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Newsletter of Ibn Sina Academy (NISA)

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CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN UNANI MEDICINE

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India

Department of AYUSH

THE COUNCIL

The Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, Department of AYUSH. Established in 1978, the CCRUM started functioning from 10 January, 1979, and ever since it has been busy researching into various fundamental and applied aspects of Unani Medicine. Over the years, the CCRUM has emerged as the world-leader in the field.

THE NETWORK

20 research Centres of the Council are functioning in different parts of the Country.

THE AREAS OF ACTIVITY

The Research Programme of the Council has four major components:

* Clinical Research * Drug Standardization * Literary Research * Survey and Cultivation of Medicinal Plants

THE MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Some significant achievements of the Council are as follows:

Developing Research In Unani Medicine

CLINICAL RESEARCH

- Has developed 24 Unani Drugs which are purely natural, standardized and without any side-effects, for successful treatment of leucoderma, sinusitis, viral hepatitis, eczema, malaria, rheumatoid, arthritis and bronchial asthma.
- Has filed patents on seven of these drugs.

DRUG STANDARDIZATION

- Has evolved standards for 222 single and 385 compound Unani drugs.
- Has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for taking up advanced research in the field of drug development

LITERARY RESEARCH

- Has translated from Arabic and Persian into Urdu language 25 Unani Medical Classics mostly manuscripts. And has edited and published these works.

SURVEY & CULTIVATION OF MEDICINAL PLANTS

- Has collected 59462 specimens of 1730 medicinal plants from the wild
- Undertaking successful cultivation of four important medicinal species
- Has gathered and documented 6650 folk medicinal claims

PUBLICATIONS

- Has produced over 1000 research papers and brought out 116 research publications, besides regular publications of a bimonthly CCRUM Newsletter, Quarterly Urdu Journal Jahan-e-Tib and Annual Report.

For further information, please contact

Director

CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN UNANI MEDICINE

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IAMMS ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES AT IBN SINA ACADEMY
(From October to December 2008)

Third Ibn Sînâ Memorial Annual Lecture
The lecture began with the Welcome Address by Professor Hakim Syed Zillur Rahman, (President of Ibn Sînâ Academy of Medieval Medicine & Sciences). After welcoming the speaker, the chairman and other distinguished guests, he informed the audience that Ibn Sînâ memorial lecture is being organized with full cooperation of National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL), Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India. The first lecture was delivered by Saiyid Hamid (Chancellor, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi) in 2006 and the second by Professor Syed Mushirul Hasan (Vice Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi) in 2007. For the third lecture, the Academy has invited Dr. Syed Shahid Mahdi. The title of the lecture is "***Ahad ba ahad Maghrib, Islam aur Musalmans***". He further stressed the need and relevance of this topic in the present situation in our country.

Dr. Syed Shahid Mahdi (IAS), Ex-Vice Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia (New Delhi) and Vice President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), delivered his Ibn Sînâ Memorial Lecture on 27th Dec. 2008 at the Academy. He reviewed era by era the attitude of many European scholars towards Islam and Islamic Scholars. He said, "there is a need to reply back scholarly the anti-Islamic presentation of European scholars. However, he also warned that we should not retaliate emotionally against the European biases".

Dr. Mahdi examined critically the historical analysis of Islam by many European scholars. He quoted from English writings of about 50 European scholars and their biased attitude towards Islam. He also talked about the intellectual efforts of Muslim Spain during the middle age, and in the last century the great impact of Jamaluddin Afghani on the Muslim mind. He dwelt also on the reform movements in the Islamic world, especially on the Indian subcontinent, for instance by Sir Syed Aḥmad Khan, Mohammad Iqbal, which movement resulted in the establishment of a Madrasah at Deoband, and Nadwatul 'Ulema' at Lucknow, and also the Aligarh movement.

While presiding the function, the renowned scholar Professor Riazur Rahman Khan Sherwani (President of Muslim Educational Conference) mentioned the contribution of Ibn Rushd, Ibn Baja, Ibn Tufail, Farabi, Al-Kindi and Ibn Sînâ and their impact later on the philosophical thinking of European scholars. However, he also shared some view points of European scholars as well.

At the end, Professor SM Razaullah Ansari (General Secretary, Ibn Sînâ Academy) moved a vote of thanks. Several teachers of Aligarh Muslim University including many senior professors such as Masoodul Hasan, Ather Husain Siddiqi, Asloob Ahmad Ansari, Iftikhar Alam Khan, Shan Mohammad, Ali Mohammad Naqvi, Ishrat Hussain Farooqi, Ahmad Khalil Jafri, Syed Hashim Rizvi, etc., also attended the memorial lecture.

