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Premiere of the Film Jinnah and launch of the 'Jinnah Anthology'

The long awaited film "Jinnah" which sparked off criticism and protests in Pakistan in 1997 was finally completed and premiered at the Governor House, Karachi, on 29th May, 1999.

The film made its debut in Los Angeles, U.S.A. in late 1998 and was thereafter shown at the Montreal and London film festivals and in Washington D.C, the G.H.Q., Rawalpindi, and at the Governor House, Karachi, in April this year. The film was widely acclaimed at every exhibition and was accorded approval for public viewing in April after it was seen by the Prime Minister, Chief of Army Staff and Minister for Information.

The film "Jinnah" is owned by Quaid Project Limited (U.K.) while Mandviwalla Entertainment Limited are the distributors of the film in Pakistan and arranged the screening of the film at the premiere.

The film premiere function organized by The Jinnah Society was attended by more than 1500 special invitees at the Governor House, Karachi, which was made available by the Governor of Sindh. Speeches were given by Mr. Liaquat Merchant, Professor Akbar S. Ahmed, Producer of the film "Jinnah," Dr. Nasim Ashraf, Chairman, Quaid Project (U.S.A.), who is a renowned doctor and philanthropist of Pakistani origin but now settled in America, Mr. Yusuf Haroon and Spenta Kandawalla.

The Jinnah Award was presented to late Hakim Mohd Said which was received by his daughter Sadia Said and to late Graham Layton, the great British philanthropist who settled in Pakistan and which was received by the Chairman of LRBT Mr. Zaffar Hassan.

The film "Jinnah" has come into existence as a result of the dedication and efforts of Professor Akbar S. Ahmad, (a Pakistani bureaucrat who is a fellow of the Selwyn College, Cambridge,) over the past five years. The film has been completed at a cost of more than US \$5 million which was contributed by a large number of Pakistani residents all over the world and several corporate sector companies in Pakistan while a very substantial contribution of US \$2

million was arranged and raised by Dr. Nasim Ashraf, Chairman, Quaid Project (U.S.A.) and his group of Pakistani doctors and other members of the Association of Physicians and Surgeons in California, U.S.A. The financial support from Dr. Nasim Ashraf came at a time when the film project ran into financial crisis and almost came to an end after completion of shooting in Pakistan.

It may be recalled that even while the film was being produced in Pakistan, a constitutional petition was filed to challenge the film and orders were sought for the arrest of the producer, director and cast including Christopher Lee and Shashi Kapoor. The film, producer, director and cast were defended by Sharifuddin Pirzada and Liaquat Merchant. The petition was ultimately rejected by the Sindh High Court which

