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DOW

NEWSLETTER

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MAY, 2001

President's Message

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Amin H. Karim MD

My dear Dowites,
Asalaam-o-alaikum,

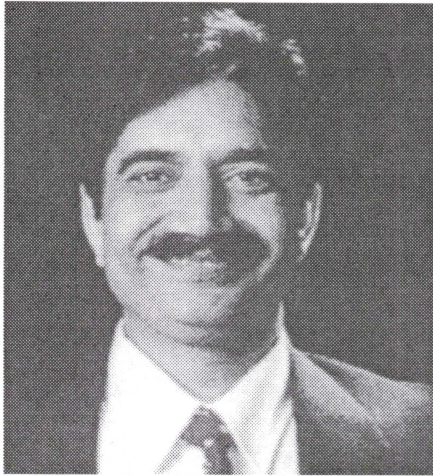
The past six months have been exciting and challenging. We remain focused in our goals of re-energizing and re-engineering the organization and slowly but surely we will get there.

1. We have established a preliminary electronic database of over 2500 Dow graduates in North America, which will be updated continuously. I strongly feel that an accurate database and demographic information is a prerequisite to the growth of this organization.
2. The work on our web site is nearing completion and soon you will be able to visit us at dowalumni.com. We are trying to make it as informative and interactive as possible. You can communicate with us more readily and share your point of views, experiences and interests on various forums.
3. We have laid groundwork to establish a Document Verification Service for our members requiring document verification from DMC for various institutions in the US.
4. We have a preliminary commitment from APPNA to hold the APPNA winter 2002 convention in Karachi with joint collaboration of DMC, SMC and AKU. This would be the first meeting of its kind.
5. I visited Dow Medical College and met with the principal Prof. Illahi Buksh Soomro and the vice-principal Dr. Tariq Mirza. The grand tour included the new libraries, forensic, pharmacology, biochemistry and computer labs. The principal appraised me about their efforts at achieving higher levels of academic standards and their interest in developing closer ties with DOGANA to assist them in achieving their goals. Prof. Soomro graciously extended the invitation to co-host the APPNA winter 2002 meeting in Karachi. I also met with the executive committee of PWA (Patients Welfare Association) and Prof. Adib Rizvi and the staff at SIUT (Sind Institute of Urology and Transplantation). DOGANA looks forward to supporting these organizations.
6. I visited the APPNA SEHAT site at Phagwari, Murree. It was heart warming to witness how the lives of thousands of villagers has been positively changed by these projects. It reinforced my commitment to a stronger DOGANA to ensure similar **social uplift projects are undertaken by APPNA in Karachi.**
7. I have had some positive dialogues with the new APPNA president regarding Dow's representation in the APPNA mainstream. So please come forward and get actively involved so that DOW can get its rightful place in APPNA.
8. We want to make DOGANA a grass-roots organization. The DOGANA councilors are working at arranging regional get-togethers. Their names and numbers are on the letterhead. **Please contact your regional councilors.**
9. DOGANA annual summer meeting and banquet will be held at the APPNA annual convention in Chicago IL. Arrangements are underway and we hope to make this a memorable meeting. We look forward to seeing you there. **Please make sure to register as early as possible** to avoid any disappointments. The details and registration forms for the DOGANA banquet are enclosed.

My dear friends, DOGANA needs your support to be whatever you want it to be. This is a particularly exciting year as we anticipate hotly contested elections for the APPNA offices. I encourage you to become members of DOGANA and of APPNA to get our voices heard.

Thank you
Zeelaf Munir, MD

APPNA President's message



Lets us Join Hands in APPNA!

As President of the APPNA, I extend greetings to the DOW Alumni Association of North America. You are a vital component of APPNA, the largest professional organization of Pakistanis residing abroad. The DOW alumni has been always been the one of the most important part of APPNA.

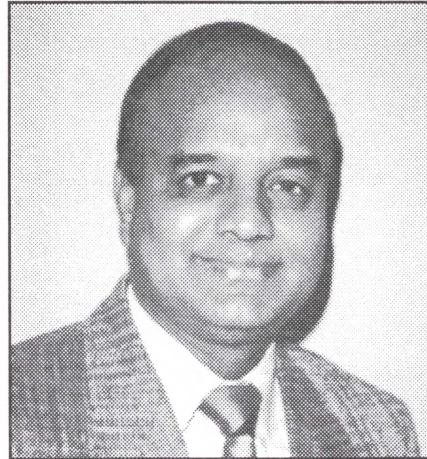
We are an association of more than 10,000 Pakistani physicians living and working in the United States, with membership benefits and programs tailored to your interests. APPNA conducts local and national meetings, professional education and training, in addition to advocacy work, assistance to Pakistani expatriates and public health projects beneficial to the people of Pakistan.

As you might have notice that APPNA has under gone a major restructuring and a face lift this year. This was necessary to prepare APPNA for the new millenium and to take it to the next level. Helping us with this task are year several members of DOW Alumnus, who are chairpersons and members of various APPNA Committees and are volunteering their time and efforts to reform APPNA. I would like to especially mention Dr. Mushtaq Khan. You will be able to see first hand his hard work and talent in putting together what is shaping up to be the largest and best APPNA meeting ever. We are expecting more than 2,500 people for our annual national convention (continued on page 6 col 1)

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APPNA IN THE NEW MILLENIUM

*Ambitious meeting planned
Dr. Mushtaq Khan organizes the
Chicago Summer 2001 meeting*



APPNA started out as a small organization of Pakistani Physicians. In about a quarter century of its existence, APPNA has evolved into the most organized and largest organization of Pakistani-Americans (Physicians). It now includes organizations of spouses (Alliance) Youth (SAYA), children (CAPPNA), and young graduates of local medical schools (NAMA).

The theme of this year's APPNA Summer meeting is "APPNA in the New Millenium." In order to accommodate new programs, the schedule of events has been rearranged. In addition, certain changes have been made in registration and seating arrangements.

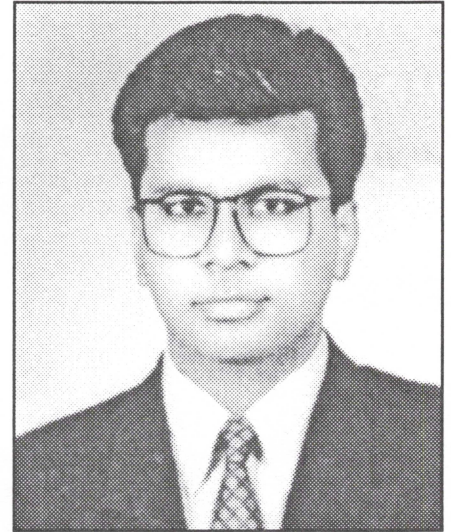
In the new millenium APPNA will face many challenges of the community in North America and in Pakistan. For this purpose, the entire day on Saturday, July 7th, has been set aside - morning to focus on issues in North America (Community Empowerment in the New Millenium), and after session for challenges in Pakistan (Peace and Prosperity in South Asia in New Millenium).

