Experts Deliberate Quality Assurance System's Contribution to Sustain and Enhance Performance

Wheelchairs Distributed among Students with Special Needs

6. Revamped R&D Framework Shared with Researchers
7. Training on Artificial Intelligence

STUDENT ALERT
Ensure your MS/MPhil or PhD Programme is approved by HEC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>International conference on Quality Assurance System, Standards and Policies: Issues and Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>HEC, Microsoft Launch Imagine Cup 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>HEC Shares Revamped R&amp;D Framework with Researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>HEC, Huawei Training on Artificial Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3rd Annual Conference of CPEC Consortium of Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>27th VCs Committee on Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>HEC Distributes Wheelchairs among Students with Special Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>HEC, Southeast University China Join Hands for Academic Linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>HEC, Huawei to Setup 8 New ICT Academies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>VU Workshop on Bioinformatics Technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>UVAS Conference on Food Safety through Parasite Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>IST Conference on Aerospace Science &amp; Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pakistani Students Win 3rd Position in APSCO Microsatellite Contest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Higher Education Commission, Pakistan
The Higher Education Commission (HEC), in collaboration with United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP), organised an international conference on Quality Assurance System, Standards and Policies: Issues and Challenges from December 4-5, 2019 in Islamabad. President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi inaugurated the conference.

The two-day event, which was attended by national and international university administrators, heads of accreditation councils, academics and quality assurance professionals from different parts of the world, discussed ways to improve the quality of higher education and advance mutual understanding of international quality assurance standards. The event provided an opportunity to Pakistan’s university leaders to learn from expertise of international universities as well as share their own experiences.

Various sessions of the conference sought ways to strengthen the quality culture, tackling the challenge of global competitiveness, mobilise resources, establish standards, and facilitate mutual learning as well as develop an improved quality system, including faculty and programme quality and identify mechanisms through which quality assurance system could contribute to sustaining and enhancing performance.

CONFERENCE THEMES

- Issues and Challenges of Developing Quality Assurance System, Standards and Policies
- Improving Faculty Quality: Role of Training and Capacity Building
- Role of Quality Assurance in Research Excellence Framework
- Role of Quality Assurance in Teaching Excellence Framework
- Assuring Quality through Accreditation
- Ascertaining Performance of HEIs through Ranking and Rating Systems
Various sessions of the Conference sought ways to strengthen the quality culture, tackling the challenge of global competitiveness, mobilise resources, establish standards, and facilitate mutual learning as well as develop an improved quality system, including faculty and programme quality. The experts also identified mechanisms through which quality assurance system could contribute to sustain and enhance performance.

The event specifically shared lessons from experience in other countries, identified options for international cooperation for advancing the shared agenda, reviewed national and regional developments in quality assurance, and highlighted initiatives for making teaching and pedagogy more effective and developing a teaching excellence framework.

Speaking during the opening ceremony, Dr. Alvi emphasized that universities must focus on enhancing the quality of education and research in addition to increasing enrolment and publications. He assured that as the economy grows, the funding situation for higher education will also improve.

The President said that while education must focus on developing human intellect, it should also try to ensure that it is relevant to needs of the society. “Universities should constantly improve their syllabi, bring it into consonance with social as well as psychological needs of students. Education must be a pleasure, which should not keep the students under a perpetual stress of achievement.”

Mr. Paul Jones, US Ambassador in opening ceremony stated that the United States is proud of its educational linkages with Pakistan. “I have over three decades in diplomacy and have not seen more effective partner in education than HEC.” He informed the audience that the United States is proud of awarding 19,000 need-based scholarships to Pakistan students so far.

Tariq Banuri, Chairman HEC said that the conference themes correspond with the HEC’s reform agenda, and the goal of this conference is to start a national conversation about “quality”. He said that quality is not a destination, it is a journey. “HEC will compile the lessons and recommendations of the conference for improving the quality of regulatory policies, ensuring that HEC financing result in greater success of the universities, and the enhancement of the quality and relevance of education and research.”

