



Amroha International Society

This biennial newsletter provides information about the latest activities of the Amroha International Society and shares the stories and news of its members.

A Biennial Newsletter

Issue No. 21 - July 2013

Editor's Note

Page 2

Fundraising, AIS website and more

Read the latest AIS fundraising events, updates on the website, members and discussions

Page 3

AIS 10th anniversary dinner

Read all about and see photos of the wonderful dinner held in Hobart

Page 4

AIS Scholarship Programme

Pages 5-6

AIS Cataract camps

See photos of the last two cataract camps held in January and April 2013

Page 7

Clean Amroha Project

The project begins to clean Amroha!

Pages 8-9

Amroha's cultural heritage

How the Muradabadi Gate got saved, recipes and more

Page 10

AIS Blanket distributions

Page 11

Graduations

Page 12

Amroha's High Achievers

Pages 13-14

Weddings

Page 15

News from members

Page 16

Pie graph

See where AIS members are living

Contact

Page 17

AIS 10th Anniversary

This year, the AIS celebrates 10 years since its foundation. In one decade, it has grown from a handful of members to **476 members** residing in at least **14 countries** across the globe. During this time, it has held **12 Cataract Camps**, in which it has **screened at least 3,000** underprivileged people, funded **210 cataract operations**, and provided **155 free pairs of prescription glasses**. In addition, the AIS has provided **medication to at least 2,500 people**.

The AIS has provided **24 tertiary level scholarships** to bright hardworking students from underprivileged backgrounds.

The record of AIS eye camps and scholarships and other projects have been colourfully documented and published in **21 newsletters** since 2007.



EDITOR'S NOTE

It gives me great pleasure to report that this is the 10th anniversary of the Amroha International Society (AIS). It was my dream to help the underprivileged people of Amroha in the key areas of health and education. The dream slowly began to be realised in 2003 with the advice, support and encouragement of my family, over a qorma dinner the name was decided on, and the design for a website tentatively sketched out. Early AIS members Safia Khan, Kamal Naqvi and Yasmin Naqvi were instrumental in the conception and development of the society. The first big challenge was to find members. The initial step towards fulfilling this daunting task was made immensely more easy by my friend Mehmood Naqvi in Houston who gave me the list of Sadat-e-Amroha, Karachi members, through which eventually a significant number of people with links to Amroha who were living outside the Indian subcontinent became members. 10 years on, the AIS is composed of 476 members living in 14 countries across the globe. Our members include Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jews, agnostics and atheists. In 2005, the website was markedly improved by our Australian web developer, Simon Stanton, with the help of AIS members. Simon is still working on making the website more interesting and easy to navigate. The first AIS newsletter was issued in January 2007. Since then we have provided 21 newsletters to members, documenting a fantastic record of AIS project development, membership expansion, and of course the colourful weddings, cute babies, and impressive graduations of our members and their families.

Early on in the establishment of the AIS, we knew that the key to success was to have an on-the-ground committee to implement and oversee AIS funded projects, and in 2008 a small committee was formed. The idea for funding cataract camps originated from Dr Nitin Verma, an Ophthalmologist based in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia (originally from New Delhi) who put me in touch with Mr. Chatrath of Faridabad who worked with the Venu Eye Institute in New Delhi in charitable work. Mr. Chatrath was a true inspiration. He demonstrated in concrete terms by his own experience how such camps could be run and funded with the help of the Venu Eye Institute. He personally accompanied me to Amroha to seek volunteers for the first eye camp, which was held in April 2008. Since this time, the AIS has funded 12 eye camps and literally helped thousands of underprivileged people with critically needed eye care. 210 people have been saved from cataract blindness as a result of the AIS.