This year we are planning an excellent CME Category I program with eminent speakers. Local CME committee is working very hard along with the national CME committee to make one of the best program.

On Wednesday, July 4th, there will be a boat cruise on Lake Michigan with beautiful skyline in the background. It will have one hour of CME program.

(Continued on page 3 column 1)

DR. NADEEM AHSAN APPOINTED CO EDITOR APPNA JOURNAL



Dr. Nadeem Ahsan has been appointed as a co editor of APPNA Journal. He is a 1979 graduate of St. Patrick's High School, Karachi. He attended DJ Science College. He is of the class of 1989 of Dow Medical College. He comes from a family of physicians. His three older siblings also attended Dow (Azra and Tasnim Ahsan 1978, Sadiha Ahsan 1987). Arriving in US he trained in Philadelphia and currently in private practice in a Philadelphia suburb (Mount Laurel, NJ) practicing Pain Management. He can be reached at dervaisbaba@hotmail.com. He runs the listserv for Dow Alumni. All Dow alumni are invited to subscribe by sending email to the following address: DOGANA-subscribe@topica.com Subscribers can then post messages to Dow-Bytes by sending email to: DOGANA@topica.com

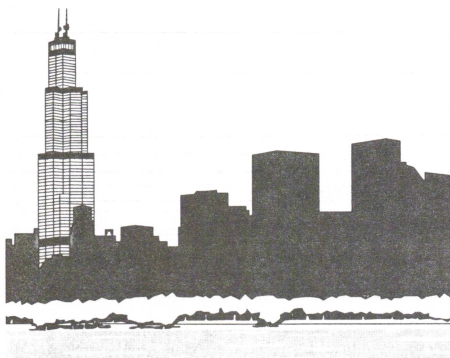
SECRETARY'S REPORT

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DMC CLASS OF 1988 TO HOLD REUNION AT CHICAGO

Class of 1988 is planning to hold a reunion at the upcoming APPNA summer meeting in Chicago, IL in July 2001. Members of this class can contact Dr. Shakeel Kouser at nephshakeel@aol.com
Office # 864 224 8716
Home # 864 225 3696

APPNA in the New Millenium
(continued from previous page)



Thursday night , July 5th, will highlight the ever-popular Alliance Family Night Dinner. SAYA and CAPPNA are also arranging exciting programs for their members.

This year, for the first time, NAMA is holding its dinner on Friday night, July 6th, along with other alumni.

Your host committee is also working very hard to provide memorable entertainment and “Mushaira”, APPNA Bazaar and exhibits will be open from Friday through Sunday.

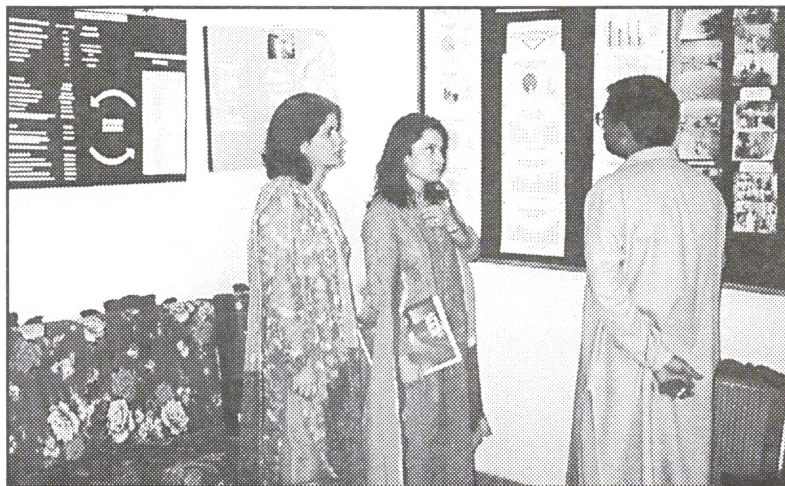
Every year about 25- 30 % are “reserved seats” on Saturday night APPNA banquet. This year we have reserved no more than five (5) tables for APPNA and its guests. This represents less than 3 % of the total seats. There will be no other reserved seats. This will alleviate long-standing complaints regarding seating arrangements. Please help us in orderly seating so that all of us can enjoy the Saturday night banquet.

On-site registration accounts for 35%-40% (sometimes even more) of total registration every year. This creates massive chaos and confusion to accommodate last minute registrants. In order to avoid this, we have instituted a three-tier registration system this year. Those registered before May 1st will be entitled to green tickets and will be seated in front. Those registered during the month of May 1st will be receive yellow tickets and will be seated in the middle. those registered after June 1st will be identified with red tickets and will be seated in the remaining seats So please , please, please register early.

Dr. Mushtaq Khan
(Dowlink March 2001 Pg 3 of 12)

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Amin H. Karim MD

Dr. Zeelaf Munir visits Phugwan Murree APPNA Sehat Center



Dr. Arshad (right) explains highlights to Dr. Zeelaf Munir (center) & Dr. Erum (left)

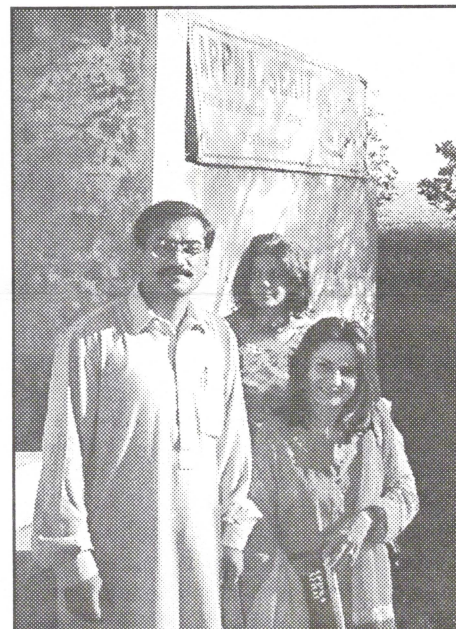
APPNA’s SEHAT program is a vital part of our commitment to the health care of Pakistan. The program which has grown in scope and size is essentially a self help model growing out of basic health ingredients such as preventive medicine, sanitation, vaccinations and birth spacing. SEHAT has been recognized not only as a health model but also as a project which has demonstrated its performance with respect to decrease in infant and maternal mortality. Other ancillary projects have grown around it and include female literacy and projects to enhance self reliance and a sense of ownership.

