



GCU Quarterly

Vol.5: Issue III & IV, 2017

July - December, 2017

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GCU to Shift on Energy-Efficient Appliances

Government College University Lahore is the first university in the Punjab to shift to energy-efficient appliances, as the Punjab Energy Efficiency and Conservation Agency (PEECA) selected the 153 years old educational institution for the pilot project of its Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programme.

Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah, Vice Chancellor GCU and Managing Director PEECA signed a 15-point pilot-project agreement. According to the agreement, the agency would retrofit the University's energy inefficient appliances by replacing them with energy efficient appliances. The PEECA would replace 6,500 lights, 440 ACs, and 2,400 fans on the main campus of GCU.

The MD PEECA said that they had conducted a detailed energy audit of the University, and replacement of energy inefficient lights, fans and air-conditioner would substantially reduce its energy consumption. He mentioned that in the second phase, the PEECA would install the solar panels on public buildings in the Punjab, and GCU would be their top priority for this project as well. Mr. Adnan Mudassar believed that the PEECA projects were aimed at promoting energy conservation, reducing burden on the national grid and developing energy audit culture in the Punjab.

The Vice Chancellor appreciated the PEECA initiatives and mentioned that the project would reduce the university's electricity bill and generators' fuel expenses. He stated that GCU would share a monthly progress report with the PEECA illustrating energy savings of the project and energy performance for a period of two year to evaluate the success of the project. Mr. Saboor Ahmad Khan, Registrar GCU, Director Planning and Development and Programme Manager PEECA also attended the agreement signing ceremony at the University's Syndicate Room.



Businessman Donates to GCU-EFT

An eminent businessman, Bao Muhammad Bashir, donated Rs. 0.5 million to the Government College University Endowment Fund Trust (GCU-EFT) for initiating a perpetual silver scholarship for the financially challenged students. The scholarship would be given to a deserving student every year on merit. Bao Muhammad Bashir handed over the donation cheque to the Vice Chancellor GCU.

On the occasion, Bao Muhammad Bashir said that he had great trust in working of GCU and its Endowment Fund. He pledged to donate silver scholarship every year. Prof. Butt said that GCU is the only public sector university in Pakistan which has an active endowment fund giving scholarships to the deserving students.



GCU Receives the Prof. M. Rashid Literary Collections

The family of the late Prof. M. Rashid donated his personal library and literary collections to the Government College University Lahore at a gracefully ceremony. Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah, the Vice Chancellor, Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, Prof. Zafar Rashid, son of Prof. M. Rashid, the former Principal of Government College Lahore, graced the occasion.

Prof. M. Rashid also served GC as Head of Department of Economics before his appointment as the Principal of the College. Prof. Zafar Rashid, who is also Old Ravian, donated all his personal collections including books and literary journals of his father to GCU Library.

The Vice Chancellor stated that GCU housed personal libraries of fifty-five reputed literary personalities. He added that more than 150,000 books had been donated to GCU till to-date. He expressed gratitude to the family of Prof. M. Rashid for the valuable donation to the University.

Prof. Zafar Rashid shared the personal memories of his late father as the Principal of the college. He also appreciated the role of GCU Library in making serious efforts to meet the needs of the GCU students.

Senior Librarian, Mr. Muhammad Naeem mentioned that Prof. M. Rashid collection included some of very old and unique books which were not easily available now days. He said that these books should be utilized for the reference purpose only as per policy.



Report on Poverty in South Asia Launched at GCU

A report on poverty eradication was launched by the South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE) in collaboration with Labor Education Foundation and Simorgh at GCU Lahore. The report was titled as "South Asia and the Future of Pro-People Development: The Centrality of Social Justice and Equality".

The report argues that the South Asia covers 22 per cent of the world's population compared to only 1.3% of the world's income. The idea that market will correct imbalances through demand and supply, led to the gradual withdrawal of the state from providing services like education and health. Depleting investment and state support resulted in a crisis in agriculture, compromising food security and farmer's livelihood. Growing informalisation of labour added on to the misery of the people.

A number of economic experts and academics including one from Nepal attended the poverty report's launching ceremony. The Vice Chancellor GCU Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah graced the occasion.

Mr. Farooq Tariq, co-lead editor of the report and the general secretary, Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee introduced the report and focused on the challenges that poverty had declined in the eight South Asian countries. The report deliberated new measures of poverty, constitutionalism, the crisis of governance, and the dismantling of the welfare state. The two leading questions addressed in the report are the nature of economic growth and the widening of inequality, with an emphasis on growth through justice and not mere growth with justice.

Dr. Padma Prasad Khatiwada, Associate Professor Population Studies, Tribhuvan University (Kathmandu, Nepal) said that market glorification had multiplied people misery in South Asia. Dr. Khatiwada stated that poverty paved the way for feudal and fundamentalist forces to grow and the corporate sector to plunder the common resources in the region. She highlighted the failure of the state in



addressing popular discontents around basic social security concerns which had strengthened the fundamentalist ideas in all South Asian countries, breeding the “us versus them” narrative.

The Panelists, Mr. Karamat Ali, founding member of PILER, Dr. Faisal Bari Associate Professor of Economics at LUMS and CEO IDEAS, Dr. Kaiser Bengali Advisor to Government of Sindh and Dr. Rubina Saigol, an Independent Researcher initially evaluated the discussion. Mr. Karamat Ali revealed that more than sixty percent of the world poor lived in South Asia with similar orders of magnitude for child labour and bonded labour. He spoke of the arms race and militarization that had become a curse in South Asia and a major hindrance in addressing issues of social security of the poor in this part of the world.

Dr. Faisal Bari spoke on education issues and mentioned that the state has failed to provide education for all, and the private sector is partially filling that void. A minimum of 40 percent of the school-going children were enrolled in private schools with that percentage going up to 70% for urban areas. The school system rather than being a unifying force was dividing our future generations. He made a comparison of English medium with Urdu medium schools along with their different world views, dreams and aspirations.

Dr. Rubina Saigol spoke about the incidence of poverty among women, and the factors that contribute to raise the poverty and marginalization. She elaborated the issues such as lack of land ownership, unequal work value and the glass ceiling at workplace, unequal access to public services, patriarchal bias and social exclusion.

Dr. Kaiser Bengali focused on the contributions of the late Z.A. Bhutto to empower the workers and peasants by giving them self-respect and dignity. He stated that Pakistan was a developmental state till 1977 and had become a security state since then. He also highlighted the nature of Foreign Direct Investment which was concentrated in the services sector thus leading to growth of unemployment.

The session was concluded by Prof. Dr. Anjum Nasim – Mahbub ul Haq Chair, Department of Economics at GCU. He agreed on the broad conclusion of the report that poverty and marginalization were multidimensional and cannot be resolved with only high growth rates. However, he was skeptical about some of the conclusions of the report, especially with the point that poverty had increased in South Asia. He was of the view that working with a market-based system and using instruments of tax and expenditure for redistribution is a more viable solution than statism and types of expenditure cuts proposed in the report.



GCU Celebrates the Independence Day

The faculty and staff members of Government College University Lahore celebrated the 70th Independence Day of Pakistan with the traditional verve, and prayed for peace and prosperity in the country. At the flag-hoisting ceremony at the Bukhari Auditorium, Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah, the Vice Chancellor laid stress on strengthening the national institutions of the country. He mentioned that Pakistan was the sixth largest country in the world by population, but unfortunately it is far below in the list of countries in socioeconomic indicators. He emphasized that 70 years journey of the country had not been smooth and still it is facing multiple challenges on political, geographical, social and especially on economic fronts. The Vice Chancellor reiterated the commitment that the faculty members, staff and students of the University should endeavor for the development of country in the realm of research and education. Earlier, the Vice Chancellor along with academic heads hoisted the national flag in GCU Bukhari Auditorium. The celebrations were enhanced with the renditions of national songs by the GCU Nazir Ahmed Music Society.



GCU Stood 5th among Public Sector Universities by Times Higher Education

The Government College University this year for the first time has made it to the Times Higher Education World University Ranking; stood fifth among all the public sector universities in Pakistan and 1001+ internationally. According to the official announcement by the Times Higher Education, the GCU Lahore's strongest pillar was its International Outlook, while the weakest pillar was the Industry income. The University was ranked at 683rd among all the world universities on the basis of its International Outlook.

Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah, the Vice Chancellor said that in addition to giving international recognition, these rankings helped universities in understanding their weak and strong areas. He mentioned that unfortunately the industry in Pakistan had not yet developed an aptitude to invest in research and innovation, which was the major reason for the gap between academia and industry.

A detailed presentation on both National & International ranking was given by Director Quality Enhancement Cell during a meeting chaired by the Vice Chancellor and attended by Deans, Chairpersons and Administrative heads. The ranking parameter and performance indicators were discussed in detail. The Vice Chancellor appreciated the QEC for elaborated presentation.

Condolence Reference

A condolence reference was held at GCU at the sad demise of Dr. Jaffer Hussain, former Incharge of Department of Statistics, who passed away at the age of 42. Dr. Hussain was awarded doctor of philosophy (PhD) degree in Statistics last year from GCU. He left behind a widow and two children.

