

# Community Link

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## Human Development Foundation Celebrates 10th Year of Fundraising



Dr Adil Najam addresses the gathering



Tariq Aziz and Dr M. Alamgir Khan



Dr Nirma Khan writes a check. Mr Benish Ikram is in center

■ By Dr M. Shahid Yousuf

Results and resolution have drawn the Pakistani expatriate community of Michigan to the annual fundraisers of the Human Development Foundation year after year. It was no different on May 10th, 2008 at the Northfield Hilton, Troy, Michigan where over 500 members of the Pakistani community came together to continue the effort to alleviate poverty, promote education and community empowerment under the umbrella of HDF.

The gathering included many of the community leaders including Pakistan Association of America (MI) presidents, Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America members from all over the state and even Ohio.

The fundraising efforts are a small part of the overall picture but they translate into education for those who otherwise would spend their life in poverty, ignorance and disease or disability. These HDF schools stretch through the length and breadth of Pakistan, from the kutchi abadis (temporary settlements) to the remote villages in the back roads of the vast landscape of the country.

The Michigan effort of HDF is the result of many volunteers and community leaders such as Mr. Muzammil Malik and others (too many to name here) who have built this organization. Headed by the Dr. Zeenat Anwar, who is the Chair of the Board of Trustees of HDF, and Dr. M. Alamgir Khan, President, Michigan Chapter, the organization has successfully invited many luminaries including HRH Princess Sarwat of Jordan who was the keynote speaker in 1998, the first fundraiser event.

Prof. Adil Najam who is Frederick S. Pardee Professor of Global Public Policy at Boston University, was the keynote speaker at this function. His command of statistics and their impact on ordinary Pakistanis made a compelling case for the involvement of expatriates in USA in the wellbeing of those they have left behind. Numbers after numbers kept coming. Forty-seven million Pakistanis living under a dollar a day, 70 million with no safe drinking water, 55 million without sanitation and 50 % with no access to health care.

The impact of these statistics is staggering to comprehend though instinctively we know it all as it is all around us when we visit our former homeland. We had fallen to the 145th place amongst the community of 177 nations of the world when measured in Human Development Index (HDI). He stated that it is easier for an ordinary US resident to see a South Asian medical doctor in USA than for a South Asian to see a South Asian doctor in South Asia!

The individual excellence of Pakistani expatriates was contrasted with the collective failure of these very same Pakistanis.



Dr Zeenat Anwar, Tariq Aziz and Muzammil Malik



Dr Mujahid Ghazi

This contradiction was highlighted in his speech but he also stated that HDF, a collective effort, had a legacy of excellence. He gave examples drawn from three notables of Pakistan: Dr. Mahboob ul Haq who coined the Human Development Index (HDI), Abdul Sattar Edhi, and Akhtar Hameed Khan of Orangi Project.

While Professor Najam's speech appealed to intellect, what followed was a stirring address by Tariq Aziz, a notable politi-

cian and television personality from the days of inception of the Pakistani Television. His speech appealed to the raw emotions which connected with the audience. His command of Urdu and the narrative set the emotional tone for the evening.

He elaborated on the Islamic tenets stressing the importance of charity. Giving his own example of being a poor man in Lahore often sleeping on park benches, he felt gratified that Lahore had sent him to the Pakistani legislature with a margin of 50,000 votes.

The message being somewhat political in nature but stressing his humble roots was appreciated by the Lahorites. He auctioned one of his recent compilations of Punjabi poetry for \$ 10,000.

The book was bought by Dr. Nimr Ikram and Mrs. Benish Ikram of Jackson, MI.

Tariq Aziz promised that a new compilation, the second edition, will be dedicated to the couple and mentioned in that volume.

Dr. Mujahid Ghazi, President, Asian Broadcasting Network and community activist also spoke and conducted the rest of the evening's fundraising and auctioning of items, including jewelry which was donated by the audience. The evening raised well over \$ 200,000 for HDF.

## Pakistani-American Journalist Wins Award for Best Blog

■ By Khalid Hasan

Washington, DC: Pakistani-American Faiz Shakir and his co-author Amanda Terkel have won the Sidney Hillman Foundation's best blog award for their blog.