World AIDS Day 2008
A function to felicitate an eminent entrepreneur and public health worker of USA - Mrs. Afshan N. Hashmi, was hosted on 1st of December 2008 by Indian Medical Association (Aligarh Branch) and Ibn Sînâ Academy of Medieval Medicine & Sciences. The AIDS Cell of the Academy announced

the name of Dr. Afshan N Hashmi for the second prestigious 'Ibn Sina Public Health Award'. Dr. Hashmi is the President of USA based Global Regulatory and Business Solutions. She had received most of her education from Aligarh Muslim University (India) and advanced training from Johns Hopkins University (USA) and University of Maryland (USA). Later she worked in different organizations in the US as a Public Health Scientist and launched her own company, which within a short period has reached a noticeable level on the competitive horizon. This Award was constituted in the year 2007 to be presented on the World AIDS Day to professionals discharging leadership roles in the field of public health. The Award for 2008 was presented to Dr. Hashmi at a function organized on the occasion of World AIDS Day in the Library Hall of Ibn Sina Academy. The AIDS Cell of the Ibn Sina Academy in collaboration with Indian Medical Association, Aligarh Branch, hosted academic symposium & public health awareness programs to mark the World AIDS Day. Dr. V. K. Jain, a renowned pediatrician, as chief guest inaugurated the exhibition on thematic posters (AIDS) and display of various publications and CDs on HIV/AIDS, while Dr. Ashok Kumar (Ashok Pathology Clinic), Dr. Ajay Mittal (Mittal Diagnostic Lab), Dr. Rajeev Varshney (Amrit Nursing Home) and Dr. Syed Ziaur Rahman (Honorary Consultant, AIDS Cell, Ibn Sînâ Academy) spoke on various aspects of HIV/AIDS. Prof. Syed Zillur Rahman (President, Ibn Sînâ Academy) chaired this function. Dr. Atul Singhal (President, IMA, Aligarh Branch), Prof. H. S. Khan (Nodal Officer, ART Centre, Aligarh), Prof. Jameela Majid Siddiqui, Dr. Snehlata Jain, Dr. Naveen Jain, Dr. Fakhre Alam, Dr. Alok Kulshrestha, Dr. Md. Tauheed Ahmad, Dr. Yogesh Khunte, Dr. M. Aslam, Dr. Md. Iftakhar, Mr. S. H. Zahid Jamal and Mr. Nafees Ahmad and others attended the programme.

Kaviyon ainw Shairon ki Shaam Aapke Naam

On the occasion of Eidul Fitr, Shikhar (a cultural and social organization) organized a programme at Library Hall of Ibn Sînâ Academy on October 4, 2008 for the Hindi and Urdu Poets. It was compered by Mr. Harish Betab, (PRO, Ibn Sînâ Academy & Secretary General, Ganesh Shankar Journalist Press Club, Aligarh). Large number of Urdu and Hindi poets attended and recited their poems.

IDB/MET Weekly Meetings at Ibn Sînâ Academy

Scholars supported by Muslim Educational Trust (MET) & Islamic Development Bank (IDB) met at Ibn Sînâ Academy to listen talks of many intellectuals. Dr. Shahid Malik, Honorary Students Counselor (North Zone) convened these meetings on every Friday. IDB, Jeddah scholarship programme is basically a programme to improve the educational standards of the Muslim Community in India and in 46 other countries. The Bank aims to develop the potentialities of the Muslim Students by awarding Loan Scholarship to those who are meritorious and enthusiastic, but are unable to pursue higher studies due to financial difficulties.

Visit of Important Personalities

Following dignitaries visited the Academy:

1. Delegates, Re-orientation Programmes, UGC Academic Staff College, AMU, Aligarh, 4th October 2008
2. Delegates, Subject Refresher Courses, UGC Academic Staff College, AMU, Aligarh, 8th October 2008. On this occasion, a lecture on cultural history was delivered by Prof. Syed Zillur Rahman.

3. Dr. Nasir Abbas Nayyar (Urdu Critic and Poet), Multan University, Multan, Pakistan, 29th November 2008
4. Dr. Qazi Abid (Urdu Fiction .Writer), Lahore, Pakistan, 30th November 2008.
5. Dr. Abdul Jamil Khan, New York, USA, 11th December 2008. Presented his book: a compilation of his poetries.
6. Mr. Shariq H. Khan, Germany, 20th December 2008.
7. Dr. Husain Nagamia (USA), Chairman, International Institute of Islamic Medicine (IIIM); President, Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA was founded in 1967) and Associate Editor, The Journal of IMANA, 26th December 2008.
8. Dr. Tajuddin Ahmed (USA), Treasurer, International Institute of Islamic Medicine, 26th December 2008.

