

Nephew chronicles life of Ahmed Timol

By Fakir Hassen

A new book is the result of the determination of Imtiaz Cajee to chronicle the life of his uncle Ahmed Timol, killed by apartheid-era security policemen who alleged that he had committed suicide.

Imtiaz Cajee's book, titled "Timol - A Quest for Justice", was launched on the 33rd anniversary of Timol's death to a capacity audience who filled a hall in the once-dreaded police station, now renamed Johannesburg Central.

"In a sense this book also tells us something not only about Timol, but about all of those people who made the biggest sacrifices - their very lives - so that today we can still be in the throes of celebrating the tenth anniversary of democracy in South Africa," said Essop Pahad, close friend of the late Timol and now Minister in the Office of the President.

"The book quite convincingly demonstrates that after (Timol) was murdered, he was thrown out of the windows. That we can launch this book in

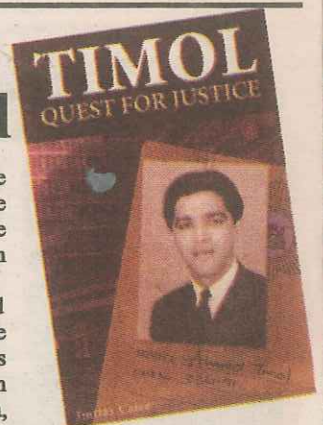
the very premises that these dastardly deeds were done is a sign of the remarkable changes that have taken place in South Africa."

Cajee said he had decided to write the book after he found that in most books written about the freedom struggle in South Africa, there were only fleeting references to his mother's brother.

Timol, who taught at Roodepoort and has a school in Azaadville named after him, enjoyed a brief teaching career in the UK, and fell in love there before he went to the then Soviet Union to be trained in the company of Thabo Mbeki, now President of South Africa, who has written the foreword to the book.

"(Timol's) firm commitment and dedication to the people of South Africa, resulted in him returning to set up the underground structures of the (then) banned South African Communist Party," said Cajee.

"Details of his arrest, torture and death have been captured to the best of my ability. There was an



international outcry and his death was attended by thousands of mourners, yet the courts consistently found nobody responsible for his death.

"I hope that this book will provide the evidence that my uncle did not commit suicide, but was tortured and murdered. There is powerful evidence to show that he was already dead when his body dropped ten floors."

Cajee said the book was an attempt to record the contribution of the brave and dedicated warriors of all races who had died at the hands of apartheid security police.

A special plaque was unveiled at the police station during the book launch to commemorate this as well.



A commemorative plaque to honour South African freedom activist killed in detention by Apartheid-era security police will be installed at the once notorious police station in Johannesburg where Ahmed Timol died 33 years ago. Looking at the plaque are former friends of Timol, all now in Government in democratic South Africa. Fltr: Essop Pahad, Minister in the Office of the State President; his brother Aziz Pahad, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Charles Nqakula; Minister of Justice; and Intelligence Minister Ronnie Kasrils.