H.E. Mr. Seiji Kojima: Patron-in-Chief of MAAP

On the strong desire of the entire membership, the new Cabinet Executives of MAAP Executive Committee extended an invitation through President MAAP (Dr. Akbar) to the Ambassador of Japan, His Excellency Mr. Seiji Kojima to act as MAAP Patron-in-Chief. The Ambassador has very graciously accepted the position. Under his dynamic patronage, MAAP will work more energetically to promote continued ties between Pakistan and Japan.

Ambassador Kojima, Arigato Gozaimashita.

New MAAP Executives for 2007-2009

Election for MAAP Executive Committee was held electronically from nomination, withdrawal, voting and final declaration of result in February 2007 by the MAAP election committee consisting of Dr. Muslim Abbas Zaidi (Chairman) & Dr. Mujahid Alam (Member) adopting criteria approved by the General Body. The result of election was announced on MAAP Yahoo egroup. The elected members of the MAAP Executive Committee are:

Dr. Muhammad Akbar : President
Mr. Zafar Mahmood : Vice President
Dr. Iftekhar Azim Niaz : Joint Secretary
Dr. Khalid Rasheed : Finance Secretary

Group Photo of Executives with other Members after oath-taking
Japan Children Art Competition and Speech Contest

As a part of the Japan-Pakistan Friendship Fest 2007, Embassy of Japan, in cooperation with Pakistan-Japan Cultural Association (PJCA) and Monbukagakusho Alumni Association of Pakistan (MAAP) organized Japan Children Art Competition and Speech Contest for the second time among the students of various schools in Faisalabad, Multan, Lahore and Islamabad. The objective was to promote creative thinking among talented and budding young artists of Pakistan. Four prizes for each category were awarded to the winning students while each student was given a certificate of participation.

The themes of the Children Art Competition and Speech Contest were “How I visualize Japan on Canvas and “How can Japan become a role model for Pakistan”, respectively. Students with age group of 11 to 14 years (a maximum of three students per school) were allowed to participate in the art competition while for speech contest; only two students per school could participate.

The purpose of organizing this event was both to appraise the children about the warmth and depth of friendly relationship between Japan and Pakistan for the past five decades as well as to familiarize them with some aspects of Japan, its people and culture. Such events will promote awareness Pakistan among the young generation of will become better aware about the social and cultural life of Japan in this modern era of age. On this occasion, young artists and speakers from different schools displayed their artistic skills and talent in the speech contest.

This art competition and speech contest is gradually becoming very popular among Pakistani school children because of the carefully chosen interesting subjects and the opportunity for the children to freely express themselves. The contests were held at the following places:

October 24, 2007 : National Arts Gallery, Islamabad
November 1, 2007 : Alhamra Hall-III, Lahore
November 14, 2007 : Faisalabad Arts Council, Faisalabad
November 28, 2007 : Multan Arts Council, Multan

Mr. Kitayama visited Pakistan on the invitation of MAAP during August 6-10, 2007 and conducted meetings with CDA officials and also conducted site visits for project feasibility. MAAP members; Dr. M. Akbar, Mr. Sultan Sikandar, Mr. Zafar Mehmood, Dr. Iftikhar Azim Niazi, Dr. Nasir M. Khan, Dr. Afzaq Hussain and Dr. Zabta Shinwari volunteered as interpreters and coordinators during his meetings with CDA and site visits. He was given a welcome dinner by MAAP at Islamabad Club on 6th August, 2007. Mr. Kitayama visited Pakistan again in the last week of September, and presented the garden layout plan to Chairman, CDA. A further visit is expected when the project requisites are finalised by CDA.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEXT SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2009

Applications for the MEXT Scholarship program of year 2009 are now acceptable at the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan. (www.pk.emb-japan.go.jp)

The last date for the submission of application is 31st March, 2008.
Reunion of MEXT Alumni in Japan 2007 (Tsudoi)
By Dr. Sadar Uddin Siddiqui

Every year Mombusho organizes a reunion of MEXT Alumni in Japan. For the year 2007, two MAAP members, Dr. Sadar Uddin Siddiqui and Dr. Inayat Ali Shah were selected to represent Pakistan at this reunion. The reunion was scheduled during November 12-16, 2007 in Tokyo, Japan. In this re-union, former students from Southwest Asia, Middle Eastern and Central Asian Countries and Mangolia (25 participants from 14 countries) were present; majority of them (15) were Muslims. Views were exchanged and activities of the associations of the former students were discussed. Various lectures and workshops were also held to share useful information. Moreover, the Alumni also met their professors and shared ideas for joint collaboration in research.

