political and spiritual leader, Bacha Khan.

This was his warmth that brought me to India to visit him. After these meeting we met several times in Bangladesh. During all our meetings I always found him very loving friend and a great human being.

When I first heard about his sudden death I was shocked for few days. I had to ask few questions from myself first what I personally lost because of his heartbreaking death, second what we the 'social activists' lost, and third what we the people of South Asia lost. ...I still have no words to define this loss that he left behind us.

In my first meeting with Khurshid Anwar I recited these couplets by renowned Pashto Poet Ghani Khan to Khurshid Bhai and once again I dedicated these to him.

*"I dream that I rise like the cry of Mansoor—  
A handful of dust, I become an ocean of light.  
But then I hear the Azaan and wake up with a flurry.  
Sleep takes away the dreams and the world comes to life  
Saying, 'lie down Ghani Khan, do your time in jail.'"*







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# Red Salute to Comrade Khurshid

TEJ SINGH / ISD, INDIA

I was shocked when Sunanda Dixit called me on 18th December 2013 around 2:15 pm and told me about passing away of my dear friend, comrade and teacher Dr. Khurshid. I could not believe that because one day before I had talk to him and Shurti. I had never thought the way he died. I was worried about his illness. The man who always fought for the causes of downtrodden and weaker sections of our society will face such a false charge.

Khurshid was a fighter himself but could not face agony of such a false charge which was leveled against him by people who could not silence his voice and stop his pen through logic and took this way to silent him without hearing his version. I salute Comrade Khurshid. My acquaintance with him was from July 1986 when I went to Delhi from Kullu to join Jawaharlal Nehru University. The three persons I met in JNU first apart from Waryam Singh ji's family, Khurshid was one of them. I had gone to JNU with a letter to Khurshid and S.N. Malakar, instead of S.N. Malakar I met Comrade Sudhir Malakar. He introduced me to Comrade Khurshid and S.N. Malakar at Nilgiri Dhaba. I was very happy to meet these gentlemen because they gave me B.R. Deepak and Jagdish Katoch like friends known for years whereas we all were meeting first time, this meeting with Khurshid remained for lifelong. Later, from Khurshid he turned into my Guruji due to this meeting; because this was the meeting of AISF comrades.

Since Khurshid was JNU AISF leader and I had join university few weeks back, it was turn of JNU SU elections. Khurshid asked me to contest election from SL. He was our panel incharge, he was very disciplined. He told me how to campaign in election and use to take report everyday from us. As he was very disciplined same time he was kindhearted. He used to look after our daily needs those days. A very interesting incident occurred during this, I used to iron once a week, Khurshid saw me in unironed clothes he ordered me to change these immediately and even asked me to bring my all clothes to his room. Then he got them iron himself.

I was witness to his marriage with Meenu in Ajay Bhawan . Bringing up of Samar had also many memories. Khurshid used to teach in CIL/SL and Meenu used to take part time classes in DU those days, so some times me,



Balbir, Amitabh Mishra and late dear Aditya Chauchan used to take Samar to crush near Mass communication besides Poorvanchal, my duty use to be hold Samar on the back seat of Balbir's scoter because I didn't know to drive.

When there was any gazetted holiday in JNU there was no dinner in the mess. We use to go Katwariya Sarai Khurshid's house for dinner. Khurshid used to cook very tasty mutton with Azhar Bhai and Shail Jha. Aditya was vegetarian and was cooking vegetable. I insisted Khurshid that I will cook mutton, he said please do not cook since you do not know cooking but still I insisted. When it was served everybody refused to eat that. After that day whenever there was mutton Khurshid used to say do not let Tej Singh Thakur enter in kitchen. A part from these he used to take study circle of AISF Comrades either in Sutlej or Kaveri hostels. Once he was taking our study circle in 316 Kaveri, he asked some questions on changes in USSR to Jagdish Katoch instead of him Comrade Sanjay Jha answered. Khurshid shouted, "Did I ask you? Let Jagdish answer." To make moment lighter I said, "Guru ji class le rahe hain, koi chhatra beech mein nahin bolega." Everybody laugh. Then after few of us used to call him Guru ji and during his life

I use to call him Guru ji. Even if by mistake I call him Sir, he use to shout at me by saying atleast you should not say this you either call me by name or Guru ji. Guru ji used to hate if somebody call him sir or Dr.

Few of his friends used to call him Khur. Guru ji always played important role in JNU SU elections but his role in 1992 JNU SU election I will remember throughout my life. He was great Comrade. Personally he helped me a lot as he taught me as his student and corrected my mistakes, but loved me as his friend and used to ignore my laziness and other shortcomings. I am still repenting why did I not go to Delhi on 17<sup>th</sup> December from Mandi, then may be my beloved Guru ji would not have taken this harsh step if I would have been there, instead he could have fought his enemies bravely. Now I personally and we collectively promise him that we will carry forward his fight for justice and also we will try to do the task best which he has taken upon that is always fighting for the rights of oppressed and downtrodden and against all types of racism and for women rights. As he fought for Nirbhaya in 2012 and also inspired us to fight for this cause with others.