The Vice Chancellor, Deans, all senior faculty members, staff of the university and the bereaved family attended the condolence reference. The Vice Chancellor said that Dr. Jaffer Hussain was an honest, dedicated and hard-working teacher and colleague, and his services for the University would always be remembered. He mentioned that void created by his demise in the Department could never be filled. "I tender my sincere sympathy to his children who had lost their father, who was an honest and dedicated person. I wish them success in life, and our doors are always open for them for every kind of help, assistance or guidance".



GCU Debating Society wins 307 Oratory Awards

The Debating Society of Government College University (GCUDS) has set an unprecedented national record by clinching a total of 307 trophies at various national competitions during the academic session 2016-17. The record includes 53 team trophies, 15 runners-up trophies, 100 best speaker awards, 73 second positions, 61 third positions and 05 consolation prizes at various Declamation, Parliamentary Style Debates, Model United Nations, Recitation and Poetry contests in English, Urdu, Pashto and Punjabi languages.

The annual report was presented to the Vice Chancellor by GCUDS. During last academic year, the GCUDC won almost all major parliamentary tournaments in Urdu category including FCC, Kinnaird College, LUMS and Shahjiwana. In English category, GCU lifted the team trophies at PIEAS, RMC, FAST and Kinnaird College. The high achievers in parliamentary style debates included Raza Aftab Gillani, Hassan Qadeer Butt, Muhammad Shareef, Hamza Abbas, Hamid Riaz, Shahkar Ali Bukhari, Mudabbir Ali and Abdullah Cheema.

In Declamation, GCU orators won the team trophies at Sadiq Public School Bahawalpur, COMSATS, Army Burn Hall College Abbottabad, Lahore College for Women University, Scouts Cadet College Batrasi KP and many others. According to the report, the speakers who excelled in Declamation included Mohiba Ahmed, Saad Khan, Kafeel Rana, Zain Ul Hassan, Arslan Daultana, Ali Zar, Haris Ali Virk, Abdul Raheem Virk, Zohaib Alam, Shehr Bano, Harram Malik, Daniyal Haider, Salman



Sikander, Abdullah Mohsin, Bilal Ahmed, Hassaan Bin Irshad and Mohsin Ahmed.

The Ravian poets Usama Zoraiz, Muhammad Ali Zahir, Fahad Mehmood Sokhta, Kafeel Rana and Zohaib Alam won various poetry contests. Hafiz Amir, Zahid Hussain and Muhammad Sharjeel stood victorious in different Naat and Qiraat competitions across the country. In different Model United Nations debates, Rabia Javed, Saqib Yaqoob, Mukarram Ghafoor, Huzafa Ali, Sarmad Wali, Hannan Asghar and Sarmad Bukhari won several prizes.

The Vice Chancellor congratulated the Ravian orators on their excellent performance in the national debating competitions.

GCU Signs MOU with PSQCA to Promote Awareness and Research about Quality Control

The Government College University Lahore and Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote research and awareness about quality control in the country. Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah, the Vice Chancellor and Muhammad Khalid Siddiq, Director General PSQCA signed the 13-point accord organized by the office of Academic Planning and External Links at GCU.

The agreement envisages that PSQCA would provide all technical assistance to GCU in establishing the Standardization, Quality and Technology Management Wing, and developing quality control education programs. The PSQCA would also include the senior faculty members and scientists of GCU in its technical committees for different products evaluation.

The Director General PSQCA highlighted the need to include subjects related to quality control in the University's curriculum, saying that they were going to sign an agreement with the Pakistan Engineering Council in this regard. He said that PSQCA had adopted 22,368 standards for different products. He stated that they were looking forward to universities for research & development.

The PSQCA and GCU agreed to undertake joint research projects in the areas of common interests by sharing their human and material resources including instruments, services and facilities. Both organizations would also hold joint seminars to promote awareness among youth about the quality control.

The Vice Chancellor laid a stress on PSQCA to focus on the food products. He briefed the delegates about the history, traditions and achievements of GCU, besides the research work being carried out by the faculty members. Ms. Fouzia Shaheen, Director Academic Planning and External Links mentioned that a joint working group would be formed to regularly review the implementation of agreement and collaborative activities.





Cancer Awareness Drive at GCU

Pink Ribbon Youth Awareness Drive was held at Government College University (GCU) Lahore to raise awareness among the university's female students and staff members about the breast cancer and eliminate social stigmas attached to this disease.

On the opening ceremony, the Director Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) Ms. Iram Sohail said that about 9.8 million women in Pakistan are at the risk of cancer, but unfortunately there is not much awareness in our society about this dreadful disease. "It is still considered a taboo in most parts of our society to talk about this cancer which affects every one out of nine women in the society. Even girls are neat reluctant to talk to their mothers about such diseases, that is why there is need of awareness campaigns on a massive scale," she mentioned.

The day long awareness drive was organized by the QEC department in collaboration with the Pink Ribbon Pakistan. It included an art festival which was followed by an awareness walk led by the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah, Director Facilities Mr. Yousaf Bashir and Ms. Iram Sohail from the University's Clock Tower to the Girls Cafeteria.

On the occasion, the Vice Chancellor said that GCU's mission is to empower its students, especially the female students, with the knowledge about their health issues and techniques to adopt an active and healthy lifestyle. He said that due to higher number of risk of breast cancer students must work as active volunteers and educate their family members and others in their surroundings above this dreadful disease.

Awareness pamphlets were also distributed among the students to make them aware about precautions, early detection methods, and treatment for the breast carcinoma.

The postcards with awareness messages made by GCU students from department of Fine Arts, were also put on display outside the office of the Vice Chancellor to sensitize the students to support Pink Ribbon awareness drive for saving thousands of women dying from the Breast Cancer every year in Pakistan.



Thalassemia Awareness Seminar Organized at GCU

The speakers at seminar highlighted the lack of awareness in Pakistan about a grievous genetic blood disorder, Thalassemia, and called upon the government to take effective measures for compulsory pre-marriages blood screening test of couples for thalassemia before entering into wedlock. The seminar was organized by the Blood Donor Society of GC University (GCU-BDS) in collaboration with a non-government organization (NGO), Kashif Iqbal Thalassemia Care Centre (KITCC), at Fazl-e-Hussain Reading Room of the University.

Mr. Asif Hameed Butt, Punjab coordinator KITCC said that Thalassemia minor or carrier is not a disease and normally does not require any medical treatment. However, when one carrier marries another; they could have a chance of having an offspring with thalassemia major which is dreadful and fatal. Mr. Butt mentioned that there were more than 17.6 million Thalassemia carriers in Pakistan, but only a handful of them had knowledge about this genetic disorder. He shared the conclusion of a survey conducted in a leading university of Pakistan which was very astonishing for them. The survey indicated that out of 800 students only one student had got his blood screened for thalassemia and majority of students had no knowledge about this disorder. "The ratio of Thalassemia carriers is high in families where cousin marriages are common," he added. In reply to a question, the KITCC coordinator said that about seven thousands new cases of children's birth with Thalassemia major are reported every year in Pakistan.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah mentioned that prevention was the best solution, as thalassemia child with an average life expectancy of 12-16 years in Pakistan had a very difficult and painful life to live. "In order to survive, these children require regular monthly blood transfusions and chelation therapy to withdraw excessive iron from their bodies. An estimated sum of Rs. 180,000 is required for each child per annum, whereas bone marrow transplant, which is the only permanent treatment and has low success rate, costs millions of rupees."

The Vice Chancellor advised the students to act as volunteers in their families and areas, and raise awareness about this genetic disorder. "Students must use their social media accounts for spreading such positive messages instead of expressing negative thoughts."

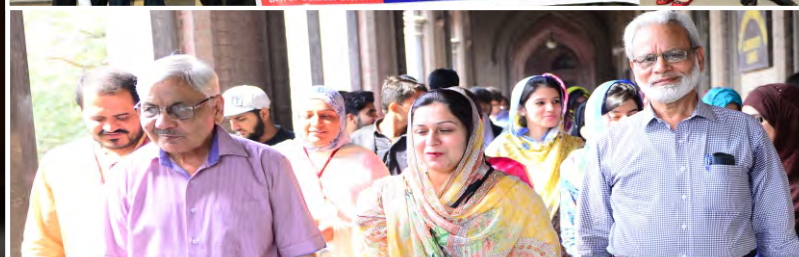
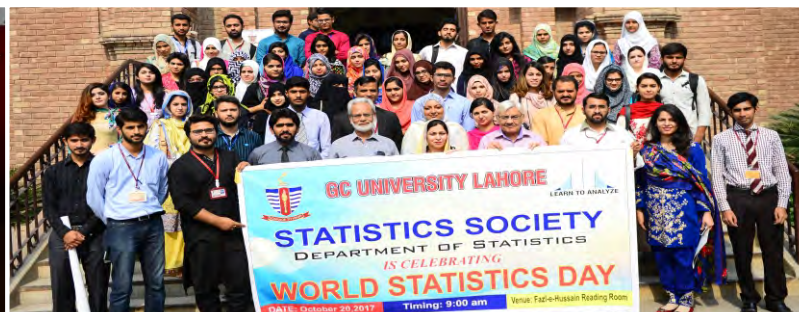
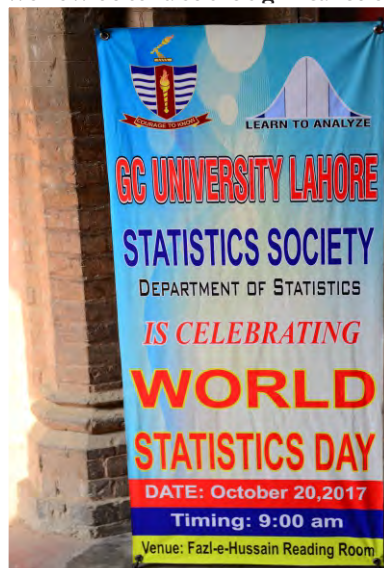
GCU-BDS Advisor also spoke at the seminar and encouraged the students to go for blood screening test for thalassemia. He told the students that many sportsmen and celebrities in the world including Indian actor Amitabh Bachchan and Pakistani singer Abrar-ul-Haq are thalassemia carriers.