Addressing the closing ceremony, Dr. Ishrat Hussain, Adviser to Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms and Austerity, appreciated HEC’s initiative to open an international discourse on the much-needed subject of quality in higher education. “The ideas discussed should help the country in addressing the major gaps in quality assurance systems, including issues like plagiarism, misrepresentation of research
findings, and poor quality of journals. This is high time for us to reflect upon and overcome these problems.”

Dr. Hussain congratulated HEC on establishing the National Academy of Higher Education. “We have been talking about this for a long time.” He hoped that NAHE would fill in the intellectual disconnect between teaching and research.

The President of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, USA Dr. Judith S. Eaton observed that all the partner countries may have different obstacles in terms of quality assurance, so such conferences provide a platform to share experiences. She talked about quality assurance measures at governmental and non-governmental levels, adding that issues and challenges include access to higher education, effectiveness of quality assurance and education and the challenges regarding academic freedom.

Sharing a brief summary of the Conference proceedings, Dr. Fateh Marri, Executive Director HEC said the Conference was aimed at mainstreaming quality in higher education. He said over 300 local and international participants attended the conference, and contributed to the five diverse themes under discussion. Ms. Rita Akhtar, Executive Director USEFP said that the conference helped come up with ideas for building our future together and responding to challenges. She hoped that the multilateral cooperation and conversation on quality would continue in order to increase effectiveness of the quality assurance measures.
Imagine Cup, which was started in 2003, is not only a competition but also serves as a platform for teams to present their solutions and is an ideal opportunity for young innovators from around the world to express their imagination, bring ideas to life and also win $100,000.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Microsoft Pakistan have launched the Imagine Cup 2020, an annual global technology competition that brings together young technologists to play their part in resolving some of the world’s toughest challenges.

Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry was chief guest of the ceremony, which was attended by Special Adviser to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Usman Dar, Microsoft Country General Manager Abid Zaidi along with vice chancellors, faculty members and students of various universities.

Imagine Cup, which was started in 2003, is not only a competition but it also serves as a platform for teams to present their solutions and is an ideal opportunity for young innovators from around the world to express their imagination, bring ideas to life and also win $100,000.

The regional competitions in Pakistan would be telecast live on HEC’s Edu TV from studios of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology Islamabad, Riphah International University Islamabad, Lahore Garrison University and Sindh Madressatul Islam University Karachi to ensure transparency and accountability.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Chaudhry emphasized that the future of Pakistan lies in quality education and that his Ministry fully supports HEC’s initiatives on improving quality of undergraduate programmes, which are backbone of the higher education sector.

Mr. Dar said that under Kamyab Jawaan Programme, successful project teams of Imagine Cup be provided complete government support for commercialization and marketing of their projects.

While motivating the students to compete in Imagine Cup, the Chairman HEC said, “Look out for problems around you and try to find a way to solve that problem. If you find a solution, that’s the real success and our purpose at HEC is to make you successful.”

He informed the audience that to enhance the quality of higher education, HEC has already initiated the process of revamping four-year undergraduate curriculum in general universities and is working to enhance quality of research in MS and PhD programmes with an aim to help resolve country’s problems. “We want to ensure that when students graduate, they should have all the right skills which are required by the employers,” he said.
HEC Shares Revamped R&D Framework with Researchers

The main programmes of the Framework include Grand Challenge Fund, Local Challenge Fund, National Research Programme for Universities, Innovative and Collaborative Research Grant and Technology Transfer Support Fund.

The Higher Education Commission has recently completed a roadshow to spread awareness among faculty members and researchers about the newly developed Research and Development Framework.

In this regard, the first event was organized at HEC Secretariat, Islamabad, which was followed by events in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta respectively, aiming at educating academics and researchers about various components of the Framework, motivate them to obtain benefit from various funding opportunities, and provide them advice and guidance to apply for different grants.

Speaking during the inaugural session, Dr. Zain ul Abdin, Director General (R&D) informed the audience that a rigorous and transparent peer-review evaluation mechanism involving foreign evaluators, external reviews and review panels is being developed to overrule any chances of biasness or concerns based on conflict of interest while awarding grants.

