

In the name of *Allah*, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

... .. *The HOPE Bulletin*

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Editor: Akbar Abdullah

CALIFORNIA *JAMA'AT* PROJECT: APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL ANJUMAN, LAHORE

INTRODUCTION

As condolences continue to come in on the passing away of our beloved sisters, Mrs Noer Sardar and Mrs Fakhr-ud-Din Ahmad, we pray that their families will find comfort in knowing that their sorrows are shared with other members of the worldwide *Jama'at*.

In January, our brother, A.S. Abdul Santoe, Central Anjuman's European Representative, participated in the Saturday session of the European Leadership Conference, which was held in North Holland, and delivered a powerful message on "Peace and Tolerance in Islam." A summary report referring to his speech and discussion are given in this special issue.

CONDOLENCE

Message from Mansoor Baksh, Religious Adviser, Guyana

Dear Jerrel,

Assalaamu Alaikum.

Our hearts have received a severe blow when we heard of your loss. *Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi rajionn.* Please accept condolences from our entire family and *jama'at* for the loss of your mom.

We have known each other for a long time and I have always looked at you and your father as leaders in our *jama'at*. After meeting Sis Shafida, we felt as if we were part of your family. This is indeed a great loss to us and to our entire *jama'at* because we know of the great involvement of your entire family in the *jama'at* affairs.

Our prayers for Allah to grant her eternal peace and for strength and happiness in your family.

Love,

Mansoor, Fazia, Javed, Naveed and Safeya

SALAT-E-JANAZA GHAIBANA

Message from Amir Aziz, General Secretary, Central Anjuman, Lahore

Assalam-o-Alaikum.

On this Friday Hazrat Ameer led the *Janaza* prayer of Mrs. Noer Sardar Sahiba and Mrs. Fakhr-ud-Din Sahiba. He gave a brief introduction of both the personalities and commended their services for the *Jammat*. Later on he conducted a fervent prayer for them.

EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

"Leadership and Good Governance - Innovative Approaches to World Peace"

UPF-Europe hosted its first 2008 three day "European Leadership Conference", January 18-20, in Huize Glory (Glory House), Bergen aan Zee, North Holland.

"Peace and Tolerance in Islam" by *A. S. Abdul Santoe*, European Coordinator of the Ahmadiyya Lahore Movement. Mr. Santoe showed a powerpoint presentation (see below) that clearly showed the essentially peaceful and compassionate nature of Islam. He said that while people like Geert Wilders were allowed to make inflammatory statements under the cloak of freedom of expression, the media ignored responses from him and others. He suggested that "we should use 'freedom of expression' (while also) recognizing the feelings and moods and holy things of others in our society". In the Netherlands, the feelings of one million people were not accounted for.

The talks were followed by *lengthy discussion* and, as UPF-NL Secretary General Wim Koetsier had previously envisaged, it coalesced into *considering the relationship between "Europe" and "Islam"*, including the growing Moslem population in Europe, Turkey's application to join the EU and Europe's involvement in the affairs of predominantly Moslem countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran.

Mr. van Iersel opined that what seemed to be anti-Islam was really all to do with the government having allowed uncontrolled immigration. The matter had not been discussed in Parliament for many years, though everyone had talked about it "around the kitchen table". He further asserted that while there were theological differences between Christianity and Islam (he himself is a Roman Catholic), "the command to behave kindly and respectfully in order to please God is the same" - and that those who attacked Islam seemed to be those that themselves had no belief.

Answering whether India and Pakistan could learn from the EU in creating a similar South East Asia Union, Mr. Van Iersel suggested there needed to be more political will. Mr. Santoe opined that the EU was able to develop because of Europe's Christian history even more than through economic agreements and that the differing religious cultures in the Indian subcontinent would also need to be resolved.

Mr. Van Iersel said he was amazed that Islam had been able to survive without having a "chief" or hierarchy, Mr. Santoe countered that he felt Islam had survived precisely because of this!

There was much more vigorous but good natured discussion, Mr. Santoe finishing by saying that interreligious cooperation was difficult in the Netherlands, that even the Moslems could not come together; but he was grateful to have found within UPF "a forum where we can come together and preach the unity of mankind."

PHOTOGRAPHIC PRESENTATION



A.S. Abdul Santoe delivering his speech



A.S. Abdul Santoe amongst guests



Glory House, conference venue



Other participants

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