

The *Pakistan Association* Newsletter

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Pakistan Association's 6th Annual Spring Dinner & Peace Gala

The Pakistan Association invites you to its 6th Annual Spring Dinner and musical to be held on April 30, Saturday at the university of Maryland Shady Grove campus in Rockville.

The Association's Spring dinners, dedicated to young professionals, have been fun-filled evenings with traditional Pakistani feast, songs, D.J. music and much more. The spring dinners provide excellent opportunities for young professionals to interact and net work in a relaxed environment.

This year the we also celebrate the many initiatives for peace in the South Asian. We are inviting our friends from the South Asian community to join us. We sincerely hope that the Pakistani American community can play a vital role in keeping the momentum for peace in South Asian going. This issue of the Association's newsletter also provides coverage of the peace initiatives in this spirit.

So, bring your friends to the dinner and support us in this effort. *Kindly make your reservations today!*

Demographic portrait of Pakistani-Americans in New York City Higher Poverty, Lower Incomes, Less English Ability

According to a census analysis by the Asian American Federation of New York, city's Pakistani Americans tended to experience greater poverty, earn less, speak less English and live in larger households than city residents as a whole in 2000.

"Our profile of New York City's Pakistani American population provides an important snapshot of an immigrant group facing severe poverty and language challenges," said Cao K.O, executive director of the Asian American Federation. "The very high child-poverty rate and the limited English skills of senior citizens require particular attention from community service planners and policy-makers. This information is especially significant in a post-September 11th context, as this community has suffered hardship stemming from hate crimes, employment discrimination and government policies." The profile is available at www.aafny.org.

APRIL 30, SATURDAY

Spring Dinner & Peace Gala

See details inside

At University of Maryland, Shady Grove

FOCUS

"Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good- to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the way-farer (ye meet), and what your right hands possess: For Allah loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious." *Al-Qura'n - AN-NISA (4:36)*

Narrated Haritha bin Wahb: I heard the Prophet ﷺ (may peace be upon him) saying, "Shall I tell you of the people of Paradise? They comprise every poor humble person, and if he swears by Allah to do something, Allah will fulfill it; while the people of the fire comprise every violent, cruel arrogant person." *(Sahih Muslim)*

Track II - Parallel Diplomacy

"Has people-to-people contact between Pakistan and India, often referred to as Track II or parallel diplomacy, reached critical mass?" asks Aamer Ahmed Khan of BBC News Karachi.

"It is unstoppable now," says Imtiaz Alam, of the South Asian Free Media Association (SAFMA). "The change that we see has not just come about at the government level, where one sees a visible slackening of bureaucratic resistance. Even the public perception has changed radically." Asma Jehangir, noted human rights activist and peace activist agrees. "We will undoubtedly see several hiccups as this process moves on. But even if the government on either side tries to clamp down on such contacts now, it may not be possible because of technology."

One aspect of Track II efforts that has seriously excited observers, it seems, is the capacity of such activity to take the peace agenda away from Delhi and Islamabad. Nazr, an Indian movie starring Pakistani screen diva Mira, is a case in point. Similarly, film companies are seriously thinking of setting up base in Dubai in order to get around the problem of screening their products in Pakistani cinemas.

In order to ensure that the momentum generated in 2004 is not frittered away for want of a follow up, Track II activists are already gearing up for the year ahead. SAFMA plans two major conferences of parliamentarians early next year, while major private TV networks are deep in the process of finishing a series of Dubai-based joint ventures with Pakistani and Indian stars.

The threat from the religious lobby remains omni-present. "We are not against normalization with India," says Mansoor Jaffar of the Islamic Jamaat-e-Islami party. "But we feel that this Track II exercise is aimed at pushing the core issue of Kashmir into the background." His opinion, however, may no longer be a majority opinion. Observers feel that while such rhetoric may continue unabated and official contacts between the two countries may remain hostage to history and red tapism, parallel diplomacy can indeed be the way forward towards normalization.

