



**PRESS RELEASE: S.S. Tilawa 80th Commemoration receives support from Bollywood,  
British Deputy High Commissioner, and Navy Officials**

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MUMBAI, India

This week on Wednesday November 23rd, the 80th anniversary of the ill-fated S.S. Tilawa was held at the Grand Hotel, Ballard Estate, South Mumbai.

Amongst the over 100 attendees was Bollywood legend Mr. Johnny Lever, His Majesty's British Deputy High Commissioner Mr. Alan Gemmell, Commodore Koshy, and several retired high ranking Indian Navy officers. The program included speeches from Vice President of the Maritime Mumbai Museum Society Mrs. Anita Yewala, descendant of the drowned Mr. Emile Solanki from Canada, several pre-recorded speeches from Tilawa families in the USA and UK, and a final presentation from Mr. Gemmel. He read a moving poem written by Mr. Mervyn Maciel, now age 93, who lost his parents and 3 siblings to the tragedy.

The sterling program was streamed live on YouTube and Zoom globally. The programme recording and images of the commemoration can be viewed here:

**<https://youtu.be/JXKfeKDm290>**

The event hosts were Mr. Mukesh R. Solanki (UK), and Mr. Emile Solanki (Canada) who are descendents of the drowned the late Mr. Nichhabhai Chibabhai Solanki, of Kachholi, Gujarat. With the support of the Maritime Mumbai Museum Society the event was a huge success.

"This is the first time the forgotten tragedy is being commemorated, and the loss of 280 lives memorialized. We desire this commemoration to be the start to greater awareness, further research, and even a production of a documentary and movie. How fitting that the first ever commemoration be held in the very area Tilawa last left, and 678 survivors returned. We feel so privileged to play a small role in helping bring some closure to Tilawa families, and providing a resource through our website [tilawa1942.com](http://tilawa1942.com)" Says Emile.



S.S. Tilawa left Bombay on November 20th 1942 at 17:00, and was attacked by the Japanese Imperial Navy in the early hours of November 23rd.

Recently in 2017, the ship was discovered by Argentum Exploration Ltd. They declared 2,364 silver bars, weighing 60 tons, and valued at approximately \$50 million US dollars. The Republic of South Africa (RSA), twice pursued British courts to approve their claim of state immunity. However, in 2020, and recently in the court of appeals 2022, the justices concluded whilst RSA are the rightful owners, the silver was intended for commercial use, it was on a merchant ship, and purchased for coinage including for Egypt. RSA will have to pay Argentum for their labours in order to receive their bars. "We hope this exciting discovery will help further our research of the forgotten tragedy" says Emile.

Please visit [www.tilawa1942.com](http://www.tilawa1942.com) for a comprehensive review on S.S. Tilawa. Any remaining survivors, descendants of victim's, or others with information are encouraged to share what they know and email [info@tilawa1942.com](mailto:info@tilawa1942.com)

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