

## Methodology Report

### **EAP1435: *An Obscure Archive: Hindi-Urdu periodicals from late colonial India, 1900-1950***

It was both a pleasure and learning experience for our entire team that worked on the project, so thanks, first of all, to the British Library and Arcadia for providing the opportunity. We would also like to thank Mr. Fuwad Khwaja of Kanpur for having preserved and donated the Urdu newspaper *Sadaqat* to us. Prof. Shahid Amin played a big role in putting us in touch with Mr. Khwaja. Mr. Priyamvad from the same city shared Hindi *Bhavishya*, *Chand*, *Madhuri* and *Prabha* with us. We acquired *Dipali* and *Filmdom* from a collector of old books in Kolkata. Some files of *Vishwamitra* were gifted to our library by Mr. Prakash Chandrayan of Saraiya village in Munger, Bihar. All these people deserve our thanks for having preserved this fragile material for so many decades.

We also learnt that some of the material—especially from the early years of *Sadaqat* and *Dipali*—was so fragile that we could not even donate these to a library as initially planned. The pages simply crumbled. I am glad we rescued the material from obscurity at the right time, and have given them a new lease of life.

We benefited a great deal from the expertise and know-how acquired by Dr. Rahi Soren's team by visiting the EAP project sites at Jadavpur University. We used a part time scanner donated by an institution we were collaborating with to produce high quality tiff-format images. Using the colour bar was not always easy, especially for big newspaper pages, so we did not use it mostly. Files of our *Bhavishya* collection were already available at archive.org, but we rescanned them for better resolution images, as we had promised in the proposal. We could not scan a couple of journals and books as we had planned and promised simply because we could not acquire clarity about their copyright status. On the plus side, using the funds we have also managed to survey the sites from where we could source the remaining issues of these excellent but endangered Hindi-Urdu journals, and we plan to scan and upload them in near future.

Lastly, we have presented to the discerning public, glimpses of the material at three exhibitions (India Habitat Centre, CSDS and School of Arts and Aesthetics, JNU) in Delhi and one at Hyderabad University, and hope to organise one more exhibition later this month at *Samanvay – Indian Languages Festival*, India Habitat Centre (24–26 November). It is always a good experience to hear what non-researchers have to say about something we thought only scholars will be interested in. We have received enthusiastic proposals from quite a few young scholars about their intent and we have one scholar registered for a doctorate on *Bhavishya*. Putting up exhibitions also helped us gather information about other valuable but endangered collections. Holding exhibitions is also our way of recognising the painstaking labour of collectors. We acknowledge them in our brochures and invite them to speak about their experience of collection, preservation and usage of the material.

**EAP team**

**CSDS, Delhi**