The scholarship program was also a crucial part of the AIS charitable goals, since Amroha's youth are the future and key to developmental improvement in the community as a whole. In its 10 years, the AIS has provided 24 tertiary level scholarships to bright hardworking students from underprivileged backgrounds studying at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), the Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), and in Amroha. Professor Huzoor Khan in the AMU and Dr Jamal Abidi in the JMI were instrumental in promoting our scholarship programme together with the Director Student Welfare of these universities. Recently, we have sent 8 students of Rehana College in Amroha in the Indira Gandhi Open University courses, aimed at students over 18 years who are unable for financial reasons to continue their education post primary school. We have also started our work at the primary school level by providing books and stationary in local Amroha schools and monitoring the education standard and the food freely provided as required by law. We intend to commence a counselling programme and offer financial support to students of certificate courses for plumbing, carpentry, and electronics. In order to help the AIS identify potential projects in health and education in Amroha, Dr Abbas Khan is conducting a survey on Amroha's main health and education challenges.

The AIS has recently launched the "Clean Amroha" project in order to implement practical means to begin the challenging task of creating a more environmentally friendly, hygienic Amroha. The first step is the installation of large bins to promote the organised disposal of waste in the streets. Mohalla Katkui is the first district to receive the bins and will act as a test case of the project. Eventually, the plan is to extend the project to the whole of Amroha. The AIS has also contacted the District Magistrate, Mr. Patwar, about the poor water and sewerage conditions in Amroha, copies of which have been sent to a number of officials, including the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, the Prime Minister and the Vice President of India. I met with Mr. Patwar on 24 May 2013, who informed me about the work he is doing about the drainage and water supply. Promisingly, he has banned the use of plastic in Amroha.

The AIS has also been effective in supporting the preservation of Amroha's cultural heritage. In 2012, the local government proposed the replacement of Amroha's 300 year old Muradabadi Gate. Thanks largely to many appeals by the AIS, including to the Vice President of India, the gate has been saved. Thank you to all those who supported the appeal.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to thank each and every member of the AIS for your support over the last 10 years. It is only due to you that any of these incredible achievements have been made possible. Together, we have demonstrated that we are proud of our roots, ready to help those in need, and committed to improving the future of our hometown and the most vulnerable people living there.

Ikram Naqvi



Fundraising

Thanks to your support we have managed to help thousands of underprivileged people in the past ten years . With your continued help, we could do even more. Donations can be made on www.amrohainternational.org either by Pay Pal or Everyday Hero, including by choosing monthly payments instead of a lump sum.

The Fahan Girls School in Hobart has accepted the AIS as their charity and has committed to raise \$5000 this year.



Fahan school girls and AIS coordinator, Ikram Naqvi

Many Indian restaurants in Hobart have display AIS collection tins and have raised close to AU\$500 in the last few years.

All AIS members are encouraged to organize a dinner or afternoon tea to help the underprivileged people of Amroha.

One of Australia's gardening icons, Peter Cundall, has agreed to lead the cataract operations appeal through the Mercury newspaper in Tasmania.

I am particularly grateful to our two oldest donors, Peter Saunders, 83 and Don Phillips, 92 years old, for their generous donations.

One pleasing recent development has been the giving of donations in rupees in India. Every bit helps. As Mother Teresa wisely said, "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."

Kamal Naqvi (of London) and Joel Rache (of The Hague) are participating in the Amsterdam Half Marathon on Sunday, 20 October 2013, to raise money for AIS. You can sponsor them by through the following links:

<https://give.everydayhero.com/au/kamal>

<https://give.everydayhero.com/au/joel-3>

Regular Giving

You can donate regularly to AIS by going to the DONATE button on the [AIS website](http://www.amrohainternational.org).

Facebook

The AIS Face Book group continues to grow. We have 201 members at present. The increased activity is also encouraging.

You tube

We have put videos of an AIS eye camp and the launch of Ikram Naqvi's autobiography *Safarnama* on You Tube. You can purchase this book on the [AIS website](http://www.amrohainternational.org) - all funds go to the Amroha International Society.