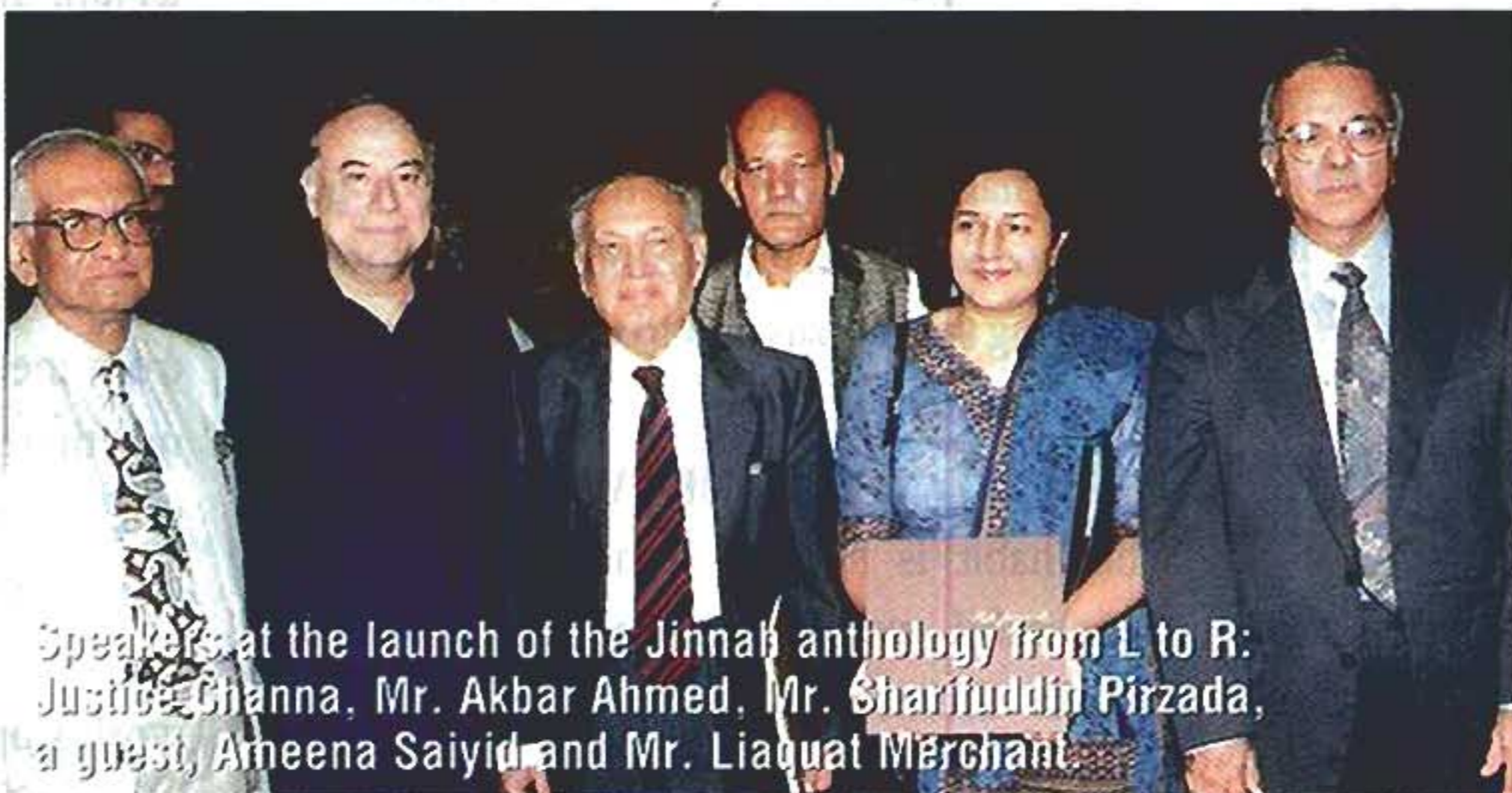


L to R: Liaquat Merchant, Ameena Saiyid and Hashim Raza at the OUP launch.

The Jinnah Society and Oxford University Press (OUP) published a new book on the Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah called 'The Jinnah Anthology,' at the former Flagstaff House, now renamed Quaid-e-Azam House Museum. Unlike other books published on the Quaid which are either biographies, records, or a collection of works of the Quaid, this book contains something of interest for everyone. It includes rare photographs, personal recollections of contemporaries of the Quaid like Princess Abida Sultana of Bhopal, Sahabzada Yaqub Ali Khan, Begum Shaista Ikramullah, Yusuf Haroon, Syed Hashim Raza, Justice Z.A. Channa, Sharifuddin Pirzada and Atta Rabbani.

S.M. Burke gives a historian's perspective of the Quaid and Ameena Saiyid a publishers view. There are impressions given by Beverly Nicholas, Lady Wavell, Aga Khan III, and Edgar Snow, and a study by Liaquat Merchant, the grand-nephew of the Quaid as well as the President of the Jinnah Society. The book contains the reproduced copy of the obituary of the Quaid as well as his will, and portions of high court judgements (on the cases related to property instituted after the death of Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah) pertaining to Mr. Jinnah's personal faith and sectarian beliefs.

The Jinnah Anthology has been compiled and edited by Liaquat Merchant; composed and designed by Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture and printed by Rosette Printers. It has been sponsored by Habib Bank Limited, Bank Alfalah Limited, Shell Pakistan Limited, Dewan Mushtaq Group, ABN AMRO Bank, Bank Al-Habib Limited, Ghulam Mohammad Fecto, Mr. Sadruddin Hashwani and Yunus Brothers while several other sponsors in the Corporate Sector are also likely to lend their support towards the project. ■



Speakers at the launch of the Jinnah anthology from L to R: Justice Channa, Mr. Akbar Ahmed, Mr. Sharifuddin Pirzada, a guest, Ameena Saiyid and Mr. Liaquat Merchant.

held that production of a film was a fundamental right of expression with which there could be no interference except to the extent prescribed by law in relation to its public exhibition.

The film "Jinnah" will place Quaid-e-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah on the centre stage of world public opinion and the world will acknowledge his achievements as a politician and towering statesman of this century.

Pakistanis will now feel the impact of Professor Stanley Wolperts tribute, "Few men alter the course of history. Fewer still change the map of the world. Hardly any one can be accredited with making a nation state. Mohammad Ali Jinnah did all three."

