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I. GC President to Address SAAA in Maryland

Priscilla Shyam <Pshyam@ifc.org> November 10:

Dr. Ted N. C. Wilson, President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, will be the key note speaker at the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Southern Asia Adventist Association (SAAA) on Sabbath, December 3, 2011. The meeting will be at the new Spencerville Adventist Academy, 2502 Spencerville Road, Spencerville, Maryland 20868. A special invitation is extended to all, especially those who are, or have been, associated with the Southern Asia Division - mission workers, missionaries, lay folks, and anyone with a kinship for Southern Asia, young and not-so-young. Former members of SAAA, are particularly encouraged to come and praise God with us for His leading these past 50 years. Further updates will follow in the days ahead. For additional information, please feel free to contact Rajan Thomas, SAAA President - email: <rajan_thomas45@yahoo.com>, or Subbu Varadarajan, coordinator of the Golden Jubilee at subbu108@hotmail.com.

The Program:

***December 2nd Friday - Celebration kick off with vespers; Takoma Park Church Keystone Room

***December 3rd Saturday - Sabbath celebration; New Spencerville Adventist Academy

2502 Spencerville Road Spencerville MD 20868

a) Sabbath School 10:00 AM: English: Tamil: Telugu: SAAA Missions
b) Special Feature 11:15 AM: Founders and Pioneers -- History in Photos
c) Divine Service 11:45 AM -1:30 PM--Ted Wilson GC President
d) Potluck lunch 1:30 PM -3:00 PM
e) Seminars 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM
f) Social Program 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM ~~~~~~~ II. Falakatta School Then & Now

Reggie Shires <RegShires@aol.com> October 25:

We received some beautiful photos of our school at Falakata from Manick Kisku. The following link which my son Donn Shires listed will take you to the album: http://bit.ly/onwQta

Norma and I were surprised how attractive the grounds have become. When we were there, teachers and students worked hard on the fertile land to raise food and cash crops for the school. It is encouraging now to see there are flowers all over the place. It's turning into a garden of Eden.

Here is Manick's letter to us from Falakata:

"I just returned from Falakata. My elder son Dr. Sundeep had his 'miracle' son Joshua dedicated in the same chapel that you used to preach in. The chapel is much larger now with extensions on both the sides.

"I have taken a few pictures of Falakata with my son's camera. I'll tell him to send it to you. I wanted to take the picture of the old leg-operated press where you used to crank out the school paper, 'The Plainsman,' but it was raining cats and dogs just as it often does so I could not take any photos. I will ask my nephew who is the headmaster to take the photos for you. Khitish and Ashima, your students, taught at the school and now are retired and live there. I have taken the pictures of the house where you stayed--both the front and the back
of the house. The big Flame of the Forest tree is long gone. A few trees which were relatively small have grown massive are still there as a mute witness to the passing of time.

"The barn and the carpenter shop adjacent to the press remain intact. The riverside has changed drastically as expected: the cane jungle is gone and those majestic teak trees are long been cut down to be replaced by smaller ones. The old rickety wooden bridge has been replaced by a concrete one. The Oxbow lake is getting filled with sand. I am told that the lake is going to be deepened 3 feet.

"There is a teak jungle behind where you used to stay. The wooden structure of the girls' hostel has been replaced by a modern building. Now the girls hostel has a quadrangle with dining hall on the eastern side. The Old Mango tree is gone and so has the silk cotton tree from which the boys use to retrieve wild honey.

"There is one amusing incident from the school to report: At dusk a girl was eating a chapatti for supper. Suddenly from no where a jackal turned up. The girls screamed. That frightened the poor creature, who looking for the best hiding place, dashed under the skirt of the girl. It was a comical sight, both of them, the girl and the jackal, jumping up and down for couple of seconds until the jackal dashed out of the strange safe haven!"

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III. Letters

1. Betty and Merle Fernando <merlynfernando@yahoo.com> November 5:

We have known Yvonne [Stockhausen] Bazliel since our Pakistan days in the 60’s before she was married. She transferred from Burma when the hospital was taken over. Knew the Bazliels boys since VHS days in the early '50s. Met the Drs. Bazliels in Simla in the late '60s. Merle met Dr. Bazliel at an All India Surgeon's conference in Gujarat in 1961 when he was doing his residency at Vellore.