Membership

There has been a big growth of membership of the AIS recently, mainly Australians. We now have 476 members - an increase of 18 members since our last newsletter.

See the pie graph on page 6 for geographical representation.

AIS Website

Hits on the [AIS website](http://www.amrohainternational.org) continue to be over 10,000 per month. It reached over 12,000 in December 2012. Thanks to all those who visit our website.

Discussion Forum

The Discussion Forum on the AIS website is your opportunity to make your voice heard. Your input is always welcomed. The following are few examples of recent comments:

Tanvir Ali, 19 January 2013

"Congratulations on organising another successful camp on 18 January 2013. Thirty two would have been the highest number for cataract operation so far. You are doing a great job. Please keep it up"

Shariq Hasan, 7 June 2013

"It was good to see photos of the eye camp on 23 April 2013. Also pleased to know that the follow up visit by the Venu Eye Institute doctors went well".

Nargis Siddiqui, 7 June 2013

"Just returned from India. It was good to see the dust bins put by the Amroha International Society... It was also good to see recent donations for the eye sight appeal. I urge all Amrohis to get behind this much needed cause."

AIS 10th Anniversary Dinner

The AIS 10th anniversary dinner was held at the Annapurna restaurant in Hobart (Australia) on 14 April. The dinner was booked to capacity and those attending raised Au\$2,275. It was a fantastic night of food, friends and dancing, in the name of a worthy cause.



Sujata Gupta and her daughter, performing a traditional Indian dance at the dinner

Above: Guests enjoying dinner at the Annapurna

AIS Scholarship Program

AIS scholarship conditions - new requirements

In order to ensure that the AIS scholarships are offered only to those students who have a proven academic record and who are in acute financial need, the AIS has increased the minimum marks to qualify for the scholarship to 70% and reduced the maximum monthly income of parents to RS10,000. In addition, AIS scholarship recipients are required to demonstrate a willingness to contribute to AIS projects for the underprivileged.

AIS scholarship recipients

The following are letters of appreciation from some AIS scholarship holders.

Mohd Ashar

"Sir, I am very thankful to you that you considered my application favourably and gave me this scholarship. This money will alleviate the financial burden on my family. Thank you."

Mohd Rais



"Thanks sir for your financial help "

Abdul Sami



"As my final year has finished I am looking for a good job in mechanical engineering. I am thankful to the AIS for its help for my studies."

We congratulate Abdul for finishing his Diploma in Engineering and wish him luck in finding a good job. He was one of our best students consistently securing over 80% marks.

Kafeel Khan



"I thank you for your scholarship. I am the eldest boy in my family. My father could not afford to help me and my two sisters in education on his meagre income. I had to take a loan from a bank for my studies until your scholarship. With your scholarship money I was able to help my sisters also."

Kafeel is also one of our top scholarship holders consistently securing over 80% marks. He is also helping the AIS to conduct a survey on health and education issues in Amroha. (Photo of me with Jamia students & AMU girl student)

Mohd Farhan



"I am an engineer who plans to pursue IT career in the secondary level. I am currently a junior. However I am doing B.E to enhance my skills and upgrade myself. With the help of your scholarship I am able to concentrate on my education. Your financial support has allowed me to one step closer to my goal".

Fareha Aqdas



Fareha Aqdas is a new scholarship recipient. She is undertaking a MSc in Statistics at the Aligarh Muslim University.

Scholarship holders from the Jamia Millia Islamia



From left (back): Syed Anwar Hasan, a possible scholarship candidate, Umaiz Iqbal, Kafeel Khan (B. Tech), Mohd. Farhan (Dip. Computer Eng), Mohd. Rais (BSc in Instrumentation), Abdul Sami (Diploma in Mechanical Engineering)

Front: Ikram Naqvi, Jamal Abidi

Indira Ghandi Open University Courses

We have sent 8 students to Rehana College in Amroha for IGNOU courses: Raishma, Uzma, Aanihal, Deepti, Huma, Krishan Kumar, Rakesh and Raviya. These external education courses are for students over 18 years old who were unable for financial reasons to continue their education post primary school.