The seminar was followed by free camp where students of GCU were screened for Thalassemia minor.

GCU Celebrates World Statistics Day

The Government College University Lahore Statistics Society celebrated the World Statistics Day by holding a seminar, poster competition and an on-campus walk for the awareness of students. The university's senior faculty members led the walk from the Postgraduate Block to Main Building to highlight the importance of statistics in the light of the fact that humans are living through a data revolution which is changing their world.

On the seminar, Dr. Kashif Ali Shah mentioned that better statistics meant better decisions and better lives. He told the students that United Nations Statistical Commission celebrated World Statistics Day for the first time on October 20, 2010 worldwide to raise the significance of this field.



GCU Holds Quadri-Lingual Debates Competition

The Government College University Debating Society (GCU-DS) held a two-day quadri-lingual debates competition in Pashto, Punjabi, Urdu and English. The president GCU-DS Mohiba Ahmed chaired the two-day debates. The objective of the debates was to develop leadership qualities, ability to think and speak clearly & intelligently show and tolerance towards faith, beliefs, practices and attitudes among students. Students from 26 academic departments of the university showed their oratory skills on different topics including “you never be overdressed or overeducated” and “the revival of student politics will negatively impact education in Pakistan”.

In English Debates, Abdul Hannan Mir from Department of Economics secured the first position, while Abdullah Mohsin and Shahrukh Baig from Department of English secured second and third positions respectively. Romaisha Tauseef from Department of Psychology won the English humorous debates.

In Punjabi debates, Sultan Altamash and Abdullah Jameel from Political Science clinched the first and third positions, while Tauseef Mehmood from Urdu was adjudicated the second position. Farhan Khan, Fazal Hadi and Nida Khattak were declared first, second and third in the Pashto Debates. The Urdu debates were clean swept by the students of Department of English, as its students Amna Ghafoor, Abdullah Cheema and Haris Ali Virk won the first, second and third positions respectively.

In Urdu humorous category, Intermediate students Sultan Faiz and Abdullah Zahid grabbed the first and third positions, while Hafiz Umer from Political Science stood second.



Balochistan Residential College Khuzdar, Students Visit GCU

A delegation of 40 students from Balochistan Residential College (BRC), Khuzdar, Balochistan visited the Government College University on a study tour. The delegation was headed by the senior faculty member Prof. Mattiur Rehman of BRC who visited various academic departments of GCU.

Addressing the students, GCU Director Sports Mr. Khadim Ali Khan said that we are all Pakistanis and we have to serve and protect our country without considering our castes, sects and personal interests. He mentioned that GCU had produced countless legendry personalities, including Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Nobel Prize winner Dr. Abdus Salam and most of the scientists who carried out nuclear tests and designed missile system also belonged to this institution.

The students also visited the Library, Sports Complex and Naqoosh Museum. They termed that the visit was very beneficial for their studies and they learned a lot from the teacher and students of GCU. They also lauded the discipline of the students of GC University.



Seminar on Awareness of “Breast Cancer” Organized at GCU

Speakers at the seminar at Government College University have cautioned that there is frightening increase in the ratio of breast cancer in young girls in Pakistan due to inappropriate diet and unhealthy lifestyles. The seminar was organized by the University's Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) in collaboration with the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre (SKMCH&RC).

The Clinical oncologist Dr. Kashifa Ehsan pointed out that the situation is getting critical every year, and the only key to survival from this fatal disease is early detection. She dispelled the impression that only married women or women in middle ages were the victim of breast cancer, even young girls must have knowledge about their self-examination methods. “It's rare but there are chances of developing this disease in men and hundreds of such cases have been reported throughout the world” Dr Ehsan

added.

The Director QEC Ms. Iram Sohail said that the month of October was marked in countries across the world as breast cancer awareness month for early detection and treatment and also as palliative care of the disease. She mentioned that breast cancer was the most common cancer in women worldwide and the incidence was rising up steadily every year due to increase in life expectancy, urbanization and adoption of western lifestyles. The Director stated that currently, there was not sufficient knowledge of breast cancer in Pakistan; therefore, more awareness campaigns were needed at the national level. She believed that the breast cancer was not fatal; rather it was ignorance which made it fatal and early detection can result in survival rate of up to 90 per cent.

The clinical oncologist and experts briefed the female students about the signs & symptoms of breast cancer and methods of self-examination. In reply to a question, the clinical oncologist said that all women are at risk of developing breast cancer, while the factor that put some women at greater risk is family history of breast cancer. The Director Marketing SKMCH&RC Ms. Naila Khan also addressed the seminar.



Seminar on Seventy Years of Pakistan at GCU

A seminar titled “Seventy years of Pakistan” was held at Government College University under the auspices of its Department of History to deliberate upon the economic and political journey of the country. The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah chaired the seminar which was also addressed by eminent historian Prof. Dr. Tahir Kamran and renowned economist Prof. Dr. Anjum Nasim.

On the occasion, Prof. Tahir Kamran, the former Iqbal fellow at University of Cambridge, United Kingdom said that the 70-year history of Pakistan was indeed chequered. He stated that Political instability leading to military intervention, sectarian animosity; external threats and a fledgling economy have repeatedly created hurdles in Pakistan's progress as a modern, sovereign nation-state. However, Prof. Kamran believed, that events in the past ten years had indicated unprecedented maturity on the part of various stakeholders. Political upheaval now does not result in investors rushing to eject capital from the economy or the threat of the democratic and parliamentary system being wrapped up. Instead, political actors show the maturity originally exhibited by Jinnah in capturing a limited political space in the colonial dispensation and then continually vied to extend its remit.”

Prof Kamran stressed that state education policies were currently skewed towards the natural sciences and state patronage of social scientists and academics associated with progressive field would definitely help spreading the new discourse. The necessity of studying science cannot be underestimated, undoubtedly, but when a state implements policies that are visibly favouring one sphere of study over other(s), this creates a cleavage in the sources of knowledge production in society.

Dr. Anjum Nasim, the Professor on Mehboobul Haq Chair at GCU said that in absolute terms, Pakistan had no doubt shown some economic progress since its inception in 1947, but comparing Pakistan with neighbouring countries, which were not very different from Pakistan at the time of independence such as China, India and Sri Lanka, the performance looked no longer that



impressive. He stated that suggestions that Pakistan should be focusing on a growth model that emphasizes productivity growth rather than focusing on brick and mortar should be non-controversial. Investment in human capital, in schools, colleges and universities, in research and innovation, requires a resource commitment on the part of the government and society. Places like GCU could be the intellectual hub and the incubators of a new generation of Pakistanis who are innovative and entrepreneurial, hardworking and committed, thoughtful and caring, and who lead us into the next 70 years.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah in his concluding remarks stated that the biggest challenge for Pakistan is its population, which had increased five times since 1947, and most of their economic achievements were offset by this huge increase in population. He asked the students to remain mindful of new ideological tendencies related to militancy and extremism which had taken over Pakistan in the last few years. He expressed gratitude to the speakers for providing a very insightful view of 70 years of Pakistan, saying that sometimes the young generations tend to think that there were only gloom and doom, but, he hoped that after listening to Prof. Nasim and Prof. Kamran, they would realize that there were achievements and rays of hope as well.



PARB Awards RS 21.9M Project to GCU for Improvement in Nutritive value of Crops

The Punjab Agriculture Research Board (PARB) has awarded Rs. 21.9 million for research project to Government College University (GCU). The award was given to SDSC for cost effective improvement in nutritive value of rice and wheat crops through nanoparticles adopted biochar in saline-sodic soils. Punjab Agricultural Minister Mr. Muhammad Naeem Akhtar Khan Bhabha handed over the cheque of six million rupees as first instalment to Dr. Waqas-ud-Din Khan, the Project Manager and Assistant Professor, GCU Lahore at graceful ceremony at the PARB office. Chief Executive PARB Dr. Noor ul Islam and GCU Director Research Prof. Dr. Ikram ul Haq were also present.

