

Heart to Heart by Daduzen :

Sindhi oh Sindhi; Sindhi don't let me down:

With the grace of Kabir Saheb, a book titled "Kabir Speaks" has been written comprising 300 Dohas translated with a perfect English rhyme with a purport for each couplet. Ordinarily you might think that I should be spiritually happy having the privilege of authored this book, but really speaking I am depressed!

Do you know why? Because I just realized that I am Sindhi who does not know Sindhi! My depression is accentuated as fuel to fire to witness my fellow Sindhi's apparently oblivious of their responsibility to teach their children and grand children our alienated and neglected Mother tongue.

Proud to be a Sindhi but reluctant or embarrassed to speak Sindhi! "Oh we are Sindhi's but no Sindhi please" is all that is subliminally transmitted to me.

As I scouted around to verify my vibration- inputs and to give vent to my newfound realization i.e. to contribute some awareness to the dwindling interest in our language, this is what was heard; "Oh Dadu children have to play soccer, children have to take tennis lessons, oh yes Mandarin classes, and not to forget piano lessons and oh my God they have to attend birthday party'. Priorities have shifted assaulting the need to learn into a back- water phenomenon.

So I asked what about you, it's a Sunday, why don't you learn along with your children? The answers were variegated: "What's the point", "We are too old to learn" and besides we have a rummy quorum and I am late already". Some were for poker and some for horseracing and the few were for Satsang to listen to talks in English and singing songs in Hindi : "Daya karo mere Sai". Sure enough on Monday stock market fell by 800 points and all the more "Daya karo mere Sai". All the Saseen's

were singing along with their family in the Gurudwara. The prasaad is so tasty in the Gurudwara: Not for Gur-Parsad but Karao parsad.

Finally I met some extra anglicized Sindhis with a typical Brit accent: “You know Sindhi is dying language mate! So stop wasting your time and ours. English is the language of communications and Sindhi’s, will never learn Sindhi even if it is for free, but invite then for high noon tea or evening cocktails then everyone will be there thronged with extraneous smiles and loving hugs that wear off as soon as they leave”. “Ours is a dying culture” said some! So I wondered in awe of silence that could only accommodate a thud of my heart: “So much pride in announcing a death of a mother – tongue? “ Have we become so anglicized at the cost and sacrifice of our tradition and culture”

So who was or is to blame for these responses? We the grandparents and the parents! For certain! The truth of the matter is that when our children were growing up in the 70’s the English foundation school teachers had one basic question to ask “What language does your child speak at home?” We are all petrified. Damn we do and damn we don’t. No English school wanted to admit children with a vernacular or an Indian accent so we were compelled to speak in English at home. But now such conditions and restrictions don’t exist in Hong Kong so long you can afford to pay the exorbitant fees, admission granted with or without an accent. As we can all observe Hong Kong is all about money and property and Stock market beside few other money making intrigues. Money matters even if we are scattered.

So where do we Sindhi’s go from here? In 1947 we are forced out of our homes and home land and now we are forcing out our language out of our system out of our volition dancing on the waves of complacency. So before our culture or language becomes extinct at the international level it would be high time with a sigh for all parents to reassess our predicament and what direction to lead our future generation. Time is not very far when our grandchildren will start suffering from an identity crisis and query in askance “Why were we not given a chance, option, choice, opportunity to learn Sindhi?

In conclusion, to add salt on my simmering wounds the editor of this magazine Baljit Chohan requests me to make this article funny! To make a sad predicament into humor and satire only a Sindhi could do it!

And so look at the irony of being a Sindhi: I have to write for a magazine that is Punjabi who have Sindhi's on the board of contributors and which is distributed at Tamil, Sikh and Chinese outlets to reach out to few of my Sindhi compatriots who claim to speak (Bhagli –Tutli) broken Sindhi at home with their children who really don't understand a "S" about Sindhi.

Do I have reason to happy or stay depressed?

Now on a somber note here is a poem from my heart:

CALL OF A MOTHER

*OH! DESCENDANTS OF MIGHTY SINDHU
ON ITS BANK YOUR ANCESTORS THRIVED!*

*NOW YOU HAVE DISPERSED FAR AND WIDE
TO SECURE WEALTH IN AFFLUENT STRIDE*

*WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN A MOTHER DEAR
NEVER DID I ABANDON AND HELD YOU NEAR*

*SILENT NIGHTS IN LOVE I WEEP
DREAMING OF YOU IN YEARNING SLEEP*

*AS YOUR MOTHER, I LANGUSIH IN WAIL
UNFURL YOUR HEARTS AND SET ME A SAIL*

*MY ETERNAL MELODY, HOMES TO ADORN
BEFORE I AM SMITTEN IN SADNESS FORLORN*

*EYES AQUEOUS TRICKLE AND A TEAR
AWAKE BEFORE YOUR LIFE BECOMES UNCLEAR*

*IN YOUR PROGENY I WISH TO EXIST
TO YOUR CHILD A CHANCE YOU MUST PERSIST*

*TO BENEVOLENT SUCCESS I SHALL ADD
PERPETUAL BOUNTIES, MY SINDHI LAD*

*I AM THE ESSENCE OF DARYA E SIND
TO REMAIN A PART OF JAI HIND- JAI HIND*

YOUR SINDHI MOTHER (LANGUAGE)

BY DADUZEN 17TH APRIL 2015

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