



Thu 28th Jun, 2007

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Quick Vote

Question? Under Joint Electorate Christian leadership is selected by votes of Muslim members of Parliament. 2 Christian parliamentarians are in carts of MMA, (Religious Parties Alliance) while Christians never ever voted Muslim political parties. Joint Electorate divided Christians; if you want Unity then Vote now: Do you reject Joint Election System?

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Headline News

Dr. Safdar Sarki and Mr. Asif Baladi awarded UNA-NCA Human Rights Community Award 2006

Washington, DC – The United Nations Association of the National Capital Area (UNA-NCA) announced the winners of its 2006 Human Rights Community Award today at a formal luncheon at Capitol Hill in Washington, DC for celebration of the International Human Rights Day on December 10, 2006. Among the winners were two nominees from The World Sindhi Institute, who were paid tribute for their selfless commitment to the promotion of human rights in Sindh without fearing their own lives and security. Message of the Secretary General of United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan was read out at this occasion, in which he clearly declared poverty as the basic cause of human rights violations in the world. He proposed that in order to seriously work for universal human rights, we must demonstrate that we are serious about deprivation and suggested to answer the call to fight poverty as “a matter of obligation, not charity”.

Mr. Asif Baladi (originally Allah Ditto) is a Sindhi nationalist activist, intellectual writer and former journalist well-known in Sindhi community who writes under the name Asif Baladi. He is also the founder and President of the Sindh Nationalist Forum (SNF) and has been active with the ‘Jeeay Sindh’ movement. Not too long ago his organization SNF, announced to convene a ‘Pegham-e-Lateef’ (literally meaning ‘message of Lateef’) Conference at the shrine of Shah Abdul Lateef Bhitai, the great Sindhi Sufi poet and saint. The objective of the conference as Asif Baladi articulated was, “to spread the message of peace and pluralism”. ‘Paigham-e-Sindh’ Conference would have thus advanced Sindh’s message of peace, love and harmony to the rest of the world. His organization believes in the unity of multiplicity of religions and equity of cultures that combines Bhullay Shah, Bhattai and Kabir in the same stream in order to provide common foundations to South Asia. On June 26th 2006 Baladi was abducted by Inter Service Intelligence of Pakistan (ISI) personnel from Karachi. Since then he is reported to be held incommunicado by intelligence agencies and is yet to appear in front of the courts. His family is being harassed and are receiving threatening call by ISI agents to stop them approach the courts and media. No case, complaint or warrant from any court of law or from any police station has been produced against him. His family fears for his life and has filed a High Court petition. Result, if any, is yet awaited.

Dr. Sarki is a U.S. citizen, and his wife and two children live in the U.S. Dr. Sarki went to Pakistan for promoting the rights for Sindhis through his work with the “Jeay Sindh Quami Mahaz”, working as a leader of that secular party in Pakistan. On February 24, 2006, Dr. Sarki, was abducted from his apartment in Karachi, Pakistan,. According to eyewitnesses, he was blind folded, hand cuffed, beaten

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for an hour and bled profusely before he was removed from his apartment, by men who were believed to be members of the Pakistan security forces. They confiscated Dr. Sarki's laptop and US passport. Hundreds of the neighbors witnessed the beating and arrest of Dr. Sarki while he was being taken away in a police van. Since then, whereabouts of Dr. Sarki are still unknown to his family and friends. They fear for his life and apprehend severe torture if still alive. Dr. Sarki has not been heard from, seen, or charged with any crimes since his disappearance on that day.

On March 10, 2006, Amnesty International issued an urgent action appeal on Dr. Sarki's behalf. On May 25, the Asian Human Rights Commission issued a similar appeal. Over 60 news articles have been published concerning Dr. Sarki's abduction in the Pakistani media. A habeas corpus petition was filed with the Sindh High Court, but the government has failed to provide any information in response.

This year, the Louis B. Sohn Award was presented to Ms. Corinne Whitlatch, who has been the Executive Director of Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP). The Award went to her as an acknowledgement of her enormous contributions to the process of peace and justice in the Palestine-Israel conflict. Other Awardees of the UNA-NCA Human Rights Community Award include personalities such as Mona Dave of Amnesty International, who has sought to stop abuses against civilians, urged to end violence and helped promote education. Also presented the same award was Mr. Frank W. Dunham, nominated by Human Rights First, who died in 2006 and had a long and distinguished career as a defense lawyer of clients having difficulty in obtaining counsel. Mr. Luke T. Lee, a nominee from UNA-NCA served for many years as Co-Chair of the Human Rights Task Force of the same organization and provided wise and valuable leadership for the program. Mr. Brian Evans of Amnesty International won this award for his work on human rights in the Middle East.

As both the Awardees from Sindh could not be present on the occasion due to their disappearance at the hands of authorities in Pakistan, representatives of The World Sindhi Institute received their awards on their behalf. Ms. Elizabeth West received Dr. Safdar Sarki's award and Ms. Shannon Harris received the award for Mr. Asif Baladi. Mr. Munawar Laghari, executive director WSI also attended the ceremony along with his team.

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