Warm Welcome to Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, Prime Minister of Japan

Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, the Prime Minister of Japan, paid a two-day official visit to Pakistan on April 30 and May 1, 2005. He was cordially received by the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan. As a result of this visit, the relations between the two countries have entered a new phase of mutual cooperation and collaboration in various fields. The Government of Pakistan expressed its profound appreciation for the economic and technical assistance received from Japan. The MAAP members hope that this visit will strengthen and expand cooperation in the field of education and scientific research between the two countries.

The 1st South Asian Regional Meeting of Japanese Universities Alumni Associations in Kathmandu

The 1st South Asian Regional Meeting of the Alumni of Japanese Universities was held in Kathmandu on March 29, 2005. Representatives from Japanese Alumni Associations of Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were present at the meeting. Monbusho Scholars Association of India (MOSAI) although its members were not physically present, participated via mail and expressed commitment "to abide by any decision taken in the meeting". The agenda of the meeting was to decide the name of the Association and formulate its objectives. The decisions taken by the 1st Regional meeting of Japanese Alumni Associations were: (1) Name: South Asian Federation of Japanese Universities Alumni (SAFJUA). (2) Objectives: Will organize Regional Conferences / Seminars / Workshops/Symposiums on common interests.

http://www.maap.edu.pk
including scientific, social and cultural aspects; Joint publication of journals/proceedings/newsletters and reports in soft and hard copies (electronic and paper form); conduct, cultural and scientific exchange programs; and strengthening the link between SAFJUA and Japan.

Methodology: SAFJUA will organize yearly seminars/symposiums/video conferences in the member countries as may be agreed in rotation; Joint publications and directories of the Alumnij Promotion of scientific and cultural programs among member associations and Japan; and invite Japanese professionals and scholars in the activities of SAFJUA. An ad-hoc committee has been formed with one member from each Association (country) to prepare rules and regulations of the SAFJUA. Upon approval by all Associations, the next meeting will be decided.

The regional meeting in Kathmandu was organized in line with the Tokyo Tsudoi-reunion-2004, objectives. It was supported by the MOFA. Delegates from Alumni Associations of Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka actively participated in the meeting. Delegates held an incredible nine hours marathon meeting, discussing every detail of the objectives. The hard efforts were rewarded with the formation of the "South Asian Federation of Japanese Universities Alumni.

Orientation Programme for the Japanese Government Scholarship Grantees 2005

An orientation seminar was conducted by the MAAP at the Japanese Embassy on 17th March 2005, for the guidance of the Pakistani scholars going to Japan this year on Japanese Government scholarships. Mr. Hisao Nishimaki, Director Press, Information and Culture was also present. Mr. S. Sikandar Khan, Dr. Najam Siddiqi and Dr. Nasir Khan talked about various aspects of Japanese culture and a foreign students' life in Japan based on their own experiences by using multimedia presentations, which was followed by a brief question-answer session.

In the evening Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, the Ambassador of Japan, hosted a reception for the scholars and the members of MAAP at his residence. In his brief speech, the Ambassador congratulated the scholars and expressed his hope that they would successfully complete their studies in Japan and return home to contribute in the development of Pakistan, in their respective fields of education and scientific research.

List of MEXT Scholarship Grantees 2005

Ms. Nadia Anwar, University of Tsukuba
nadia-nibge@yahoo.com

Mr. Sikandar Ali, Osaka University
alisbiotech@yahoo.com

Mr. Safdar Hussain Bouk, Keio University
bouk15@hotmail.com

Ms. Noureen Afsar Khan, Kagoshima University,
Noureen-khan2008@yahoo.com

Syed Raza Kazmi, Tohoku University
syedrazakazmi@gmail.com

Mr. Atif Zahoor, The University of Tokyo,
zahooratif@hotmail.com

http://www.maap.edu.pk
A delegation from University of Yamanashi, Japan, visited Foundation University Medical College (FUMC) from April 25, 2005 to May 1st, 2005. The delegation consisted of Prof. Yoshiki Hamada, Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Mr. Motoya Yamamoto, Incharge Foreign Students office. This delegation's visit was to meet the officials of Foundation University and to deliver lectures to the faculty and students.