Dr. Waqas-ud-Din Khan said wheat was a major cereal crop of Punjab province growing on a large area of 9.26 million, with 25.48 million tonnes of production. Therefore, it has a significant potential to secure food availability for increasing population. However, in Pakistan, 6.3 million hectare land is saline-sodic. If this saline-sodic area is brought under wheat cultivation, additionally 8.6 million tons of wheat production would be expected, while considering 50% yield reduction in these poor soils. Due to reduced organic contents in rice-wheat zones of Punjab soils, low fertilizer use efficiency is the major constraint and burden on local farming community especially in economic terms. Interestingly, Dr. Khan stated that the farmer desired higher crop yield with minimum expenditure. This project would benefit the farmers' community through availability of a novel nanoparticles enriched organic product which will not only enhance the soil fertility but also a cost-effective option in terms of application rate, labour and transportation.

Dr. Khan mentioned that iron nanoparticles enriched biochar was only option available in the market by an Australian company. But, now in Pakistan, the development of zinc, iron and composite nanoparticles doped biochar could provide an opportunity to make an excellent organic product which may be a huge landmark in quantitative terms for all the agencies involved in this project.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah congratulated the SDSC on winning the project, saying that young faculty must be encouraged and devoted to win more research projects. As research projects are the backbone of the University, Dr. Waqas has set a great trend for young faculty members to come forward with innovative ideas and win big grants from different funding agencies.

GCU Signs MOU with NCP for Research Collaboration

A memorandum of understanding was signed between National Centre for Physics (NCP), Islamabad and Government College University (GCU), Lahore for research collaboration. The Director General NCP Prof. Dr. Hafeez R. Hoorani and the Vice Chancellor GCU Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah signed eight-point accord at a graceful ceremony, organized by the Directorate of Academic Planning and External Link (AP&EL) GCU at the Syndicate Room of the University.

In the opening comments, Director AP&EL Ms. Fouzia Shahin highlighted the scope of collaboration included enhanced utilization of NCP science equipment by GCU researchers, exchange of experts for technical and scientific trainings, sharing of research data, archives and publications, and cooperation for scientific research on projects of national interests. She stated that the MoU would also create possibilities for researchers from GCU to work at NCP Islamabad.

Prof. Hafeez said that NCP Islamabad was a national user facility for people who had sound knowledge and expertise in Physics and allied disciplines. He mentioned that the Center had scientific cooperation agreements with several international centers including ICTP, SESAME, ALS, CERN and KRISS. He proudly shared the achievements and role of Pakistani physicists in different scientific inventions and innovations.

The Vice Chancellor praised the role of NCP in promotion of research in the fields of physics and breaking the isolation of Pakistani researchers from international scientific community and to establish linkages among academia, industry and research institutes for the intellectual growth.

The Head of Laser Plasma Physics at NCP, Dr. Muhammad Aslam Baig, Director Collaborations and Academic Activities Dr. Riffat Muhammad Qureshi, Director TDP Dr. Mohsin Siddique, GCU deans Prof. Islam Ullah Khan and Prof. Dr. Raiz Ahmad, Professor Salam Chair in Physics Dr. G. Murtaza and Registrar Mr. Saboor Khan also attended the MoU signing ceremony.

The GCU Lahore and NCP Islamabad also agreed to hold joint international conferences, workshops, seminars and invited talks for promotion of research in Physics and allied disciplines.



University of Kent, UK Dean Visits GCU

Dr. Anthony Manning, Dean for Internationalization from University of Kent, United Kingdom visited the Government College University to explore the possibilities for research and academic collaboration. Dr. Manning met the GCU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah and discussed the bilateral cooperation in the areas of student and staff exchange, joint research projects, dual degree programmes and scholarship opportunities for Pakistani students in UK. GCU Dean Faculty of Engineering Prof. Dr. Raiz Ahmed, Dean Faculty of Languages Prof. Dr. Iqbal Shahid, Academic Planning and External Links Director Ms. Fouzia Shaheen, Assistant Director Ms. Ammarah Batool, and Country Advisor University of Kent Mr. Saad Wasim also attended the meeting.

On the occasion, Dr. Manning mentioned that the University of Kent is ranked among the top 20 universities of UK. The University was offering five dedicated scholarships of £20,000 to academically outstanding Pakistani students for postgraduate programmes in the fields of Science, Computing, Engineering and Digital Arts, Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science. He hoped that GCU students would actively contest for the scholarships. Dr. Manning also showed keen interest in the joint research projects with GCU faculty in the fields of Biotechnology, Physics, Mathematics, History, English Literature and Psychology.

The Vice Chancellor briefed the visiting dean about the University's ongoing research projects, international linkages and recently launched international Split PhD programme by Punjab Higher Education Commission for GCU students. He also invited the senior faculty members of University of Kent for conducting short-term training workshops for the faculty of GCU.





GCU Student Wins Squash Junior Championship

Haris Qasim, a student of pre-engineering at Government College University has won “All Pakistan Squash Junior Championship 2017” organized by the Racket Sports Trust Pakistan at Punjab Squash Complex Lahore. Haris Qasim beat Pakistan No. 1 in under-17 category, Uzair Shaukat from Peshawar, by 3-2 in the finals of the junior competition.

Haris had also won the Qatar Junior Championship 2017 and Japan Junior Championship 2017 held in August and September respectively. In Japan, Haris had beaten Malaysian No. 1 in juniors, Kerwinteh, in the finals by 3-2 after a very interesting and closely contested match of one hour twenty minutes.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah, Chairman Sports Board Prof. Dr. Ikram-ul-Haq and Director Sports Khadim Ali Khan congratulated Haris Qasim on his consecutive achievements in the Squash. The Vice Chancellor said that the student's achievements brought laurels to the institution. The Director Sports said that Haris was a pride of GCU and is going to participate in the American Junior Squash Championship 2017-18 in the December, and I am very hopeful that he would use all of his experiences and unquestioned class to continue his winning streak.”

Haris Qasim, who admires the Egyptian squash player Fares Dessouky for his aggressive style and has a dream of winning the World Squash Championship.

Visually-Impaired Students of GCU Win Quiz Contest

A team of visually-impaired students of Government College University has won the quiz competition, organized by the Movement for Independence of Disabled in connection with the International White Cane Safety Day, at the Government Islamia College Civil Lines Lahore. The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah invited the team comprising of Shehryar Shabbir, Adnan Sami and Hassan Khan to office and congratulated at their success. Prof. Shah stated that more than 200 physically-challenged students were currently studying at GCU and they all were really very special to them. They are very hardworking, committed to their studies and actively participate in co-curricular and sports activities.



37th Allama Iqbal Declamation Held at GCU

The 37th All Pakistan Allama Muhammad Iqbal Bilingual Declamation Contest, one of the biggest national debating galas held at the Government College University Lahore under the auspices of its Debating Society (GCUDS). “It's not the presidential debate or any other political debate, but as far as the content, confidence and clarity are concerned, the level is far above,” said the President GCUDS Ms. Mohiba Ahmad Moniba while addressing the inauguration of two-day debates.

About 300 orators from 70 educational institutions including Pakistan Air Force Academy Risalpur, UET Lahore, University of Gujrat, DOW University of Health Sciences Karachi, FCC University, Kinnaird College, King Edward Medical University, Punjab University and Lahore College for Women University contested for the coveted team trophy and best speaker awards.

“Here, nobody has the right to remain silent. None of the contemporary conflicts could escape from the arguments, wit and

humour of these best national orators who came from all over Pakistan to GCU Lahore to express their thoughts,” said the General Secretary GCUDS Kafil Rana.

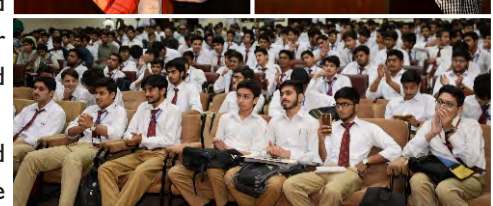
The serious topics that remained closely contested by the teams on the first day were: “one is not born but rather becomes a woman”, “we make our own history but not under circumstances chosen by us”, “the struggle against power is the struggle between memory and forgetting” and “revolution is not a onetime event”.

In the humorous category, the participants enthralled the audience with their wit and humor particularly on the topics: “frailty, thy name is man”, “I want you to be weak as weak as I am”, “To be popular one must be mediocre”, and “I am my best work.” In the Urdu category, the youth punctuated their speeches with fiery verses of Mirza Ghalib, Allama Iqbal, Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Habib Jalib.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah said that GCUDS put its glorious tradition of oratory to good use by picking up themes from contemporary issues for its closely contested declamation. “The declamation named after our most outstanding alumnus, Dr. Iqbal, has been continuously converging some of the best minds from Pakistani youth in GC since 1980, and we are thrilled that this time, a good number of orators from the Baluchistan also participated in this contest,” he mentioned. The Vice Chancellor stated that this year the Best English Speaker would be awarded with the Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Medal and a cash prize while the Best Urdu Speaker would receive the Dr. Majeed Nizami Medal.

