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K H V S R N H K L V

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I MET Munawwar bhai at a few Jashn-e-Rekhta events. A humble man rooted in reality, his magnetic charisma as a shaya.r unfolded abundantly in 7TilidlaiTOS, where he was a popular figure because of his hold on the audience's pulse. He not only mimed the stage, but the audience as well.

Munawwar bhai could get them immersed in his magic in no time because poetry was not just an intellectual exercise for him. It was truly heartfelt and emotional. And that reflected in his renditions, which were straight from the heart and instantaneously reached the audiences' heart and they would get moved to tears. Munawwar himself would get teary-eyed, his voice would choke while reciting his poems.

Most of the time, this connect did not remain limited to mushairas. He would form life-long bonds with many in the audience. There are many in his huge circle of friends whom he met at such events. Most of less stature would charge ₹15 lakh for participating in Dubai who met him 30 years back at a mushairas but Munawwar bhai never demanded any money. He became family now.

Munawwar wrote in Urdu and Hindi (Awadhi) in simple, easy-to-understand language although his works have been translated into many languages. All his works have a beautiful blend of these two languages and touched a chord with the masses.

In the literary fraternity, everyone acknowledges Munawwar's unique contribution to Urdu poetry, often known to eulogise the *ustad* (beloved). He is, perhaps, the only Urdu poet who made 'mother' his muse. His collection 'Mad' is widely appreciated among his contemporaries as well as readers. It is not just a tribute to all mothers, but also talks about family values and traditions.

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Z K R P D G H P R W
K L V P X V H

I remember once an organiser didn't have the budget to invite him. When Munawwar got to know about this, he called him and said he would not take any money. *Bas* ghara bola ke Haleem ke thawa khila dens.. "That was Munawwar bhai. His transport business was also not doing well. Because of this, he was short of funds in his final days but never asked anyone for anything. He never forgot a favour or his friends. In his final days, when he was on a ventilator, some friends recorded a message for him. His daughter told later that they could sense some movement in his eyes. Even in an unconscious state, he remembered his friends.

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