IAMMS MEMBERS ACTIVITIES

Prof. Syed Zillur Rahman, President, Ibn Sînâ Academy, has been invited as

1. Member, Jury of Eminent Personalities, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan International Award for Literature 2008, Constituted by the Vice Chancellor of AMU, Aligarh, October 7, 2008.
2. Chief Guest, Sir Syed Day Celebration, Allama Iqbal Hall, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 17th October 2008
3. Chief Guest, Prize Distribution Function, World Osteoporosis Day, AK Tibbiya College, AMU, Aligarh, 20th October 2008.
4. Chief Guest, Re-orientation Training Programme, Department of Ilmul Advia, AK Tibbiya College, AMU, Aligarh, 31st December 2008.

He attended also the following international conferences:

1. International Congress of Traditional and Complementary Medicine, Research Centre for Traditional and Complementary Medicine, Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, Sari, Iran, October 28-31, 2008. Presented a paper on "Medical Heritage of Ibn Sina" and adjudged the poster presentations.
2. Seminar on Hakeem Mohammad Saeed, Pakistan Association for Eastern Medicine, Hamdard Markaz, Lahore, November 7, 2008. Invited as Guest of Honour
3. Iqbal Day Celebrations, Sir Syed Memorial Society, Islamabad, Pakistan, November 20, 2008. Presented presidential remarks.
4. Hamdard International Integrative Medicine Conference on "Expanding the Horizon of Integrative Medicine. Faculty of Eastern Medicine, Hamdard University, Karachi, Pakistan, November 24-26, 2008. Delivered Keynote address in the inaugural function and presided a session on "Memorial Lecture on Hakeem Abdul Hameed". Prof. Hkm Abdul Hannan, Dean Faculty of Eastern Medicine delivered the first "Prof Hakeem S. Zillur Rahman Oration".

Prof. S. M. Razaullah Ansari (General Secretary of Ibn Sînâ Academy) was invited to chair the Technical Session-1, of the Workshop on "Web 2.0 in Education", organised by the FTK Centre for Information Technology of the Jamia Millia Islamia (New Delhi) on Nov.4, 2008.

Another significant development is that Prof. S. M. R. Ansari has been nominated by the Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi, for the position of the *First Vice-President* of the IUHPS Executive Council. IUHPS stands for the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science. It sponsors and organizes every four years the International Congress of History of Science (ICHS). INSA is the official adhering institution to IUHPS. According to our information, the

International Nomination Committee of IUHPS has approved the inclusion of Prof. Ansari's name for the above-mentioned position in the official panel of the Council. Ibn Sina Academy wishes Prof. Ansari all success at the election of the Council, which will take place at the General Assembly of IUHPS during 23rd ICHS, to be held in Budapest, July 28-Aug.2, 2009. For detail about the Budapest Congress refer to item: "Forthcoming Conferences" in this issue.

Dr. Syed Ziaur Rahman, Treasurer, Ibn Sînâ Academy and lecturer, Department of Pharmacology, JNMC, AMU, Aligarh, has been appointed as:

1. Convener, Urban Health, Indian Medical Association, Aligarh Branch for a session 2008-2009.
2. Coordinator, ITP-IPS National Pharmacology Quiz, Special Quiz Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, AMU, Aligarh, December 14, 2008.
3. Resource Person, Training Programme for coordinators of the regional and peripheral Pharmacovigilance Centres for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani (ASU) Drugs under the sponsorship of WHO Country Office, India, 14th December 2008. Delivered two lectures viz. "Need of Pharmacovigilance for ASU Drugs" and "Causality Analysis" and presented concluding remarks as Guest of Honour in the Valedictory Function.
4. Guest Speaker, "Antibiotic Resistance", Conference Hall, Dr. Z A Dental College, AMU, Aligarh, November 2008.

Dr. Rahman attended also the following conferences and seminars

5. Third International Symposium on Recent Advances in Cardiovascular Sciences, Delhi Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Research (DIPSAR), In collaboration with Intl Academy of Cardiovascular Sciences, Govt. of NCT, New Delhi, India, December 17th, 2008.
6. 41st Annual Conference of Indian Pharmacological Society, ITP-IPS National Pharmacology Conference, AIIMS, New Delhi, December 18-20, 2008. Presented a paper entitles, Lifestyle Drugs – Are we ready? Also organized ITP-IPS National Pharmacology Quiz 2008.