Farewell Dinner for Mr. Arata Mizukami

Mr. Arata Mizukami served as Third Secretary of the Embassy of Japan. During his stay in Pakistan, he developed a very close association with MAAP. He attended almost all monthly meetings of MAAP and helped in coordinating various activities of MAAP. To acknowledge his services, MAAP hosted a farewell dinner in his honour and presented a MAAP-Shield as token of appreciations. The dinner was attended by MAAP members, Mr. Yo Fukuzawa, Director, Press, Information and Culture Department Embassy of Japan in Pakistan and Dr Ghazala Ali (Coordinator for MAAP in culture section of the Japanese Embassy). Families of MAAP members also attended the farewell dinner.
**MAAP MEMBERS ORGANIZED AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE (CETEE-2007) IN ISLAMABAD**

The 1st international conference on “Emerging Trends in Engineering Education” was organized by Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in collaboration with HEC and NUST on Dec. 27-28, 2008. The inaugural session was held at Aiwan-e-Sadr (Presidency), Islamabad, chaired by President Pervez Musharraf. The Technical Sessions were conducted at Marriott hotel. A large number of participants / professionals (more than 300) both from within the country and abroad showed keen interest in the conference.

This event was a great success which received appreciations from the Government of Pakistan and by all other concerned quarters in academia and industry. Two MAAP members, Dr. M. Akbar and Dr. Nasir M. Khan, had the honour to act as Chairman, Organizing Committee and Conference Secretary of the CETEE-2007, respectively.

The conference was the first of its nature providing unique opportunity of a thorough review of entire spectrum and approach of conducting engineering education in Pakistan and to discuss allied emerging issues. The conference focused on four major Themes (for details http://www.cetee2007.pec.org.pk) and over 30 peer-reviewed papers were presented and discussed. The outcome of the conference will facilitate formulation of policy guidelines to enhance the quality standards of engineering education/profession in Pakistan.

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**Japanese film festival in Islamabad**

A Japanese Film Festival showing English subtitled versions of four Japanese films was held in Islamabad from 28-30 August, 2007 at Islamabad Serena Hotel. The inaugural film was "The Hidden Blade" and the other three films were “Swing Girls”, Water Boys and The Face of Jizo. The Japanese Film Festival has become a regular feature in the cultural activities of Islamabad and people from all walks of life came and enjoy these films.
From PJCA to MAAP

By Prof. Dr. Nusrat Ara Majeed

It was in year 1992, after return from my first ever visit to Japan, when I met, the then, Ambassador, Mr. Kunio Muraoaka. The Deputy Chief of Mission introduced me to the President and the Vice President of PJCA and I joined it as an executive member. Those were the days of peace and freedom, there were no restrictions to enter the diplomatic enclave, and I used to participate in many parties and other social cultural activities. The first medical advisor of the Japanese Embassy, Dr. Miyahke became a good friend and afterward he visited my hospital to discuss EKG's and other heart related problems of the staff.

The Deputy Chief of Mission left Pakistan in 1993 and later Mr. Muraoaka, the then Ambassador was also posted out in 1994. The new Ambassador's wife was a very dynamic lady and used to get involved in many activities. I hardly knew any Japanese words during my stay at Tokushima University for one year. My close association with the ladies of Japan Embassy enabled me to learn a few words. I used to learn a few words every time we met and then during the teatime in my office, I often phoned them to drill some new words during our tele-talk. Mrs. Kawakami taught me some basic grammar and I was able to communicate in Japanese. They left in 1997 to be succeeded by H.E. Mr. Minoru Kubota and his charming wife. By now things were little intentionally changed briefly after the "Desert Storm" in 1998, but it did not affect the activities of Japan Embassy cultural troupe which kept on its activities at enhanced pace for better understanding between the two countries.

In the year 2000, embassy was headed by Ambassador Sadaki Numata. He liked to play the piano and would often sing at various functions. He was followed by Ambassador Shibuya who could only stay for 1 1/2 years and was replaced by Ambassador Nabuaki Tanaka, a very dynamic person, who took keen interest in cultural activities and every year invited a cultural troupe from Japan, consisting of artists, musicians and calligraphers. After a very short stay, he left for a high-profile position at U.N. He was a strong advocate to bring PJCA and MAAP together whereby both associations could function in close harmony for promotion and strengthening of mutual relationship between the two countries.

In May 2006, Mr. Seiji Kojima got posted here as the new Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan. I have the pleasure of knowing Mrs. Tami Kojima since her arrival in Islamabad. Madam Kojima is a very pleasant and dynamic lady, who dresses up very nicely in Pakistani style and speaks fluent Urdu. Both of them take keen interest in all cultural activities. I was introduced and invited to join MAAP by, the then, Director, Press, Information and Culture, Mr. Hisao Nishimaki in early 2007. Since then I have been attending monthly meetings. This was a journey from 1992 to 2007.