Yvonne took medicine in Kingston, Jamaica and was the head of her class. She aimed to be so in order to keep her Sabbath privileges during her university days. She was the update in Obstetrics for Karachi, sang beautiful specials for worship and our inspiration when we left for Kandy at the end of 1967.

Yvonne passed through Hong Kong after one of her several surgeries. Gul has visited Lakeside, Kandy. Yvonne has stayed in touch in bits and pieces through the years. We thank God for her.

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2. John M. Fowler <FowlerJ@gc.adventist.org> November 7:

I want to comment on two items that appeared in the Nov. 7 SUD newsletter:

The Dass Years at Roorkee

First, a thank you to Edwin and Marceline Dass for the long and tireless service in Roorkee. Their period of leadership in that institution would be remembered for what they have done to Christian education: they transformed the campus over the years. Beauty in the form of flower beds was their enduring gift to the campus, even during the dry summer months. Visitors to that campus copied many of the developmental ideas from there and implemented them in their own institutions. I know of a few such institutions in Africa from where I had often recruited accreditation team members. Discipline is another, and was obvious to any visitor who spent a few days there. Cleanliness is perhaps the best at Roorkee, more than any other Adventist institution in India, with clean classrooms, un littered sidewalks, and clean hostels with hot water and odorless toilets. Living at Roorkee was a pleasant experience. Faith and learning thrived well in both high school and college levels. Edwin and Marceline contributed their best to Roorkee, and I wish them health and happiness in their retired life.

On Spicer Becoming a Recognized University

The second comment I wish to make is one of joy on the possibility that Spicer may be able to become a private university. Such a possibility has been the prayer and hope of not only those who are at Spicer, but all those who are interested in education. It is a shame that our government's educational policy has been a regressive one, still tied to the monopolistic pattern of the British colonial style, when countries around the world are moving forward with independent universities which are judged by the excellence and the
marketability of their degrees. One needs to look at countries in Africa where education is so privatized that a university charter is earned by the merit of the institution and not by gruity of the government, with quality controlled by academic bodies. The quality of Spicer education has never been in doubt as you can see how their graduates thrive in the private sector both with in India and in countries around the world, but the almighty pen of the government has consistently refused to recognize that quality. But now a new day seems to be coming.

Let us hope and pray for two things: the Maharashtra government will successfully move and pass the bill to establish private universities; and Spicer will be one of those allowed to establish a private university. Let us also hope that the recent Anna movement against corruption will filter down to the State level so that the road to establish private universities is not paved with rocks and mountains of corruption.

Meanwhile, it behooves us not to live as though private university is a done deal. It is a long road. While we wait the government and its legislatures to pass the bill and then the bill to become the law, and then the benefits of that law become available to Spicer, those who love Spicer have much to do: enable the college to create a strong infrastructure, work toward a wage policy that will meet the government's minimum requirement, keep the process of Adventist integration at all levels on the campus, and maintain a prayer-based initiative in every area of its ministry. In addition to all of these, let those who were part of Spicer and who continue to love Spicer make that college their priority in prayer and support.

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IV. News from Pakistan Adventist Seminary & College

Selmon H. Dio <shdio003@hotmail.com> November 2:

(1) The Pakistan Adventist Seminary and College (PASC) is now affiliated with the University of Sargodha. They have initially approved B. Com. B. Sc. and B. A. They also will approve B. Ed. and M. Ed. after Eid holiday (Muslim Festival). Praise God for his blessing for the Pakistan Adventist Seminary and College.

(2) The Pakistan Adventist Seminary and College had evangelistic meetings on the Fundamental Beliefs of the SDA Church. All 28 beliefs were discussed. Thirty one students took baptism.

[Dr. Dio is the president of PASC. Before being called to that position, he was Academic Dean of our Seminary in Bangladesh. He is an alumnus of PACS which he attended when Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan.] ~~~~~~~~~~~ V. The Mother Jilani Story [Chapter 8 of 17]

Some time ago I came across a quite old book lying around our house by Goldie Down. I had never heard of it before though I had seen several of her other books. This one is about Mother Jilani, the mother of Dr. Mrs. I. R. Bazliel who, with her doctor husband, WERE Simla Hospital for many, many years.