MEMBERS NEWS IN BRIEF

Guest Lecture at ZA Dental College

Drug resistance can be considered as a natural response to the selective pressure of the growing drug marketing. Though, there is an increasing incidence of antibiotic-resistant pathogens all over the world, but, still few measures are being taken in this direction, remarked Dr. Rahman. While, delivering the guest lecture as a part of Continuing Dental Education (CDE) on "Antibiotic Resistance" at the Conference Hall of Dr. Z A Dental College, AMU, Aligarh.

Dr. Syed Ziaur Rahman, Lecturer, Department of Pharmacology, JNMC, AMU, Aligarh, enlightened with a few astonishing facts related to antibiotic resistance. It is estimated that more than 5000 to 10000 different species of bacteria live in the human body but some are real pathogen. The illegal, irrational and misuse of antibiotic is the main reason in making these few pathogens resistant. A bacterium that has been in existence for million of years without any opposition, is now defeating 50-year-old antibiotics. This is a war of microevolution vs. microbial evolution. Alexander Fleming, the discover of first antibiotic, himself recognized the potential danger of antibiotic resistance way back in 1945

Dr. Rahman stressed that misuse of penicillin could lead to the selection and propagation of mutant forms of bacteria resistant to the drug. Although, the first penicillin-resistant bacteria appeared several years later, but now the position is beyond control. A resistance to antimicrobials, recognized more than 50 years ago has led to an increase in morbidity, mortality and cost of health care. TB, which is still a very common disease in all developing countries, is currently becoming extensive drug resistant (EDR) leaving behind the problem of multidrug resistant (MDR). Bacteria have efficient mechanisms of genetic transfer which spreads resistance.

He further stated that the problem of antibiotic resistance is specifically been facing in all ICUs of the world. He laid the stress to promote the use of Standard Treatment Guidelines (STG) of WHO, developed according to antimicrobial resistance patterns, formation of Drugs and Therapeutic Committees (DTC) including Committee for Hospital Antimicrobial Policy (AMA), should be constituted in each medical hospitals.

The Committee for AMA Policy in JN Medical College Hospital has been in existence but without any significant role. Moreover, there is no set up of DTC, "Hospital Formulary", STG and Model List of Essential Medicines in the College Hospital. Dr. S S Ahmad, Chairman, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Dr. Z A Dental College, AM[redacted]

bacterial resistance is becoming a global problem. The development of new antibiotics has slowed but the growth of resistant microorganisms is increasing.

In the end of the CDE programme Dr. Ahmad thanked the audience particularly the students, staff of Dental College and GlaxoSmithKline, who arranged the programme so nicely.

(Source: Press Release (22.11.2008) by Zeeshan Ahmad, Assistant Public Relations' Officer, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh).

Guest Lecture at AMU Teaching Staff Association Club

In the last few years, cases of heart attacks among people in their late 20s have increased significantly. Change in lifestyle, increased smoking and stress is to blame for this disturbing trend but the genetic disposition of Indians, who are at risk of suffering premature heart attacks, adds to the problem", said Dr. Viveka Kumar, Senior Consultant, Max Heart Hospital, New Delhi. He further enlightened the etiopathology and therapeutic aspects of heart related diseases.

While presiding over the function, Prof. MU Rabbani, Director, Cardiology Centre, JN Medical College, AMU, Aligarh, informed that the risk of heart disease is higher among Indians than white Americans, Chinese and Japanese, and as a community, Indians are more prone to heart diseases at a younger age. He threw light on the medical advantages of stent (a small

It is expected that at least 10 teams of 3 members will play the final round.

The judges namely Dr. Hammad Usmani (Department of Anaesthesiology), Dr. Piyush Kumar (Department of Psychiatry) and Dr. Onkar Singh (Department of Pharmacology) announced the final results and distributed the attendance certificate to all participants.

Dr. Varun Gupta (Department of Pharmacology) and Dr. Girish Meshram (Department of Pharmacology) helped in maintaining the time and score. Dr. Jameel Ahmad (Lecturer, Department of Pharmacology) announced a special prize from his side to one of the attendee who answered highest number of times from the audience.

FELLOWSHIP

Chemical Heritage Society Fellowships 2009-10

After the session 2008-2009, successful expansion of its extensive fellowship program, the Chemical Heritage Foundation (CHF) is happy to announce the start of the 2009-10 competition. Generous pre- and postdoctoral fellowships are available for research on the history of chemistry, broadly construed. Fellowships are available for periods of 1 to 9 months, and will be spent in residence at CHF in Philadelphia; there are travel grants available for shorter research projects.