Speakers from the R&D division shared details of different components of the new R&D Framework.

A tutorial session focusing on finding international research funding opportunities was delivered by Dr. Fouzia Sadiq, Director Research at Shifa Tameer-e-Millat University, Islamabad.

The academics and researchers applauded the activity and were of the view that these sessions have provided them an opportunity of networking with other researchers, and has provided an insight about new initiatives of HEC to resolve national-level issues of strategic relevance towards society and industry.
The Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Huawei Technologies Pakistan Pvt. Ltd. jointly organised the first ‘Train the Trainers’ Training for Huawei Certified ICT Associate (HCIA) on Artificial Intelligence (AI) at HEC Secretariat, Islamabad.

The eight-day training, conducted by Huawei AI Experts from China, was attended by trainers from 11 universities across Pakistan.

The training is a part of Presidential Initiative for Artificial Intelligence and Computing (PIAIC). The training aims at Artificial Intelligence talent development in Pakistan.

The HCIA-AI training and certification will cultivate entrepreneurial talent for the professionals of Artificial Intelligence helping them to use the AI framework in the industry for development and innovation.

Dr. Fateh Marri, Executive Director HEC, was chief guest in the closing ceremony, which was also attended by Mr. Shahzad Rasheed, Chief Technical Officer (CTO), Huawei Enterprise Business Group Pakistan, delegates from various universities.

Addressing the audience, Dr. Marri emphasised on the importance of Artificial Intelligence in understanding modern tools in education sector but also its relevance for overall economic growth of any nation.

He also mentioned the importance of close relationship between industry and academia to achieve the objective of problem solving in all aspects of life.

Mr. Shahzad Rasheed congratulated the trainees for being selected for the prestigious training.

He elaborated usefulness of Artificial Intelligence in building bridges for solving various problems faced by the country and assured Huawei’s complete support.
The Pakistani and Chinese universities collaborating under the CPEC Consortium of Universities will generate ideas leading to the development of both the countries, as universities are the nurseries of ideas.

This was the crux of the two-day 3rd Annual Conference of CPEC Consortium of Universities held recently in Islamabad under the theme “Academic Collaboration for Sustainable Partnerships”. The event reviewed the progress and pledged to reinforce the efforts to achieve objectives of the Consortium.

The Consortium was founded in Islamabad in August 2017 as “CPEC Consortium of Business Schools” to promote business-to-business linkages between China and Pakistan and help study relocation of Chinese businesses in the planned industrial parks in Pakistan under CPEC. The initiative was launched under the auspices of HEC and China Association of Higher Education (CAHE). However, the scope of the Consortium has been enhanced to cover all major domains of higher education and currently more than 50 universities from the two countries are part of the Consortium.

The Conference included focus group discussions on various topics including Developing Research Universities for Lead Role in National Development, Teaching Excellence for Employability of Graduates, and Research Management to Solve National and Regional Challenges with a Focus on CPEC, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Water and Food Security, Energy Security and Special Economic Zones,
Various sessions of the conference reviewed progress of academic collaborations among partner institutions, identified new areas of cooperation for development of human resource, sought ways to expand academic linkages among the universities of the two countries and promote harmony and invigorate people-to-people contacts, and explored joint research projects and areas of convergence.

and Cultural and Social Cooperation. The event also included a Science, Arts and Technology Exhibition.

Speaking as chief guest at the inaugural ceremony, Makhdoom Khusro Bukhtiar, the then Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform urged the universities to carry out diagnostic studies of all crucial sectors, as it would unleash the potential areas in which Pakistan needs to conduct research and come up with sustainable solutions. He stressed the need for promoting broad-based cooperation and synergy to jointly work in different fields including data science, artificial intelligence, technology, agriculture.

