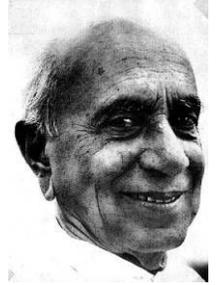




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Sindhi-Americans Gathered in Houston to Pay Tribute to Their National Leader

Two Sindhi Luminaries were Awarded on Their Contribution to Sindhi Society and Culture

HOUSTON, TX, USA. Hundreds of Sindhi-Americans gathered in Houston on Saturday, January 17, 2009 to commemorate the 105th birthday of Mr. G. M. Syed, a national leader of the Sindhi people who waged a nonviolent struggle against Islamic fundamentalism and for Sindhi freedom. Sindh is home to the ancient Indus Valley civilization and is now a province in Pakistan. A vibrant Sindhi-American community numbering in the tens of thousands lives in various U.S. cities.

More than 30 million Sindhis live in Sindh today. Sindhis are supportive of democracy and secularism and have been marginalized by Pakistan's military dictatorship and its Islamist ideology.

Dr. Zia Shah of the G. M. Syed Memorial Committee and Dr Saghir Shaikh of World Sindhi Congress spoke on the life and legacy of Mr Syed.

"Mr. Syed's message of non-violence, tolerance, and peace has a universal appeal, and the core principles of non-violence and conflict resolution are applicable to all the struggles for self-determination at individual, communal, or national levels," said Dr. Saghir Shaikh.

This annual event is organized to create a global awareness about the plight of Sindh and Sindhis around the world. "We must follow Syed's legacy of non-violent struggle and support the legitimate struggle of the peoples of Sindh and Balochistan," said Dr. Zia Shah, president of the G. M. Syed Memorial Committee, in his concluding remarks.

Many prominent community members attended the event including Mr. Jamil Daudi and Mr Zafar Agha, of Sindhi Association of North America, Mr. Umed Laghari, Ms Amber Laghari, Noornisa Ghangro, Manzoor Shha, Bashir Shahani, asif and Zubair Bhambro and Asif Shah of World Sindhi Congress.



During this event, G M Syed Memorial Awards for 2008 were also announced. Two Sindhi political leaders **Mr Abdul Wahid Aresar_(59) of Umerkot, Sindh and** and **Mr. Sunder Agnani of Jaipur, India**, were conferred with the prestigious 'G. M. Syed Memorial Awards 2008' in recognition of their contributions to *Sindhi society, culture and Sindhi rights movement*. These awards are jointly sponsored by the World Sindhi Congress and the G. M. Syed Memorial Committee.

Both of the award recipients participated the gathering through telephone. Mr Aresar in his eloquent speech reminded the audience for to the message of unity and justice. Mr Agnani bond among Sindhi in Sindh and India through the shared language and tradition is too strong to be broken by the geographical and political divisions. Others who participated through the telephone were Dr Gul Agha of Urabana, IL, and Mr. Keerat Babani of Mumbai.

The meeting concluded that the Pakistani government has been systematically violating the human rights of the secular-minded people of Sindh and Baluchistan. Pakistan has propped up Islamic fundamentalists, encouraged migration to reduce the indigenous people to a minority, and exploited the natural resources of the two provinces. Since last three years, it has been bombing and strafing Baloch villages with military equipment provided by the USA to fight Al-Qaeda and remnants of the Taliban. In year 2006 and 2007 the great Baloch leaders were assassinated: Sardar Akbar Ali Bugti and Balach Marri. Several hundreds of Baloch and Sindhis have been kidnapped by the Pakistani military over the last few years. The meeting expressed special concern about the Sindhi-American Dr. Safdar Sarki, who is under the custody and of Pakistan agencies since February 2006.

A dinner concluded the meeting.

The G. M. Syed Memorial Committee is a Houston, TX-based educational group organized to promote G. M. Syed's message of non-violence, democracy, secularism, and the right to self-determination for Sindhis and other oppressed nations within the international community. For more information, visit <http://www.gmsyed.org>.

The World Sindhi Congress (WSC) is one of the most prominent human rights advocacy organizations for Sindh and Sindhis. The main objective of WSC is to create a better understanding among the international community about the persecuted status of Sindhis in Pakistan and about the Sindhi people's struggles for their human rights, including the right to self-determination. WSC is a registered company in England and Wales, and California, USA, organized to carry out non-profit activities only. For more information, visit