Dr. Zeelaf Munir, visited the Phugwan, Murree APPNA SEHAT Center during her 2000 visit to Pakistan.

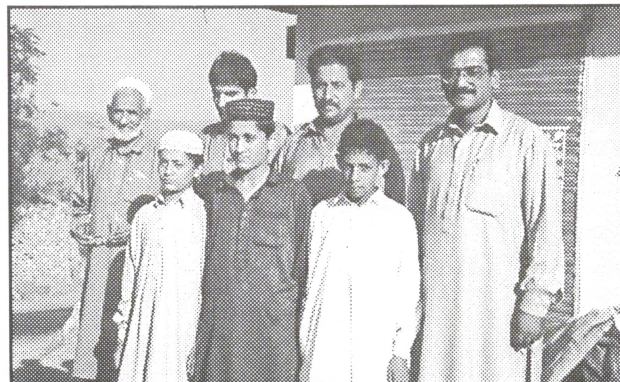
APPNA SEHAT’s founder Dr. Naseem Ashraf regularly updates APPNA during the Executive Committee meetings which are held three times a year. The report is eagerly awaited by the audience.

Information on the project can be obtained as a link from the main APPNA web page.

<http://www.appna.org>



Dr.Arshad (L) and Dr.Munir(R) at the Phugwan Center. Dr.Erum (middle)



Some members of the Phugwan community with Dr.Arshad (extreme right)

MAD COW DISEASE

PROPOSAL TO LIFT BAN ON BEEF IMPORT FROM UK

ISLAMABAD, Feb 1, 2001 (APP)-The government is considering to lift ban on the import of livestock, beef and its derivatives from the United Kingdom (UK). Sources said that UK has requested the government of Pakistan to lift ban on beef import. The government imposed ban on the import of livestock, beef and its derivatives from UK and northern Ireland in July 1998 amid reports of mad cow diseases. The UK has mentioned in its communique that the European Commission had announced on July 14, 1999 that the export of the UK beef and allied products produced under the Data Base Export Scheme (DBSE) could start from August 1, 1999. The country does not import livestock or meat from abroad only Friesian and New Jersey cows are imported for cross breeding purposes to improve and uplift the genetic potential of local nondescript cows.

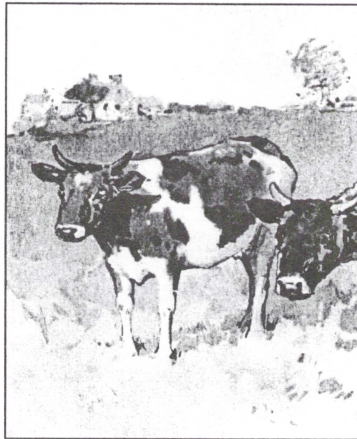
Dubai bans Pakistan cattle imports

Dubai authorities have banned import of cows from Pakistan after some shiploads of cattle in the last two months were found to include animals suffering from the foot and mouth disease (FMD). One local newspaper reported that the Dubai Municipality and Customs Authority (DMCA), who check all imports of livestock into Dubai, detected the foot and mouth disease in 190 cattle. The report added that the General Secretariat of Municipalities (UAE's apex body of municipalities) and the agriculture and fisheries ministry were to decide if the ban would be extended to cover entire UAE.

"The first consignment of 40 cattle suffering from foot and mouth arrived in October and was sent back," a report in the Gulf News daily said, adding that Karachi municipal authorities had been warned that the cattle should be vaccinated and healthy the next time they were sent. When the second lot of cattle arrived here last month, it too was also found to be contaminated. DMCA issued an order banning the import of Pakistani cattle. Earlier this year, UAE authorities banned the import of Pakistani meat after they received complaints of unhygienic slaughtered meat being imported. At the time of the ban, Pakistan used to export five tons of meat to UAE everyday. The Gulf News added that the team only approved one slaughterhouse in Lahore and another conditionally in Karachi. (IANS) The UAE and the other Gulf Arab oil states have banned livestock and beef imports from a number of European and African countries in the past few months because of concerns over mad cow disease and other illnesses. Saudi Arabia is battling an outbreak of Rift Valley Fever, a viral disease transmitted from infected livestock to humans which has killed 113 people in the kingdom and at least 97 people in neighbouring Yemen. Dec 25, 2000 (Reuters)

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IRAN, PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN AFFECTED?



Mad cow disease fear spreads

Tehran, Dec 20, 2000 IRNA — Iran has halted the import of German meat since early this month as the mad cow disease is spreading in the European Union countries, the State Veterinary Organization (SVO) said here Tuesday. Samad Yeganeh, who is in charge of the international relations department of SVO said that since early December, Iran has imported no contaminated meat. Before the spread of mad cow disease, he said, Iran has signed a contract for importing 4,300 tons of red meat from Germany for the current Iranian calendar year (starting March 20). "This is while only 1,400 tons of meat have been imported to Iran before the spread of disease in Germany," he said.

Touching on the livestock-running, Yeganeh said, "To prevent the flow of infected cattle to Iran, illegal cattle will be segregated from the rest and vaccinated against different kind of diseases." He said that the recent severe drought in Afghanistan has resulted in the smuggling of thousands of livestock to Iran via southeastern cities of Zabol and Zahedan.

Earlier this month, the daily Resaalat said that Iran is threatened with the killer mad cow disease in the wake of infected cattle being smuggled from Afghanistan into bordering Sistan Baluchistan.

It said the Taliban militia had purchased the infected cattle from Pakistan which had imported them from Europe. More than 80 people have died in Britain and two in France from mad cow disease which is also called bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), and scientists fear the toll may still rise.