Talking to the South Asia Journalists' Association (SAJA), he said, "To have our work recognized as journalism is a great testament to the increasing reliability and influence of the blog-o-sphere. I'm not sure if that's an honor for us, or a blow to traditional journalism. Either way, I'll take it."

Shakir is the research director at the Center for American Progress and serves as editor-in-chief of ThinkProgress.org and The Progress Report.

He holds degrees from Harvard University and the Georgetown Law Center and has previously worked as a research associate for the Democratic National Committee, as a legislative aide to Florida Senator Bob Graham on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, and as a communications aide in the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (Courtesy Daily Times)

## May 12 Karachi Carnage Remembered in San Francisco Bay Area



Tayyab Mahmud and panelists

■ By Ali Hasan Cemendtaur

For Pakistan, May 12, 2007 was a momentous -- and a depressing -- day. If violence has always been a part of the Pakistani politics then the Karachi carnage of May 12 was the ugliest manifestation of that fact. It was the day when Pakistan's military ruler decided to break the momentum of a growing opposition by charging his political proponents to tackle the lawyers' movement. Over forty people died on May 12 but the strategy of scaring people with violence backfired. Opposition to Pervez Musharraf grew even stronger and Musharraf was forced to make several concessions.

Friends of South Asia, a group of Bay Area watchers of South Asian politics, observed May 12 by holding a talk and a discussion on Sunday, May 11. The commemorative program, co-sponsored by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan

American Congress, featured eminent Pakistani-American law professor Tayyab Mahmud as the main speaker and Ijaz Syed, Javed Ellahie, and Dabbir Tirmizi as panelists who discussed various facets of Pakistani judicial crisis. The program was titled "Pakistan's Judicial Crisis and Remembering Karachi May 12 Carnage."

Tayyab Mahmud in his speech said that the Pakistani coup d'état of 2007 was unique in the world history, because unlike other coups that one was staged to oust judges. Mahmud also said that the Pakistani events of last year should be seen in the larger context of developing world's response to the Western hegemony.

In the panel discussion Javed Ellahie said that the lawyers' movement in which roughly five thousand lawyers achieved a lot for the whole nation was unprecedented in the history of Pakistan.

Dabbir Tirmizi said his party, Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf, did

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## COPAA Expresses Relief on Tariq Azizuddin's Release



Los Angeles, CA: The Council of Pakistan American Affairs (COPAA), a Southern California based organization, has expressed "relief over the safe release of the Pakistani Ambassador to Afghanistan, Mr. Tariq Azizuddin" A COPAA Press Release states: A great friend of the Pakistani-American community, Mr. Azizuddin served as the Pakistani Consul General in Los Angeles from 1997-2000. During his captivity, while COPAA expressed

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## MCSI Dinner on June 22

A message received from the Muslim Community Service, Inc., La Mirada, CA states: By the grace of Allah (SWT), we have found a property for sale that is an unbelievable opportunity for building a permanent Masjid and other facilities for our Muslim community. We have been actively requesting donations, including a fundraiser and a mailing campaign, to raise enough funds to purchase the property.

The 14000 sf property includes 6600 sf building and 20 parking spaces. Moreover, there is a vacant land behind the building which could be purchased (\$400k) for future parking or other purposes. The property is located at the crossing of Imperial Hwy & Valley View in the city of La Mirada, CA 90638. Your help is urgently needed to complete the \$1.9 million acquisition. Muslim Community Service, Inc (MCSI) is arranging a fundraising dinner on Sunday, June 22nd, 2008 starting @ 5PM at the Whittier Community Center located at 7630 Washington Ave, Whittier CA 90602 at the crossing of Painter & Mar Vista.

MCSI is proposing donation and/or investment (loan) funds to secure this property. For any further information please contact any of the following brothers: Dr Rehman

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## Houstonians Help Harvard Student 'Save the Little Dreams' of Pakistani Children



Salman Ahmad gives a scintillating performance

Houston, TX: Called 'dreamfly', an organization raises funds to build schools in Pakistan. It supported this year's annual Asian/Pacific American Heritage Association (AP-AHA) Festival at the Miller Outdoor Theater on May 3rd as a booth sponsor. The event attracted hundreds of Houstonians, a diverse group that helped "save the little dreams" of Pakistani children by extending their support through drawings, pictures and video messages at the dreamfly booth.

