



## **KARACHI: Sadequain: The Holy Sinner launched**

**By Our Staff Reporter**

KARACHI, Aug 9: The State Bank of Pakistan will convert its old building on I. I. Chundrigar Road to a museum where some of the most prized works of Sadequain, after having been restored, will be put on display.

This was announced by State Bank governor Dr Ishrat Hussain, at the launch of a 648-page book Sadequain: The Holy Sinner 1954-1987 on the lawn of the Mohatta Palace Museum on Saturday evening.

Sadequain (1930-1987) was one of the most original artists of his time. Controversial and prolific, his remarkable career spanned three decades and witnessed a feverish flurry of creativity that resulted in several thousand paintings, etchings and drawings — not to mention his giant murals which adorn the walls of important institutions in South Asia and the West. Perhaps the most honoured Pakistan artist of his era, he was a recipient of the Laureate Biennale de Paris, in addition to the highest national awards in his homeland. Even during his lifetime, his paintings were exhibited at major art venues across the world.

The SBP governor said that the reason why the old building of the State Bank was being converted to a museum was that it would enable the young and budding artists of the country to have free access to the works of Sadequain.

He observed that it was the responsibility of Pakistanis to enrich the cultural heritage which had been passed on to them by their forefathers.

He said that he had decided to put the murals of the State Bank on display at the Mohatta Palace Museum in the teeth of opposition on the condition that special visits of schoolchildren would be arranged.

He paid tribute to the untiring efforts of the editors who had put the book together. He also appreciated the efforts by those who had organized the exhibition Sadequain: The Holy Sinner 1954 - 1987.

The largest-attended and longest-running exhibition in the history of Pakistani art — The Holy Sinner: Sadequain — came to an end at the Mohatta Palace Museum on Jan 19, 2003.

The exhibition, featuring more than 200 non-calligraphic works of the artist, got under way in the 16 rooms of the Mohatta Palace Museum on Feb 28, 2002. The organizers of the exhibition said that more than 85,000 art lovers, as well as 160 schools, had come to see Sadequain's works, whose commercial worth, at a conservative guess, was around Rs500 million. They said that they had to extend the exhibition for one more week on overwhelming public demand during which more than 10,000 people had visited the Mohatta Palace Museum. Salima Hashmi and Hameed Haroon were the co-curators of the exhibition.

Mr Haroon spoke about those who had played an important role in making the exhibition possible and putting the book together on a voluntary basis. He named them one by one and appreciated their efforts. He also talked about the book, which reproduces some 400 of Sadequain's important creations, supported by an anthology of critical commentaries by the artist's contemporaries and friends.

He added that a film was being prepared on the life and works of Sadequain. Shooting for the film, he added, had been completed and it was in the production stage. He said that four documentaries on Sadequain would also be prepared.