

2nd All PSA Sweden Round Table Conference

Linköping, 19th July, 2008

Minutes of the Meeting

Attendees

Aamir Sohail (President)	PSA BTH
Zain-ul-Abidin (Coordinator)	PSA Halmstad
Sher Azam Afridi (President)	PSA Linköping
Muzammil Zareen (Vice President)	PSA Linköping
Imran Hakam (Member Activities)	PSA Linköping
Hafiz Zaka (Member Activities)	PSA Linköping
Sohail Rafique (Member Accommodation)	PSA Linköping
Aslam Lali	PSA Linköping
Ghalib Adnan	PSA Linköping
Ozair Kafray (President)	PSA Stockholm
Shahzeb Baloch	PSA Stockholm
Faheem Mughal	PSA Stockholm
Muhammad Saad Rahman	Copenhagen

Skype Attendees

Chaudray Farooq (France) – General Secretary	PSA Stockholm
Syed Asad Abbas Rizvi (Italy) – Ex-President	PSA Linköping
Sheraz Ahmed (Sweden)	PSA BTH

Welcome address was given by Sher Azam Afridi (President PSA Linköping).

A. Introduction and Induction of PSA BTH in the PSA Sweden Network (Sheraz Ahmed on Skype)

- BTH Introduction:** Environment of BTH is very friendly and it is the largest Pakistani community in any University in Sweden. There are more than 400 Pakistani students in BTH. We have conducted several traditional events in BTH. BTH Events: We have conducted several traditional and other events in BTH. We celebrated 23 March in BTH. Now it is our tradition that we welcome all incoming students through welcome party. We also celebrated Eid Festivals and played a leading role in the International events of School.
- Election Process:** We conducted PSA BTH election in two campuses (Karlskrona & Ronneby) of BTH. We selected Friday for the elections. Election process was very fair. There are 19 official members of PSA BTH. President, VP, GS, Liaison officers & Events Coordinator
- Yahoo Group Moderation:** We have blocked one yahoo group. Pakbth is now the official yahoo group of PSA BTH. Now there are several moderators of Pakbth for facilitating Pakistani students.

4. **PSA BTH Website:** PSA BTH is working on their website. I hope that very soon we are going to launch PSA BTH website.
5. **Accommodation Issues:** PSA BTH will not help officially regarding accommodation on any email or forum but they will help informally and will help all the incoming students.
6. **PSA BTH Elections:** PSA BTH will conduct new election for the president, as aamir sohail has finished his degree and he is moved to Stockholm. After the summer we are going to conduct a new president election for the PSA BTH.

B. PSA Sweden Website (Chaudray Farooq on Skype)

1. Farooq Ahmad explained the current status of website, hosting issues of website and discussion forum.
2. Each PSA is responsible for managing the contents and resources of its own website and PSA Sweden will only provide sub-domains to all PSAs.
3. Web Administrators of PSA Sweden are mainly to facilitate new PSAs to startup with their websites. All PSAs were recommended to get a hosting space from their respective Student Union however as per earlier decisions PSA Sweden will provide hosting space until availability from other resources.
4. Meeting representatives discussed the hosting issue of discussion forum. In discussion they finalized that discussion forum will be launched separately and independently while linking to all PSA websites.
5. Farooq Ahmad gave his opinion about different hosting companies like webhost4life, but none was finalized.
6. Farooq Ahmad was appointed to recommend the hosting package to the Coordinator PSA Sweden for the next period and Discussion forum.

C. Role of Agents & consultants (Sher Azam Afridi)

The negative role of consultants/agents is condemned in this meeting and the following proposals were made in this meeting:

1. We should involve HEC and embassy in this case
2. All those who already are writing different articles in the news papers should write about this negative role of them and should aware the students through media. And we must have synchronized information, which we want to publish in the news papers etc., so that our own statements must not be in contradiction with each other which could be misused by the consultants
3. Arrange if possible at university levels, seminars, workshops etc. (in Pakistan) for the awareness of our students about admission process and negative role of consultants and consequences

D. Negative Role of Agents (Zain-ul-Abidin)

In order to minimize or contain the negative impact of agents which use Study Visa to transport people to EU, we have discussed a number of points such as:

1. Using Print and Electronic Media in Pakistan to inform prospective students so that they can be guided without the need of agents and to discourage the people who want to use this mechanism to enter EU.
2. Provide updated information to the Universities and Institutes in Pakistan through Alumni's in the form of Posters or information Seminars.
3. My proposal in this regard is to promote the joint collaboration or exchange collaborations between Swedish and Pakistani Universities. I think PhD Students can take the lead in this regard. I have put forward some basic clauses below that can be considered for such a collaboration document.

D (A) Swedish – Pakistani University Collaboration

The universities can carry out an exchange programme for Masters students in the beginning which can be further extended to collaboration for research activities and exchange of faculty.

Following are some of the clauses relevant to students exchange programme:

1. Participants remain students of the home institution throughout the period of the exchange.
2. The total number of students exchanged per year will be determined by mutual agreement of the two institutions. Each institution will set an initial goal of two students to participate in the exchange during its first year. The number may be increased in subsequent years by mutual agreement of the two institutions.
3. Exchange candidates will be nominated and their qualifications for the exchange tested by their home institutions and approved by the host institution.
4. Students will be free to choose courses from the full range of courses available at the host institution, provided that they satisfy the individual course prerequisites and space is available.
5. Participants in the exchange must have their proposed programme of studies at the host institution approved by their home institution prior to the exchange.
6. At the end of the academic year and upon request, the host institution will send to the home institution an official transcript of the academic achievement of each student participating in the exchange.
7. Each institution shall designate an individual who will serve as Coordinator for this agreement. The Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating the specific aspects of the programme, as well as advising and assisting students.

