

The Big Interfaith Iftar @ Hyderi Islamic Centre on Sunday 27th July 2014, 7 pm -10 pm

Welcome & Introduction



Assalaam Alaykum

On behalf of the Hyderi Islamic Centre and community I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you gathered here to take part again in one of the most important events in the Islamic calendar, though it be possibly on the last night of the holy month of Ramadan and possibly on the eve of one of the two main festivals for Muslims - the Eid ul Fitr - the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast-

We have been organising the annual interfaith iftar for a number of years now together with the South London Inter Faith Group with the objective of sharing some of the spirit of Ramadan during which Muslim communities all over the world and in Britain come together before the breaking of the fast in their mosques and community centres to spend time in spiritual reflection, prayers and devotions and which usually end with a meal to break the fast together symbolising our unity in our journey to our Creator and Lord.

This year we have incorporated the Iftar as a part of a bigger nationwide government sponsored initiative called 'The Big Iftar' which has encouraged and supported the holding of these Iftars throughout the country to encourage good community relations, neighbourliness and to encourage local Muslims and people of other faiths and none to reach out to each other and help dispel some of the mutual prejudices that are current out there and cause so much grief, conflict and suffering in our increasingly interdependent world.

This year in Britain as we commemorate 100 years since the First World War I thought it appropriate that we reflect on the causes of War and Peace and whether Religions are Conducive to a more peaceful world. There seems to be a common myth in British society that the cause of a lot of conflicts and wars lies in religion. I hope the speakers in the short time we have will be able to enlighten us on the topic and pave for further discussions on how religions and people of faith can help create a more peaceful world.

Lastly it has been my practice to dedicate the event to a cause or a person and this year I would like to dedicate the event to all the victims of wars and conflict, particularly children and especially the children of Gaza - many of whom have lost their lives due to the Israeli onslaught on Gaza- Children have no hand in causing these wars and yet are most affected by the suffering that wars bring caused by adults. This programme is dedicated to them.

I will now hand over to the Chair for this evening for what I pray will be a fruitful event in bringing us closer together on our different and varied journeys of faith with the hope that the world we leave behind will be more peaceful than the world we inherited.

Barakallahu feekum (God bless you all)

Rizwan Alibhai, Interfaith Co-ordinator for Hyderi Islamic Centre