Projects funded in the past range from the history of Arabic alchemy and agricultural improvement to nanotechnology, pharmaceutical industry and trans fats. Research proposals detailing the importance of CHF's wide-ranging collections for the proposed project will be considered with particular care. During the fellowship tenure, CHF fellows form a vital part of CHF's intellectual life, with opportunities to publish in the *Chemical Heritage Magazine*, and to join conferences, talks, seminars and social events.

Details about the fellowships and the present fellow community at CHF and the application process, the online application form and fellowship FAQs may be found on our new, improved fellowship webpage: http://www.chemheritage.org/research/research.html. Our collections and other areas of CHF can be explored via our general webpage, www.chemheritage.org. The application deadline is 15 February 2009.

For further questions, please contact, Mr. Ronald Brashear, Ms. Ashley Augustyniak and Dr. Anke Timmermann at fellowships@chemheritage.org.

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES / SEMINARS

Origins: The Historical Sciences in the Age of Darwin Prospectus for a workshop to be held at the University of Chicago, June 2009

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a powerful new framework of inquiry and explanation swept the human and natural sciences: in cosmology and classics, in embryology and philology, in biology and theology, history gripped the imagination of scholars and scientists. The question of the origins and development of languages, species, peoples, and texts became central to the most advanced investigations conducted in the archives, the field, and the laboratory. Literary forms – the biography, the autobiography, the Bildungsroman – that charted life trajectories created narrative models during this period in the work of Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Thomas Carlyle, and Jules Michelet. In the immensely influential schemes of Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer, François Guizot and Henry

Buckle, the courses of science and civilization were recapitulated – and extrapolated into the future. Meditations upon progress and its discontents in the work of Karl Marx and John Stuart Mill, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Friedrich Nietzsche took the pulse of an age obsessed by history as a way of knowing and imagining. Charles Darwin's On the Origin of Species (1859) erupted into an intellectual world primed to appreciate its questions, if not its answers: how did things come to be as they are now – and what will they become?

As part of their ongoing cooperation in the History of the Human Sciences and in celebration of the Darwin Year 2009, the University of Chicago and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science Berlin will co-sponsor a workshop on all aspects of the historical sciences from circa 1789 – 1914. Papers on all aspects of the historical sciences during this period are welcome, including the emergence of new forms of explanation (e.g. ontogenesis, evolution, epochal stages of history), the cultivation of new forms of inquiry (e.g. reconstruction of language families, archival research, time series), philosophical reflections (e.g. on the meaning and nature of progress or the snares of historicism), and the transformation of cultural consciousness (e.g. through epics of national origins or historical novels). The aim of the workshop is to highlight a program of scientific inquiry that spanned the human and natural sciences as well as learned and lay cultures.

The workshop will take place on June 5th and 6th. Accommodations and transportation will be provided for those delivering papers. We encourage both graduate students and faculty members to submit an abstract by January 15th, 2009. Send abstracts to:

Submitted by: Robert J. Richards, Morris Fishbein Professor of the History of Science, Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science, University of Chicago on behalf of Chicago-Max Planck Workshop, Fishbein Center for the History of Science and Medicine, University of Chicago, Chicago, USA.

23rd International Congress of History and Philosophy of Science and Technology, to be held in Budapest (Hungary), July 28-Aug.3, 2009.

The Congress (hereafter ICHST) is sponsored by the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science (IUHPS), which is adhered to the International Council of Scientific Union (ICSU). The second Circular of this Congress can be read at its Website: http://www.conferences.hu/ichs09/, wherein all details about the Congress is presented. The Chairperson of the Local Organizing Committee is Dr. Eva Vamos.

The readers may be informed that at the Budapest Congress 95 symposia with invited talks are being organized by expert historians of various sciences. Besides them 34 sectional meetings on seven different scientific branches will also be organized. At ICHST about 2000-3000 participants take part in its proceedings. The last congress was organized in Beijing (China) in 2005.

It may be mentioned in passing that Prof. S.M. Razaullah Ansari (General Secretary of Ibn Sînâ Academy) is organising a symposium with the title: " *Ancient And Medieval Astronomy With Special Emphasis On Its Socio-Cultural Context*". The Organizing Committee comprises: S. M. R. Ansari (India) Chair, Julio Samso (Spain), and Anne Tihon (Belgium). This Symposium is being organized under the

auspices of the IUHPS Historical Commission for the History of Ancient and Medieval Astronomy (CHAMA); President, S. M. R. Ansari; Secretary, Anne Tihon. Readers, who would like to be informed about CHAMA, may visit its website; http://chama.fltr.ucl.ac.be and read its recent Newsletter (issue of Dec.2008).