Story from BBC NEWS by Aamer Ahmed Khan

http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/south_asia/4143737.stm

JOURNEY FOR PEACE

Pakistan Association's two prominent members and past chairs of its Board of Trustees, Tufail Ahmad and Ali Nawaz Memon, were part of a 21-member Joint Indo-Pak Peace and Goodwill Mission of expatriate Pakistanis and Indians living in U.S., Canada and Britain, to visit Pakistan and India earlier this year.

According to John Prabhudoss, Chairman, Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations of North America, it was for the first time that such an effort was undertaken by individuals of Indian and Pakistani origin living outside their homelands, who passionately feel for South Asia's peace, prosperity and stability.

The delegation members did not represent any government, government agency or their policies, or any business or vested commercial interest. They joined in at their own expenses to advance the peace process between the two nuclear South Asian neighbors.

Though recently there have been a number of Indian and Pakistani peace and business delegations to both the countries, there have never been a Joint Peace Delegation to the region by a group of individual peace activists, academics, journalists and concerned citizens of Indian and Pakistani origin are going to the region to support and stimulate the peace process.

Tufail Ahmad praised the aspirations of the younger generation of the Indian-Americans and Pakistani-Americans who were vocal in pleading the cause of Pakistan-India friendship. "It is this generation which will bring about change in attitudes," he said. The momentum of peace between India and Pakistan, he said, is gaining ground as "the track-II diplomacy is giving dividends."

Ali Nawaz Memon said, "peace in South Asia is essential to the stability and progress in the world," and described the visit to Pakistan and India as a journey to a better understanding "as a first step." He said, "people of South Asian diaspora have a responsibility to help create understanding, mutual trust and confidence among the countries in the region, especially between these two South Asian nuclear powers."

The delegation started its visit from Karachi on December 27, and later visited Quetta, Peshawar, Lahore and Islamabad. On January 2, the delegation entered India from Wagah-Attari border crossing it on foot where the delegates offered interfaith prayers for the victims of the Partition related violence, on both sides, in 1947.

It held meetings in New Delhi and later in Kolkota, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Jammu with members of press, government, NGOs and civil society leaders, with the message of peace, harmony and wishes for prosperity. Also the delegation delivered a petition personally to Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz at Islamabad, and the Congress President Sonia Gandhi at New Delhi. The petition requested the two governments to build a suitable memorial at the Wagah Border to the innocent Hindu, Muslim and Sikh victims.

Dr. Pritam K. Rohila, Executive Director of the Association for Communal Harmony in Asia and the spirit behind the peace journey summarizes his impressions as follows. "The longing for peace in people on both sides of the border made the delegates feel *Aag dono taraf hai barabar lagi huyi*. But at the government level, they could not help recall Ghalib's couplet,

*Aashqi sabr talab, aur tamana betab;
Dil ka kya rang karun mein khoon-i-jigr honay tak.*



Pakistani Americans in the News

◆ Dr Shirin Tahir-Kheli has been appointed as the Senior Advisor, United Nations Reform, to the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Dr Kheli would directly report to Rice while co-coordinating with the State Department and the inter-agency community about the US' position on UN reform. In the past, the Pakistani-American diplomat has held key positions in the US State Department. She served as special assistant to the President and senior director for Democracy of the Human Rights and International Operations at the National Security Council from 2003 to 2005. Ambassador Shirin Raziuddin Tahir-Kheli was born on August 24, 1944, in Hyderabad, India. Her father was a scientist in the Osmania University before he and his family migrated to Pakistan. She is married and has two children



◆ An Indian and a Pakistani author have been jointly awarded this year's international Kiriya Prize for their outstanding contribution to literature. Nadeem Aslam and Suketu Mehta will share the \$30,000 cash prize presented by Pacific Rim Voices, an independent non-profit organization for their novels 'Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found' and 'Maps for Lost Lovers.' Aslam's book is set among the Pakistani community of an unnamed English town and opens with the disappearance of two lovers, Chanda and Jugnu.