The Chinese Ambassador Mr. Yao Jing said that CPEC projects including the Consortium of Universities are recent manifestations of strong bilateral relations. He said the Consortium is a vital platform to connect people of both the countries. The Chairman, Strategic Policy Planning Cell, Dr. Moeed Yusuf said it is the age of global connectivity, in which the Consortium of Universities will play its important role in execution of CPEC and the Road and Belt initiatives. He encouraged the universities to conduct research on important national issues and bring their findings to the Strategic Policy Planning Cell.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Lt. Gen. (R) Muhammad Asghar, Consultant (CPEC) HEC emphasised that Pakistan needs to learn from China as to how it lifted its population from poverty. Mr. Guan Peijun, Vice President, CAHE, stressed that the operational efficiency of the Consortiums needs to be worked on so as to further strengthen it.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, Executive Director HEC Dr. Fateh Marri said that the Consortium has provided the member universities with a great opportunity to jointly work on issues of bilateral interest. Dr. Safdar Ali Shah, Director General (CPEC) HEC shared an overview of the activities carried out under the Consortium for the period of November 2018 to October 2019.
Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship Project is a State guardianship for the deprived, as it is responsibility of the State to counter elitism by facilitating people in employment as well as education and health sectors.

This was stated by President Dr. Arif Alvi while addressing the 27th Vice Chancellors Committee meeting held in connection with Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarships. The heads of public sector universities across the country attended the meeting held at HEC Secretariat. Many of them joined through video link from their respective campuses.

Dr. Alvi regretted that students from low income families were forced to quit education after Matriculation or Intermediate due to financial constraints. “If only three per cent of students acquire college education, 97 per cent of the country’s intellect is neglected.” He stressed that the State is responsible for countering elitism by taking such measures at the launch of the Prime Minister’s Ehsaas Programme. Elaborating his own experiences, he highlighted the importance of merit and need-based scholarships in a student’s life. He said it is a major development that provision of educational opportunities to undergraduate students is focused under this project.

The President urged the Vice Chancellors to take a ‘quantum jump’ for enhancement in quality of education in order to make country’s youth productive in terms of provision of service to the society. He stressed the need for ensuring fairness and transparency in the execution of Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship Project.

Appreciating the gender balance maintained in the project, he said it is a social obligation not to let the women’s productivity and contribution to society go waste. He regretted that, according to a report, 80 per cent of women graduating from medical institutions do not work. He advised the University heads to take care of specially-abled students in whatever form they need it.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation Dr. Sania Nishtar said it is imperative to invest in the human capital making the youth technologically skilled to meet the future challenges. She said that these scholarships are part of a much broader effort being made under Ehsaas.

Dr. Nishtar termed the project a paradigm change in the State scholarship policy. She said that Prime Minister Imran Khan is keen that this programme should benefit maximum number of

“Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship Project is a State guardianship for the deprived, as it is responsibility of the State to counter elitism by facilitating people in employment as well as education and health sectors”. President Arif Alvi told the Vice Chancellors and urged them to ensure fairness and transparency in the execution of the Ehsaas Scholarship Project.
Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarships are being awarded to low-income students enrolled in four and five-year undergraduate programmes. Students from low-income families studying in public sector universities are eligible to apply. Selection is made on the basis of the student’s GPA and family income (below a maximum threshold). The scholarship covers tuition fee and a stipend. Fifty per cent of the scholarships are reserved for female students.

students across the country, adding that the Government will allocate more resources for this in the coming years.

Chairman HEC Tariq Banuri underscored that 249 out of 250 students from low income families cannot afford to acquire undergraduate education, so the Government must enhance budget for Ehsaas Scholarships. He informed the gathering that as many as 132,000 students have submitted applications under first phase. The Chairman said the project is the largest-ever undergraduate scholarship initiative of Pakistan. “Our children need our help for gaining access to higher education.”

Dr. Muhammad Ali, Chairman, Vice Chancellors Committee said the Government’s commitment to education is a great source of encouragement to the academic community. He said that the Ehsaas Scholarship Project is a revolutionary and game changing initiative which will promote national prosperity in the days to come. Later, in the question answer session, the Vice Chancellors thanked the Government for this programme and gave some proposals for making it more productive.

Under the Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship Project, scholarships are being awarded to low-income students enrolled in four and five-year undergraduate programmes.

