

2nd Joint Meeting of the Sri Lanka Association of Dermatologists with the German Dermatological Society (29th January - 2nd February 1998)

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Sri Lanka Association of Dermatologists (SLAD) had the privilege of having a joint meeting with the German Dermatological Society in 1986, marking its inaugural academic sessions.

Twelve years later, in 1998, again we were fortunate to have a joint meeting with German Dermatologists. The idea of having the second joint meeting surfaced at the annual sessions of 1997, at which Dr Gunter Schwenzer was a special guest. Dr Gunter Schwenzer is a Consultant Dermatologist and Dermatologic Surgeon from Hamburg, Germany. During his many visits to Sri Lanka over the years he has established lasting links with Sri Lankan Dermatologists.

An organizing committee was formed in advance, to plan the activities related to the meeting. Dr Gunter Schwenzer and Dr W D H Perera functioned as co-chairpersons of this committee. At a press conference held at Hotel Trans Asia on 20th January 1998, the representatives of the media were briefed about the meeting.

In spite of the instability Sri Lanka was facing due to terrorist threats in January 1998, eight Consultant Dermatologists from Germany arrived here, to participate in the joint meeting. Their arrival under such trying circumstances was source of inspiration to the members of the Sri Lanka Association of Dermatologists.

Inauguration ceremony was held on 29th January at Hotel Lanka Oberoi. His Excellency Helmut Van Edig, the Ambassador for the Republic of Germany in Sri Lanka, graced this occasion as the Chief Guest. During this meeting honorary membership of the Sri Lanka Association of Dermatologists was conferred

on Dr Gunter Schwenzer, in recognition of his services to the field of Dermatology in Sri Lanka. He is the first honorary member of the SLAD. The ceremony was followed by a reception, and a cultural pageant.

In the morning of the 30th January, a variety of interesting Dermatological problems were discussed at the clinical session held at NHSL. It was excellently organized by Dr D N Atukorala, and Dr W D H Perera, Consultant Dermatologists of the NHSL. On the same afternoon, Sri Lankan Dermatologists and Pathologists had the delightful experience of listening to Dr Heino Hugel, who conducted the Dermatopathology session and kept the audience spellbound. Dr Hugel is a Dermatopathologist from Friedrichshafen, Germany.

Academic sessions were held on 31st January at Hotel Lanka Oberoi. Number of review and plenary lectures were delivered, and free papers were presented by Sri Lankan and German Dermatologists, covering a wide variety of topics. The presentations were of a high standard and were received well.

German Dermatologists had another opportunity of seeing Tropical Dermatological problems at the clinical session held in Kandy, on 2nd February. It was possible due to the untiring efforts of Dr Mahinda Gunawardena, Consultant Dermatologist, Teaching Hospital, Kandy.

At Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya German Delegates enjoyed the privilege of listening to Mr D B Sumithrarachchi, the Director of Botanical Gardens. He made a beautiful presentation of an overview of flora of Sri Lanka. Le Vallon Tea Estate at Galaha also was visited by the delegates.

¹ Vice President, Sri Lanka Association of Dermatologists.

Annual Dinner held at Hotel Lanka Oberoi was well attended. Hon. Van Edig also hosted the German delegates and the office bearers of the SLAD, to a dinner at his residence.

The joint meeting further strengthened the cordial relationship that exists between Germany and Sri Lanka. On 16th December 1998, a workshop on dermatological Surgery was conducted by Dr Gunter Schwenzer at the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya. This was included in the programme of the Fourth International Medical Congress held at Peradeniya. Many young Dermatologists and Surgeons benefited from this. One of the postgraduate trainees in Dermatology will be shortly leaving to Germany, for the overseas component of training. She will be undergoing her training under Prof C Orfanos, who is an international figure in Dermatology.

It is evident that the joint meeting was highly successful. It has already borne fruit. We sincerely wish for more joint meetings in the future.

P.S. Following consisted the delegation from Germany

Dr Med Gunter Schwenzer

Prof Dr Med E Haneke

Dr Med S W Wassilew

Dr Med H Hugel

Prof Dr Med M Hundeiker

Dr H Ziegler

Dr P Anderson

Dr (Mrs) I Langhans