

**Mahamaheem's Speech for National Seminar On
"Rabindranath Tagore And His Association With Uttar
Pradesh" on 10th December 2011 at Allahabad**

**Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, and
Friends from Media,**

It is indeed a great privilege for me to inaugurate the National Seminar on Rabindranath Tagore and his association with Uttar Pradesh organized by Allahabad Museum to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the legendary poet and philosopher, Rabindranath Tagore.

Rabindranath Tagore, a sentimental poet, who was seeking for the universal truth, was one of the spokes persons of the soul of India who mesmerized the world,

both through his immensely moving voice and his pen. His overwhelming literary genius was widely admired by the world after his publication of the legendary work "Gitanjali". Uttar Pradesh especially Allahabad, Varanasi and Agra were some of his favourite places where he penned down the wonderful works including the masterpiece "Gitanjali". It was printed and published here in the Indian press. Uttar Pradesh, the land of the Indian epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharat, the wonder of the world Taj Mahal, the land where the 'Buddha' delivered the first sermon after attaining his enlightenment that signifies the "turning of the wheel",

transcending the time and space had been a subject of great interest to Tagore too.

Tagore visited Allahabad several times, first time at the age of 13 after his initiation (Upnayan) with his father Maharishi Devendra Nath Tagore. Subsequently he paid many more visits to meet his relatives and also to meet Chintamani Ghosh of Indian Press and also Ramanand Chattopadhyay, the great freedom fighter. His famous poem 'Taj Mahal' was conceived and written here after his visit to Agra. Tagore had come to the city, along with his nephew in November 1900, and stayed at the Barnett Hotel (now Hotel Harsh) on the M G Marg, Civil Lines, for three days. He again visited the city in October,

1914 and composed 14 of his other poems. These poems marked his stylistic shift from measured verse to free verse.

Late Chintamani Ghosh was the first publisher who introduced Tagore's works to the literary world in 1908. In 1923 when Vishwa Bharti had set up its own publishing concern, Indian Press returned entire stock of his published books for initiating Vishwa Bharti's publication.

In return late Chintamani Ghosh had expressed the desire to listen to one of Tagore's songs from the kavi guru. Tagore happily fulfilled his wish. The legendary poet has mentioned Allahabad in his famous poem

'Nauka Dubi'. Tagore's has exercised great influence on Hindi poets of Allahabad. Mention should be made of the short monograph of the great Hindi poet Surya Kant Tripathi 'Nirala' on Rabindranath Tagore. Titled Rabindra Kavita Kanan, this book elucidates Niralaji's analysis of a number of poems of Tagore.

I am glad to know that the national anthem's complete version has been composed and produced by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting recently. As one listens to the national anthem it arouses the spirit of nationalism in us. While talking about Rabindranath Tagore's concept of nationalism, one would realize his

deep and passionate love for India. He hailed India as "The enchanter of the world's mind".

Like Vivekanand, Tagore stressed the necessity of cultivation of the strength for the realization of rights, both by the individual and the group. According to him, the acceptance of insult of the bondage leads to the lessening of the divine light in the hearts of the men. It is capitulation to untruth and injustice. Weakness is the betrayal of the human soul.

Tagore had a spiritual conception of freedom. The essence of freedom is illumination of the soul which is achieved by a process of self realization and love is the path-way to freedom. Freedom is attained only through

the recognition of pervasiveness of interdependence of all beings, enlargement of perspective, expansion of consciousness, absoluteness of the parameter for revolution and the realization of eternal creativity of God.

His very famous lines are :

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by Thee into ever-
widening thought and action-
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my
country awake."

- Geetanjali

Every region has a personality of its own and Uttar Pradesh is not an exception to that. It is the meeting point of culture and civilization of our country having a repository of more than 10,000 years old human endeavor as evident from the archaeological excavated artifacts.

This is the land that witnessed many ups and downs of Indian history and here in the land where the poets and philosophers conceived their thoughts and expounded them through their literary dexterity of expression. Rabindranath Tagore, the champion of modern Indian literature and the campaigner of 'freedom' and sensibility also got impacted by the land of Uttar Pradesh, be it Allahabad, Varanasi and Agra or the time of Freedom struggle. Every space or city or its ambience inspired him to conceive some his writings. When the entire nation is celebrating the literary hero Rabidnranath Tagore on his 150th birth anniversary, how the great repository heritage of India, Allahabad Museum can remain away from this

responsibility. I am sure the deliberation to be expounded here by the eminent scholars invited here, will throw light on some of forgotten memories of Rabindranath Tagore and reflections of the great mind of Tagore. The National Seminar would bring new insight to the youths in particular and ignite new hopes for a revibrating India. I wish all good luck and offer my congratulations to the organizing committee for successful organization of the Seminar.

Once in a blue moon a great man is born. Tagore is one such great soul who could bring laurel to the literary art of India by receiving the solitary Indian Nobel Prize since 1913. We are yet to receive another Nobel Prize in

the field of literature. I hope that this seminar will enthuse the scholarly people to take up serious literary work so that we succeed in achieving literary heights for which Tagore would have been proud of.

Thank You - Namaskar