◆ The first Pakistani American feature film by writer-producer-director Hassan Zee, a 33-year-old independent filmmaker with a degree in medicine, opened in San Francisco this month. Hasan raised \$500,000 (with help from the Film Arts Foundation) and hired a big-time cinematographer, Hiro Narita (*Never Cry Wolf, Honey, I Shrank the Kids, and The Rocketeer*). In the film, Hava (Pooja Kumar), a beautiful Pakistani-American girl, returns fully grown to America after a traditional upbringing in Pakistan where her parents felt she would be untainted by American culture. Finding herself in an exciting new environment, Hava's eyes open to life's possibilities. She thinks her dream of going to the University will come true, but her marriage has already been arranged by her parents. As a result, Hava finds herself engaged in not just a clash of cultures, but a battle for her very survival as an individual.

◆ Maha Jafri, a senior at Johns Hopkins was awarded \$10,000 in funding from the University's Woodrow Wilson Fellowship in order to produce a short film. Maha, an English major and French literature minor, developed a full-fledged screenplay, from a short story she wrote in her freshman year. Her story is "about a fat girl and a Pakistani store owner." The plot takes a turn toward the surreal as the shop owner with a "grown-up person crush" romanticizes Ellie in the elaborate song and dance fantasies of his own Pakistani culture.



◆ Arafat Khaskheli was among several who were made citizens at a ceremony held in College Station, Texas. "Becoming a citizen today is going to open up a lot of doors for me, a lot of opportunities," he said. Khaskheli is among 12,000 soldiers who have been made US citizens since the war on Iraq was launched in 2003. More than 2,000 soldiers became US citizens this year, 58 of whom were awarded posthumously.

News & Commentary

❖ A Pakistani embassy hostage in Iraq has appeared in a videotape calling on Pakistan to help secure his release, Al Jazeera television said on Friday, airing excerpts of the video. The kidnapped employee of the Pakistani embassy in Iraq is safe and is probably being held for ransom, a Pakistani government spokesman said on Monday. Malik Mohammad Javed, a Pakistani assistant at the embassy who does not have diplomatic status, went missing in Baghdad on Saturday. Javed is 46, has six children and has been working at the embassy in Baghdad for seven years. Last July, two Pakistanis were killed by militants in Iraq after being kidnapped.

❖ The US government has indicted a Pakistani businessman Humayun A Khan and his Israeli partner Asher Karni for illegally exporting devices from the US that could be employed to test, develop and detonate nuclear weapons. Federal prosecutors said that Karni had pleaded guilty to arranging illegal exports of American-made equipment both to Pakistan and its regional rival, India. Asher Karni, an Israeli who lives in South Africa, provided information that led to charges brought against Humayun Khan, an Islamabad businessman with longstanding ties to Pakistan's military, of sales of nuclear-related technology to other countries.

❖ MMA (Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal) activists attacked a mini-marathon organized by a provincial government at a stadium in Gujranwala because women were running alongside men. Alliance activists spread through the city and forced markets to close. The protesters burned tires on the main highway and clashed with law enforcement authorities. Six officers reportedly were injured.

❖ According to the World Economic Outlook 2005 Pakistan and India will grow at the same rate, while China takes the lead, after end of the textile quotas. The three Asian economies will take the lion's share in textile trade after abolition of quotas, and added any restrictions against China by US or EU would benefit the other two.

❖ Specialist Azhar Ali of Queens who was killed in a bomb blast in Iraq, was laid to rest in Coram, New York. Queens Councilman John Liu and Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton had helped obtain visas and passports for the Ali's parents who live near Karachi. Azhar Ali, the second youngest of nine children, came to New York when he was 14. He graduated from John Bowne High School in Flushing and joined the 69th in 1998. His family said after leaving the military he hoped to become a New York City police officer.