The number of countries imposing bans on beef imports from Europe is on the rise. The spread of deadly brain-wasting illness has sparked a new wave of concerns among world countries which are trying to prevent the disease from affecting humans. (<http://www.irna.com/newshtm/eng/30110757.htm>)

MCDONALD'S REPRESENTATIVES SUMMONED

*BSE in South African beef
Lahore to investigate*

The Metropolitan Corporation of Lahore on Tuesday issued a notice to , McDonald's, urging it to stop the import of beef from South Africa. South African meat is considered unsafe as the country has been badly hit by BSE commonly known as mad cow disease. South Africa was the second country after the UK to face ban on export of meat and meat products by several countries in the Middle East as well as other regions. Representatives of the food chain were summoned for a meeting with the MCL administrator, Brig (ret'd) Yasub Ali Dogar, and handed out a notice seeking information about the quantity of meat being imported from South Africa and the certification standards being applied. The food chain has been directed to file its reply by 10am on Wednesday (Dec 13, 2000). The MCL has sent a letter to the Lahore division commissioner requesting him to constitute a high-level committee to deal with the issues related to the import of meat. The corporation has reportedly decided to also approach the federal government with a request to clarify its policy on import of meat. It will urge the importers to get meat for their food products from indigenous resources. This will not only rule out the hazards of diseased meat but also promote the development of local meat industry. (Sajid Iqbal, Dawn Dec 13th, 2000)

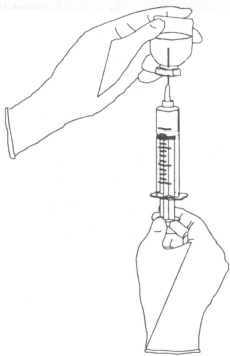
<http://www.dawn.com/2000/12/13/nat15.htm>

URBAN ELITE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO vCJD

Access to foreign meat to the urban elite of Pakistan places them at an increased risk of mad cow disease. Meat is a scarce commodity in the diet of the poor and a visit to McDonalds or other international food chain outlets such as Pizza Hut etc is unlikely. International travel to Europe, especially to countries which have now shown to have cases (Germany, Italy, France, Portugal and Spain) also places the upper income groups to increased risk. Miss Faiza Abdur Rab , Dept. of Food Technology, University of Karachi, reported that Pakistan imports not only foreign cattle but also cattle feed for livestock and gelatin from overseas for human consumption .(continued pg. 10, col. 1 Faiza Rab)

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The fall meeting of Dogana was held on September 20, 2000 in San Francisco at Cathedral Hill Hotel. Targets set from the summer meetings were addressed and progress was reviewed. Increasing the membership of DOGANA and adopting social uplift projects for DMC and CHK were identified as priorities. Plans for a membership drive and for setting up an electronic database was presented by the president and approved by the committee. The **constitution committee**, headed by Dr. Alvi reported that an interim report would be presented in spring meeting regarding by laws of updated DOGANA constitution which if approved by the executive committee would be circulated to all members and if no further objections were made then it would be presented for approval in summer meeting at Chicago in July 2001. Issue regarding setting up a **data bank** for document verification service was discussed and the concept was unanimously approved as well as funds were allocated for such a service. It was decided that a nominal fee would be set up for all members interested in using the service which would help in streamlining the verification process with Dow medical college office and required US authority needing the verification.



UNSAFE INJECTIONS PUT AT 80%

More than 80 per cent of injections are unsafe in Pakistan, according to international studies that have highlighted alarming abuse of injections. The Network for Consumer Protection in Pakistan, an NGO, called for promoting safe injection practices to avoid avoidable human loss and lessen injection-related diseases. A study concluded that unsafe injections were a major mode of hepatitis C transmission where the study was carried out. Packaging of disposable syringe is no guarantee for its sterility. "A staff nurse at Hayat Shaheed Teaching Hospital, Peshawar, said on condition of anonymity that on several occasions they found syringes with blunt needles, or syringes without needles, or with bloodstained needles when they opened packed syringes brought in by the attendants of patients," the Network said quoting a study.

(continued next column SYRINGES)

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For this purpose the president would be meeting with Principal at Dow as well as school office and student bodies during her visit to DMC. An update on the above issue is that, the service is now in place and available to members. Regional Counselors were encouraged to set up regional meeting and get together to help promote DOGANA's cause as well as provide a social platform where regional members have a chance to meet one another. An update on Rizwan Karatela's **web site project** was provided. This site once functioning will also have a link for document verification service mentioned above as well as secured sites to pay off dues on line. **Social uplift projects** including PWA, SIUT and Dow aid project were discussed. Executive committee endorsed the support for these projects. It was recommended that **Dr. Rizvi** should be invited to APPNA summer meeting and be given a lifetime achievement and recognition award. **Dr. Nadeem Ahsan's project** received excellent support and it was recommended that all members should provide medical and surgical supplies which are in excess at their offices or place of work. The address and modus operandi of this would be sent in a separate newsletter or will be posted on the web site. Publication committee chaired by Dr. Abdur Rehman was urged strongly to keep up the good work and Dow Journal should be published and available to all members by summer meeting like last year. He was asked to aggressively obtain literary and other contributions from members for the purpose. **Budgets** were discussed and it was determined that DOGANA's books were in black although with only a nominal margin. Dr. Mushtaq Khan and Dr. Alvi were requested to still maintain the accounts as previously done but to provide the executive committee with details by spring meeting so they can be available for publishing in Journal by summer meeting. Finally at end of meeting Dr. Abdur Rehman announced his candidacy for the position of treasurer for APPNA.

With this note meeting was adjourned. Senior members attending the meeting congratulated the current executive committee, they also applauded their enthusiasm and effort put into the organization. Sincerely,

Sadeem Mahmood, M.D.

SYRINGES (continued from previous col.)

According to Safe Injection Global Network Pakistan (SIGN Pakistan), an increasing number of people in the country are being hospitalised with end-stage liver diseases from hepatitis C. A study has shown that of 203 interviewed patients, 165 or 81%, were given injections by the doctors and about 73% did not know whether the injections were sterile. Of 135 patients tested 44% had hepatitis C. In the clinics in Darsano Channo, Malir district, comprising mixed Sindhi-Balochi families, it was found that 94% of the syringes were being reused. (Dawn Dec 13, 2000)

SAUNF SUPARI BRANDS SPIKED Samples contain diacetyl morphine and heroin

The presence of addictive substances in chhalia, gutka and saunf supari was established when 36 different samples of saunf supari of Pakistan and Indian origin were analyzed at the Chemistry Department of Karachi University for possible narcotic contamination. These samples mainly consisted of aniseed, supari, chocolate-coated nuts, sugar-coated aniseed, dry fruits, gutka etc. Few of these samples contained tobacco, colouring and flavouring agents.

The samples were carefully extracted with deionized water and distilled methanol separately. Nineteen samples extracted with methanol and 10 samples extracted with water gave a positive identification of diacetyl morphine. Nine samples had low heroin content which could not be extracted with water. Heroin was detected and identified with positive Froehde's test, positive Dragendorff's test, TLC and confirmed by UV absorption at 278-280nm and matching with reference standard.

Sixteen samples extracted with water also developed fungal growth within 48 hours, which shows poor hygienic conditions during the packing of these materials.