E. Self-Evaluations of Individual PSA's (Zain-ul-Abidin)

In order to assess the working and performance of an individual PSA over a period of time, the following guidelines were discussed:

1. Skype meetings will be held atleast once a month where atleast one representative from each PSA must participate. In order for an individual to attend any PSA meeting, he should have attended atleast 60% of previous meetings so that he knows the proceedings from the previous meetings.
2. Only persons endorsed by the respective PSA should participate in such meetings.

3. The coordinator of PSA Sweden will be responsible for deciding the time of the meeting and he or she will be responsible for collecting and distributing minutes of the meeting.
4. Aamer Sohail (PSA BTH) has taken the responsibility for collecting and distributing the cultural and tourism related material about Pakistan.

**F. Summary of Prof. Ishtiaq's Address - Prof. Ishtiaq Ahmed renowned Sweden based columnist & social scientist to address the Delegates from Singapore via telephone
(Zain-ul-Abidin)**

We had the privilege to attend the telephonic address by Prof. Ishtiaq from Singapore. Following are some of the salient messages conveyed to us:

1. We the students should dedicate ourselves to our studies to the best of our abilities so that we can project a better image about Pakistani students based on our performance.
2. While responding to some of the negative propaganda in the West about Islam and Pakistan, we should not justify the wrongdoings of some of the extremist elements and instead of being defensive, we should explain them the point that they cannot blame and punish the whole nation for the actions of a minority.
3. Replying to a question about the negative role of agents, he was categorically against such elements and he proposed to highlight this issue in the Pakistani print media and further accepted to provide a bridge for PSA Sweden to the Pakistani Ambassador in Sweden.
4. Replying to a question about our role for improving education system of Pakistan, he stressed the need for us to improve our current standing in our current position till we reached a credible stage where we can play some effective role to improve the education in Pakistan after returning to Pakistan.

G. Granting of one year visa but the requirement of account statement to be for four years (Sher Azam Afridi)

1. We should discuss this issue with Swedish immigration and also involve HEC if possible
2. Individual PSAs will collect data of all such cases from their respective universities and will share it with the member responsible for it, so that we can make a collective data for it

H. Mailing lists Moderation (Zain-ul-Abidin & Ozair Kafray)

1. Mailing lists pertaining to discussion amongst Pakistani students in each city and in Sweden shall be moderated to increase the effectiveness of the lists
2. Consensus on a single policy for all groups was not achieved, it was however discussed that a document shall be available as "Guidelines for moderation of Mailing lists"
3. The PSAs in each city are free to discuss and adopt the guidelines document partly or as a whole, based on their own requirements

4. The document shall be written by Ozair Nazir Kafray for approval by 2nd August 2008

I. Discuss about the elected body and procedure of election for PSA Sweden (Sher Azam Afridi)

1. We should have elected representatives in all universities, which will be helpful for the future of PSA Sweden
2. The President's of respective PSA's at different universities will be the official representatives of PSA Sweden
3. It was unanimously decided that the representative of PSA Sweden at Linköping University will be the first coordinator of it
4. Majority of the meetings will be online (Skype) using conference calls. All those who wanted to represent their respective PSA in the next meeting have must attended 60% of all online conference meetings held in the mean while before the general physical meeting
5. The coordinator of PSA Sweden (The coordinator will be for three months. After every three months the responsibility of coordinator will be shifted to the president of PSA of another university in alphabetical order of the respective universities.) He will coordinate with the other PSA Elected members. As the network expands they will be simultaneously be added to the list accordingly. Presently there are five representative bodies: a) BTH b) Halmstad c) Linköping d) Lund e) Stockholm.

J. Coordination amongst all PSA's for receiving the new students and guiding them onwards to their respective cities (Saad Rahman)

1. Call for volunteers will be made on Pakistan_kth, swedenpk, denmarkpk & pesa-dk yahoo groups so that people can come forward to receive new students at Stockholm and Copenhagen
2. After receiving the group of students the information will be communicated to the respective PSA and they will make sure to receive the group of students at the respective bus stop or train station in their city
3. New students will be requested to provide complete arrival information atleast 10 days before arrival to info@psasweden.org with complete details such as Name, E-mail, program of study, Final Destination, Arrival Time, Flight Number or otherwise they will not be facilitated.
4. PSA Sweden as an entity will not take any responsibility of accommodating anyone for over night stays.

K. Extending cooperation with PSA Finland, Norway, Denmark, France & Germany (Aamir Sohail & Saad Rahman)

1. Efforts are being made to contact other PSA's and so far not too much progress have been made other than the presence of Syed Zahid Ali from PSA Linköping who is currently doing his thesis in Aachen, Germany and in contact with PSA Aachen.

L. Methods for transferring money to Sweden (Saad Rahman)

1. Document will be compiled and mailed on the mailing lists and also uploaded on the website which will inform about all possible ways to send money to Sweden.