

CITYNEWS

Lahore Edition

Literary festival attracts writers, artistes, art buffs

By Meeran Karim
LAHORE

THE second annual Lahore Literary Festival (LLF) 2014 officially commenced with a star-studded opening ceremony at the Alhamra Arts Council, The Mall, here on Friday.

Pakistani veteran singer Farida Khanum, artist Shazia Sikander (in absentia), and actor Zia Mohyeddin were honored with lifetime achievement awards for their contribution to the arts in Pakistan. Prominent personalities at the ceremony included Pakistani journalist and member of LLF advisory board 2014 Ahmed Rashid, Amber

Saigol of a media group, Iqbal Z. Ahmed, French ambassador to Pakistan Philippe Thiebaud, a representative of the Germany Embassy in Pakistan, Italian ambassador to Pakistan Adriano Cianfarani, writer Fakir S. Aijazuddin, Dean of the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies Vali Nasr, CEO of a private bank Al-falah Asif Bajwa, legendary Ghazal singer Farida Khanum and theatre extraordinaire Zia Mohyeddin.

Ahmed Rashid opened the festival and addressed the audience gathered in Alhamra, Hall 1. The journalist thanked LLF's 100 speakers from Pakistan and

eight other countries for making a pilgrimage to the cultural hub of the country, the vibrant city of Lahore. On behalf of the LLF board of governors, headed by public relations expert Nusrat Jamil, and the advisory board, Rashid praised Lahore for taking ownership of the festival and attending its sessions religiously year after year. His speech was followed by Amber Saigol who reinforced his media group's partnership with LLF and its mission. Iqbal Z. Ahmed in his speech commended the organizers for helping soften the image of Pakistan in the world. Diplomatic representatives from Italy, Germany and France ensured

their support for cultural events and heritage sites in Lahore and in the rest of Pakistan. Fakir S. Aijazuddin treated the audience to a visual tour of Lahore chronicling 300 years of history. This was followed by the prize distribution of lifetime achievement awards to the honorees mentioned above. LLF 2014 is scheduled to take place on Saturday (today) and Sunday (tomorrow) as well.

'LAHORE, LITERATURE AND LONGING': Eminent Pakistani lawyer Aitzaz Ahsan, writer F.S. Aijazuddin, consulting editor of Newsweek Pakistan

Continued on page 14



Literary festival

Continued from page 13

Khaled Ahmed and Indian writer Pran Nevile spoke with Pakistani journalist Majeed Sheikh, in a session called 'Lahore, Literature, and Longing' held in Hall 2, Alhamra Arts Council, The Mall.

They revived Lahore's vibrant history with anecdotes and poetry on their lives in the city as young men searching for good fortune.

At a time when the rightwing forces in the country have seemingly hijacked different manifestations of Indo-Pak culture, Ahsan, Aijazuddin, Ahmed and Nevil called for a greater investment in preserving the arts and culture of the city and the country.

Urdu fiction was also a subject of discussion, and senior advocate Ahsan called for its worldwide promotion.