AIS Cataract Camps

The cataract camp on 30 January 2013 attracted 248 patients. Of these, 28 had cataract operations, 30 were given free spectacles and 195 were provided with free medicines for minor eye problems.

The latest eye camp on 23 April had 438 people. Of these, 27 had cataract operations, 358 received free medicine for minor eye problems and 158 received free spectacles.



Words of cataract operation patients

"Thank you. Without your help I would have remained blind"

Krishan Kumar

"Thanks for giving me eye sight again"

Maryam Bano

"I would have been living a miserable life without your help"

Surender Singh



Clean Amroha Project



The “Clean Amroha Project” was launched on 13 April 2013. Although dust bins were distributed all over Amroha, we are concentrating on testing the idea and process in Mohalla Katkui. The enthusiasm of few young people involved in the project was impressive. They were appointed in positions of responsibility to implement the project which will be critical to its success. Depending on how successful the project is in the next few months, the intention is to organise a “Clean Katkui Day” in November this year. The project is designed expand to the other Mohallas of Amroha. A yearly award will be offered for the cleanest Mohalla in Amroha. An annual “Clean Amroha Day” will eventually be organised to promote the idea of fostering a cleaner Amroha.



Ikram Naqvi with one of the rubbish bins in Mohalla Katkui of the Clean Amroha project

Clean Amroha Project

Other health matters

AIS coordinator, Ikram Naqvi, made a formal submission to Mr Pawaar, the District Magistrate (DM) of Amroha about the poor quality of drinking water in the town which is eight times worse than the quality recommended as safe to drink by the World Health Organisation. In addition, he pointed out the lack of land for Amroha's rubbish resulting in the dumping of rubbish on both sides of the roads outside inhabited areas. Not only do these dumps look terrible, but the plastic bags from these rubbish dumps cause particular health problems for the animals that eat them and clog up the open drains, resulting in the flooding of roads after only minimal rainfall.

The DM has recently prohibited the use of plastic bags in Amroha. During these meetings with the DM as well as with Dr Afsar Pervez, the Chairman of the Amroha Nagarpalika (Municipal Council), that steps are being taken to rectify these problems.

Ikram Naqvi with Mr Pawaar, District Magistrate of Amroha



Ikram Naqvi with Dr Afsar Pervez, the Chairman of the Amroha Nagarpalika (Municipal Council) and Surender Singh (Chairman, AIS Amroha Committee)

Amroha's cultural heritage



Muradabadi Gate

The 300 year old Muradabadi Gate of India was on the brink of being demolished in order to build new one. As a result of submissions made on behalf of AIS members to the local State MLA (Member of Legislative Council), Mehboob Ali and the Director of the Archaeological department, the Vice President of India and the Chairman of the Nagarplika.

The AIS was informed by the Chairman and the engineer of Nagarpalika that the gate will be restored and not demolished. The architect for the Indian Parliament, Yasmeen Abidi, is keen to help. The AIS will keep monitoring the situation as the gate is still under threat until the old gate is restored. The AIS thanks all those who helped in saving this historical piece of cultural heritage.

Christian History of Amroha

There is a century old Methodist church in Mohalla Mandichob and the Christian graveyard is the side of the cross road (previously known as Parker Road) near Krishan Bal Mandir school.

For further information please visit the AIS website under [history of Amroha](#).

Amroha Specialities

There is some debate about what are considered as typical Amroha dishes. Views expressed by AIS members suggest some consensus that Shaljam gosht, Baisni roti and aam (mangos) Bairi roti and karhi would foot the bill. You can visit the AIS website to get recipes and to suggest others.

Khalid Haque of San Diego has recently sent an Amroha Samosa recipe. Visit the [AIS website](#) to get the recipe!



