

In Memoriam:

Aharon Ben Yitzchak (ז"ל) אהרון בן יצחק
Abdolrahim Eteessami (Of Blessed Memory)

Last month, our community lost Mr. Abdolrahim Eteessami (O.B.M.), one of our most prominent leaders over the past century. Mr. Eteessami, who was an exemplary servant and pioneer of the Mashadi Jewish Community, passed away at the age of 97 on January 24, 2021. Due to the current pandemic restrictions, the community was not able to properly pay our respect and memorialize his life and achievements.

The Central Board honors the memory of the Late Mr. Abdolrahim Eteessami (ז"ל), who gloriously served our community for over sixty years through several eras. His leadership, service, wisdom, and foresight were instrumental in us becoming the healthy and united community that we are today, particularly after the difficult period of migration from Tehran to New York.

A small sampling of highlights from Mr. Eteessami's service and achievements include the following:

- At a very young age, he was encouraged by his mother, Maryam Eteessami (Livian) (ז"ל) to volunteer for the community's Chevra Kadisha and help wash and prepare the bodies of the deceased for burial. Throughout his life, he remained involved with this mitzvah and made sure that the burial process remains available, equitable, and as easy as possible for all members of the community. Soon after arriving in America, he organized to acquire the first and second plots of land at the cemetery in Long Island for our community.
- Founded and helped establish the Anjoman (community board) in Tehran and led the efforts to build the Anjoman Synagogue and catering hall. This building is still in use and many weddings and happy occasions of the Jewish community of Tehran take place there.
- Introduced later starting times for Shabbat prayer services in Tehran and helped increase synagogue attendance many-fold, especially by women and children.
- Convinced Rabbi Ben Haim to join our community in Tehran to enhance the holiness of the Synagogue and prayer services, and then again to rejoin us in New York as the Rabbi of the community.
- After migration of the community to New York, he organized and directed the building of Shaare Tova Synagogue in Kew Gardens, on land donated by the Late Yousef Banilivy.
- Was instrumental in organizing and funding the building of the Mashadi Community Beit Avot in Hertzeliya, Israel, in cooperation with other community boards in Europe and Israel.
- Joined and helped the efforts of several community members in Great Neck (led by the Late Mehdi Hariri Tolou) to build the Shaare Shalom Synagogue.
- Continued to advise and guide new generations of community leaders for years, as the elder statesman of the community.

Mr. Eteessami's legacy is an inspiration and example for countless future generations, including many of his own children and grandchildren who have been and continue to be heavily involved in community service.

May his memory be a blessing for his children, family, and the entire community. May HaShem protect our community and continue to bless us with outstanding leaders like Mr. Abdolrahim Eteessami (ז"ל).

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