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THE BURAQ PLANETARY SOCIETY AND BURAQ SPACE CAMP

- **Our Vision and History**

Our core purpose is to inspire and challenge young minds to uncover their latent potential, and help them become better leaders in the future. Buraq Planetary Society was initiated in 1993 under the leadership of Eisenhower Fellow Dr. Shahid Mahmud and Mrs. Naureen Mahmud. Our first accomplishment was selecting and sponsoring three cadets to attend the Uzbekistan Space Camp. In 1994, Buraq Planetary Society held its first Pakistani Space Camp in Murree and has held 14 camps since then. All of the camps are lead and organized by the Buraq Planetary Society Board of Directors and graduate Buraqians from previous years, who were selected as top cadets from amongst their batch.

- **Our Aims and Objectives:**

Based on merit, we select 40 students between the ages of 14 to 16 years from all over Pakistan who share a common interest in space, leadership, youth empowerment and awakening. We provide the Pakistani youth a unique platform away from schools and textbooks to get a taste of experiential learning and provide a framework for making strategic visions (plans) for themselves and for the future of Pakistan. The students learn to survive in a ten-day camping environment which requires them to sleep in tents and participate in physical exercise early every morning, in order to develop their interpersonal skills such as teamwork, self-confidence and communication, as well as strengthen their powers of reasoning, problem solving and time management.

The 15th Annual Buraq Space Camp 2018

- Each year, a ten-day camp is held in the outskirts of Pakistan's capital city Islamabad, in a safe and conducive environment ideal for learning and recreation. All cadets are given a unique opportunity to meet and interact with the best and brightest Pakistani leaders in academia, science, technology, business and many other significant fields. Due to its distinctive camp activities and specially designed program outline, the Buraq Space Camps offer an unforgettable camping experience for a prestigious group of 40 students.

What happens after camp?

Cadets of Buraq

- **Organization Profile**

The eight member team behind the Facebook page aspires to provide an insight into the influence that Buraq and fellow Buraqians have on the personalities, lives and goals of cadets and to help connect the graduates and the applicants alike over shared experiences, interests and memories. Buraqians recognized the increasing gap between successive batches and in the hopes to reconnect, a team was put together to gather testimonials and make them accessible. The page currently has a following of 397 people with 25 published posts.

In light of the increasing use of social media, the team came to the unanimous conclusion of establishing Buraqian presence on major social media outlets such as Youtube and Snapchat. Our Youtube channel is to serve as a VLOG channel and to publish all official Buraq videos.

Our Social media also facilitate the easy access to Buraq for prospective candidates, making it easier for candidates to contact us and get involved with Buraq.

- **Outline of the task undertaken:**

The page draws its inspiration from the classic “Humans of New York.” It will bring to the forefront the intimate experiences of Buraqians in relation to the time spent at the camp. The posts will include testimonies, congratulatory posts on achievements, milestones reached by the camp, introductions and links to projects started by Buraqians, and calls to volunteers or participants.

- **Contribution to host organization:**

Through this initiative, the presence of Buraq over social media increases thereby enabling us to reach larger audiences and attract more people to Buraq itself.

Buraq Alumni Association

- **Organization Profile:**

Realizing the increasing need to bridge the gap between successive generations of Buraqians, a team of 6 Buraqians convened to discuss, and plan events to get the Alumni involved and connect them. The purpose of the association is to give Buraqians a chance to get in touch with other Buraqians, benefit from their experiences, and for Buraqians to get involved in and help change narratives that currently define the metaphorical and physical landscape of this country. The association finds possible events Buraqians may be interested in, discusses their feasibility, and contacts responsible organization. The task of choosing what to get involved in is left to Buraqians so as to keep the community involved.

- **Outline of tasks undertaken:**

1. An alumni database: In an effort to create professional circles specifically for the Buraqian community, a database was established. The database contains information such as name, year the person was a cadet in, area of study, email address, mobile phone number, and what they're willing to help with. The database is updated on a weekly basis currently as it is still gaining momentum; the aim, however, is for it to eventually become a self-sustainable venture.

2. Social Responsibility Projects: Buraqians have been involved in giving back to society in whatever capacity they can. In this regard, the association started collaborations with well reputed organizations in Pakistan's major cities, namely, Lahore, Islamabad, and Karachi. Recently, Buraqians participated in the Baby Box Project in Islamabad and a Plantation drive at the Urban Forest in Karachi. The Lahore chapter of this endeavor is to be executed in the coming month.

3. Reunions: Other than being involved in projects, it is important to be able to sit down and rejoice in what brought us together over a lunch or dinner. In this spirit, reunions were planned and executed in major cities of the country, namely, Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi. While the Islamabad and Karachi chapters kicked off as a huge success with cadets as far back as 2012 (the year camp restarted after a brief break) in attendance, the Lahore chapter is scheduled to be held on the 4th of August 2018.

For a deeper insight into our initiative, visit www.buraqsociety.org