According to a press release, the organization dreamfly was co-founded by a Pakistani Harvard Business School student Umaimah Mendhro and her colleague from Microsoft, Mona Akmal. Its goal is to empower people across the world to unlock their potential and build a network of global communities that invest in each other's success. The organization's initial project is to build a high-quality primary school and an innovative learning center in Akri, a village in Pakistan where the literacy rate is less than 10% and people live on less than 50c a day. Akri also happens to be Umaimah's home-village. The organization has already raised \$65,000 of the \$100,000 needed to build the dreamfly campus.

The construction and ongoing operations of the dreamfly school will be managed by The Citizens Foundation (TCF), a renowned nonprofit organization that currently manages over 450 schools imparting education to over 55,000 students across Pakistan. The organization has won many accolades and honors for its work, particularly for its financial and

operations management and transparency. Comprehensive information about TCF may be accessed through its website: [www.tcfusa.org](http://www.tcfusa.org). All donations to dreamfly are directed to TCF USA, a 501 (C)(3) status organization investing in education in Pakistan.

The APAHA Festival provided an ideal setting for promoting awareness of dreamfly's mission, attracting many people to attend with a complimentary concert by world-famous Junoon, a Pakistani rock band selling over 25 million albums worldwide, and the first to be invited to perform at the United Nations General Assembly.

Parents opened dialogue with their children by contrasting the circumstances of illiterate children in Pakistan with the educational opportunities available to children in the United States. As shown in their artistic expressions, pictures and video messages, these children were compelled to help "save the little dreams" of Akri's children by encouraging sponsors to contribute.

dreamfly's success to-date has been made possible through the generosity of hundreds of students, faculty and alumni from Harvard, MIT, and other Boston Universities, employees and senior managers at Microsoft Corporation, and every day people in the US who are moved by dreamfly's mission. Mr. Raymond Gilmartin, the outgoing CEO of Merck and a current Microsoft board member and Harvard Faculty member, became dreamfly's most recent 'dream-maker', sponsoring the dreamfly school library. To learn more about dreamfly, please visit: [www.thedreamfly.org](http://www.thedreamfly.org).

If you are able to donate your time or expertise, you can simply email Dreamfly at [info@thedreamfly.org](mailto:info@thedreamfly.org) or [umendhro@mba2009.hbs.edu](mailto:umendhro@mba2009.hbs.edu). Our most critical need, of course, is the additional \$35,000 to complete the school. Donations can be made online by following the "How you can Help" link on [www.thedreamfly.org](http://www.thedreamfly.org). All donations are tax-exempt and go to TCF USA, which is a 501(C)(3) accredited organization.

Let's together take these children on a surreal journey to make their every purposeful desire and positive ambition a reality. Let's create positive change wherever we can today - one village, one state, one country at a time.

APAHA contact information: [www.apaha.org](http://www.apaha.org); or contact Grace Rodriguez, Development & Marketing Director, at [grace@apaha.org](mailto:grace@apaha.org) or 713-568-5432.

## NCHD's Literacy Program Is Achieving Its Targets: Dr. Azra Pechoho

Nawabshah: The National Commission for Human Development's (NCHD) Literacy Program is achieving its objectives and targets in far flung areas of the country through the hard work and commitment of its teams. This was stated by Pakistan Peoples Party MNA, Dr. Azra Pechoho during her visit to the NCHD project in district Nawabshah. While appraising the services of female teachers, she said that NCHD is playing a vital role in areas of primary healthcare, education and employment generation throughout the country.

Briefing her on the occasion, NCHD's District General Manager informed that NCHD has reopened 196 feeder schools in the district in the first phase, while 600 more centers would be established in the second phase. She was informed that during the first phase, 15,000 females had graduated from these literacy centers.

