



Indian - Jewish Association UK

Uniting the Indian and Jewish
Communities in Britain

Mumbai Commemoration – 21st December 2008

The Indian Jewish Association, together with the Board of Deputies, Hindu Forum of Great Britain and the Hindu Council UK, held a Solidarity Gathering on Sunday 21st December at the Sternberg Centre, Finchley.

IJA Co Chairman John Levy opened the meeting by noting how different the Indian and Jewish communities in Britain are, but that they have so much in common. Dr Gautam Sen, speaking for the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, the supreme body representing Hindu Saints and Saints to India read the Shanti Bat, the Hindu hymn to peace, and described the Mumbai attacks as a source of great sadness for India, where Jews have never before been attacked as Jews. Indians and Jews in India were now bonded together and he hoped that the consequence of the murderous attack would further strengthen the already strong links between India, Israel and Jews worldwide.

Rabbi Dr Tony Bayfield, representing the Reform Synagogues of Britain, intoned Psalm 130; Mavis Hyman, Trustee of the Miriam Hyman Memorial Trust recalled that her daughter Miriam, who had been killed in the London terrorist attacks on July 7 2005, was born on the first day of Chanukah, the Jewish festival of lights, and that she like the Mumbai victims had been the random victim of targeted violence. She drew strength from her late daughter's resilience which was now commemorated in a trust to raise funds for a childrens' eye clinic in Orissa, India.

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg of the Masorti Movement noted that the core teaching of Judaism is that every human being is created in God's image and that it is now even more important for the Indian and Jewish communities to come together, to follow the lead set by Chabad and to counter acts of terror by spreading light.

The gathering concluded with the lighting of the first light of Chanukah by Jewish and Indian children.

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