The Government College former Principal, the late Prof. M.A. Khan introduced Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Medal with a donation of Rs. 500,000 in 2007. The University's Debating Society had initiated the Dr. Majeed Nizami Medal in 2013 to pay tribute to the services of the eminent Old Ravian journalist.

The participating orators mentioned to media personnel that the national media must promote academic debates held in educational institutions instead of useless political debates that lead to nothing but confusion.



US Aid Punjab Director Visits GCU

The Director for Punjab from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Ms. Lee Swanson visited the Government College University to identify the areas of cooperation for youth development. Ms. Swanson had a detailed meeting with the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah. The University's faculty deans, Prof Dr. Islam Ullah Khan, Prof Dr. Iqbal Shahid, and Prof Dr. Raiz Ahmed were also present.

The Vice Chancellor sought the USAID cooperation in developing linkages with American universities and support for developing facilities for the university's physically-challenged students of GCU. Ms. Lee Swanson mentioned that USAID was committed to support the youth development in Pakistan in every possible way. She showed keen interest for cooperation with GCU in the fields of drama, music and other performing arts as well as in biological sciences, environmental studies, media studies, business and management, and English language learning. She stated that education was her passion and admired the landscape beauty of the university campus. The Director Academic Planning and External Links (APEL), Ms. Fouzia Shahin briefed the USAID officials about different academic programmes, research linkages and achievements of the university. GCU Registrar Mr. Saboor Ahmed Khan, Director Institute of Industrial Biotechnology Prof. Dr. Hamid Mukhtar, Senior Education Advisor USAID Mr. Haroon Fahim, and Assistant Director APEL Ms Ammarah Batool were also present.



Guru Nanak Educational and Eminent Canadian Journalist Visits GCU

The President of Guru Nanak Educational and Sports Society Mr. Kalwant Singh and eminent Canadian journalist Mr. Santok Singh Mander have visited the Government College University and met with Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr Hassan Amir Shah and Registrar Mr Saboor Ahmad Khan. GCU Sikh faculty member Kalyan Singh Kalyan was also present.

On the occasion, Mr. Kalwant Singh pledged scholarships of Rs. 50,000 for a topper of the university's newly-established Punjabi Department and the best sportsman of the university. He also showed interest in providing scholarships to the minority students of GCU. The Registrar Mr. Saboor Khan briefed Mr. Kalwant Singh and Mr. Santok Singh about the history, traditions, academic programs and achievements of the University. He said that more than five Sikh students are studying in the postgraduate programs of the university. Later, the delegation also visited the different departments of the university including Punjabi Department.



GCU Delegation Visits Iqbal's Mausoleum

A delegation of students and teachers from Government College University led by Dean Faculty of Languages, Islamic & Oriental Learning, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Shahid visited the Iqbal's mausoleum. The delegation paid tribute to the great Old Ravian, philosopher and poet of the East on his 140th birth anniversary. The office bearers of GCU Rovers Club were also present. On the occasion, Dr. Iqbal Shahid said that Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal's philosophy was a beacon of light for youth and Iqbal's poetry composed in Urdu and Persian spell out the manifesto for purposeful change. He mentioned that it was a matter of great pride and inspiration for all Ravians and Old Ravians that Iqbal had been student of Government College. Prof. Iqbal Shahid offered fateha for the soul of great national poet and laid floral wreath. He also recorded his views in the visitors' book.

In addition, a seminar was also held at the Department of Urdu of GC University in connection with the Iqbal's birth anniversary. The Chairperson of Urdu Department from Tehran University Dr. Muhammad Quemercy, GCU Dean Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Prof. Dr. Tahir Kamran, Dean Faculty of Languages, Islamic & Oriental Learning, Prof. Dr. Muahmmad Iqbal Shahid and the Chairperson Urdu Department Dr. Khalid Mehmood Sanjrani addressed the seminar.



Photographic Exhibition and Thaap Conference Held at GCU

A photographic exhibition on the evolution of major cities in Pakistan was held at the Government College University in connection with the 8th THAAP (The Trust for History, Arts and Architecture, Pakistan) Conference. As many as 51 photographs on life in major cities of Pakistan were displayed at the exhibition which was attended by people from all walks of life.

THAAP Director Prof. Pervaiz Vandal inaugurated the exhibition and said “City is not a soulless mass of infrastructure and debris. It is like an organism grows, develops and becomes changed, so this year THAAP and GC University are holding international conference on “The City: An Evolving Organism,” a topic which needs serious deliberations.”. The conference was held in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission and spread over eight technical sessions.

Prof. Pervaiz Vandal mentioned that the city was not simply about building and rebuilding an infrastructure, its primary concern must be the state of people's life. He appreciated the work of photographers who played an important role in preserving the social, cultural and economic history of cities. Prof. Sajida Haider Vandal, the chief executive of THAAP said that this photographic exhibition presented a selection of visual documents on the impact of never ending expansion and evolution of urban on its inhabitants and their environment. These photographs remind us of the ways we have molded our living spaces and lifestyles. Both, the tragedy and the heroism of transforming urban culture are recorded in strong expression.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah visited the exhibition and addressed the conference. He said that young and seasoned photographers shared their remarkable individual vision on ever shifting metropolitan sensibility which draws our attention to what needed to be done to help sustain impact of the massive urban progression and its consequences on global scale.

The conference was also addressed by the Chairperson Department of Architecture Dr. Samra Mohsin Khan, eminent historian Prof. Dr. Tahir Kamran, the Chairperson Department of Fine Arts Mr. Erfan Ullah Babar and photographer Ms. Amna Yasin.



Policy Dialogue on “Migration and Displacement”

Speakers at the policy dialogue of the international conference on “Migration and Displacement” said that no single country in the world or bilateral treaties alone could resolve the issue of migration, and immediate global efforts were required to deal with this mega challenge.

The policy dialogue was chaired by Professor Emeritus Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed, Stockholm University, Sweden while Prof. Dr. Tahir Kamran, the Dean Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at GCU, Prof. Dr. Khalid Manzoor Butt, the conference chairman were also present. Besides more than 51 social scientists from different universities of Pakistan, as many as eleven foreign scholars including Ms. Angela Sarafian from Belgium, Ms. Xiaoqing Xie and Dr. Tang Jun from China, Dr. Saodat Olimova and Prof. Muzaffar Olimova from Tajikistan and Mr. Mahesh Raj Bhatta from Nepal participated in the policy dialogue.

Prof. Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed said that human history was full of migrations and events of displacement for several reasons which not only bring challenges for the migrants but also posed threats to inhabitants of the host states. He announced that they had deliberated on research papers of all the participants in detail in the policy dialogue and drafted eighteen recommendations with the unanimous consensus. He added that these recommendations along with the conference proceedings would be sent to the academic institutions, think-tanks, heads of the states and international organizations to help them deal with this mega challenge more effectively. We recommend that pluralism so far as religious, ethnic, linguistic and cultural should be part of the state's policy and there must be zero tolerance towards all kinds of extremism.

The recommendations include that feeling of deprivation should be eradicated as it encourages migration and non-interference in the affairs of the other states especially by the world powers for peaceful co-existence; university education should promote pluralism, robust system of political parties and family planning. The policy dialogue reiterated the point of conference's key note speaker, Prof. Dr. Hasan Askari Rizvi, that most of the refugee problems were caused by the international politics; ambitious global agenda of major world powers.

Prof. Dr. Khalid Butt, the conference chairman, said that there was a dire need to change the mind set of the people which could only be achieved through education and socialization. He laid stress on the importance of multiculturalism especially to be promoted in Pakistan. Prof. Dr. Tahir Kamran said that countries which faced colonization should not be compared with western nations because of the differences in state structure, adding that “we have failed to ingrain in the youth, the real essence of nationalism. Ms. Angela Sarafian said that in order to discourage economic migration to other parts of the world like Europe, international community needs to focus on development and co-operation.

Old Vs Young Ravians Debate held at GCU

The Old Ravians Union (ORU) organized a debate between Old and Young Ravians at Government College University (GCU). The topic of the debate was “The old generation has failed the nation”; where a team of highly respected, sagacious and learned Old Ravians defended the acts of their generations against fierce arguments of stentorian orators of the university's Debating Society. The President of the Union, Mr. Kazi Afaq Hossain, chaired the British House of Commons style debate that lasted for more than two hours at the university's Bukhari Auditorium, while the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah was the chief guest.

The team Old Ravians was comprised of eminent English poet and Scholar Mr. Irshad Ullah-Khan, noted women rights activist Dr. Arifa Sayyeda Zehra and Mr. Nasir Muneef Qureshi, the former President of GCU Debating Society.

The team of Young Ravians comprising of President Debating Society GCU Mohiba Ahmed, Zahid Ali and Raza Aftab Gillani who debated with fire, wit and humour. The team lamented that the biggest crime of their older generation was that they remained silent at the time that required radical action. “They didn't question the oppression, and failed through and through to come out of their abstractions and opened their eyes to the ground realities of time and also stopped everyone who did so”, the young speakers said. Mohiba Ahmed said that the older generation remained quiet when women were being veiled and secluded against their will, when their bodies were being sensationalized while their minds were trivialized. The young speakers went strong till the end when the final thought-provoking arguments by Mr. Irshad Ullah-Khan and Dr. Arifa Sayyeda Zehra turned the tables around and audience eventually gave their verdict in favor of Old Ravians.