The Dean of FUMC, Prof. Iftikhar Ahmed Malik and other professors welcomed Prof. Yoshiki Hamada and Mr. Yamamoto. They met with the Managing Director of Fauji Foundation, Lt. Gen (R) Syed Mohammad Amjad, the Rector of FUI, Brig (R) Talat Saeed and Dean of FUMC, Prof. Iftikhar Ahmad Malik. Prof. Hamada visited Fauji Foundation Hospital and the attached Artificial Limb Center. He delivered a lecture to the faculty and students of the final years MBBS class. He was impressed by the students and the facilities available. The academic agreement was signed by the Dean FUMC and by the Dean of University of Yamanashi on 1st June 2005.

In 2002, the Dean of Foundation University Medical College invited the Dean of Yamanashi University, School of Medicine, Japan, for signing of an academic agreement between the two institutions, which was introduced to the FUMC by one of its faculty members, Associate Professor, Dr. Najam Siddiqi, who did his PhD from Yamanashi University, Japan.

In May 2004, Dr. Najam Siddiqi met the President of Yamanashi University and delivered a letter to him from the Rector of FUI.
The monthly MAAP meeting was held on 2nd June, 2005 at 5:00 pm at Holiday Inn, Islamabad. Dr. Nasir M. Khan made a presentation about the feasibility of making a Japanese garden in Islamabad. President of MAAP had already written a letter to the Chairman of CDA and the Ambassador of Japan in this regard.

Dr. Najam Siddiqi gave a detailed presentation on the Academic agreement between University of Yamanashi, Faculty of Medicine, Japan and the Foundation University Medical College, Rawalpindi. Other points on the agenda were to sponsor the Haiku Mushaira in Islamabad, and the signing of the papers for the registration of MAAP. The Report on the 1st South Asian Federation of Japanese Universities Alumni (SAFJUA) held in Nepal on 29th March, 2005, was also read by the Secretary, Mr. Toqeer from Lahore, represented MAAP at this meeting.

The President of MAAP, requested all the members to write articles for the Newsletter. At the end, Mr. Nishimaki, Director, Information and Culture in his speech congratulated Dr. Najam for his long lasting efforts in the materialization of an academic agreement between Yamanashi and Foundation Universities. He further added that this would help Pakistani faculty and students to visit Japan and learn the latest technologies in medicine. He also appreciated the efforts of Dr. Nasir in gaining the feasibility and technical know-how to develop a Japanese garden in Islamabad. The Japanese Embassy will surely support this project which will give a Japanese touch to the scenic beauty of Islamabad. In the end, President MAAP, Mr. S. Sikander Khan thanked all the members and the Japanese officials for attending this meeting.
A Little about Ikebana
By Khaulah Abbasi

Flowers are a symbol of happiness and love. Different kinds of flowers are used for different occasions. Whether the occasion is happy, such as somebody's wedding function, or sad like a funeral, flowers play a vital role. They also convey the message of love and are thought to be one of the most important gifts for Valentine's Day. Despite all this, the beauty of flowers becomes extremely prominent if they are arranged properly, either as a display for the corner of the hall for decoration purpose, or given as a gift to friends. The arrangement of flowers so that they attract the attention of beholder, can also be called Ikebana.

When we talk about Ikebana in Pakistan, then we cannot proceed without mentioning Mrs. Asifa Ataka's name. Mrs Ataka not only teaches Ikebana, but has also become an inspiration for those who want to learn it throughout Pakistan. She has learnt this art from the Ikenobo School which is one of the leading flower arrangement schools in Japan. She takes Ikebana classes in Karachi, but keeps traveling to different cities like Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad to spread her knowledge throughout the country. Her students in different cities keep waiting for her throughout the year to quench their thirst for this unique form of art and to learn as much as possible.

Ikebana is a vast subject. It has different types and styles. "Moribana" is the most simple type. In this form a few flowers are very simply but elegantly arranged in the vase. Another type of Ikebana in which flowers are carefully arranged in long narrow containers, is called "Nageire". There are other styles which are called "chocotai" and "shatai". In advanced forms of Ikebana, the container, or the vase in which flowers are arranged, is also given great importance.

In Ikebana any seasonal flowers can be used, but these flowers are not stacked up together in the vase, but are beautifully and carefully arranged in such a way so that the beauty of each flower is enhanced and the overall arrangement catches the attention of everyone present in the room. In a majority of Ikebana arrangements 3 or 5 flowers are used. The rest of the materials are leaves or small flowers which are also called "helpers", to enhance the beauty of main flowers. Main flowers are called "Shin", "Soe" and "Tai" denoting past, present and future.