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Chapter 8: Double Heartbreak

It was a long, long journey from the Gulf of Arabia to the little village of Tangi nestling among the mountains of India's North West Frontier. Hagar and Sakinah with little baby Jamila weathered the arduous trip better than Gulam did. His great sense of loss was reflected not only in his sad face, but also in his diminished appetite and lack of interest in anything. Neither little Sakinah's childish wonder over all the new sights and sounds of the journey nor baby Jamila's first smiles and laughs awakened any response from him.

Gulam could only think of his little Sara--how he had watched with breathless admiration her first smile, her first faltering steps, her first words. How proud he had been when she began lessons with a tutor and proved that she was an intelligent girl.

"Just like her father." A wan smile would begin to brighten his lips, only to vanish as bitter tears welled up in his eyes. "And just as she was blossoming into the flower of womanhood, she was taken from us. The others will be the same." His lips set firmly in a line of pain, and he would scarcely look at his other two little daughters.

Their welcome back to Tangi village was subdued out of respect for their recent sorrow, but scarcely had the family reached the sanctuary of the ancestral home that Gulam became ill. There were no specific symptoms that could be treated with pills and potions. He simply went to bed and faded away. Each day he grew a little more weak and listless. His wife and
his mother did everything in their power for him. Local doctors were called in, only to be baffled by the absence of symptoms. Every remedy, however strange, that anyone suggested was tried, but it was no use.

Dr. Gulam Jalini passed quietly to his rest at age thirty-nine.

That was in the days before all the "psycho" names had been invented to describe the various illnesses that result from the interrelation of mind and body. The relatives simply said, "Gulam died of a broken heart because of little Sara's death."

Seventeen years of sequestered family life had not prepared Hagar for the trial of faith which now confronted her. She was completely alone, one Christian young woman among thousands of grimly fanatical Muslims.

Her husband's family made all the arrangements for the Muslim rites burial and the forty days of mourning and feasting which followed. Hagar was not consulted. Her only duty was to stay inside the house for this period.

She knew she was comparatively safe as long as she did not put one foot outside the door, and for that she was thankful. It gave her time to think, plan, and pray.

And how she did pray! Hagar well knew that her life and the lives of her daughters were in the balance. Now that her husband was gone, she had no one to protect her from his relatives, who never had liked her anyway.

By rights of inheritance the ancestral home and all the other property now belonged to little Sakhina. How much the relatives wanted to have the little girls in their power and bring them up as Muslims! They would stop at nothing to attain their ends--a little poison in Hagar's food and their victory would be automatic. Fearfully Hagar wondered what she should do.

What could she do? If it had not been for the children, she guessed he life would have been snuffed out when her husband died. But she had been spared so far. Surely God would deliver her in some way.

News of Gulam's death finally reached Dr. Starr, a friend of Dr. Pennell's who lived in Peshawar. Immediately he wrote to Hagar, telling her that he would come and take her from the village if she wanted to go. But Hagar knew that such a bold move would be suicide. (Dr. Starr was later murdered by Pathan tribesmen.) Secretly she sent back word, "No. Do not come. They will shoot both you and me, and what will become of my children?"

Perhaps a woman could help her more successfully. In her despair Hagar thought of Pastor and Mrs. Vigaram, whom she had known well in Bannu. "Can you help me get away from here?" she wrote. She bribed a servant to get her letter to Mrs. Vigaram somehow.

It was only forty miles to friends and safety, but to Hagar it might as well be four hundred, her chances seemed so slim. But God was working for her.

Before the period of mourning for Gulam had ended, the local tesildar (government official) made known his desire to marry Hagar. It would add greatly to his prestige to have the kazi's widow as his wife, to say nothing of the property which would then be under his control.

"No," she sent word back to him; "I will not marry anyone."

"What on earth are you going to do if you will not marry again?" asked the mother-in-law sarcastically.

This was the opportunity that Hagar had been waiting for. With a prayer in her heart she replied calmly, "I am a trained nurse. I can go to some hospital and work to support myself and my children."