In his final arguments, Mr. Irshad Ullah-Khan, who also taught at Oxford University for six years, said that the older generation had not failed the nation; rather they had protected Pakistan against the foreign conspiracies, and ensured that it stayed stable. “When you say the old generation has failed the nation, did you mean that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ai Jinnah had failed the nation or the great old Ravians like Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Prof. Dr. Abdus Salam, Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Dr. Samar Mubarikmand had failed the nation or your parents or teachers who had nurtured you and make you able to speak at this stage had failed the nation?” he asked the young speakers. In reply to other arguments, Mr. Irshad Ullah-Khan said that they had not remained silent, they questioned every act to the best of their abilities and knowledge but they didn't had online platforms like social media and independent electronic media.

The Honorary Secretary ORU Prof. Dr. Khalid Maznoor Butt said that Old Ravian Union has revived the tradition to organize this debate where all members of Old Ravian Union were invited. The advisor of Debating Society Mr. Siddique Awan said that the generations of orators had been groomed by GCU. He stated two episodes of Old versus Young Ravians Debates, where fathers and sons came face to face with each other. In the late 1960s, the then editor of Dawn, Mazhar Ali Khan, and his son, Tariq Ali, a celebrated writer, contested against each other. In mid 1990s, Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan and son Ali Hassan locked horns on the motion “Men are democratic by nature while women are despotic.” However, father being the opponent did not deter Ali from arguing his case effectively and the audience eventually gave their verdict in favour of the son, agreeing that it was men and not women who were to be blamed.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah said that the “OLD vs. YOUNG RAVIANS Debate” was one of the oldest traditions of Government College which played a vital role in bridging the gap between the thoughts of two generations. He expressed his gratitude to the Old Ravians Union for reviving the tradition of 'Old versus Young Ravians debate, which had not been held for the last so many years. The Vice Chancellor congratulated the Old Ravians on winning the debates. However, he said, his personal sympathies were with the younger generation.



GCU Remembers its Alumnus Prof. Abdus Salam

Prof. Abdus Salam, the Nobel Laureate and Old Ravian, breathed his last 21 years ago on November 21, 1996 after a protracted illness. With his sad demise, not only Pakistan but also the entire third world lost a great scientist and humble human being. A seminar was organized at his alma mater, Government College University, to pay glowing tributes to Prof. Salam for his contributions in the fields of Mathematics and Physics, and the role, he played, for the development of science in Pakistan.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah proudly shared that GCU housed the original Nobel Prize Certificate of Dr. Abdus Salam, saying that "it was our most cherished possession to-date." He said it was remarkable that how the Italian had owned Prof. Salam and honoured him. International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) Italy had preserved all his documents, awards, shields, souvenirs and his personal collection of books including his Hukka etc. in a separate room called Salam Room in the library of ICTP. Talking about his love for Pakistan, the Vice Chancellor mentioned that Prof. Salam never accepted any other nationality despite many offers. He stated his personal interactions with Salam, saying that he was a very hardworking throughout his life. The former Vice Chancellor Punjab University Prof. Dr. Mujahid Kamran shed light on the academic achievements of Prof. Salam and his interest in literature.

In his keynote address, Dr. Ghulam Murtaza, Professor Salam Chair, GCU, shared the story of Prof. Salam, a village boy from Jhang, inspired all the young people with the idea that wherever they might come from, they too could make careers in science or indeed in any other profession. Dr. Murtaza was taught by Dr. Salam himself at the Imperial College London and highlighted the humble upbringing, strong character and virtues of the great scientist. He mentioned that Prof. Salam's achievements were not only confined to the Nobel Prize but he was also a fellow of more than 30 academies/societies of the world and was awarded honorary doctorate by more than 40 universities across the globe.

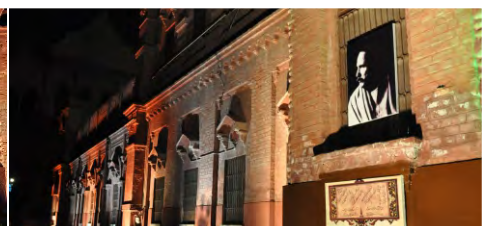
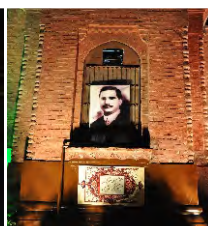
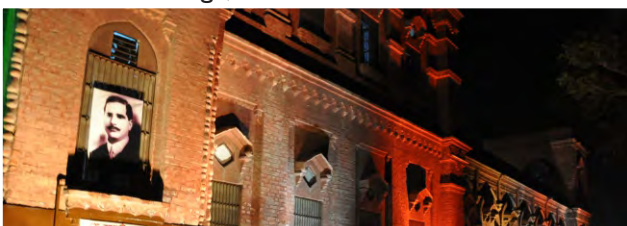
Prof. Amer Iqbal from Abdus Salam School paid tributes to Prof. Salam by telling the participants about his electro-weak theory and its modern implications. He stated that scientific work of Salam was one of the great achievements of the 20th century and was regarded an important step towards ultimate unity of all forces in nature.



Seminar on "Allama Iqbal" held at GCU

Government College University organized a seminar in connection with the 140th birth anniversary of Poet of the East. Dean Faculty of Engineering Prof. Dr. Raiz Ahmad, Executive Director National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), Pakistan Zulfikar Ahmed Cheema and the Chairman Societies Board Dr. Muhammad Ibrhaim attended the seminar. Mr. Zulfikar Cheema highlighted that the philosophy of Allama Muhammad Iqbal will always remain a guiding principle for the humanity, but it's very unfortunate that our new generation didn't know much about it. He said Allama Iqbal had exposed the hollowness of western's culture and philosophy and portrayed the true picture of Islam. He mentioned that the Iqbal's concept of Khudi taught Muslims to acquire knowledge and prosper instead of waiting only for the divine help. He also stated that the Poet of the East had presented the case of Muslim Ummah in the world in a way that nobody could do. He called upon to study the poetry of Allama Iqbal, saying that "it's relevant."

Prof. Raiz Ahmad said that it was a matter of great pride and inspiration for all Ravians that Iqbal had been the student of Government College, Lahore.



Teachers' Training Workshop held at GCU

The Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) in collaboration with Learning Innovation Division of Higher Education Commission (HEC) organized a three days training workshop on “Outcome Based Education in Higher Education Institutions”. The objective of the workshop was to discuss, impart and share the significance of teachers' role in disseminating knowledge using different pedagogical skills to get the desired learning outcomes. Renowned resource persons delivered the training sessions which were attended by 20 staff members from academic departments of GCU.

In the opening ceremony, the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah emphasized on the productive role of a teacher in the class room environment. He said that the authority lies with the teachers, so in order to achieve desired outcomes, teacher should impart rightful knowledge and pay attention to every student as the learning capacity of every student varies. The Director QEC Ms. Iram Sohail shared that the workshop will cover different pedagogical skills including students' assessment techniques, soft skills, communication skills, quality assurance, critical thinking and reasoning and how to develop learning outcomes in the context of objective based learning. She mentioned that Quality Enhancement Cell GCU organizes such training workshops for continuous professional development of its faculty and staff.

The Vice Chancellor also graced the closing ceremony of the training workshop. He lauded the initiatives of QEC especially its efforts for capacity building of the university teachers and hoped that the participants would endeavour to apply what they gained from the training workshop. He mentioned that a teacher has to create appropriate and enabling environment to engage students in a process of achieving Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) already embedded in the curriculum. “Educational goals keep changing, terminology keeps changing and as time goes expectations from educational institutions also keep changing, and now it is time for outcome based education,” he added.

The Director QEC mentioned in the closing ceremony that the higher education was undergoing a “sea change” where students' success was focused primarily. She added that the mission of universities had always been imparting education and creating new knowledge, but measuring and demonstrating if students were indeed learning was a relatively new concept. “All good things must come to an end but this end will lead to a new beginning in the university's classrooms,” She added.

Later, the Vice Chancellor awarded the certificates to the participants of workshop. GCU Registrar Mr. Saboor Ahmed Khan also attended the opening and closing ceremonies of the training workshop.



GCU Celebrates World Philosophy Day

Speakers at the seminar at Government College University (GCU) were of the opinion that a conducive, liberal and open environment is needed for the development of Philosophy in any society, which had not been provided in Pakistan for the last seventy years. The seminar was organized on “The tough trail of Philosophy in Pakistan” by the GCU Brett Philosophy Society in connection with the celebration of World Philosophy Day.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah chaired the seminar. He said that GCU had always promoted the spirit of free inquiry and critical thinking. He appreciated the cherished philosophical personalities of the institution who has the oldest Department of Philosophy in entire South Asia which was established in 1868.