A dental surgeon said chewing of chhalia is commonly considered a harmless habit, but it is hazardous

She said it causes stiffness in the muscles and tissues of the mouth and tongue behaves like one made of rubber. These are the early symptoms of cancer. In such cases, she pointed out, the mouth of the patient is forcefully opened with instruments and retained in this position with the help of wood or plastic strips to prevent further stricture. -APP (Dawn Nov. 6, 2000)

DMC CLASS OF 1976 TO HOLD 25TH YEAR REUNION

Class of 1976 plans to hold two reunions one at Chicago APPNA convention and another in December in Karachi, Pakistan. According to the preliminary communication Dr. Azra Raza has begun preparations in this regard.

DMC CLASS OF 1971 TO HOLD 30TH YEAR REUNION

King Edward and Nishtar Medical College and Dow Medical College classes of 1971 are holding their 30th year reunion.

NET NIKAH

GROOM ONLY SEVENTEEN

The bride 3 times his age, parents file (alien?) abduction report

Amin was only 17 years old and lived in Islamabad. Nicol Kadas was 50 years old, divorced with a son and a daughter and living in Canada. Continents apart was no obstacle. With internet chatting the two fell in love. Kadas flew to Islamabad and soon Amin disappeared. Worried parents fearing foul play filed a report of abduction of their son by Kadas. Amin had really left home without informing his parents and married Kadas. The two lived for one week at a guest house before resurfacing. Meanwhile the parents could not locate Amin. Amin was urged by Kadas to face the situation boldly as the local reporters were hounding them. Kadas had already arranged for Amin's visa to Canada where he seemed to be intent on settling. Kadas is said to have been lonely in Canada. The parents upon learning of the safety of their son withdrew the abduction complaint. (Dawn Nov 16th, 2000)

DOGANA WEB SITE IN OPERATION

Document verification service incorporated

Visitors of the new DOGANA website will be pleasantly surprised by its improved functionality.

Visitors to <http://www.dowalumni.com> will not be greeted by a recent message from DOGANA President Dr. Zeelaf Munir but also see such useful features as the online document verification service. This service which has been set up with a great deal of effort is now up and running.

Other useful features are the database operations. With this feature you can get the most recent location of a classmate or for that matter any DMC graduate who is in the US. The search feature is powerful and will perform under first name, last name or even by the year of graduation.

Online membership form submission is another useful feature. With this instantaneous method of registration and becoming a member, it is hoped that membership will be increased.

All the members of the cabinet and executive council can be contacted right from the first page via e-mail facility.

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CULTURE CLASHES

HALLOWEEN DEFENDED

"The joy it can bring to adults and children"

Is Halloween alive and well in Pakistan? Judging from the responses and newspapers of Pakistan it seems to be quite common. When one learns of its defenders writing articles in leading papers one must conclude that it must be a widespread practice.

Writing in "Dawn" Oct. 29, 2000, writer Kiran Nazish describes how she accompanied her three cousins "despite all the warnings" to the neighbor's houses. Henna, seven year old wore a witch's costume while Bobby was "delighted at the smiles and words of praise and handfuls of candy that greeted them".

Promotion of neighborliness is also viewed as the reasons why it should be continued. "The same as previous years, many of the people we visited were folks we only see at Halloween even though they live just a few doors away. Most of them, the elderly especially, had bought supplies of candy and were waiting. Most gave out two or three times as much per kid as they had originally intended, because there were so few kids out. And they were as delighted to see the kids as the kids were to see them."

Kiran Nazish bemoans the fact that its abolition is being proposed: "Halloween is in trouble. Every year editorials in newspapers, features in magazines and on television warn of dangers to children. And each year more communities "ban" Halloween."

Fuzzy feel of social harmony and anti-paranoia are also some of the benefits cherished by the writer. "Nowadays people often don't know their near neighbours, much less the neighbours a few blocks away. For little children these strange houses and strange people are a source of fear and anxiety. Children have been taught not to trust or talk to strangers, to beware of them. But on Halloween that prohibition is lifted; and, with fear, but impelled by curiosity and greed for candy and other loot, little ones ring doorbells at houses of strangers to find time and again that these strangers are really friendly people like the people they know well. In the course of the evening, they gain confidence in themselves and in their neighbourhood come away not only with bags full of candy to be enjoyed for weeks after, but also a warm feeling about their neighbourhood and people in general."

"Looked at another way, Halloween is a time that reconfirms the social bond of a neighbourhood (particularly the bond between strangers of different generations) by a ritual act of trade. Children go to lengths to dress up and overcome their fear of strangers in exchange for candy. And adults buy the candy and overcome their distrust of strange children in exchange for the pleasure of seeing their wild outfits and vicariously reliving their own adventures as children."

VALENTINE'S DAY

Pagan practice depiction fails to deter ardent adherents.

Writing in Dawn, Feb. 11, 2001, Raihana A. Hasan wonders about the whole exercise: "A PAGAN love festival being celebrated in the Land of the Pure? Perish the thought! And yet that is exactly what will happen on February 14 when, in a trend that has been on the rise year by year in Pakistan's bigger cities, personal columns in newspapers will break out in a rash of Saint Valentine's Day messages, bookshops will flaunt a whole new line of cards, bakeries will display an array of special cakes, and courting, betrothed or married young couples will exchange cards, gifts and flowers."

A sense of entitlement

After describing the history of this day in great detail, the writer justifies the practice as follows: "The festival has taken root even in strait-laced Pakistan, where the religious Right fiercely opposes the mildest of New Year celebrations and bands of vigilantes stalk the streets to catch and punish defiant merrymakers. Like Mother's Day and Father's Day, February 14 has crept into young people's social calendar, and is being increasingly celebrated and enjoyed.

And, come to think of it, why not? The Lord knows that there is precious little to celebrate in these grim days of soaring prices, water shortages and loadshedding. Our youngsters are entitled to a little fun, I guess. In any case, while February weather may be harsh in the West, nature itself has made it a time for romance in warmer climes such as ours.

It is the month of Basant, when the sap rises in the veins, the trees begin to blossom, the flowering mustard turns fields bright yellow, girls wear clothes to match and sing songs to welcome spring, boys fly kites from every rooftop in sheer exuberance, and the young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love!"



