

Potential of Sindhi highlighted on Mother Language Day

By Our Staff Correspondent

HYDERABAD, Feb 21: Speakers at a seminar held on Thursday to mark the International Mother Language Day said that the Sindhi language was developing at a rapid pace and if Sindhi-speaking people continued their struggle to get the status of a national language, they would be able to guarantee the safety of Sindhi civilisation, heritage, history and its culture.

They said that Sindhi was the oldest language of the sub-continent and contrary to some people's beliefs, it wasn't threatened before and wouldn't be threatened in the future.

The speakers also paid tribute to scholar, novelist and Sindhi writer Sirajul Haq Memon.

In his presidential speech, historian, scholar and author Dr G.A. Allana said that the Sindhi language was making progress by the day and the struggle of Sindhi-speaking people to get it recognised as one of the national languages would continue.

He said that the Sindhi language was as old as the history of Moenjodaro. Though it had faced a few threats during Arab and Persian rule over Sindh, the people had accepted the new religion and its

ways without compromising on their language.

Dr Allana said that during British rule, intensive planning had been done to promote the Sindhi language. "Sindhi alphabet was modified and books were published besides establishing Sindhi-medium schools," he said. "The late Z.A. Bhutto also did some work in the form of legislation for the Sindhi language and creation of various language institutions."

Sindhi Language Authority (SLA) chairperson Dr Fahimda Hussain appreciated the initiative taken for observing the International Mother Language Day and paying tribute to the late Sirajul Haq Memon. She recalled that the late scholar had caused a stir by writing articles for the Sindhi language and the rights of people living in Sindh during Ayub Khan's 'One Unit' days.

Former chairman of the Sindh Textbook Board Dr Habibullah Siddiqui was of the view that Sindh's intelligentsia was dissatisfied about the lack of research about the history of the Sindhi language.

Former vice chancellor of the Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur Abdul Hameed Sindhi said that Siraj

Memon had raised his voice for the Sindhi language to prove that it had developed on its own without any outside help.

Educationist Qalandar Shah Lakhyari highlighted the late scholar's significant contribution to Sindhi literature and said that it should be given the status it deserved.

Novelist Ghulam Nabi Mughal called the death of Sirajul Haq Memon a big loss for Sindhi literature, adding that Sindhi had developed greatly during British rule and was making swift progress now.

The late scholar's son, Arshad Siraj Memon, said that the name of his father was synonymous with Sindh because his father loved this land and always disseminated the message of love for Sindh.

Meanwhile, another event was organised to mark mother language day by the Sindh Agriculture and Forestry Workers Coordinating Organisation at their office. The organisation's head Suleman G. Abro demanded the status of a national language for Sindhi and reopening of all Sindhi-language schools. Sindhi-speaking students should be given admissions in Karachi's educational institutions, he added.