The Chairperson Department of Philosophy, Dr. Sobia Tahir believed that persistent political instability did not let the stage to be set for the genesis, growth and promotion of knowledge in general and of Philosophy in particular. She suggested that instead of promotion of isolated Departments of Philosophy, its interdisciplinary role must be enhanced which may improve reasoning tendency of students. She also emphasized



the need for a stable political system in the country with no more experiments with representative institutions. "Pakistan is a seat of most ancient cultures, civilization and the dignified philosophies of the world; but we have severed the knots from other sources of identity due to excessive ideological zeal. This has led us to a repressive environment in which independent philosophical inquiry is impossible," She added.

At the end of an open debate Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Prof. Dr. Tahir Kamran highlighted that a pre-ordained frame-work of state ideology prevents question raising and critical thinking. The Advisor GCU Brett Philosophical Society Dr. Alwin Vincent Murad in his opening remarks apprised the participants with the aims and objectives of the World Philosophy Day which was celebrated by UNESCO globally in the month of November. Eminent philosopher and novelist Prof. Mirza Athar Baig stressed the importance of indigenous and culture-oriented philosophy, saying that western philosophy could not put down roots in their society and culture, and it must come from within the society.

Workshop on Bioinformatics

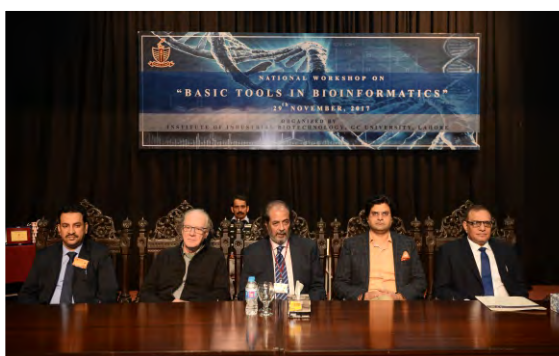
The Institute of Industrial Biotechnology (GCU-IIB) at Government College University arranged a workshop on "Basic tools in Bioinformatics". The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah chaired the inaugural ceremony of one-day workshop which was also addressed by Dr. Daniel Hoessli from Switzerland.

In his opening remarks, Dean Faculty of Science and Technology Prof. Dr. Islam Ullah Khan mentioned that about 250 participants from 35 different colleges, universities and research organizations across the Pakistan were participating in the workshop which covered a wide range of basic techniques of bioinformatics. He stated that the objective to hold this workshop was to provide practical, step-by-step assistance to the participants to ensure the maximum learning.

The Director IIB Prof. Dr. Hamid Mukhtar said that computational biology or bioinformatics had emerged as a new field in the last decade and had been not less than a miracle. "A few years ago we could not imagine the visualization of DNA or Protein but with the emergence of bioinformatics we can not only see the structural details of biomolecules but also elucidate their function, reactivity and binding abilities," he added.

Dr. Daniel Hoessli highlighted the use of bioinformatics which had allowed scientist to make new discoveries. The treatment of diseases has become easier by applying tools of drugs designing. The study of drug interactions has made it possible to formulate new methods of curing cancer. Data pertinent to evolutionary traits and genetics was being used to improve the nutritional capacities of agricultural crops and increase productivity. Moreover, the available tools helped in designing experiments according to the biomolecules being studied, thereby facilitating the scientists. He added that it was imperative for the students to have a complete understanding of this field which is integration of computer, biology, chemistry and statistics. This age was no longer prevailed where the excellence could be achieved by knowledge in one specific area only. The integration of various subjects is the need of the hour, he concluded.

The Vice Chancellor talked about the way computational biology had revolutionized the field of science. He commended the efforts of IIB for regularly conducting such workshops. Dr. Imran Amin from NIBGE, Dr. Sohail Afzal from UMT, Dr. Muhammad Naveed from UCP, Dr. Nauman Aftab and Mr. Ishtiaq Ahmed from GCU delivered presentations and trained the participants on the use of various softwares for the analysis of biological data.



Seminar on “Centenary of Russian Revolution”

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRC) Chairman Prof. Dr. Mehdi Hassan said that the use of religion in politics ends in violence and bloodshed, and this is what they have learnt from undistorted history. He was addressing a seminar on “Centenary of Russian Revolution” at the Government College University Lahore.

Former HRC chairman Mr. I. A. Rehman, Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah, Stockholm University, Sweden Professor Emeritus Dr Ishtiaq Ahmed and GCU Political Science Department Chairman Prof Dr Khalid Manzoor Butt addressed the seminar organized by Quaid-e-Azam Political Science Society. They shed light on the different aspects of October Revolution by labeling it as one of the powerful events of the last century with far reaching implications around the world. The speakers highlighted both positive and negative aspects of socialism in detail.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Mehdi Hassan said that during the Cold War, the governments in Pakistan sided with the United States of America to oppose the spread of socialism. They used religion as an instrument in propaganda against socialism by spreading the notion that it creates a godless society, he added.

The HRC chairman said that the Soviet Union had collapsed due to various reasons, but the ideology of socialism would not die until the gap between the haves and have-nots was bridged. He clarified that socialism might not been an ideal system at all and had various negative impacts on USSR and international politics but connecting it with religion was not right at all.

Prof Dr Hassan also said the biggest crime, their generations had made, was to distort the history for their political and social wishes.

Mr I. A. Rehman talked about the different aspects of October Revolution in detail including its impact outside the Soviet Union. He also highlighted its similarities with the French Revolution. He also told students about the factors which led to the collapse of Soviet Union.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah said that he had spent six years in Moscow as student in the cold war period from 1973 to 1979 and personally witnessed the achievements of the Soviet Union in all sectors from housing to science and technology. Everybody was provided jobs and also there was not much discrimination in salaries of people, but at the same time, this system was creating different troubles for the society which included less motivated labor and excessive taxation he added.

Prof Shah told students they might support or join left or right politics after completing their education but they must always have tolerance towards the ideas, beliefs and faith of other people.

Prof Khalid Butt said that despite the collapse of USSR as a socialist country, the socialist ideals of the October Revolution still under debate among the philosophers of the world. He said there are many lessons which could be learnt from the collapse of USSR i.e. the poor statecraft could result in the failure of the any system. He said that bad economy led the revolution and ultimately it was again bad economy which disintegrated the USSR.

Prof Ishtiaq Ahmad said no system was bad or perfect as philosophers interpreted the world in different ways but the ultimate task was to change it. He told students about incidents which led to Russian Revolution and also the reasons behind the failure of Soviet Union.



GCU, Canadian University Signs Accord to Document Biodiversity in Pakistan

The Government College University Lahore and University of Guelph Ontario, Canada signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a reference library of DNA barcodes of animals, plants and fungi to research and document biodiversity in Pakistan.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah and University of Guelph Center for Biodiversity Genomics (CBG) Director Dr Paul Hebert through his representative Dr Muhammad Ashfaq signed a 26 point MoU at a graceful ceremony organized by the Directorate of Academic Planning and External Links (AP&EL) at the university's Syndicate Room.

CBG Canada research scientist Dr Muhammad Ashfaq said this project would play a crucial role in conservation of the country's indigenous species. We can't conserve, until we have an accurate data about the biodiversity in Pakistan. He said that the Earth had already faced five major mass extinctions, and ninety percent of species, once existed, had been extinct. However, he said, the sixth extinction was likely to be different as human intervention in nature had posed a threat to existence of animals, birds and plants. If we don't know about any of these species of animals or plants, we could not do much protect them, he added.

Dr Ashfaq said that Europe had reference libraries which had documented and research on more than eight million species but unfortunately none of Muslim countries had taken any major initiative in this regard. Dr Asfaq said that Center for Biodiversity Genomics (CBG), Canada was a global leader in the field of DNA barcoding and occupied 50,000 Sq. ft. facility at the University of Guelph and its research capacity reflected the coupling of one of the Canada's largest genomics platforms with a workforce that included world class expertise in biodiversity science, DNA sequencing and informatics.

The research scientist said that they would provide training to GCU faculty and students in DNA barcoding which was a convenient, efficient, cheap and accurate emerging technology which had greatly accelerated the pace of species discovery. At present, researchers all over the world are utilizing this powerful tool for investigating biodiversity, differentiating cryptic species, testing food authenticity, identifying parasites, vectors, insects and predators, monitoring of illegal trade of animals and their products and identifying forensically important insects, he added.

GCU Zoology Department Chairperson Dr Mzuhammad Tahir said Pakistani waters had a rich biodiversity and DNA barcoding effectively worked in water bodies.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Hassan Shah laid a stress on expanding research collaboration among foreign and national universities, saying that that higher education had become complex and multidisciplinary, and no university in the world could progress in isolation any more.

According the accord, both the universities also agreed to exchange faculty, researchers and students besides initiating joint research projects to develop global partnerships in the area of biodiversity genomics, biodiversity science, DNA sequencing and bioinformatics. Earlier, GCU AP&EL Director Ms. Fouzia Shaheen briefed the delegation about the scope of the accord and other active research collaborations of GCU.



Int'l Conference on Public Health Research begins at GCU

A two-day international conference on "Innovative Biological and Public Health Research (IBPHR-2017)" held at the GC University Lahore under the auspices of Zoology Department, Higher Education Commission, Punjab Agriculture and Research Board (PRBA) and PHEC.

