

The Department of Modern South Asian Studies (Languages and Literatures),
South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg,
Announces the International Workshop:

**Between Popular Culture and State Ideology: Urdu literature and Urdu Media in
Present-day Pakistan**

Dates: 20-22 July 2006

Venue: Internationales Wissenschaftsforum Heidelberg

Format: three-day workshop with participation of scholars from Pakistan, France, Germany, Great Britain, Norway and the United States.

Urdu is not only the national language, but the main link language for the common people of Pakistan. More books and periodicals are published in Urdu than in any other Pakistani language, including English. Moreover, Urdu is the principal language of religious discourse among South Asian Muslims. And yet, there is little awareness of this language and its vibrant culture outside Pakistan and India. The workshop aims to give Urdu scholars from different countries the opportunity to discuss a wide range of questions concerning the status and function of Urdu language and Urdu media in present-day Pakistan and to reach out to non-Urdu scholars of South Asia as well as to representatives of German media.

Questions to be discussed may be grouped as follows:

- 1. The role and space of Urdu literature and Urdu media in public discourse and in civil society
- 2. The place and function of Urdu as compared to other Pakistani languages (English and the regional languages)
- 3. Urdu literature and Urdu media in the global age: influences, interaction; new formats and genres

Working languages of the workshop will be Urdu and English. In case of Urdu papers English translations or summaries will be distributed among guest participants who are not well-versed in Urdu.

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