NCHD is currently operating in all districts of Pakistan including FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas), FANA (Federal Administered Northern Areas) and AJK (Azad Jammu & Kashmir). Since 2002, NCHD has enrolled 7.87 million previously out-of-school children (5-7 year old) in primary schools and established over 120,000 Adult Literacy Centers (with 95% learners being female) all over Pakistan.

For achieving the 8th Millennium Development Goal (MDG)

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## US Muslims Concerned over New Report on Terrorism

■ By Abdus Sattar Ghazali

San Francisco: Organizations of American Muslims have expressed concern over a new government report on "homegrown terrorism" which claims that the threat posed by "violent Islamist extremists" now comes increasingly from within the US.

The report titled 'Violent Islamist extremism, the Internet, and the homegrown terrorist threat' has been released by Senator Lieberman, Chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee and Senator Susan Collins, a member of the committee.

"No longer is the threat just from abroad, as was the case with the attacks of September 11, 2001; the threat is now increasingly from within, from homegrown terrorists who are inspired by 'violent Islamist ideology' to plan and execute attacks where they live," the report said.

Four leading Arab-American and Muslim-American advocacy groups, in a joint letter to the two senators, have expressed deep concern over the report that heavily relies on a widely criticized and deeply flawed New York Police Department study on domestic radicalization that claimed that typical "signatures" of radicalization include wearing traditional clothing, growing beard, or giving up cigarettes, drinking, and gambling.

The groups which sent the letter are: American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), Muslim Advocates and Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC).

"Perhaps most disturbing is the fact that the report relies upon a now-discredited 2007 report by the New York Police Department that recommends particular scrutiny of American Muslims and Arab-Americans," said Kareem Shora, executive director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC).

## A Day of Pakistani Culture in Washington

Washington, DC: For a day-and-a-half, Pakistani music, food and dresses were the talk of the town in the US capital, not the war on terror - thanks to the first ever open house at the Pakistan Embassy.

The drones, the Taliban insurgents and Al Qaeda terrorists were pushed in the background as more than 4,000 people, mostly non-Pakistani Americans, thronged the Pakistan Embassy in Washington to perform bhangra and eat kebabs.

The visitors included Washington's mayor Adrian M. Fenty, senior government officials and think-tank experts. But what surprised everyone

## SALAM Sacramento: American Muslims Look to the Future



Glimpses of the graduation ceremony

■ By Ras H. Siddiqui

The Sacramento Area League of Associated Muslims (SALAM) held two programs this month, charting out a future for Muslims in America in their own ways. The May 18th event was a colorful Graduation Ceremony for the SALAM Weekend School which highlighted not only the achievements of mostly American-born Muslim kids but fulfilled the expectations of their parents as well.

The second program was held earlier on May 3rd with the Annual Spring Banquet and Fundraiser during which the existing Community Center, which many of us believe is a state-of-the-art building, was filled with people who are seeing the beginnings of a very modern or 21st Century Mosque for which ground was broken on March 29th. This could be one of the first mosque projects in America that is actually contemplating going solar.

Close to three hundred people attended the May 3rd event which raised over \$90,000 for future projects and expenses. The gathering was first addressed by Omar Mohey Eldin, Chairman SALAM Board of Trustees, along with Qur'anic recitation by Jaafar Albalbool and a performance by Sister Romana's (SALAM full-time school's) Pre-School class.

After Maghrib prayers a detailed progress report was presented by Javed Iqbal along with a slide presentation of the groundbreaking ceremony by Karim Menoufy, an inspirational talk by Dr. Metwalli Amer, and last but not least the fundraiser by Imam M.A. Azeez during which SALAM's young Imam talked about ground-breaking Real Estate ventures not just here and now but in the afterlife.

The SALAM Weekend School's graduation ceremony was once again a matter of great pride for not only the students and their teachers but for their parents as well. It was also very well attended. The Weekend School is currently looking for qualified teachers for classes that start again after the sum-

mer break. Any readers here who are interested in devoting time to the worthy cause of teaching Muslim children important aspects of their faith are encouraged to apply. Please visit SALAM at: <http://www.salamcenter.org/> or email [weekendschool@salamcenter.org](mailto:weekendschool@salamcenter.org).

