

Regional News

Jewish-Muslim dinner highlights similarities between faiths

The United Jewish Congregation (UJC) of Hong Kong joined leaders and members of the Muslim Community on 21 June for an interfaith dinner. This second annual event was held at the Pakistan Club in Kowloon.

Imam Muhammad Arshad, the spiritual leader for Hong Kong's Muslim community, began with a beautifully chanted prayer that sounded somehow familiar to the Jewish participants. It was a prayer for peace and he also expressed the hope that the celebration of similarities from this event will be replicated throughout the world.

Imam Arshad and Rabbi David Kopstein, of the UJC,



Imam Arshad and Rabbi Kopstein

each then made presentations on "The Character of Moses" from their own tradition's perspectives. Once again a cord of familiarity was struck, as all participants came to understand how remarkably similar the two traditions are on the topic.

While the speeches and prayers for peace were moving and eye opening, the most meaningful connections were made at the dinner table where participants voluntarily sat alternating Muslim and Jew. Some kissed and hugged hello, immediately reconnecting from last year's dinner. All expressed

real gratitude for the opportunity to interface personally with someone who on the outside appears so radically different.

The talk around the tables was one stressing similarities. Photos of children were passed around and the discussion quickly moved to subjects such as the challenges of imparting religious values to children in a modern day, multi-cultural and face-paced environment.

Jewish participants left with gifts of boxes of Golden Pakistani Mangos and a peaceful sense that there is much right in the world.

Yara monument

against the Japanese Foreign Minister's orders. He was forced to resign from his post in 1947.

In 1985 Israel awarded him the honour of "The Righteous Among the Nations".