All students from low-income families studying in undergraduate programmes in public sector universities are eligible to apply. Selection is based on need-cum-merit, i.e., on the basis of the student’s GPA and family income (below a maximum threshold). The scholarship covers tuition fee and a stipend.

Fifty per cent of the scholarships are reserved for female students, while students with special needs as well as those from remote and disadvantaged areas are also encouraged to apply.
Mr. Shafqat Mahmood, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training distributed 42 electric wheelchairs to students of 14 public sector universities during a ceremony held at HEC Secretariat. While addressing the ceremony as chief guest, he said we need to play a leadership role and it is government’s responsibility to facilitate special children in transforming their lives.

Tariq Banuri, Chairman HEC, Dr. Fateh Marri, Executive Director, HEC, student recipients of wheelchairs, and their parents, representatives of the universities were also present in the ceremony organised under PM’s Electric Wheelchair Scheme for University Students.

The Minister hoped that all public sector educational institutions would be made inclusive and accessible for special children. He also urged private sector universities to make alteration in their infrastructure to provide more and more opportunities to specially-challenged students.

The parents of specially-challenged students praised the initiative of distributing electric wheelchairs to disabled students with an objective to facilitate them in their mission to complete their higher education. Students said that no previous Government had taken an initiative of providing electric wheelchairs to the specially-challenged students.

Students requested that in all educational institutions, building of ramps and provision of elevators should be made mandatory for facilitating physically-challenged students.

Earlier, briefing on Prime Minister’s Electric Wheelchair Scheme, Muhammad Raza Chohan, Director General HRD, HEC informed the audience that a total of 600 electric wheelchairs are to be distributed in three years duration in all regions of the country. Initially, 208 electric wheelchairs are to be distributed among the university students who had applied under the scheme in the year 2018 and were recommended by the evaluation committees of the public sector universities and HEC’s steering committee.

He informed that electric wheelchair distribution ceremony at HEC Secretariat is the central ceremony while 17 university students were given electric wheelchairs in a distribution ceremony held earlier at Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences, Jamshoro (LUMHS) and in another ceremony held in Chief Minister’s House, Lahore 20 university students were given electric wheelchairs.

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HEC, Southeast University China
Join Hands for Academic Linkages

Both sides will look for ways to advance exchange and collaboration in the fields of education, culture and provide better opportunities for faculty members and students. The activities will include scholarships for Bachelor’s and Master’s programme in identified disciplines, faculty exchange, joint seminars and conferences, student exchange as well as postdoctoral opportunities at SEU.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the Southeast University (SEU), China have signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) to collaborate for academic and research linkages. The document was signed by Dr. Fateh Marri, Executive Director HEC and Prof. Zheng Jiamao, Vice President, SEU during a meeting of Chinese delegation comprising delegates from SEU and China Road and Bridge Corporation with the HEC management.

According to the Letter of Intent, both sides will look for ways to advance collaboration in the fields of education, culture and provide better opportunities for faculty members and students. The activities will include scholarships for Bachelor’s and Master’s programme in identified disciplines, faculty exchange, joint seminars and conferences, student exchange as well as postdoctoral opportunities at SEU.

HEC and CRBC had inked an agreement in October 2017 under which a total of 100 Pakistani Civil Engineers would avail fully funded scholarship to study Masters of Transportation Engineering and its sub fields at SEU. Out of these, 10 Pakistani students have already graduated from SEU while 40 students are currently enrolled and pursuing their studies.

Prof. Dr. Zheng Jiameo, Vice President informed the audience about quality of education at SEU. The Vice President of SEU showed interest for collaboration with HEC and Pakistani universities.

Dr. Marri informed them about the Consortium of Pakistani and Chinese universities and emphasised that this platform should be used for identifying areas where two sides can collaborate at individual as well as institutional levels. Prof. Zheng Jiamao briefed on history, development and distinctions of SEU. He hoped that their visit will open avenues for collaboration between SEU and Pakistani universities. Prof. Liu Zhiyuan of SEU briefed the meeting about the progress of Pakistani students who have either graduated from SEU or currently pursuing their studies.
STUDENT ALERT!