The SALAM facility is located across the street from American River College at 4541 College Oak Drive, Sacramento. The telephone number is 916-979-1933.

The graduation ceremony, besides its beaming children and parents, had the usual festive atmosphere with food and networking at its best. Parents and even some grandparents participated. That this was all happening near fenced open ground with parked construction equipment did not go unnoticed by many of us. Inshallah, by this time next year a brand new Mosque structure will be standing in this open ground, a testament to Islam's growth in America's future as well. (With thanks to sister Lana Tamimi for her many years of service to the SALAM Weekend School).

## First Muslim Astronaut Addresses Shura Council Convention

Shura Council sincerely appreciates the moral and material support from its member organizations and the community at large at its annual banquet this past Sunday, says a Council press release. It adds: "This definitely helps Shura Council move forward," said Dr. Siddiqui, the Chairman of the Shura Council. He also highlighted the establishment of North California Shura Council and urged everyone to work harder and make communities stronger through continued education and organization.

The Vice Chairman of the Shura Council, Dr. Maher Hathout, expressed the possibility of the Shura Council becoming a launching pad for "organized communities coming together to work for mutual benefit and societal good."

The event attracted a diverse group of over four hundred scholars, Imams, leaders, activists and students from as far as San Diego in South and Conejo Valley in North among many others from Inland Empire, Los Angeles and Orange counties. "We feel recharged for this show of support and ready for the work ahead," said

Shakeel Syed, Executive Director of the Shura Council.

Receiving the 2008 Lifetime Service Award, Imam Saadiq Saafir of Masjid Ibaadillah recalled how proud he has been "for over fifteen years of continued efforts by Shura Council to keep the leadership dialoging on one table." He urged everyone to keep the culture of "working together" not only alive but stronger.

The special guest at the banquet was Dr. Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor, the first Muslim astronaut from Malaysia, who received the Shura Council's 2008 Peace Award. After

giving a video presentation and sharing experiences from his journey into space, Dr. Sheikh thanked the Shura Council for inviting him and sharing his new goal of life: "to revive the Islamic legacy and reclaim the rightful place for Muslims in the twenty-first century."

In addition to meeting the Muslim leadership in Southern California, Dr. Sheikh met with a former [American] astronaut at Jet Propulsion Laboratory and spoke at area universities and California Science Center. He also visited the North California Shura Council and met with the San

Diego Muslim community as well.

Receiving the Peace Award, Dr. Sheikh urged everyone to "dream big and work hard to realize it." Speaking to students at several Islamic schools in Southern California, Dr. Sheikh did inspire many young Muslims to dream.

All good comes from God and shortcomings are all ours. We thank you once again and look forward for a journey together in the years ahead.

Indeed, it is only together, we can make a difference!

\* If you like to receive a

SHURA, P 28

## IECRC Conference Highlights the Status of Women in Islam

### At Right Time, Musharraf Will Say Goodbye

■ By Khalid Hasan

Washington, DC: President Pervez Musharraf's "only desire is to act as the constitutional president and see Pakistan move into a total civilian dispensation," but as "things stabilize, the right time will come for him to move away and say goodbye," according to Rashid Qureshi, his press secretary, as quoted by the Washington Post on Sunday.

In an Islamabad-dated report, the newspaper reported Qureshi as saying of the war on terrorism and Pakistan's US link, "We are not anybody's puppet. It is our war, and we need their help." He said the president's aides had advised him to be quiet and stay "20 steps back" from public life as the new government developed, but that he might start becoming more active in expressing his views if urgent situations developed with the economy or terrorism. "This is not the time for him to leave, because there may be need for his constructive advice," Qureshi said.