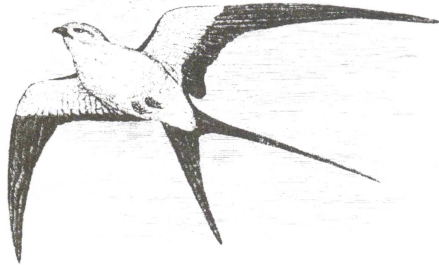
Cheaper at the graveyard

"Dawn" reports that normally a dozen roses cost Rs.25 year round but on the eve of Valentine's red roses are fetchable at Rs. 400 per dozen. Florists are refusing to sell single roses but if you insist, it can set you back Rs. 25 per rose. The article describes another phenomenon. "So flowers are now as expensive as other Valentine Day's gift. No wonder, therefore, some of the young people were seen at the flower shops outside the city graveyards. Probably the flowers there were less expensive. Or perhaps they decided to shower rose petals on their beloveds." ("Roses are for the rich" Navaid Rashid, Dawn, Feb. 14th, 2001)

INDUSTRIES WARNED

Industries told to change their trade if they cannot stop pollution

Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (PEPA) have issued notices to industries in the Islamabad area to control emissions and waste or change the industry altogether. Rehman Steel Mill has established a flour mill instead. Sectors I-9 and I-10 have been most affected and residents have been reported to have sold their houses. Monitoring teams consisting of citizens, PEPA and CDA give fortnightly reports on the problem. (Dawn Feb. 12, '01)



FALCON TRAPPING LICENSES ISSUED

The Sindh Wildlife Department has issued at least nine falcon trapping and one falcon dealership permits, it is learnt. The migratory falcons, specially the species of Peregrine and Saker, are highly sought after by hunters from foreign countries, who use these predatory birds to hunt the endangered and internationally-protected houbara bustards. "A few of the falcons are migratory species and are regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and trapping and netting such birds is not allowed, but the wildlife department issue certain number of falcon trapping and dealership permits," the sources said. A trapper can catch up to either 60 local falcons or two migratory falcons on each trapping permit that costs about Rs20,000. In one method 100 local falcons are destroyed before catching a single migratory peregrine. But there is little departmental monitoring and it is not known if trappers maintain the bag limit. A local falcon could be sold for up to Rs5,000 and a migratory falcon's price runs into millions, the highest so far reported was Rs5 million. Sindh Wildlife Conservator M. A. Ansari told this reporter that falcon trapping and dealership permits were issued every year, so this year's permits were routine matter. (Dawn Sep.21, 2000)

(Dowlink March 2001 Pg 9 of 12)

ENVIRONMENT

PRICE OF PROGRESS

Annual environment degradation costs pegged at US \$ 1.9 billion

Pakistan's economy is suffering an annual loss of US\$1.8 billion owing to environmental hazards, Federal Minister for Environment, Local Government and Rural Development, told a news conference on Monday. Giving area-wise break-up of this financial loss, Omar Asghar said municipal solid and liquid waste costs \$883 million, urban air pollution \$369 million, soil in cropland degradation \$357 million, rangeland degradation \$125 million, deforestation \$28 million and destruction of mangrove forests \$ 15.7 million.

Water availability per capita in 1951, it was 5,300 cubic unit meter (CUM) per capita in 1951 which has now gone down to 1,200 CUM in 1999. Delivery vans, which were only 8,503 in 1980, are at present over 157,400 in 1998 - a rise of 1,751 per cent.

Motorcycle numbers went up by 541 per cent during the last 20 years. In 1980, total 287,622 motorcycles were on the road and these numbers have gone up to 1843,700.

Cars increased during the last 20 years -- from 148,334 to 638,800 -- a rise of 331 per cent. The numbers of trucks in 1980 was 34,193 which went up to 136,500 in 1998 - a rise of 299 per cent. The country had 25,275 buses in 1980 against 79,700 in 1998 - a rise of 215 per cent. In 1998 82,900 rickshaws were plying on the roads against 31950 in 1980 - a rise of 159 per cent. Omar Asghar said quoted a recent study on air quality in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad which has indicated that air pollution was 6.4 times higher than the WHO guidelines and 3.8 times higher than Japanese standards.

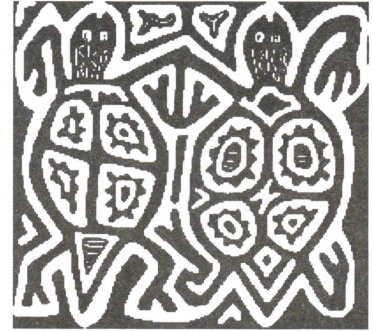
200 NEW SPECIES IN KHIRTAR PARK

The Australian scientists conducting the baseline study in the Khirthar National Park have said over 200 new species of fauna and flora have been discovered in the park.

The Australian scientists Prof Neal Enright (Botanist), Ben Miller (Botanist), Rhidian Harrington (Biologist), John Perkins (Farming Systems), Chris Houston and Elizabeth Hopkins (Anthropologists), and Murray Clayton (Archaeology), Sindh Wildlife Conservator Mahboob Alam Ansari and others also spoke. The half-a-million-dollar study is being funded by the Premier-Shell, which had been granted the oil and gas exploration licence for Dumar block, over 90 per cent of the which comprises Khirthar National Park, where such commercial activities are banned under Sindh Wildlife Protection Act. Sindh Wildlife Department plans to prepare a management plan on the basis of the study report. (Dawn Sep.12,00)

FEHMIDA ASRAR

Turtle Lady Featured on CNN



The Sabz and Zaitooni Turtle Conservation Project has been in existence since 1996 or earlier. Its aim is to protect the sea turtles that come to lay their eggs on the beaches of Hawke's Bay and Sandspit. The Sabz (Green turtle, *Chelonia mydas*) and Zaitooni (Ridley turtle, *Lepidochelys Olivacea*) turtles, the only vegetarian turtle species, are under the threat of extinction.

Asrar, who has been dubbed the Turtle Lady of Karachi, runs a turtle protection project for the Sindh Wildlife Department, along with a team of six helpers. The team tags turtles and monitors their progress, conducts autopsies on those it finds dead, and nurtures the eggs until they hatch and can be released safely into the sea.

The program was launched in 1980 with funds from international conservation groups, but since 1983, funding has come largely from donations, with only staff salaries covered by the provincial government. The program is critically short of money, Asrar said. The vehicle she uses to travel to and from the beaches breaks down often so she is forced to catch rides with friends to the site.

Education of the public about the plight of the turtles is key to their survival, said Asrar, who speaks at schools and leads groups out to the beaches to spread awareness about the importance of conservation.

Egg poaching, sea water pollution, sea nets and commercial trade for turtle shells for cosmetics and medicines are some of the reasons for their decline. Scientists have estimated that 150,000 sea turtles are drowned in shrimp nets annually. USA since 1989 has required shrimpers to use TED (Turtle Excluder Device) which allows shrimps to stay in the net but allow the turtles to escape. Countries such as India, Thailand, Pakistan and Malaysia which did not use TEDs could not export shrimps to US. The matter went to World Trade Organization which in Oct '98 ruled in favor of the four countries as it held that US could not discriminate against the shrimp exporters since it amounted to a trade barrier and that restrictions on trade could not discriminate between products from different countries. Environmentalists who maintained TEDs reduced turtle trapping by 97% saw this as a setback. (CNN Jan6, 1999, CNN Oct 13, 1998)



(L to R Dr. Shoaib Tauheed
and Dr. Shakeel Kouser)

A TRIP TO KARACHI AND DOW MEDICAL COLLEGE

by Dr. Muhammad Shakeel Kouser

It was a very exciting time for me and my family to visit Karachi and Dow Medical College after four years. Karachi has changed in its outlook since my last visit. It is more crowded and noisier. It has more traffic on the roads. In the rush hours it is impossible to move around in spite of the remarkable overhead bridges built in all parts. What Karachi needs is a mass transit program, either a subway system or above ground train system like in Bangkok, Thailand. The other cheap alternative is to develop and modernize the already existing circular railway system.