Ensure your MS/MPhil or PhD Programme is approved by HEC

The Higher Education Commission made it mandatory for all higher education institutions across the country to obtain No Objection Certificate (NOC) from HEC prior to launching MS/MPhil or equivalent and PhD Programmes, after November 7, 2013.

Updated lists of all the NOCs issued, till date, to offer MS/MPhil or equivalent and PhD programmes can be checked from www.hec.gov.pk/site/NOC-Issued

All students and parents are advised NOT to take admission in any MS/ MPhil or equivalent as well as PhD programme that is not approved by HEC, since the resultant degrees will NOT be attested by HEC.

It has been noticed that despite clear instructions, some universities are initiating/executing MS/MPhil or equivalent and PhD programmes without obtaining NOC from Quality Assurance Division of HEC in sheer violation of HEC policy.

All relevant stakeholders are hereby informed that from June 1, 2020, no backdated NOC OR one-time attestation cases will be entertained, and the subsequent degrees of programmes launched after this date without HEC approval will not be attested.

All HEIs are advised to submit their complete NOC applications in compliance with the given HEC criteria. NOC guidelines are available at www.hec.gov.pk/site/Criteria-MPhil-Ms-PhD

HEC shall not entertain any incomplete application.

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to boost employment opportunities by transferring industrial knowledge and capacity building in Pakistan which is aimed towards promoting the studies of advanced technologies and adopting the globally renowned university-enterprise cooperation model for course development, training and certification in HEIs.

Currently, 14 Huawei ICT Academies are operational all across Pakistan. These academies have trained around 1800 students and they were given the opportunity to get the internationally recognised ICT certifications.

Huawei offers three levels of certification: Huawei Certified ICT Associate (HCIA), Huawei Certified ICT Professional (HCIP), and Huawei Certified ICT Expert (HCIE). With its leading talent development system and certification standards, Huawei is committed to developing new ICT professionals in the digital era and building a healthy ICT talent ecosystem.

The Huawei ICT Academy is a global education programme which is aimed at promoting the studies of advanced technologies and adopting globally renowned university-enterprise cooperation model for course development, training and certification in the field of information and communication technology by inviting the talent from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the partner countries and institutions.

Huawei ICT Academy programme was launched in Pakistan in 2016 under a Memorandum of Understanding signed between HEC and Huawei Technologies Pakistan Pvt. Ltd.

As per this agreement, Huawei will set up eight new ICT Academies across Pakistan besides upgrading of the four existing ones. These Academies will provide students’ access to the latest ICT Technologies.

Further, it has been agreed that Huawei will bring latest, Cloud, Storage and Security Technologies to these academies which in turn will help the Students to be familiar and certify on the various technologies on offer.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan and Huawei Technologies Pakistan Pvt. Ltd. jointly signed agreement for setting up of ICT Academies in Pakistan. The ceremony was attended by Tariq Banuri, Chairman HEC, Mr. Steven Yi, President, Huawei Middle East and Africa Region, Mr. Charles Yang, President Huawei Middle East Region, CEO, Huawei Pakistan Mr. Saif Chi and other official from both organisations.

A hands-on Training Workshop on Latest Bioinformatics Tools and Technologies in Genomics and Proteomics was organised by Department of Bioinformatics and Computational Biology of the Virtual University, (VU) Islamabad Campus.

The workshop included topics on Structural and Functional Protein Analysis, Analysis of Variations in Whole-Exome Sequencing Data, Protein-Protein Docking and Molecular Dynamic Simulation while all training sessions were conducted as per requirement on systems including both the windows and Linux based trainings.

Dr. Muhammad Tariq Pervez, Head of Department, Bioinformatics and Computational Biology trained the participants on generating, viewing, analysing multiple sequence alignments using MUSCLE and Jalview, analysing physiochemical properties using Protparam, motif analysis using MEME, domain analysis using InterProScan, secondary structure analysis using GOR IV and protein modelling using SWISS Modeler.
The Department of Management Sciences, Isra University Hyderabad organised a training session on Digital Marketing at Isra University Hyderabad.