However, according to the report by Pamela Constable and Robin Wright, "even from the shadows, Musharraf's presence has continued to influence the country he ruled as an army general from 1999 to 2007. The issue of whether he should remain in office has already divided the ruling coalition, eclipsed pressing national needs and revived conspiracy theories about American meddling in Pakistani affairs." The correspondents say no one in Islamabad thinks that Musharraf has the clout or the desire to dissolve parliament, as his presidential post allows him to do, let alone provoke another military coup. On the other hand, the civilian rift further lessens the chances of his being impeached by Parliament or legally challenged by the former Supreme Court chief justice he fired last year. Moreover, many Pakistanis are convinced that Musharraf still enjoys the support of Bush administration officials... who may worry that civilian leaders will not address the problem of militancy with as much rigor."

The report also quotes Stephen Cohen of Brookings as saying, "If the parties can't get along, then he'll stay around and see a way of being a balancer between the two of them, with the support of the army." He is also said to have predicted that Musharraf will make a "graceful exit" well before the end of his five-year presidential term. On Asif Ali Zardari, the report points out that "despite his party's liberal ideology, critics say Zardari has been showing increasing signs of autocracy, such as strong-arming opponents through intermediaries and cracking down on press freedoms". Media officials said he had ordered that Geo television, a major national source of news and political commentary, be barred

**MUSHARRAF, P 28**

ed volunteers for making the program an inspiring success for all. IECRC extends its special thanks to Brother Ahmed Shareef for providing and manning the audio sound system late into the evening. More information can be obtained by visiting [www.iecrcna.org](http://www.iecrcna.org) and [www.maulud.org](http://www.maulud.org) or calling 510-732-6786.



Pictures above: Glimpses of the Milad Shareef organized by IECRC

The Islamic Educational and Cultural Research Center (IECRC), a non-profit, non-political, 501(c)(3) community service organization based in Northern California, held its Third Annual Women's Conference on March 16, 2008 at the elegant Mehran Restaurant in the city of Newark, California. The Conference was attended by over 300 women who came from far and near to attend the great Milad Shareef gathering dedicated to the following great female personalities:

Hazrat Ummeh Hani (may Allah be well pleased with her), the dear cousin of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him, His Family and Companions) who was also known as Fakhta which means dove, the bird of peace. She was a great transmitter of Hadeeth literature and was dearly loved and trusted by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him and His Family). She is also famous as "Hind".

Hazrat Syeda Sakina (may Allah be well pleased with her), the precious great-grand-daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him and His Family) who witnessed the somber battle of Karbala at a very tender age and suffered its aftermath.

The term Milad Shareef refers to the celebration of the noble birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him, b. 570 CE) as the Light of Guidance for humanity in general and women in particular. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is believed by Muslims to be the final Prophet of Almighty God sent as a "Mercy to all the worlds" culminating the Divine Message of upholding truth and fighting evil both at the spiritual and social levels. Muslims believe in and love all the Prophets of God including Prophets Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jesus, and Moses (peace be upon them all). The Pure Mother Mary (may God have mercy on her) is one of the four perfect women in Islam.

Through its annual women's conferences, IECRC intends to bring to light the shining female luminaries of the Islamic intellectual and spiritu-

al tradition whose contributions are immense and warrant attention in the modern age as a source of inspiration, guidance, and healing to women both within and outside the fold of the Islamic faith and practice. Amongst the most distinguished women in Islam are those of the Blessed Household (may God be pleased with them all) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) as they drank directly from the spiritual and intellectual waters of His Blessed Company and Teachings.

Those presenting at this year's Conference were Dr. Syeda Saiqa Zubeda, Executive Director of the Canadian Women Counseling Centre (CWCC), British Columbia; Dr. Malek B. Moosa, Medical Practitioner in Vancouver, Canada; Ms. Benazir Bath, Lecturer at Yuba City College; Ms. Floretta Kukoyi of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, San Francisco; Ms. Fatima Mirza, Founder of the SABA Center; Syeda Zille Humma Qadri, Chair of the Women's Committee of IECRC; and young Abdullah Muhammad Ayyaz, 9-year old son of Syeda Zille Humma Qadri.

The opening session of the Conference was conducted by Sister Fatima Sharaaz Qadri, Women's Committee Chair of the IECRC Sacramento Chapter. She informed the audience of the great creation of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and the miracles related to His Blessed Birth. She eloquently invited guests to present their knowledge and spirituality to an eager audience.