Bringing warmth to cold nights on the Amroha train platform



AIS distributes blankets

During AIS Coordinator, Ikram Naqvi's last visit to Amroha in December 2012, he was moved watching poor people sleeping on the concrete floor of the train station and platforms with minimal and threadbare bedding.

The AIS distributed 100 blankets immediately.

The AIS will distribute blankets to the homeless in winter every year.

**Ikram Naqvi distributing a blanket to
a homeless elderly woman in
December 2012**



Graduations

University graduates



Abbas Khan, son of Huzoor and Zaibun Khan of Mohalla Danishmandan completed his Bachelor of Dentistry from the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) with 8 gold medals including one for being the first nationally top ranked male student of the AMU.



Suhail Abidi, son of Kamal and Bazmi Abidi of Mohalla Nogayn, recently graduated with an MBA from the Stanford University.



Pervez Naqvi, son of Salman Naqvi of Mohalla Katkoi, recently completed his MBA from the Wharton School of Management of the Pennsylvania University.

High school graduate



Sidra Goher, daughter of Ali Goher and Mehmooda Naqvi, became one of three top students in Grade 10 in Houston. She is the projected Valediction for the 2013 graduating class of J. Frank Dobie High School for this year. She will also be the Commencement Speaker at her graduation, an honour given to the best speaker at the school. Her plans are to go to University of Texas Austin to undergrad in Business.

Amroha's high achievers

As part of it's tenth anniversary celebrations, AIS takes note of some of Amroha's lesser known brightest and most inspiring stars



Madeeha Siddiqui, daughter of Shaji and Isna Siddiqui of California was accepted in the "Letter & Sciences" department at the University of California at Berkeley. Of the 68,000 undergraduate applicants, she was one of the 14,000 (21%) that were accepted.

Madeeha Siddiqui with her family

Raza Askari, son of Razi Askari of Mohalla Katkui created history by attaining 95.6% in CBS High School Board.

Dr Naseem Naqvi, wife of Dr Jafar Naqvi of Karachi, has the honor to be the first woman Ph.D. in Amroha. She obtained her Ph.D. from the Leeds University in the UK in the 1950s.



Kamal Zehra Naqvi, of Mohalla Katkui, wife of Arif Raza Naqvi, is probably the first woman to obtain an MSc in Amroha. She received scholarship for her BSc and MSc degrees. She completed her masters from the Lucknow University in 1960. She also did a Masters in Library Science from the Karachi University.

Ghadeer Naqvi, daughter of Syedain Raza and Naim Zehra (Anjum) Naqvi, graduated from the University of Karachi in 1998 and completed a few certificate courses from the Aga Khan University. Her first book on education as a teaching guide was published by the Oxford University Press in 2009. Since then she has published 10 text books. She is married to Mushtaq Ali and lives in Dallas. She gives credit of her success to her mother Anjum who she says is an "excellent mother".

Anjum Zehra is a lecturer in Karachi University, Microbiology Department. She has recently completed her Ph.D. from the University of South Australia.

Syed Mohd Rizwan Naqvi has invented a "Foot Pump" model that can pump the water in quantity equal of Submersible Pump without Diesel or Electricity. It operates like a paddle of Tailors Sewing Machine. At present he is working as Associate Professor at ILLMT Noida.

Dr. S Masood Ahmad has been appointed Director of National Geophysical Research Institute. He was awarded the National Geoscience Award in 2009. He received the award from the Vice President of India Hon. M. Hamid Ansari. Dr. S Masood Ahmad got the award for his work in the field of Environmental Studies.



Ikhlas Khan was recently awarded a D.litt (Honoris Causa) by the Hamdard University. The International Conference on Science of Botanical (ICSB) also recognised Ikhlas Khan for scientific achievement in Natural products and herbal medicine. More details are on their website www.ocfordicsb.org



Mohd Sibtain Naqvi was recently elected to the International Association of Table Tennis representing Pakistan.

