

decline many of these invitations, for lack of time. In Pakistan, your absence will be noted, so it is best go whenever possible, no matter how tedious some functions may be.

Speeches are much more formal in Pakistan than in Canada. When making a speech or addressing a gathering, you must acknowledge everyone at the head table, formally welcome and thank the chief guest and other dignitaries, and thank the sponsors of the event. Make sure you include all the people who matter. Follow protocol at all times.

Dress code

Dress code varies a great deal. In urban areas young male Pakistanis wear western clothes, but in rural areas traditional clothes are the norm. In most situations you should dress formally. Men should wear a tie. When it is hot, men can wear short-sleeve shirts. Never wear shorts or jeans to work. If you wear a *shalwar kameez*, the traditional Pakistani loose baggy trousers and knee-length shirt, it is a gesture that will be highly appreciated. If you wear local clothes, however, make sure they are of high quality, spotless and ironed neatly. Western women are advised to wear a *shalwar kameez* or modest, loose-fitting, western garments that cover the legs and arms. Women should never appear in public in shorts, halter

tops, short skirts, bathing suits or other clothing that exposes their arms or legs. If you wear a *shalwar kameez*, wear the *dupatta*, a long, flowing scarf, too, since it is an essential part of the dress.

Addressing Pakistanis

Addressing Pakistanis can be confusing to an outsider. Although it varies depending on the person's position and age, it is safe to refer to men as Mr. or Sir, and women as Miss. Married women will correct you if you address them as Miss. The Canadian practice of calling people by their first name is uncommon in Pakistan, so avoid first names unless invited to use them.

When meeting with senior bureaucrats such as the Commissioner or the Home Secretary, it is customary to address them by their title. When corresponding with Pakistanis, there are conventions for addressing individuals that depend on the person's status and/or position. Check with your counterparts. Accept that you will be referred to as Mr., *sahib*, or Sir if you are a man and Ma'am, *memsahib*, if you are a woman. Sometimes women are addressed as Sir, too!

When you meet with a Pakistani business person or government bureaucrat for the first time, let the individual know who you are beforehand. Make a phone call prior to your