Dr. Syeda Saiqa Zubeda delivered a comprehensive and academic Powerpoint presentation on Famous Muslim Women: A historical, spiritual, social and cultural perspective. She inspired the audience which consisted of both the old and the young through her knowledgeable narrations of the great women of Islamic history of the by-gone era - how they were scholars, warriors and women of great courage and patience. She emphasized the educational imperative for women and the need to return to the pristine teachings of Islam through connection with its Divine

Text - The Holy Qur'an.

Dr. Malek B. Moosa of Vancouver, Canada delivered her inspiring speech explaining the need to connect with the Divine Source of all healing energies in order to remove the pervasive modern ailments of depression and anxiety. She shared with an eager audience how reciting some specific Blessed Names of Allah Almighty has brought healing to her patients even with terminally ill diseases such as cancer. She praised the audio CD by Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ahmed Qadri, the Founding Director of the IECRC: "Allah ke Namon se Ilaaj Kijie" or "Heal Yourself with the Blessed Names of Allah Almighty".

Ms. Benazir Bath of the Islamic Center of Yuba City highlighted the difference in the social condition of women not just in pre-Islamic Arabia but also around the world. She explained how with the advent of Islam over 1400 years ago, women were bestowed their God-given birthrights, rights which the West received only recently such as the right to suffrage and property. Ms. Fatima Mirza of the SABA Center eloquently presented a similar message on the role of women in Islam.

Ms. Floretta Kukoyi of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, San Francisco emphasized the importance of "staying connected with our roots". She said that we should take the best from our home countries and the best from this country (the United States) and be the best we can.

Syeda Zille Humma Qadri of the IECRC USA delivered a moving speech on the two great personalities to whom the Conference was dedicated. She informed the audience of the piety and great status of Hazrat Syeda Sakina (may Allah be well pleased with her) who despite being only five years of age never missed her prayers. And for whom Allah Almighty sent the Leader of the Women in Paradise, Hazrat Syeda Fatima Zahra (may Allah be well pleased with her) to protect her when once she had become lost. Syeda Zille Humma also talked of the great reverence and respect the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) had for Hazrat Ummeh

Hani (may Allah be well pleased with her). She emphasized the importance of loving the Blessed Family of the Holy Prophet (Ahle Bayt), may Allah Almighty be well pleased with them.

Nine-year-old Abdullah Muhammad Ayyaz, oldest son of Syeda Zille Humma Qadri, eloquently presented on the love for and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). He exhorted the audience to honor and love our parents and be good Muslims. The IECRC always encourages its children and youth to participate as much as possible in all of its events.

The Holy Qur'an was recited by Hafiza Nadia Bath of Yuba City who memorized the entire Holy Qur'an at the tender age of 14. Those who recited the religious poetry (Hamd, Naat and Manqabat) were Sister Riffat Saeed, Sister Mumtaz Begum, Sister Aysha Ali, Sister Ashiyana Riaz, Sister Benazir Bath, Sister Samina Bath, Sister Amina Bath, Sister Sohab Hamdani, Sister Wasia Mobeen, Sister Naila Naz, and Sister Fareeha Bari. Some of these women traveled from as far as Woodland and Yuba City to participate in this noble event. The recitations were in Urdu, Punjabi, Arabic, Farsi and English. There was also an IECRC Powerpoint presentation detailing to the audience the history and services of the IECRC.

Children presented beautiful recitations as well including an enjoyable tablo of the famous Children's Prayer of Hazrat Allama Iqbal (may Allah have mercy on him): "Lab pe aati hai dua". There was also an English/Arabic presentation by the young sisters Aneesa Rehman, Nisma Khan and Sahar Khan on the traditional Daf to the delight of the audience calling out to the beautiful city of Madina, The Radiant. Other young participants were Abdurrahman Muhammad Ayyaz, Humza Chaudhry, Zahara Chaudhry and Noorain Chaudhry. The youngest presenter was four-year-old Baby Zainub, daughter of IECRC's Women's Committee Chair, Syeda Zille Humma Qadri, who won the heart of the audience by her powerful and reverberating Naat presentation.

IECRC is grateful to its dedicat-