



SHAMIAM ARIF APPEAL – NEWS LETTER JUNE 2005

OVERVIEW

Shamiam Arif, born on 23rd August 2002, suffered serious, extensive burns as a result of an accidental fire at her home in the Kotli Region of Pakistan in early 2003. As a result of the fire and limited emergency treatment, Shamiam has lost her hands as well as suffering from extensive damage to her head and face. Shamiam has little hope of receiving the appropriate medical care and support in her own area.

In the autumn of 2003 whilst on a trip to Pakistan, Farooq Ahmed, a Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary Special Police Constable, heard of Shamiam’s plight and decided to try and help her by raising funds to provide her with medical assistance which would improve her long term physical development and her quality of life.

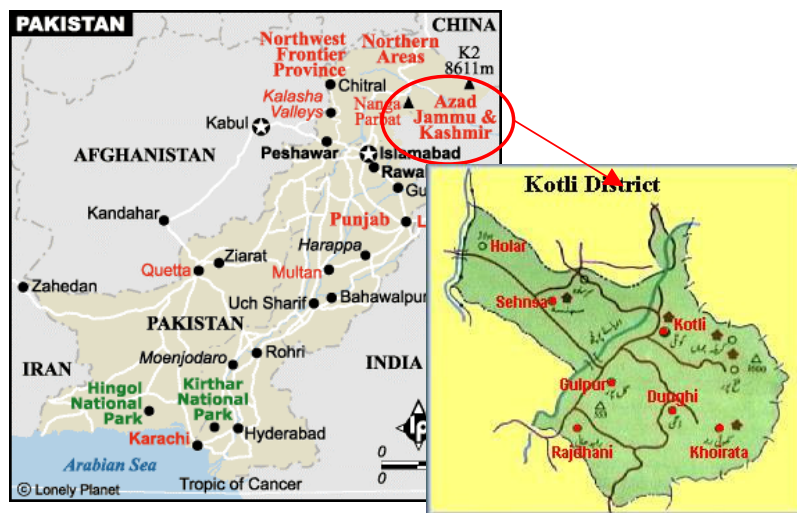


Shamiam before the fire

Since then, Farooq who also works at the Rose of India Restaurant in Dumfries and has a grown up family of his own, has worked tirelessly forming and now leading a small group, seeking to raise sufficient funds to support Shamiam.

Shamiam now nearly three years old, faces many years of reconstructive surgery and ‘high maintenance’ medical support.

Map of Pakistan and the Kotli District





Shamiam Arif Appeal



THE ARIF FAMILY

The Arif family – Shamiam, her younger brother Shakib who is almost 2 years old (born exactly one year after his sister!) with their mum Tahira and dad Mohammad, but known to everyone as 'Arif', have been resident in the Luton area since December 2003. There is widespread support for the Arif family within the Luton Muslim community and the Chelmsford Hospital where Shamiam is receiving her treatment, is easily accessed.



The Arif's visit the Dumfries area regularly, meeting their Scottish based friends and supporters.

They returned to Kotli for a second return visit in late 2004 for a visit, maintaining links with their family and community.

At the moment, the Arif family are again back in Luton pending further treatment for Shamiam.

Shamiam and her family have been very well cared for and supported in the Luton area during their stay here in the UK. Farzana Javaid and her father Mohammed Javaid, with Abdul Raja Qayyum are leading members of the Luton team.

MEDICAL TREATMENT

The injuries Shamiam has suffered mean that she will require a huge amount of surgical and extended medical care. Unfortunately, the specialist treatment and costs involved cannot be provided in Shamiam's homeland. To date, some £75,000 has been raised by the UK based appeal and a specialist surgeon, Dr Peter Dziewulski, based at a hospital in Chelmsford is providing his support in relation to the assessment and treatment appropriate to Shamiam's condition.



Shamiam after the fire



Shamiam after treatment in the UK



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Just before the end of 2003, an initial operation was completed which has stabilised Shamiam's skull and further work has since been undertaken, which includes:

- Skin grafting of an unhealed wound on her scalp and forehead
- Treatment for a fungal infection of her skin
- The release of multiple burn scar contractures of her upper and lower eyelids
- Scar massage and physio-therapy sessions
- Treatment for eczema

It is only in recent times that Shamiam has been able once again, to blink and close her eyes to sleep.

On 14th June 2005, Dr Dziejewski and a colleague undertook an operation on Shamiam's left arm, creating a form of pincer which will allow Shamiam some additional grip and dexterity. This required at least a 10 day stay in hospital with follow up support treatment and monitoring, with additional skin grafting which was done on 29th June. A similar operation will be carried out some two weeks afterwards on Shamiam's right arm.

Additional work is also planned for her eyelids; nose and mouth. Due to the fragility and absence in parts of her skull, Dr Dziejewski is looking to create a form of head protection which will provide some safety for Shamiam, particularly as she has so full of energy and mischief!