*Lal Salam Guru ji.*



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# How Do We Know What Good We Do?

## The Activism – Analysis Nexus

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Each violent conflict has its own history and specific causes. Yet, many elements of violent conflict seem to be identical across the various types of conflict. In all contexts of violent conflict parts of the population are mobilized and recruited for warfare. Producers and traders of arms and ammunition provide for anyone who pays. Agitators always find ways to create fear, enmity, mistrust and hatred where there was none before. Violence feeds violence. Action and reaction, violence and counter violence spark off a self perpetuating cycle of revenge and retaliation. As reliable as a clockwork attempts of ending violence and transforming violent conflict into constructive forms of interaction are aborted by purposeful actions.

Such strategies of warfare and violent conflict can be observed everywhere. They are predictable. If violence and warfare seem to follow certain patterns why then is it so difficult to design strategies for avoiding, preventing violence? Why does it seem to be impossible to foresee developments that lead to violent confrontation? And why does it seem to be impossible to foresee how strategies of peace building will affect the conflict? Or does it only seem to be impossible?

The experiences of civil society activists engaging in conflict transformation and peace building show ambiguous results. Yes, there are positive results. Constructive solutions for ending violence were found, relationships were re-established, levels of violence were reduced. But there are also experiences where well intended interventions had unexpected negative effects. In one case, a civil society initiative intended to restore relationships between groups divided by violent conflict. They started a series of dialogues with key members of all groups “to analyse differences and look for ways to solve their dispute”. However, after several meetings a large number of participants joined militias and fighting continued. They later said that the dialogue meetings had only revealed that the differences

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among them were so great, there “would never be a way to live peacefully together again”, they said.

Fortunately, such drastic negative experiences are rare. But the observation of occasional unintended negative effects raise the question of how the impact of peace work can be assessed and how unintended negative impact can be prevented.

### **PERCEIVING – UNDERSTANDING – ACTING—**

Conflict is about many things. It is about power, access to resources, control, it can be about relationships, identity and belonging. But it always is about perception. People judge and act based on their perceptions. There are things people are used to perceive – e.g. established stereotypes, there are things that confuse established perceptions and there are things people are made to perceive.

Therefore, conventional wisdom states that a “sound and proper analysis” is the required starting point for peace practice. While there is general agreement on this statement there is much less agreement as to what constitutes a “sound and proper analysis”. Thus, there are numerous concepts of conflict analysis. Beyond the immediate question of what constitutes a “sound and proper analysis” there are two fundamental questions: Is there – or can there be – something like an “objective” analysis? And: what do I need to know if I can not know everything?

Most conflict analysis look at economic, political, ideological and social issues that divide people. They study them in their histories and their present relevance to explain why things are happening the way they do. Strategizing for peace practice then very often includes projecting these issues into the future: what needs to be changed to bring about significant improvement?

Khurshid Anwar introduced another dimension into his understanding of a “sound and proper analysis”. By exploring the concept of Composite Heritage he reminded peace practitioners that there are no clear divides among people. While people may be divided on some issues at one moment in time, there are far more numerous elements and issues they have had – and still have – in common. Incidentally,

he explored this thought while at the same time the development and humanitarian community began exploring the “local capacities for peace” concept. Khurshid’s exploration into Composite Heritage reminds the community of peace practitioners that by doing a “sound and proper conflict analysis” the conventional way, we have seen but only one half – if not less – of reality. Understanding economic, political, social and ideological issues that divide people is necessary – but it is not sufficient to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of human relations and interactions.

I will always remember when – many years ago – I met Dr. Khurshid Anwar. It was at a consultation in Colombo, organized by Edda Kirleis, Angela Koenig and colleagues of the Asia team of the Churches’ Development Service (EED). They invited me to share some of my experiences working with partners in the Horn of Africa region on conflict transformation and peace building. We had just begun introducing “Do No Harm” or the Local Capacities for Peace “Framework for Considering the Impact of Projects on the Context of Conflict” into our thinking and analysis there.

Then there was this gentleman with a pronounced and strong voice, expressive body language and a magnificent way of capturing the attention of the audience. He talked about Composite Heritage. And I felt like listening to my twin brother.

The conversation we started at that distant meeting in Colombo never stopped. It was our journey to find the activism – analysis nexus. Over the years others joined our rambling discussion. It culminated finally in ASHA – Advanced Social/Historical Analysis. Our joint attempt to get a little closer to what may constitute an appropriate analysis. The challenge was -and still is – in Khurshid’s words: “finding a way to move from an opinion-based perception to a systematic understanding of their environment and a deeper understanding of the political. In the process we become aware of our capabilities and capacities to act in and change that environment and we discover how to strategically plan and mobilize for action in order to effect desired change.” Travelling with Khurshid Anwar brought us this far. We remain committed to continue the journey.

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