Ikebana is a very old form of the Japanese art of flower arrangement. Initially it was done only by males. But with the passage of time and increasing popularity of this art, females also started learning it. Now there are a lot of Ikebana professors teaching it throughout the world. Ikebana is gradually becoming more and more famous among people and the number of Ikebana students is increasing day by day. One reason for the increasing popularity of Ikebana is that man feels relaxed and fresh when he's close to nature. Beautifully arranged flowers not only relax the people admiring them, but also become a source of joy for those whose minds are lethargic due to a tiring mechanical routine. The closer we go to nature, the fresher we feel and the more relaxed and content we become. To get closer to nature, we have to get closer to flowers and leaves. Ikebana is a way for us to bring nature into our homes. This is the reason the Japanese give such importance to flowers and this is why Ikebana is getting more famous day by day.

http://www.maap.edu.pk
The Embassy of Japan celebrated “Japan Week” in collaboration with Asian Cultural Exchange Association, Japan and MAAP from 19th to 24th March 2005, in which various cultural events were organized to introduce the traditions of Japan to the people of Pakistan. A delegation from Japan comprising of 22 performers and artists arrived in Pakistan on 17th March 2005 to produce a series of colorful cultural activities.

The events during “Japan Week” included the Japanese Tea Ceremony, Ikebana demonstration, calligraphy demonstrations, an exhibition of Japanese art work at Nomad Gallery, a Judo demonstration on Tatami, and children's art competition/exhibition (a joint display of Japanese and Pakistani children's paintings). In collaboration with the Marriott Hotel, the Embassy also held a “Japanese Food Festival”. The Embassy of Japan had also made special arrangements for Japanese artists to demonstrate calligraphy, Ikebana and Tea Ceremony and exhibit their art works at the National College of Arts, Lahore, on 24 March 2005. The Japanese Tea Ceremony is a highly ritualized form of drinking and appreciating tea. It holds a very significant place in Japanese culture and is unlike the Pakistani tradition of chai in the afternoon. In Japan, the Japanese tea ceremony originally started in the 15th century and underwent some changes in the 16th century. This modified format has been followed since then, however, and little has changed in this ceremony since that time. The Tea Ceremony was the only place people could meet outside of their class, as equals. The point of the tea ceremony is “peacefulness through a bowl of tea”. The beautiful drinking bowl, the utensils and the colourful tableware, all add to the experience of this form of art.

As in previous years, this year too the Press, Information and Culture department of the Japanese Embassy, with the cooperation of the Alumni Association of Pakistan (MAAP) organized a Japanese Calendars Exhibitions at the Aabpara Community Centre on 13-14th of January 2005 and at the Alhamra Art Gallery Lahore on 8-9 February 2005. A large number of people visited the Exhibition and showed keen interest in the various aspects of Japanese culture, traditions and natural beauty, as depicted on the calendars. A ballot draw was held later and the lucky winners were awarded the calendars of their choice from the Embassy.

http://www.maap.edu.pk
Typical Japanese gardens are very popular and give a lasting impression about Japanese aesthetic sense and culture, which is lacking so far in the country. The desire and demand by all MAAP members for a garden in the past coupled with the suitable climate compared to many other South-east regions, like Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia etc. which do have Japanese gardens.

The President MAAP, and other members proposed the idea of making a Japanese garden during the inaugural ceremony of Japanese Film Festival in 2003. The Chairman CDA, Mr. Kamran Lashari in his speech, appreciated the proposal and asked for the technical support from the Japanese through the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad. In 2004 again, Secretary MAAP at the Japanese Film festival reminded the CDA Chairman Mr. Lashari that he promised publicly to allocate a suitable piece of land and to form a committee to work with the Embassy of Japan and MAAP. It was suggested that Margalla hills or Pir Sohawa could be suitable places for the garden especially for planting Cherry blossoms trees. Mr. Lashari fully appreciated the idea and admitted that enough funds are available but the technical help from the Japanese experts would be needed. Later on, President of MAAP dispatched an official letter, thanking and appreciating the Chairman CDA and acknowledging his well-deserved reputation, aesthetic sense and commitment to the beautification of Pakistan's landscape and improvement of the natural environment and having agreed on this proposal. The proposed Japanese garden will not only serve as a physical symbol of Pak-Japan friendship. It will serve as a platform to enjoy different social events like tea-ceremony, display of Ikebana, Hanami etc. and also bring spiritual peace and tranquility to the citizens of Pakistan.

