

### 3<sup>rd</sup> South Asian Regional Conference of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprology 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> October 2003

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*Dr. Ganga Sirimanna, Chairperson of the Organizing Committee of the 3rd South Asian Regional Congress of Dermatology and the President of the Sri Lanka Association of Dermatologists addressing the distinguished gathering at the Inauguration Ceremony.*

The prestigious 3rd South Asian Regional Conference of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprology was held from 9th-12th October 2003 in Colombo. The previous meetings were held in Katmandu and Dhaka.

The theme of the conference was 'Sharing Knowledge'. A large number of leading dermatologists, venereologists, leprologists, and histopathologists from the SAARC region including Sri Lanka as well as other countries participated. Among the speakers were Prof. C R Sirinivas, Prof. Bhushan Kumar, Dr Athul Shah, Dr Kaushal K Verma, Dr J K Maniar, Dr Jayakar Thomas, Dr Asha Kubba, Dr Vinod Sharma of India, Dr Azer Rashid and Prof. Sabrina Suhail Pal of Pakistan, Prof. F Wojnarowska, Dr Susan Burge, Prof T J Rayan, Dr G R Kinghorn, Prof. P Mortimer of UK, Dr Jack Green and Dr Alvin Chong of Australia and Prof. C L Goh and Prof. Giam Yoke Chin of Singapore. From Sri Lanka the speakers were Dr D N Atukorala, Dr W D H Perera, Dr L Ranasinghe, Dr G Sirimanne, Dr Prasad Kumarasinghe, Prof. Priyanthi Kumarasinghe, Dr R Ragunathan, Dr J Seneviratne, Prof. S N Arsecularatne, Prof. M de S Wijesundera, Dr S Settinayake, Dr I Abeywickrama and Dr C de Silva.

Over 300 foreign delegates and 100 local delegates participated. Most foreign delegates were from the SAARC region. A number of delegates from Australia, Singapore, and Malaysia also participated.

The Inauguration Ceremony was held at the Sapphire Ballroom of Hotel Continental, which was also the venue of the conference. The Chief Guest was Hon Karu Jayasuriya, Minister Power and Energy, and Hon P Dayaratne, Minister of Health was the Guest of Honour. The welcome address by Dr W D H Perera, Senior Consultant Dermatologist and Vice Chairman of the Organizing Committee was followed by the address of Dr G Sirimanne, Chairperson, Organizing Committee and President SLAD. This was followed by the address of Prof Maidul Islam, outgoing Chairman, and addresses by the Chief Guest and Guest of Honour. After the addresses Indian, Pakistani and Nepalese representatives, Dr D N Atukorala, Senior Consultant Dermatologist and Chairman of Scientific Committee gave an over view of Dermatology in Sri Lanka. Dr J Seneviratne, Secretary General, Organizing Committee proposed the vote of thanks. The gathering was entertained by two lively cultural events before the cocktails.

The academic program was spread over two and a half days and was made up of a Pre-Congress Session of advances, guest lectures, symposia, free papers and poster presentations. Prominence was given to important issues in dermatology and also to venereology and leprology. Regional expertise was admixed with expertise from the rest of the world. A wide range of topics were covered in several parallel sessions and advances were of the highest standard. The free papers and case presentations were also interesting and informative.

The SARAD Executive Committee meeting was held on the 9th of October and the SARAD general meeting on the 10th. During this meeting Dr W D H Perera was appointed as the President of SARAD and Dr Ganga Sirimanne was appointed as the General Secretary of SARAD.

The social programme of the conference was both interesting and entertaining. There were cultural programs during the inauguration ceremony and a unique cultural pageant and a Sri Lankan night was held on Saturday the 11th October.

Undoubtedly this was the biggest event organized by the SLAD. We have received many accolades from the delegates that this was also the best attended and most well organized SARAD meeting both academically and socially. It also set a standard for future meetings in the region. We are grateful to all those who helped us make this event a grand success.

**J K K Seneviratne**  
*Secretary General - SARCD 2003.*