I feel that both PJCA and MAAP are headed by very senior and graceful personalities. If they work in collaboration with each other, we will be able to bring our two countries together in stronger ties in a better and effective way. I really liked this group and was amazed to know that each and every member of MAAP is so well familiar with the culture of Japan in its true perfection. MAAP is conducting its various regular activities, especially monthly meeting on the 1st Thursday of each month. Ambassador Kojima has very kindly consented to be the Patron-in-Chief of MAAP. The Association is rendering very useful services in promoting the Japanese culture in Pakistan. It is a very well organized association and the MAAP members are volunteering themselves in coordinating various activities with the cultural section of the Japanese Embassy. We are grateful to H.E. Mr. Seiji Kojima and let us hope that each one for us can play his/her role to introduce Japan in our country, as we all owe a lot both to our homeland and Japan, the land of rising sun.
Kyoto After 7 years

By Dr. Afaq Hussain

I had stayed at Kyoto from 1994 to 2000 during which time I completed my MS and PhD degrees from Kyoto University. I had an opportunity to visit Kyoto again after a period of 7 years in May 2007. Kyoto was at the usual slow pace along the Kamogawa (Kamo River). From the Philosophers' street to kawabata, the nostalgia of cherry blossoms was in the air. I also visited my alma mater, Kyoto University and met my Professor Dr. Eiho who had now retired from Kyodai. Kyoto University has now been transformed into majestic buildings with solar roof tops. It was sad to feel that the usual welcome atmosphere had been replaced by top security measures that gave you a chilling feel. However, the delicacies of Kyoto especially Otofu, sashimi, sushi and hot tempura and udon made up for the warmth. I went around to the Kohata Hoikuen (Kindergarten) where my children went and I was greeted by a sharp Otoosan by the teachers who recognized me promptly.

MAAP DINNER RECEPTION / BONENKAI
(YEAR-END PARTY)

The Bonenkai (year-end party) is a rich cultural activity in Japan to celebrate the achievements and to forget disappointments of the passing year and re-energizing one self again for the year ahead with new determinations. The year 2007 was nearing its end when MAAP decided to hold a similar get-together (Bonenkai) this time in Islamabad on December 16, 2007 at Islamabad Club, with the aspirations/hopes that the year-2007 has passed quite eventfully for each one of us. On the special invitation of MAAP executives, H.E. Mr. Seiji Kojima, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, Madam Kojima and other senior diplomats attended the event.
The charter of proposed Regional Alumni Association named as "South Asian Federation of the Japanese University Alumni Associations (SAFJUAA)" was signed by its 1st President selected from Bangladesh, Prof. Dr. M. Mozammel Hoq, in Tokyo on behalf of respective Alumni Associations of the region like Nepal, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka in the presence of official from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan on December 6, 2005.

The next SAFJUAA meeting is going to be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from March 19-22, 2008 for which the approval has been solicited by the respective regional MEXT Alumni Associations. It is hoped that SAFJUAA will strengthen the links further in more efficient and effective manner and act as a bridge between the people of South Asian regions and Japan through conducting seminars, conferences, workshops, exchange in R&D and culture, etc.

### List of MEXT Scholars for the Year 2008

1. Syed Ali Hyder Zaidi
2. Mr. Asif Naeem
3. Mr. Muhammad Kamran Akhtar
4. Mr. Mirza Zahid Hussain
5. Mr. Muhammad Badruddin Khan
6. Mr. Iftikhar Ahmad
7. Mr. Quahir Sohail
8. Mr. Abdul Wadood
9. Mr. Naveed Ahmed
10. Ms. Farzeen Sehar Bhatti
11. Mr. Muhammad Umair

### New Member Join MAAP

Dr. Abida Farooqi was born in Rawalpindi. She had completed her Masters from the Quaid-I-Azam University, Islamabad in Organic Chemistry in 1998. She then joined Geological Survey of Pakistan and served for five years from 1998-2003. She then got Monbusho scholarship in 2003 and went to Japan for Ph.D. She completed her Ph.D in March 2007. The title of the Ph.D dissertation was: "The nature and extent of arsenic and fluoride affected groundwater and soil from Punjab Pakistan; the role of geochemical factors on the mobility and probable sources of these pollutants in natural hydrological cycle. She had published several papers in international conferences and journals. Her first paper on As and F groundwater pollution was the first academic international report on fluoride and arsenic polluted groundwater in Pakistan. Currently, she is serving at Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi as an Assistant Professor.

### Editorial Board:

Dr. Nasir M. Khan  
Dr. Syed Afaq Hussain  
Dr. Ghazala Ali  
Dr. Iftikhar Azim Niaz  
Mr. Sultan Sikandar Khan

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