"Work!" Her mother-in-law was horrified. "There is no need for you to work. Your husband was a very wealthy man. There are eight villages near here that belong to him. This house is his, and it will be yours if---" Her voice trailed off meaningfully.

"If?" prompted Hagar.

"You have only to give up this Christian religion," replied her mother-in-law. "We are all followers of the Prophet here, and we could not have a despised infidel living among us." "I cannot do that," Hagar said softly. "I do not care for the houses and lands. Just let me go with my children."

"Do not be so foolish." Her mother-in-law's voice grew harsh and loud.
"Here you can live a life of ease and luxury. All will belong to you and your daughters if you stay. Whether you marry the tesildar or not is of no consequence; only renounce Christianity and bring your daughters up as good Muslim women, and all is yours."

"No," Hagar insisted firmly. "I cannot do that. Just let me go, and God will take care of me."

"Is that your final decision?" demanded her mother-in-law.

"Yes," Hagar said quietly, trying to silence her wildly pounding heart. "Let me leave with only my life and my children."

"Very well," sneered her mother-in-law. "It shall be just as you say. The curse of Allah be upon you. You will regret this decision."

Immediately Hagar wrote again to Mrs. Vigram and asked her to send someone to meet her at the nearest town. She planned to leave the home and village just as soon as the period of mourning had ended.

Her mother-in-law lost no time in acting either. She immediately sent word to Rahman to return from Kuwait and inherit his older brother's property. In Hagar's presence she went through all her son's boxes and took out everything he had possessed. The gold pieces, the handsome inlaid pistol, the rich robes and jewelry, his medical equipment—all was given to various relatives who crowded eagerly into the room. Hagar was not allowed to keep as much as a shirt button. As if that was not enough, her mother-in-law demanded that Hagar hand over all her own jewelry. Not a ring or a bangle remained, not an item of clothing.

"Leave if you will," the old woman chuckled hoarsely, "but you'll take nothing with you."

Stripped of everything but the clothes she and the children were wearing, Hagar crept from the house in the early dawn. Quietly she bundled half-asleep Sakinah into the curtained tonga, and with the baby held tightly in her arms stepped into the vehicle herself. No one tried to interfere, and she left without a backward glance.

At the appointed place she was met by Mrs. Vigram's old and trusted servant, who had brought money to pay for her hired tonga. Efficiently he transferred the little group to his covered carriage and gave them the food he had bought. Then lightly touching his whip to the horse, they were off at a smart pace to Peshawar and freedom.

When Rahman Jilani received the urgent summons from his mother to return to India and inherit his dead brother's property, he was torn between two loyalties. Regina still resolutely refused to leave her homeland and her relatives. "Go if you wish to," she stormed at him, "but you go alone."

"But think of it," he tried to coax her. "I am to take my brother's inheritance. You will be very wealthy—a queen."

"I don't care if you become the richest man in the world, I am not going."

It was a difficult decision to make, but custom dies hard. His mother had called him, and whatever the cost, Rahman felt it his duty to go. He left everything he had in Kuwait and hurried back to India.

Once back in Tangi he soon drifted back into his old ways. There was no spectacular renunciation of Christianity; it just followed as a matter of course that if he was to be a chief, he must have a home and family. Under Muslim law he was allowed to have four wives at once, and it was no hardship for him to marry the pretty little Muslim girl his mother chose for him.

But fortune did not favor Rahman ul din Jilani. The following year his young wife died in childbirth.

Again he married, and his third wife bore him sons and daughters. For a few years life flowed on without incident. Occasionally he even visited Peshawar to inquire about Hagar, but he never offered her any financial support, nor did he ever show any signs of regret at having left Christianity behind.

In the mid-1920's the bubonic plague swept around the world, and dwellers in the rugged vastness of the Frontier mountains did not escape. The fierce Pathans could vigorously ward off any attacker they could see, they could fight and conquer an evenly matched foe, but they were powerless against the onslaughts of the ravenous bacillus that stormed through the villages and houses.

In Tangi district alone five thousand persons died. Rahman and his wife and children perished with them.
"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul." Mark 8:36.

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