❖ Police in Pakistan arrested hundreds of activists on Wednesday planning to welcome home the husband of opposition leader in exile Benazir Bhutto. According to Khaleej Times, Diplomatic observers were awaiting Zardari's return with keen interest hoping he would neutralize the initiative seized by the MMA to attract crowds at its rallies. Many Western diplomats had planned personally to witness the event in Lahore.

❖ US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, on visit to Pakistan, has said India has no cause for concern over the supply of F-16 fighter jets while reaffirming that the US would strengthen defense cooperation with Pakistan.

❖ The decision to sell F-16s to Pakistan has evoked strong criticism from some quarters. Washington Post wrote earlier this month that, "Mr. Bush's decision will bolster Mr. Musharraf's support among the only political constituency that matters to him, his nationalist generals. It will also reinforce the political dominance of that faction in Pakistan, a desperately poor country with a history of squandering its resources on its army while under funding such social services as secular schools."

SPRING DINNER!

Join the Pakistan Association at the 6th

Annual Spring Dinner

AND

PEACE GALA

IN SUPPORT OF

THE PEACE INITIATIVES IN SOUTH ASIA

APRIL 30, SATURDAY, 6:30 -11:30 PM

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For event information and reservation contact:

Roohi Siddique 301-330-2843, Tahira Anwar 240-355-1039

Or mail your checks to the Association with names of the guests

Directions: Take I-270 to Exit 8, Shady Grove Road West. Go 1.5 miles, cross the intersection with Darnestown Road, and turn right onto Gudelsky Way. Immediately turn left onto Gudelsky Drive and follow the road around to the parking area.

Going Overboard?

A peace and goodwill mission by members of the American-Pakistani Physicians of North America (APPNA) to India has generated a bitter controversy among members over the award of a shield to BJP leader LK Advani. A number of APNNA members are demanding that the current president, Dr Hussain Malik, should resign. It is alleged that the APPNA President presented Advani with a shield as a mark of appreciation without consulting the executive council. It is widely believed that Advani had a hand in the demolition of the Babri Mosque and was also involved in the Gujarat massacre of Muslims. At the ceremony Dr Malik also announced an award of a shield to an Indian minister present in the audience. When the minister did not rise and walk up to accept the award, Dr Malik himself walked down from the stage and presented the shield to the "sitting" minister.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- ❖ "One cannot subdue a man by holding back his hands. Lasting peace comes not from force." *David Borenstein*
- ❖ "Life without liberty is like a body without spirit." *Kahlil Gibran*
- ❖ "Where is the justice of political power if it executes the murderer and jails the plunderer, and then itself marches upon neighboring lands, killing thousands and pillaging the very hills?" *Kahlil Gibran*
- ❖ "That which does not kill us makes us stronger." *Friedrich Nietzsche*
- ❖ "I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually." *James Baldwin*
- ❖ "Dictators ride to and fro upon tigers which they dare not dismount. And the tigers are getting hungry." *Winston Churchill*
- ❖ Never mistake knowledge for wisdom. One helps you make a living and the other helps you make a life. *Anonymous*

Guilty Until Proven Innocent

Arrest of two 16-year-old girls from New York City, including one Bangladeshi, after the FBI asserted that they intended to become suicide bombers, sent chills across the community. Here is an extract from the New York Times editorial raising the central issue.

"No one wants to leap to conclusions about a government case in such an important area. But the record is not reassuring. Last year, the government wrongly jailed Brandon Mayfield, a lawyer who is a Muslim, for two weeks after the F.B.I. mistakenly matched his fingerprint to one found at the scene of the Madrid train bombing. After the Sept. 11 attacks, the Justice Department rounded up hundreds of Muslim men who were here illegally and detained them for months, often in deplorable conditions. The department's inspector general later found that the F.B.I. had made "little attempt to distinguish" those with terrorism ties from those without. Shortly after 9/11, federal authorities detained a Nepalese tourist for three months in a tiny cell after he inadvertently included an F.B.I. building in a videotape of the sights of New York for folks at home." (<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/12/opinion/12tue1.html>)

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