2009 is the International Year of the Astronomy

In the year 2009, the world will celebrate the International Year of Astronomy as it commemorates the 400th anniversary of Galileo's use of a telescope to study the skies, and Kepler's publication of *Astronomia Nova*. 2009 is also the anniversary of many other historic events in science, including Huygen's 1659 publication of *Systema Saturnium*. This will be 400th Anniversary of modern astronomy, and 2009 the Year of Astronomy will be an international celebration of numerous astronomical and scientific milestones. Events are still being planned, and you are invited to tell us how you want to celebrate. This page is a product of the U.S. 2009 IYA team, and we want to help you make 2009 a year long celebration to remember.

The IYA2009 Opening Event will be held in Paris, France on 15-16 January 2009. For further information, see the IYA-USA web page (link below). Text from: http://www.astronomy2009.us

Sixth International Conference on "The Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena"

The Conference aims to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Galileo's first astronomical uses of the telescope. The Conference will be held on October 18-23, 2009 in Venice, Italy.

Details about the programme and payment of the registration fee will follow soon. Full information on the venue, hotels, and transport, is available on the Conference web site http://www.astro.unipd.it/insap6/

Astronomy and its Instruments before and after Galileo

This Symposium will be held during Sept. 28-Oct.3, 2009, at San Servolo Island, Venice (Italy). It is actually an interdisciplinary conference jointly organized by: International Astronomical Union (IAU), and Astronomical Observatory of Padova (INAF). It is also supported by Scientific Instruments Commission of IUHPS. For programme etc., visit the website: http://web.oapd.inaf.it/venice2009/index.php. Contact email address of the symposium: venice2009@oapd.inaf.it

This interdisciplinary conference aims to highlight mankind's path towards an improved knowledge of the sky using mathematical and mechanical tools as well as monuments and buildings, giving rise, in so doing, to scientific astronomy. It will analyze similarities and differences among cultures and countries in exploiting the shared resource that the sky represents, and will examine the historical-political and scientific background favouring the progress of scientific astronomy in different epochs and countries, progress that led to a crucial turning-point for observational astronomy when Galileo turned the telescope to the night sky and initiated the New Astronomy. A major aim of the meeting is to help move forward the process of ensuring the recognition and protection of cultural properties around the globe that bear powerful witness to the development of astronomy in diverse cultural contexts.

Key topics:

- The cultural, scientific and political background to the development of astronomy in different countries
- Cultural properties relating to astronomy: monuments, buildings, and landscapes

- Astronomical instruments and other cultural artifacts relating to astronomy
- The intangible heritage of astronomy
- The identification and preservation of astronomical heritage; strategies for getting astronomical properties inscribed on the World Heritage List
- Venice and Galilean places

Second Biennial Conference of the Society for Philosophy of Science in Practice (SPSP)

The Society for Philosophy of Science in Practice (SPSP) aims to create an interdisciplinary community of scholars who approach the philosophy of science with a focus on scientific practice and the practical uses of scientific knowledge.

The SPSP biennial conferences provide a broad forum for scholars committed to making detailed and systematic studies of scientific practices – neither dismissing concerns about truth and rationality, nor ignoring contextual and pragmatic factors. The conferences aim at cutting through traditional disciplinary barriers and developing novel approaches. We welcome contributions from not only philosophers of science, but also philosophers working in epistemology and ethics, as well as the philosophy of engineering, medicine, agriculture, and other practical fields. Additionally, we welcome contributions from historians and sociologists of science, pure and applied scientists, and any others with an interest in philosophical questions regarding scientific practice.

The SPSP Conference in 2009 will be held concurrently with a large workshop for teachers on integrating historical, philosophical and sociological perspectives into science teaching (http://ships.umn.edu/2009). Joint sessions are planned.

In addition to keynote lectures by invited speakers, the conference will feature parallel sessions with contributed papers. For the 2009 conference, contributions on the topics listed below are welcome; however, other topics are by no means excluded. Please indicate clearly in your abstract which of the following topics (if any) your paper addresses – this will help us construct coherent themed sessions.

In addition to individual papers, proposals for whole, thematic sessions with coordinated papers are strongly encouraged, particularly those which include multiple disciplinary perspectives and / or input from scientific practitioners. Session proposals must include a 500-word abstract for each paper (or an equivalent amount of depth and detail, if the format of the proposed session is a less traditional one). Multiple submissions of any form by the same person will not be allowed.

1. Philosophy of Science and Science Education: How does philosophy of science inform science teaching? What ideas about scientific practice, including those based on historical and sociological perspectives, are important to teach? How can they be effectively taught in a science classroom? How is such understanding assessed? What insights and challenges might such contexts offer to philosophers?