During the monthly meeting of MAAP in March 2005, Dr. Nasir was assigned the task of preparing a feasibility report on developing a Japanese garden in Islamabad because of his employment with a Japanese consulting company (Nippon Giken Inc.). Following are brief details, based on a meeting of Dr. Nasir with the experts.

Concept of Japanese Gardens:
We have to focus on one of the followings types of Japanese gardens:
A) Typical Japanese style garden: It is quite sophisticated in design, material & construction, will be expensive and take lunch time and man-power required of landscape experts.
B) Simple mixed-Sakura (cherry blossoming) garden: these types of gardens/parks are also a very common and popular part of the Japanese cultural society. One can observe this form of garden everywhere in the country passing through south - north. These gardens may be mixed with many other trees and flowering plants along with Sakura beauty (local and famous Japanese species), depending upon the soil, climate and post-planted O&M conditions.

Sakura-Type mixed garden:
Cherry blossom trees attract people with their wonderful pinkish-white blossoms which cover the tree during the spring flowering season. Mixing different species of trees, which blossom at different times, also creates beauty in other seasons. An example would be the Momiji trees (called Khaede or Acer), commonly known as ‘Japanese Maple’ which are attractive in the autumn season when the leaves slowly change colour from yellow to red. What is crucial to achieve this year-round beauty is the combination of different trees and plants coupled with local species, like pines, bamboos, etc. To add to this, the various plant species must be integrated into a well-designed Japanese-style green landscape complete with wooden, stone and water-related structures. In this way alone will the Japanese cultural touch be evident and thereby bring feelings of delight to anyone entering the park.

Proposed Plants, Irrigation facilities, Suitable Area, and Structures (Thatemono):
1. Sakura trees: May be transported by ship in containers (under controlled environment as freeze-dried nursery plants) of 0.5m height, has rather speedy growth rate i.e. 1.0 m/yr.
2. Momiji (Khaede), Japanese Maple tree: Cant be freeze-dried, have to import its nursery plants of 1 m height, covered by sponge to keep moisture balance required. It has rather slow growth rate, i.e. 50 cm/yr.
3. Local bamboos, or pine trees, or any other suitable species that can be mixed in the designed landscape.
4. Flowering plants like “Poem/” used for fences, and similarly “Tsusuji”, and

http://www.maap.edu.pk
"Azalea" plants are the options.

5. Wooden structures such as typical Japanese style rooms with Tatami, which may be used for different ceremony, like tea-ceremony, Ikebana, etc. This may be coupled with typical style Thatemono observed in Japanese gardens, wooden gates, typical fountains, waterfalls, and a beautiful small lake.

6. The consultants proposed maximum 0.5 ~ 1.0 hectare of land for this simple but typical Japanese-style garden.

7. Planting Time: According to Japanese experts, the best time for these nursery plants is January to February (having a temperature range between 10 ~ 15 C). This is also recommended even for trial basis transplantation to check the suitability of growing foreign species under local climate and soil conditions. During the June monthly meeting Dr. Nasir gave a presentation on the above topic. It was suggested and agreed that the trees/plants should be imported on a trial basis in Pakistan to test their survival in green-houses given proper management and care. In this regard, the green-house and other relevant facilities available with NARC, Islamabad, including technical expertise, may be fully utilized to reduce the financial burdens in the shape of hiring of foreign experts. The information and data required by the concerned Japanese consultants may be collected accordingly for making the feasibility study before complete design and import of species here. With the proper contribution of local experts and management, we can reduce the total cost of this project.

We are, therefore, expecting firm steps from the leadership of CDA to form the concerned committee as Mr. Lashari proposed in his speech in order to examine a few options for a potential areas in Islamabad for this garden, such as the foothills (up-side) adjacent to the Japanese children park near Margalla hills, a portion of F-9 park, or Damn-e-koh/Pir-Sohawa etc.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editors:
S. Sikandar Khan
Dr. Najam Siddiqi
Dr. Nasir M. Khan
Ms. I. Mawaz

638, St. 70, I-8/3
Islamabad, Pakistan,
Mobile: 0333-5117710

e-mail: najami69@hotmail.com
http://www.maap.edu.pk

http://www.maap.edu.pk