The other thing that has struck me so much in Karachi is the gap that has widened between the rich and the poor people. I was very saddened to see that the standard of living has gone down considerably in the last four to five years. The prices have risen extraordinarily high but the salaries and jobs have remained stagnant or decreased. This has resulted in a severe hardship for low income families. There are about 6-10 McDonald restaurants that have popped up. There are at least two Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurants, a Subway Sandwich restaurant, a Dunkin Donuts, and also TGIF. These have opened up over the last few years. Old eastern mega restaurants, namely Lal Khila, Zaizah and The Village are packed in the evenings. In some of them you have to wait in line to get a table.

FAIZA RAB (continued from pg.4, col 3) According to Miss. Rab, an active member of Science Club Forum, University of Karachi, owing to scarcity of trained personnel and scarce resources there were no surveillance activities for this disease. (via e-mail)

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The shopping complexes on Tariq Road, Saddar and Clifton are packed with shoppers. It gives a false impression to people who have not seen the other parts of Karachi. If you look at Karachi's population is approximately 10 to 12 million people. As you know there is a lot of black money in Karachi as well there is a large number of Karachites living all over the world, namely USA, Canada, UK, Africa, Australia and the Middle East. These expatriates send lots of money back home to their families and also visit them. This 7% of the population of Karachi, about a million people are seen at the shopping complexes and eat at the restaurants. The locals living in Malir, Orangi Town, Landhi and old Karachi are struggling to make ends meet. I hope and I wish that as peace settles in Karachi there will be more investment, more factories come up so the standard of living will improve. In Karachi the food so much better than any restaurants here that I cannot complain anyway. My wife also gets a break from the kitchen; therefore, she cannot complain. We were not able, of course, to try all our favorite places in Karachi, but I ate at Pizza Hut which I enjoyed a lot. I dined at Village, Zaiarha, McDonald, and enjoyed Baloch ice cream.

Visit to Karachi would not be complete without going back to see how my Alma Mater is doing. Dow Medical College is growing and improving. The education is getting better. On this visit I was able to accomplish some of the things I have been planning for many years. I was able to make a small documentary film of the Dow Medical College and its different departments including a small message from our principal, Dr. Soomro. Hopefully this film could be shown at our annual meeting in Chicago. Its purpose was to show the Dowites who have not visited Dow Medical College and are in USA for many many years to see the changes and to refurbish their memories. As time passes the memories fade away and you forget how the Anatomy lecture Hall or the Arag Auditorium ever looked like. It was a great pleasure making the movie and I hope the people will enjoy looking at it. I took about 150 pictures of Dow Medical College and I hope to make a small book entitled "Dow Medical College in Pictures".

I also obtained approximately 500 old pictures of Dow Medical College. Some of them are as old as 15-20 years and I think this will be great for our archives. There are pictures of Dr. Fazal Elahi in his youth. I am trying to get more pictures from 40's and 50's. Dowites should contribute to this archival treasure of photos of Dow Medical College. It will be published on CD and in book form.

I visited Sind Institute of Transplant and briefly met Dr. Adeb Rizri. There are not enough words to commend on his achievements and services to dialysis and transplant patients of Civil Hospital. I had a fruitful interview with our Principal, Professor Ilahi Baksh Soomro. He is very interested in leading DMC to higher grounds. He gave me a very warm welcome and allowed me to take the movie, and pictures of the institution. He also recorded a message in the documentary.

I met Dr. Shoaib Tauheed Professor of Physiology and senior colleague. He has revamped Department of Physiology and started some research projects. I wish to thank Drs. Tauheed and Soomro for helping me.

I met Dr. Shoaib Tauheed Professor of Physiology and senior colleague. He has revamped Department of Physiology and started some research projects. I wish to thank Drs. Tauheed and Soomro for helping me.

The visit would be half hearted if I didn't meet my class fellows and other Dowites. I met Dr. Shahid Noor an orthopaedic surgeon returning from UK about 3 years ago and is currently working at AO Clinic; Dr. Tahir Shamsi a Class of 88 Graduate who after working at Ziauddin Hospital has just built a blood disease center in Karachi. He has done at least six to ten bone marrow transplantations for Thalassemia patients. He is doing a remarkable job in serving rich and poor people. I will ask all Dowites to send Zakat to his hospital. (cont. Pg.6 Col. 3)

DOW MEDICAL COLLEGE CLASS OF 1975 AT APPNA SUMMER JULY 2000 MEETING IN ATLANTA, GA



STANDING (L TO R) DRS. ABDUL QADIR, AYYAZ QURESHI, NAEEM AHMAD, WASEEM ARIAN, TASNEEM MIRZA, SOHAIL IJAZ AHMAD, YUSUF DESHMUKH, MOHAMMAD DAWOOD **SITTING (L TO R)** DRS. M. SHAHID YOUSUF, ZAHRA YOUSUF, AMJAD IQBAL, AZRA NAZLI SHERIFF, SADIQ HUSSAIN AND NAVEED SHERWANI

Chicago July 3-8. There is an exciting agenda and top-notch speakers booked for CME, Community Empowerment seminar and a forum on Peace and Prosperity in Southeast Asia. There will be Alumni gatherings, class reunions, APPNA bazaar, a cruise on Lake Michigan, a musharia and top entertainment programs by Pakistani groups. I urge you to come and join your friends and colleagues in this gala event.

Dr. Zeelaf Munir is the Chair of the membership committee and I join her in encouraging DOW graduates to join APPNA. As a member of APPNA, you will have the opportunity to build valuable contacts and friendships with colleagues from all over the country by participating in the organization's activities.

I am urging you to take an active role in APPNA and get involved. Your membership will also allow you to participate in our ambitious plan of work, including such important issues as residency training and placement, managed care discrimination, new resident visas and improved Pakistani medical education standards. We also hope to start several APPNA Free Clinics for the indigent Pakistanis throughout the country.