2. Epistemology of Scientific Practice: There has been a degree of disconnection between epistemology and the philosophy of science, despite the clear relevance of the two fields to each other. We welcome contributions that flesh out epistemologists' concerns in terms of scientific practice, or broaden traditional epistemological categories in order to make them more suitable for the understanding of knowledge practices.

3. Experimental Practices: More than 20

years ago the 'new experimentalists' in philosophy of science called for a more serious engagement with experimental practice. The work continues, and significant questions remain. How are scientific phenomena produced and observed - in the laboratory, in the observatory, in the field, and even in the armchair? What exactly does the knowledge of phenomena consist in? What are the characteristics of the technologies and sites that enable scientists to identify the objects of their study and to theorize about them?

4. Practices of Modeling, Simulations and Computer Experiments: Anyone familiar with today's cutting-edge scientific research will feel how out of touch our common philosophical images of scientific activity are. Most scientific theorizing today seems to happen in the form of modeling and simulation.

Has there now been enough philosophical work on modeling, after the flurry of activity in recent decades? Have we, for instance, paid enough attention to the more applied and complex subjects that tend to be neglected in traditional philosophy of science, including climatology, synthetic chemistry, ecology and seismology?

5. 'Knowing Well', Values, and Evidence-for-Use: How do philosophical approaches to knowledge change when the context shifts from 'pure' science to applied science and public policy, in areas such as engineering, agriculture and medicine? How do we go beyond mere knowing to 'knowing well'? How does the blurring of the traditional distinction between 'fact' and 'value' affect our conceptions of evidence and epistemic justification? And how do individual and social values and sense of responsibility shape the scope, focus and methods of scientific practice?

6. Rationality, Pluralism and 'Styles of Reasoning': Philosophers tend to accept very few kinds of reasoning as rational: deductive, inductive/statistical, and perhaps abductive. From historical and empirical studies it appears that scientific practices employ many other styles of reasoning. Often, these other 'styles' are seen as 'merely heuristic' and unable to play a role in the justification of knowledge. Is it possible to present more interesting accounts of these other styles of reasoning and of rationality?

7. Philosophical Pragmatism and Science in Practice: Are there existing philosophical frameworks that are particularly well-suited for the understanding of 'science in practice'? In recent years many people have paid renewed attention to the American pragmatists in this connection: Dewey, Peirce, James, and also C. I. Lewis. Can pragmatism really provide useful guidance for the philosophy of science in practice? If so, which ideas are most useful for which purposes?

8. Social Epistemology: Within both the philosophy and sociology of science, there is a shared interest in the production, assessment, and validation of knowledge. We welcome contributions, which synthesize sociological and philosophical points of view - empirically based research into the origination and transmission of scientific knowledge, as well as considerations about the social issues, which arise when such knowledge is applied in a variety of types of practice.

For further details on aims and objectives, please visit the following website: http://www.philosophy-science-practice.org

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DOCUMENTATION

History of Pharmacovigilance in India

By Syed Ziaur Rahman

As in other parts of the world, when medical scientists started thinking about the importance of monitoring Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs) in late 1960s, many eminent Indian scientists also started studying ADRs in their patients.

The first multicentric hospital based intensive ADR monitoring programme funded by ICMR was started in 1989 at the Deptt. of Pharmacology, JN Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, which was upgraded to "Task Force Multicentric Intensive Hospitals Monitoring Programme" in 1992. The study was carried out at 12 different centres in India. During a three-year period, information on more than 60,000 patients had been collected. Nevertheless, the first conference on adverse reaction monitoring, spontaneous ADR reports, prevention and treatment, was held in January 1997 by the Deptt. of Clinical Pharmacology, Seth GS Medical College and King Edward Memorial Hospital, Mumbai. In the same year, i.e. in 1997, WHO Collaborating Centre for International Drug Monitoring, Uppsala, Sweden, established its relations with Pharmacovigilance Centres in India. In agreement with the WHO Headquarters, Geneva, and the Indian Drugs Controller General, it was decided to establish a working relationship with two centres in India as "Special Centres" collaborating with the WHO Drug Monitoring Programme. These identified special centres were Deptt. of Pharmacology, JNMC, AMU, Aligarh, and Deptt. of Clinical Pharmacology, GSMC and KEM, Mumbai.

To train the young pharmacologist and allied scientists, the first international workshop on adverse drug reaction monitoring was held at JNMC, AMU, Aligarh, during November 9-12, 1998[2]. In the workshop, it was also decided to have an exclusive platform where scientists can share their own experiences related to ADR issues, hence a separate society was constituted and registered in 1999 at Ahmedabad as the Society of Pharmacovigilance, India (SoPI) with multiple aims and objectives. The main aim was to promote the study of the use and effects of drugs in population in a rational way; to determine the risk/benefit ratio of drugs in an individual and in general population and to establish a dialogue on pharmacovigilance as a distinct and influential clinical specialization. The society organizes its annual meet.