Shabnam Naqvi was awarded the Government of Canada's 2012 Ontario, Region, Deputy Minister's award of Excellence in both Gold and Silver on 14 June 2012. Shabnam said "Helping people every day who need it most is a reward in itself."

Dr Ali Jafar, son of Ibne Jafar Naqvi of Mohalla Katra, is among other things a renowned artist. He presented a portrait to Rajev Gandhi (at the time the Prime Minister) when he was 14 years old. His portrait of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was used for Azad's recent poetry book launched by Mrs Patil, former President of India. He also did an excellent portrait of Mother Teresa.



The following is a list of some other outstanding achievers of Amroha. Please tell AIS if you know somebody who should be in the list. They will be acknowledged in the next newsletter.

Mushtaq Husain "viqarul mulk" (key contributor to the formation of the Aligarh Muslim University among many outstanding contributions)

Rais Amrohvi (scholar)

Jaun Elia (poet)

Kamal Amrohi (film producer)

Syed Sadequain Ahmed Naqvi (artist)

Eqbal Mehdi (artist)

Zaiba Amrohi (artist)

Dr. Syed Aziz Jamal Naqvi (heart surgeon)

Dr. Syed Ali Jafar Naqvi (kidney specialist)

Dr. Tausiful Hasan Naqvi (geophysicist)

Dr. Mehmood Naqvi (geologist)

Dr. Zafar Nafees (psychiatrist),

Dr. Qamar Ali Abbasi (psychiatrist),

Shaheed Sqdn Ldr Intezam Naqvi (Indian hero)

Frahan Naqvi (first Amroha MBA from the Harvard University)

Dr Zainab Khan (first Amroha PhD in dentistry from the Harvard University)

Vishnu Sahai (first Indian Civil Service, British Raj) of Amroha, Governor of Asam & Nagaland)

Bhagwan Sahai (brother of Vishnu, also ICS)

Anand Raj (IT, winner of many awards in USA)

Jagdish Saran Gupta (JSC Hindu College named after him)

Babu Baghvat Sahai (lawyer)

Dr. Krishan Kishore Goel (received Rotary Distinguished Service award and Foundation Meritorious Award)

Sardar Gurcharan Singh (successful businessman and great social worker)

Sardar Surender Singh (successful businessman and great social worker), Chairman of the AIS Amroha Committee.

Rev. Zahur Ul Haqq (first Indian Presiding Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church in India)

Dr. C.L Donald (honoured by Rotary Club for his contribution to the Polio programme)

Rev. Diamond Donald (Counsellor and mission consultant in Bangalore)

Dr David Donald (Academic with BSc, B. Ed and Ph.D. in Economics)

Weddings

Zainab and Mohd

On 16 May, Zainab Khan of Boston (originally from Mohalla Danishmandan), daughter of Zaibi and Huzoor Khan, married Mohd Ahmad of Los Angeles (originally from Azam Garh in India), son of Dr. Saghir and Mrs. Afshan Ahmad, in Aligarh. Among many people attending from overseas were Ahmad's parents, two sisters, Zainab's uncles Ikram Naqvi and Ishrat Naqvi and his family from Australia and Zainab's brother Husain Khan from Jeddah. Congratulations to the happy couple!



Mushkbar and Danish

Mushkbar Naqvi of Houston got married to Danish Naqvi of Karachi on 17 June. Congratulations and best wishes for a happy married life!



Fizza and Faraz

Fizza Murtaza, daughter of Rafia and Ahmad Murtaza, got married in Houston on 20 June to Faraz Mumtaz, son of Farah and Shahid Mumtaz. Congratulations!



News from AIS members

The latest news in the last half year

Engagements

Congratulations to Fauzia Kidwai of Geneva on the engagement of her daughter, Zoya, to Saad Salman on 28 December 2012. The wedding is expected to take place on 24 August 2013.