We have the collective strength to accomplish a great deal as a professional group. By joining the APPNA, you can be an important link in the chain, secure in the knowledge that your contribution can make a difference. Take the time now and take the step into APPNA!

I hope to greet you in person in Chicago or one of our regional meetings in Washington and Orlando.

May God be with you
Riaz M Chaudhry,
President,

Association of Pakistani Physicians of
North America

MALE STUDENTS SCARCE AT KU

Their numbers put at 25%

"For the last few years, a flow of female students is heading towards the Karachi University (KU), and some of our departments give the look of being exclusive female, rather than co-ed departments," a professor said. "Since 1998, we have been flooded with female candidates seeking admission in the KU". (continued next column)

Dowlink March 2001 Pg 6 of 12)

EDUCATED JOBLESS

It is MT not IT

The educated jobless are flocking to the medical transcription jobs that are opening up in Pakistan. To train these MTs doctors are being sought.

Writing in Dawn, Dr. Zeba Hisam describes her experiences "I conducted interviews for candidates for this job and found that young boys and girls, who are just B.com, B.A, B.Sc. or even intermediates with good English, can do this job easily. I was amazed that these guys started picking the medical terms within a month of training. All of us know that unemployment is so prevalent and the job market is so constrained in our country that highly qualified people are diverted to do this job. There were M.phils in Pharmacy, M.Sc in Microbiology, MBAs and MBBS applying for training as medical transcriptionists." "I found the only hindrance in selecting candidates is mostly their poor level of English, which is the result of being poorly taught at primary level. In addition, people don't have the habit of reading books and referring to the thesaurus and dictionary. As a result, the vocabulary is limited and grammar is pathetic. I think those who love to watch English movies and read English books and enjoy them, are the best candidates for being a Medical Transcriptionist. Or after learning medical transcription, these people can enjoy the English movies more as each dialogue is understood very clearly." (Dawn Magazine Dec.31, 2000)



"Departments such as Mass Communications, Economics, Zoology and Physiology have turned into exclusive female departments," a KU official divulged. "Almost all young boys head for the IT institutes which have mushroomed in literally every nook and corner of the city, which makes their seats in arts subjects, offered by public institutions go vacant, only to be filled by girls," they said. (Dawn Dec. 16, 2000)

HIV SPREADING VIA IVDA

Emergence of TB

Pakistan has been cited among countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region where HIV transmission through injecting drug is on the increase. World Health Organization (WHO) studies from Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Oman and other countries of the region indicate an increase in the transmission of HIV through this method to alarming levels. In Oman, the rate of transmission through intravenous drug abuse (IVDA) was 5% in 1999. IVDA caused 30 % of HIV infections occurring in Iran during 1998. WHO has also pointed out that AIDS epidemic has caused the re-emergence of TB, which now represents a problem for the world. In Pakistan, TB is still a major problem claiming thousands of lives each year. WHO said AIDS facilitates the infection of its patients with TB because of their weak immunity. TB has become the killer of one-third of AIDS cases in the world. AIDS epidemic is also considered responsible for a quarter of those who die of TB. In Sudan, the HIV infection rates among pregnant women increased by five fold in some areas between 1988 and 1999.

The same increase occurred among TB patients. The infection rates among blood donors jumped, in some areas, by 700 fold in the same period. In both Yemen and Somalia, the rates of HIV infection among tuberculosis patients reached 6.9 per cent, a strikingly high level. According to experts, Pakistan is among six of the world's most worrisome TB trouble spots, according to the WHO. There are 254 TB patients in every 100,000 population in the country. Inquiries conducted by Dawn show that the responsible government departments and agencies and NGOs that had been receiving funds from international agencies had confined their job to mere holding of some seminars and workshops in a year. WHO is also of firm belief that the number of HIV/ AIDS cases in Pakistan is much higher than officially reported. Considering Pakistan among the South Asian countries which have a narrow window of opportunity to prevent the spread of AIDS/HIV pandemic, the World Bank had committed in 1998 250 million US dollars under the Social Action Programme, including lending 2 million US dollars for AIDS control programme. (Sarfraz Ahmad, Dawn, Dec. 28, 2000)

DMC VISIT (continued from Pg. 11, col. 3)

I met Tavia Zia, Sonil Ahmad and Khurshid Nayyar, who just got married. Dow Medical College and Karachi remain in our heart all the time in spite of living in the United States for the last 12 years. I will always dream and hope and pray to Allah that He gives us strength that one day we will be able to go back and serve our Alma Mater which has given us so much.

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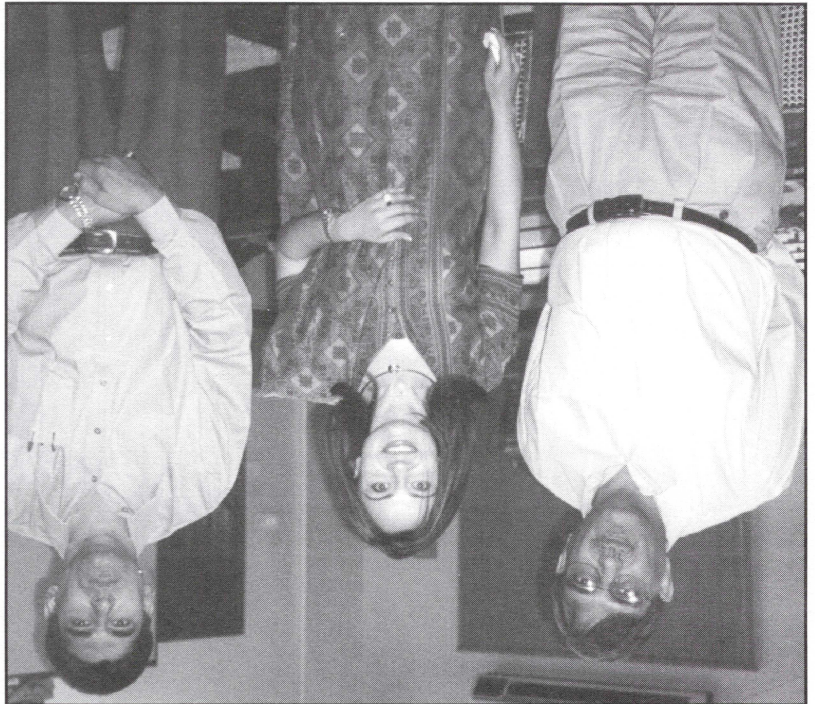
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(L to R) Dr. Ilahi Baksh Soomro, Principal, Dr. Zeelaf Munir,
Dr. Tariq Mirza, Vice-Principal



Dr. Zeelaf Munir visiting PWA

Dr. Zeelaf Munir's visit to Dow Medical College and Patient's Welfare Association