Government of India under the command of Central Drug Standard Control Organization of Drugs Controler General of India officially launched the National Pharmacovigilance Programme on 24th November 2004, which is largely based on the recommendations made in the WHO document titled "Safety Monitoring of Medicinal Products – Guidelines for Setting Up and Running a Pharmacovigilance Centre". The programme is based on a network consisting of zonal, regional and peripheral centers, but the system has not been put into real practice. Active pharmacovigilance centers do exist, but they are limited due to lack of funding, staff and resources.

In context of traditional medicine especially Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani (ASU), it was later on felt that a separate mechanism is required to be put in place to address them. The number of adverse reactions to ASU drugs reported in the National Pharmacovigilance in India is negligible. The strong belief that ASU medicines are safe contributes to a large extent to this situation. Moreover, the lack of knowledge about the concept and importance of Pharmacovigilance in ASU among ASU practitioners aggravated the problem. WHO emphasizes that it should include the traditional medicines in Pharmacovigilance system and has published Guidelines on Safety Monitoring of Herbal Medicines in Pharmacovigilance Systems in 2004. To promote these guidelines of WHO,

Ibn Sinâ Academy of Medieval Medicine & Sciences, Aligarh, first time took a novel task of improving the use of Indian originated drugs and their adverse reaction monitoring by establishing a special cell namely, Centre for Safety & Rational Use of Indian Systems of Medicine (CSRUISM) in late 2004. CSRUISM receives many ADRs of herbal drugs, which were never reported earlier.

The first national symposium on "Relevance of Herbal Pharmacovigilance" by the Department of AYUSH, M/o Health & FW, Govt. of India, was held on November 4, 2006 at the Department of Pharmacology, JNMC, AMU, Aligarh, under the aegis of SoPI and CSRUISM. The report of the national symposium with recommendations to start an exclusive "National Pharmacovigilance Programme for ASU Drugs (NPP-ASU)" was then submitted. Further perceptive of the importance of herbal Pharmacovigilance, Institute for Post Graduate Teaching & Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar, conducted two days national workshop on 3rd and 4th December 2007. On the basis of their recommendations during the workshop, a Pharmacovigilance Cell (PV Cell), first of its kind in India for Ayurveda, has been established and a "Reporting Form" for suspected adverse reactions of Ayurvedic formulations were developed and distributed amongst the faculty members, research scholars and physicians under intimation to Department of AYUSH, M/o & FW, Govt. of India.

To put Pharmacovigilance for ASU drugs in proper place in India, formation of "National Pharmacovigilance Centre for ASU Drugs", under the control of Department of AYUSH, is highly essential which would monitor the programme centrally. This programme is aimed to provide adverse drug reaction data related to various drugs of herbal, mineral, metallic, animal and of other origin available in the country. In this regard, the first National Consultative Meet of NPP-ASU was organized at Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and FW, Govt of India, New Delhi, on 29th and 30th August 2008, where the national draft protocol was technically reviewed and finalized. The finalized draft was then circulated among the experts who attended the meet for their comments and additional inputs, if any. Based on the feedback received, the final document was released as a part of launching of NPP-ASU on 29th September 2008. The programme will now be coordinated by the National Consultative Meet of NPP-ASU being constituted by the Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and FW, Govt. of India.

Indian Medical Association lately realized the importance of drug safety issues and organized a two-day workshop for all general practitioners particularly IMA leaders in September 2008 in collaboration with Johnson & Johnson at Hyderabad. It was a remarkable realization on the part of IMA and J & J. The IMA initiative to train all members of IMA, which is a largest medical organization, and other healthcare providers, about the basic understanding of pharmacovigilance, the identification of drug-related risks and practical reporting methods, is need of an hour. The message should go to all clinicians. It is essential to develop a sustainable pharmacovigilance system in India: India needs its own ADR database. India is contributing minimal ADR reports to the UMC.

From teaching point of view, many courses were thought to be started from 2006. The first, 'certificate course on pharmacovigilance and pharmacoepidemiology' was initiated by a private company "Symogen" of UK based with its Indian counterpart followed by M Pharm in Pharmacovigilance by NIMS University of Jaipur. Medical Council of India (MCI) in its notification, dated 1.12.2008 has also amended and added under clause A.1.19 that from now onwards, every medical college shall have Pharmaco-Vigilance Committee.

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