Whilst the Consultant's involvement has been kindly donated, the hospital fees are being covered by the fund-raising effort. We have deposited a second £25,000 with the hospital in advance payment for Shamiam's continued treatment. As will be appreciated, this money will be quickly used up.

SUPPORT TEAMS

A Dumfries based appeal group was formed and comprises of people from the NHS; local Police Service; local Fire Service; a professional media cameraman as well as others from the community voluntary sector. Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary has offered full support to the appeal and as a Force they have provided media management assistance and advice. We are aligned to Muslims Hands, the international charity based in Nottingham and through Muslim Hands all of the fund-raising is catalogued and properly accounted.

In Luton, the team there have also to support of the community and also key press expertise through Bev Creagh and Laura Edwards.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

The fund-raising continues and the variety and innovation is astounding.

Dumfries Lions Club has provided their support with table top 'car boot sales' and a gala Robert Burns Celebration Evening. A number of the business community in the Dumfriesshire area have also supported the appeal through donations and 'in kind' arrangements. For example, Haig and Jessie McCulloch at the Birkhill Hotel, Dumfries have provided accommodation for the Arif Family on their Dumfries visits; Jim Barr



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at the Heathhall Garden Centre laid on a birthday party for Shamiam and her brother Shakib. An older member of the Appeal Group sponsored his 30 years old moustache shave-off – a new man was discovered underneath!

Youngsters in the community have also been captivated by Shamiam and fund raising efforts have included sponsored swims; cycles; walks and other innovative efforts. Golf tournaments run by retired Police Officers have been a feature and a Jim and Wendy McColm who have a keen interest in Endurance Horse Riding, arranged an international Equestrian Event at Stranraer in May 2005. This saw competitors from across the UK participating, supported by the Strathclyde Police Mounted Branch and local police Pipe Band. With glorious weather and a large crowd, the day was a huge success. A sponsored Dog

Walk; supermarket shopping packs; UK 3 peaks climb and a sponsored shark swim are other innovative efforts from the west of the region.



The local Emergency Services have made a number of contributions, with fund-raising ongoing by a number of police officers who have completed sponsored cycle runs; hill climbs and shift collections. Our Fire Service colleagues have made different efforts, including collecting donations at their Fire Brigade HQ Open Day, as well as:-

- Running the Dublin Marathon
- Sponsored Car Wash
- Quiz Night
- Sponsored Parachute Jump
- Race Night.

Through the local group the free-lance media cameraman has produced a variety of pieces of work to date. His ongoing involvement is all with a view to cataloguing the effort and hopefully in the future producing a documentary type television programme.

INFORMATION

We have enjoyed excellent support from the press and media, particularly in Scotland and the Luton/Bedfordshire area.

BBC Scotland radio and TV; Border TV; Radio WestSound have provided regular updates and features for their audiences. The Dumfries and Galloway Standard; Dumfriesshire Newspapers – The Dumfries Courier; the Galloway Gazette have actively supported Shamiam.

Anglia TV and Prime TV, with local radio and the Three Counties radio programme also ensuring Shamiam's story is heard. The Woman Magazine and the Bedfordshire Newsgroup - Luton Herald & Post; The Luton News and the Dunstable Gazette have all carried Shamiam's challenge.



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Additional information and progress updates can also be found on the websites at:-

www.muslimhands.org

www.dumfriesandgalloway.police.uk .

We also hope to produce an updated Appeal Video; regular Newsletters and will try to make our Appeal Group meeting minutes available.

SHAMIAM'S FUTURE

Shamiam's treatment continues and her fitness and preparedness is continually under evaluation for her next round of operations. The proposed plan of treatment is estimated at her requiring to remain in the UK for at least a two year period – the after care for such treatment being equally important as the surgery itself.

It is anticipated that we will have to support Shamiam's treatment until she is a young woman and everyone involved accepts this long-term challenge.

Hence the fundraising events continue. We hope this provides a flavour for the challenge faced by the appeal group, but more importantly Shamiam and her family. Shamiam has captured the heart of all who come in contact with her, her spirit and determination is engaging and an example to all of us.



Shamiam after a number of operations

Should you wish any further personal information please contact Linda Barr, T/No. 01387 250082 or Farooq Ahmed, T/No. 07703 459950 members of the Shamiam Arif Appeal Group – Dumfries.

Donations can be made to the Appeal in the form of cheques or postal orders made payable to **United for the Needy (Shamiam Arif)** and sent to:

Muslim Hands, 148 Gregory Boulevard, Nottingham, NG7 5JE. **0115 911 7222** or go to the following website: www.muslimhands.org

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter and considering the plight of Shamiam Arif.

Farooq; Linda; John G; Gordon; Debbie; Mike; Sharon; Wendy; Jim; John McG
Shamiam Arif Appeal Group - Dumfries



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