The facilitator of the session was Fareed Ahmed, CEO Xcl Technology.

The objective of the seminar was to bring awareness about the increasing importance of digital marketing and informing students about the latest trends and techniques of digital marketing. New opportunities were also introduced to them with an additional incentive of an open invitation for the fresh graduates to work with Xcl technology.

The Seminar was conducted by Mr. Farid Ghori, CTO, Osmani Group of Companies along with different members of Hyderabad Freelancers Association (HFA).

The resource person said that Pakistan is ranked fourth in freelancing globally and these opportunities are generating 0.5 billion revenue with 47% growth.

He discussed different areas of freelancing opportunities and explained the ways of how to get in desired freelancing areas.

The objective of this mentoring seminar was to introduce various ways of freelancing for all students in general and computing students.

The ultimate goal of conducting this seminar was to motivate students to bring forward their skills that are in demand by industry and to facilitate their way into the international freelancing job market.
The Department of Parasitology, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) Lahore in collaboration with Pakistan Society of Parasitology (PSP) organised an International Conference on Food Safety through Parasite Control.

The aim of the Conference was to bring together veterinary and medical practitioners, parasitologists, researchers, postgraduate students and professionals regarding Food Safety through Parasite Control with the latest research, trends and innovative knowledge.

Moreover, in the sidelines of the conference four technical scientific sessions, 32 oral, 40 poster presentations and four pre-conference workshops on different topics were also organised.

The conference covered all major areas related to diagnostics, chemoprophylaxis, anti-parasitic and vaccines of parasites, zoonotic parasitic diseases and vector borne disease, role of veterinarians under one-health concept epidemiology and integrated pest management, etc.

Dr. Masood Rabbani, Vice Chancellor, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS), Lahore and Dr. Yaghoub Mohamadifar, President Bu-Ali Sina University, Iran signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance cooperation in scientific and educational exchanges.

Both institutions will exchange faculty, student, non-academic staff and researchers for conferences, seminars, research activities, training courses, and tutoring for degree thesis.

Both sides will also exchange publications and scientific-informative material related to specific fields with each other. The universities will also jointly organise advanced study courses, seminars, research activities and training courses for the benefit of academics and students of both sides.
The 6th International Conference on Aerospace Science and Engineering (ICASE) was organised by the Institute of Space Technology (IST).

ICASE 2019 provided a forum to scientists, engineers, researchers, professionals and students to interact and discuss the latest themes and trends related with space science, technology and its applications. It also provided a platform to share experiences, foster collaborations across industry and academia, and to evaluate emerging aerospace technologies and developments across the globe.


A total of 85 research papers were presented in the Conference along with 12 poster presentations. There were 23 technical sessions during the Conference covering different themes and tracks related with aerospace science and engineering.

In addition, there were seven plenary sessions, nine panel discussions, and 12 workshops sessions in connection with Conference themes.

A spectrum of over 40 national and international invited speakers from 17 countries namely USA, Canada, Spain, France, Austria, Finland, Serbia, Turkey, China, Jordan, Oman, Sudan, UAE, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Malaysia and Pakistan shared their research accomplishments with the academicians, researchers and students.

The National Computing Education Accreditation Council (NCEAC) recently organised a meeting to discuss industry-academia collaboration at HEC Secretariat in Islamabad.

Representatives from academia and industry joined the session and discussed various aspects of mutual cooperation. The meeting was a brainstorming session for improving industry-academia collaboration and linkages. It was a good effort to engage industry personnel in academia so that skills of the graduating students may be developed as per industrial requirements.

It was further discussed that collaboration among academia and industry would be effective to engage faculty members in specialised fields like Artificial Intelligence, Deep Learning, Data Mining and Cyber Security as required by the relevant industry.
Pakistani Students Win 3rd Position in APSCO Microsatellite Contest

A team of Pakistani students won 3rd prize in Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) Microsatellite Contest which was held at Northwestern Polytechnical University (NPU), Xi’an China. The theme of the APSCO Microsatellite Contest was Using Space Peacefully, Exploring the Vast Universe, Realizing the Common Dream of Mankind.