Zoya and Saad Salman on their engagement

Congratulations to Faraz Ahmad, son of Salman and Riffi Ahmad, of San Diego (originally from

Mohalla Bagla), who was engaged to Kulsoom, also of San Diego.



Faraz and Kulsoom on their engagement

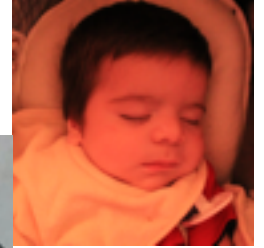
Right: Arayaman with his parents

Births

Congratulations to Aman and Mansi Chowdhry on the birth of their son, Aryaman, born on 1 March, and to Jagdish Chowdhry of Gurgaon, India on becoming a grandfather.



Congratulations to Erum and Farukh Naqvi of Pittsburgh on the birth of their son Ayaan Murtaza on 6 March.



Baby Ayaan

Rukhsar Amrohi's Book Launch



Congratulations to Rukhsar Amrohi, daughter of famous Bollywood film producer and director Kamal Amrohi, on the recent launch of her book "Dard-e-dil Likhoon Kab Tak" in her home of Amroha a few months ago.

This book was launched again by Hon. Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India. Not only does it contain Rukhsar's Urdu poetry, it also includes many unpublished letters of Kamal Amrohi to his wife and children.

Sadat-e-Amroha Annual Picnic

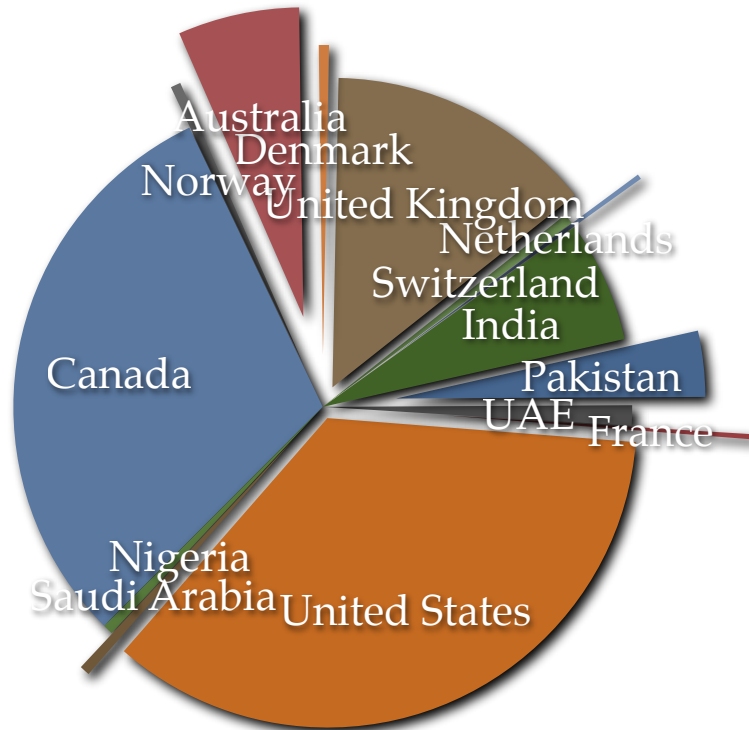
SADAT-E-AMROHA, Canada, held their annual picnic in Toronto on 1 July.



If you have news you wish to share with the AIS community, let us know so we can include it in our next newsletter.

Where are AIS members?

This pie graph gives a view of where AIS members are currently living



- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|
| ● India | ● Pakistan | ● UAE | ● France |
| ● United States | ● Saudi Arabia | ● Nigeria | ● Canada |
| ● Norway | ● Australia | ● Denmark | ● United Kingdom |
| ● Switzerland | ● Netherlands | | |

Contact

You can [email](#) your suggestions and comments about the AIS to the Co-ordinator, Ikram Naqvi, using the [mail option on the AIS website](#).

Amroha International Society
www.amrohainternationalsociety.com/