

ASGHAR, MOHAMMAD ('Oscar') (1945 - 2020), accountant and politician

Name: Mohammad ('oscar') Asghar
Date of birth: 1945
Date of death: 2020
Spouse: Firdaus Asghar
Child: Natasha Asghar
Parent: Zubaida Aslam
Parent: Aslam Khan
Gender: Male
Occupation: accountant and politician
Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements; Economics and Money
Author: Matthew W. Day

Mohammad Asghar, known as Oscar, was born on 30 September 1945 in what was then Peshawar, North West Frontier Province, British India, now Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, into a Muslim family, the son of Aslam Khan and his wife Zubaida Aslam. He spoke Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi. He gained a BA in Political Science at Peshawar University before moving to England to do an MBA and then to Wales to complete an accountancy course in Newport. He worked at various accountancy firms, including R. J. Minty Chartered Accountants in Newport from 1972 before establishing his own firm in 1983.

He married Firdaus in 1983, and they had one child, Natasha Asghar, born in October 1983, who was elected as a Conservative Member of the Senedd for South Wales East in 2021. A keen sportsman, Mohammad Asghar ran with the Olympic torch in 1964 and had a particular interest in cricket. He campaigned for Wales to have its own cricket team and tried to form a team for the Senedd.

Mohammad Asghar's political career began as a member of the Conservative Party for two decades from the 1970s to the 1990s, when he defected to the Labour Party. He became Newport's first Muslim councillor in 2004, and subsequently joined Plaid Cymru, a decision many would consider unusual given that his unionist stance was contrary to Plaid Cymru's policy of independence for Wales. Asghar himself is on record as stating that this decision was influenced by the offer of work experience for his daughter made by MEP Jill Evans. In May 2007 he became the first ethnic minority member of the Welsh Assembly when he was elected to represent Plaid Cymru for South Wales East. In 2009 he crossed the floor to rejoin the Conservative Party stating that he was 'out of tune' with Plaid and felt like 'a little parrot in a jungle'. In the Assembly elections of 2011 he was elected for the Conservative Party.

Asghar became the Shadow Minister for Equalities and Sport 2011-2018, then the Shadow Minister for Further Education, Faith, and Skills 2018-2020. He also sat on various committees, including the Public Accounts Committee 2007-2020, the Equalities, Local Government and Community Committee 2019, and the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee. In 2018, he was chair of both the Conservative Friends of India and the Conservative Friends of Pakistan. He also devoted a lot of time to developing relations with other commonwealth countries alongside the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. He was a firm supporter of social integration and was often instrumental in breaking down barriers between various faiths and communities.

Mohammad Asghar died suddenly on 16 June 2020 after being rushed into hospital. His funeral was held at Newport Central Mosque on 225 June.

Author

Matthew W. Day

Sources

'Asghar, Mohammad', Who's Who, 1 December 2020

'A tribute to Mohammad Asghar MS', Welsh Conservatives, 17 June 2020

'Mohammad Asghar', Welsh Parliament

WalesOnline, 8 and 13 December 2009

Western Mail, 16 June 2020

Further reading

Wikipedia Article: [Mohammad Asghar](#)

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