As many as 35 teams from nine countries including Russia, China, Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Thailand, Bangladesh, Peru and Mongolia had submitted their work for the first round. After the first round, 24 teams were shortlisted for the final round including two teams of Pakistani students. The team who won 3rd prize in the competition was led by Muhammad Basit Chohan from Institute of Space Technology (IST), Islamabad. Other team members were Zain Ullah Khan from Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS), Quetta and Ghayyas Latif from Government College University (GCU), Lahore. The team was supervised by Mr. Muhammad Noman from Space System Lab (SSL) of IST.

The Pakistani students worked on the platform design of 3U CubeSat and proposed an innovative platform with more power and space available for the payload as compared to commercially available platforms. An innovative deployment scheme for solar panels was also proposed by Muhammad Basit Chohan.

SZABIST holds 16th Convocation

The 16th Convocation of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST) Karachi was held recently. Mr. Saleem Mandviwalla, Deputy Chairman, Senate of Pakistan was the chief guest. Degrees were conferred to 1163 students including seven PhD students from disciplines of Management Sciences, Social Sciences, Education, Media Sciences, Biosciences, Mechatronic Engineering and Computer Science.
Pakistan Institute of Fashion Design (PIFD), Lahore participated in the Islamabad Art Festival 2019 (IAF 19) to showcase creative endeavours of its faculty and students.

The 13-day long international festival, featuring artists from 34 countries, was organised with an aim to bring Pakistan’s vibrant young artists’ innovative and energetic spirit in close contact with international artistic activity to explore cross fertilisation of ideas, concerns and challenges. The thematic focus of IAF-19 was Dialogue between Tradition and Modernity.

Mr. Umer Hameed, Course Coordinator, Foundation Year Studies, PIFD curated and installed the students’ work entitled Perfect/Imperfect at the festival with team members Ms. Mahrukh Malik and Mr. Amaar Bangash.


The Conference received research papers from universities in Pakistan as well as international contributions from UK, Korea, China, Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia. Other activities included technical workshops for students and Pitch2Shine Competition to select promising students’ projects to be incubated at the newly established Technology Innovation and Business Incubation Centre (TIBIC) at KIET.

The Institute of Business Management (IoBM) held its 22nd convocation, conferring degrees to over 1100 graduates in Business Management and other disciplines. Mr. Shahzad Dada, CEO Standard Chartered Bank was the keynote speaker of the ceremony.

Mr. Dada said it is heartening to see that 12 female students received gold medals out of the 14 recipients. He emphasised the need for men and women to work for the progress of Pakistan.

He discussed four important things: to have a sense of purpose, accept the benefits of failure, remain positive and show kindness and compassion. He advised the students to work for the less-privileged people and help them uplift their lives.
Students and parents are cautioned not to get admission in the universities/DAIs wherein admissions are banned due to various irregularities as mentioned on HEC website.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) recognises degrees of chartered universities/institutions from public and private sector in Pakistan along with their approved campuses as mentioned at following website links.

**List of Recognised Universities/Institutions**

[hec.gov.pk/site/HEIs](http://hec.gov.pk/site/HEIs)

**List of Recognised Campuses of Public and Private Sector Institutions**

[hec.gov.pk/site/recognizedcampuses](http://hec.gov.pk/site/recognizedcampuses)

**List of Illegal/Fake Institutions**

[hec.gov.pk/site/IllegaL-DAIs](http://hec.gov.pk/site/IllegaL-DAIs)

Any other university/institution which is not listed among HEC recognised universities or campuses available at HEC website will not be considered a recognised institution.

Students and their parents are advised to verify legal status of the university/institution or its campus from the above-mentioned links. Students are advised NOT to take admissions in those institutions which are not listed among HEC recognised universities/institutions/campuses. Degrees obtained from non-recognised institutions/campuses will not be recognised.

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