Punjab Minister for Higher Education Syed Raza Ali Gillani chaired the conference's inaugural session which was also addressed

by Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah, Dr James D. Harwood from Qingdao Agriculture University, China and Dr Muhammad Ashfaq from University of Guelph, Canada.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Hafiz Mohammad Tahir, the conference chairman, said that besides eminent zoologists from within the country, foreign professors from Sri Lanka, Turkey, Canada and UK were also participating in the IBPHR-2017 where 101 research papers were scheduled to be presented in technical sessions. He said that the conference focused the contemporary public health issues. Syed Raza Ali Gillani asked the university students to always aim high in their life, and never hesitate from asking questions. When you aim high you would close it but when you think low you would certainly end below it, the minister said. He called upon the students to plan to become entrepreneurs instead of job seekers. He also lauded the huge participation of female speakers and participants in the conference.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Hassan Shah proudly shared that IBPHR-2017 was the fourth international conference at GCU Lahore in last four weeks, saying that these conferences paved the way for scientific cooperation by connecting their faculty and students with scientists from different countries. He said that subjects like Botany, Zoology and Environmental Sciences had acquired a special significance in this era where human interventions had threatened the existence of many species of plants, animals and fungi.

PRBA Executive Member Dr Muhammad Younas also addressed the conference's inaugural session. Later, Prof Dr S.H.P Parajrama Karunaratne from Sri Lanka and Prof Dr Sami Simsek from Turkey addressed the first technical session of the conference.



GCU Signs Accord with Iranian University for Research Collaboration

The Government College University Lahore signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Imam Khomeini International University (IKIU), Iran for research and academic collaboration.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah and IKIU President Dr Syed Abu Hassan Naimi through Dean of Humanities Dr Bagherali Adelfar signed the accord at a graceful ceremony organized by the Directorate of Academic Planning and External Links (AP&EL) at the University's Syndicate Room. GCU Dean Faculty of Languages Prof Dr Muhammad Iqbal Shahid was also present.

According to the 26-point accord, both the universities have agreed to launch a joint research support program whereby they would host PhD and MPhil students from each other's university for a period of six months to one year, and provide them accommodation and access to laboratories and libraries besides other necessary support.

Dr. Bagherali Adelfar said that it was a prestigious moment for IKIU to sign research collaboration with the alma mater of Allama Muhammad Iqbal where the Poet of East also taught for several years. The IKIU dean also sought the guidance and support of GCU in strengthening their English Literature, Chemistry and Biotechnology departments.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Hassan Shah said GCU was actively strengthening research and academic ties with foreign universities to share best practices, training of faculty members and exchange of students at postgraduate level. He said that MoU with IKIU Iran would certainly play a key role in further strengthening the research programs of their Persian Department. GCU Dean Prof Iqbal Shahid hoped that GCU and IKIU would work together for strengthening bilateral relationships through





art, sports and cultural activities.

Earlier, GCU AP&EL Director Ms. Fouzia Shaheen briefed the delegation about the scope of the accord and other active foreign research collaborations of GCU. She said that both the universities would also joint conferences, training workshops and seminars.

IKIU Deputy of Students Affairs Dr Hamid Taheri, International Students Admissions Affairs Manager Dr Nassrollah Poormohammadi Amlashi and Language & Literature Coordinator Ms Zarnosh Mushtaq and Ministry of Education, Iran Member Dr Jabbar Rahmani also attended the ceremony.

PHEC Chairman asks Universities to Focus more on Applied Research

Punjab Higher Education Commission (PHEC) Chairman Prof. Dr. Mohammad Nizamuddin called upon the science faculty in provincial universities to focus more on applied research which could directly play role in economic development of the country.

He was addressing the closing ceremony of an international conference on “Innovative Biological and Public Health Research (IBPHR-2017)” at the Government College University Lahore. Besides experts from within Pakistan, about 11 foreign scientists also participated in two-day conference organized by the GCU Zoology Department in collaboration Higher Education Commission, Punjab Agriculture and Research Board (PRBA) and PHEC.

Prof Nizam mentioned that Pakistan is an agriculture economy but still it imports 2.5 billion dollar edible oils every year, and on the other hand, Pakistan has highest ratio of edible oils usage and also of cardiovascular diseases. I am sure that recommendations would come from this conference about our future research agenda, but my request from young and energetic faculty is that they must try to address the basic problems and needs of their country.

Prof. Nizam lauded that a culture of international conference was developing in Punjab which would surely play a key role by connecting their universities, faculty and students with eminent scientists from different countries of the world.

The PHEC chairman highlighted an urgent need for establishing a public health school in Pakistan. Despite the multiple challenges like dengue and deteriorating condition of public health in Pakistan, there is no specialized school for public health research in the country where subjects like Botany, Zoology and Environmental Science are integrated to focus on public health issues.

Prof. Nizam also revealed that he was hosting a dialogue among Vice Chancellors regarding the management and future of universities in Punjab where they would also discuss that how science research in universities could play its role in development of Pakistan.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah said that GCU had held four highly successful international conferences in last four weeks. He directed the department concerned to publish the proceedings of these conferences, so that policy makers could benefit further from them as well. He said that 115- year old Zoology Department is imparting knowledge in Pakistan and produced many eminent scientists including Prof Dr Nazir Ahmed, Prof Dr Naseer-ud-Din and Prof Dr Ramzan Mirza. He said that he had very high expectations from Zoology and Botany departments that they would play active role in promoting public health research in the country.

Later, Prof Nizam and Prof Shah presented shields to the participants of the conference.

Awareness Seminar by Government of The Punjab: Women on Wheels

A seminar Women-on-Wheels (WoW) was held at GCU that was organized by QEC in collaboration with Chief Minister’s Strategic Reforms Unit. Ms. Zainab H. Sanik, the Placement Officer, GCU, said this seminar was an effort to make possible women mobility, thus making them self-sufficient and empowered. Fatima Khan, the resource person from SRU explained to students the benefits of the scheme ‘WOW’ and the procedure of registration. She interacted with female students and said that it would also help lessen the widening economic gap and decrease gender inequality. Through this program, women will get the opportunity to get free of cost motorbike trainings by their experienced female Punjab Traffic Police Officers. This training will stretch over two to three weeks to ensure the students are trained well enough to ride on their own independently. Since



its launch in 2016, 3000 women have been successfully trained through this campaign. The Chief Minister's Strategic Reforms Unit is working in coordination with the Transport Department, Honda Atlas and Bank of Punjab to execute customized motorbikes subsidy scheme for women who have availed the trainings. A trainee of this scheme, Nimrah also shared her personal experience with the audience which encouraged them to break the stereotypes attached to riding a bike. Questions were taken at the end and forms were distributed among the audience. , Director QEC thanked the team of SRU on behalf of the Vice Chancellor and commented that the students present in the auditorium are ambassadors and they should sensitize their parents to encourage and give confidence to their daughters to play a role in bringing positive social changes and help them become empowered.

Int'l Conference on Mathematics held at GCU

An international conference on "Mathematics and its Applications (ICMA 2017)" held at Government College University to provide a platform to scientists, academicians and industrial professionals from all over the world to present their research in the field of Mathematical Sciences. As many as 11 foreign and 38 national scientists presented their papers at the three-day conference was organized by the University's Department of Mathematics in collaboration Punjab Higher Education Commission (PHEC) and Higher Education Commission, Pakistan.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah chaired the inaugural session which was also addressed by the Vice Chancellor University of Malakand Prof. Dr. Gul Zaman, Prof. Vasile Berinde from Technical University of Cluj-Napoca Romania, Prof. Ljubisa Kocianac from University of Nis Serbia, the Dean from International Islamic University Islamabad Dr. Arshad Zia and GCU Dean Faculty of Science and Technology Prof. Dr. Islam Ullah Khan.

In his key note address, Prof. Vasile Berinde said that there were two major objections being raised against mathematician these days; one that they were publishing too much and the second that they were doing less practical and more theoretical research. "I agree with the second that we mostly prefer to generalize and extend the existing theories instead of looking into application of these theories," he mentioned. Prof. Berinde said that he had turned down two invitations including one from India to attend this conference. "It's because I have seen some extraordinary research work by the students and faculty of Abdus Salam School of Mathematical Sciences in last few years and I want to personally congratulate them," he added.

Prof. Dr. Hassan Amir Shah said that GCU was holding three conferences this week but this conference had a special importance because the GCU Mathematics Department had been the most elderly place of learning and imparting knowledge of Mathematics in Pakistan. "It was the only centre of teaching Mathematics in this part of the subcontinent until 1920 when the University of the Punjab established its Department of Mathematics," he stated. Prof. Shah hoped that the conference would also provide opportunities for the participants to exchange new ideas, share knowledge and experiences to establish research relations and to find global partners for future collaborations.

Prof. Dr. Gul Zaman laid a stress on establishing research linkages especially in the fields of science among all the universities of Pakistan. Universities in Pakistan needed to pool in their resources for the promotion of research and higher education in the country.

The conference chairman Prof. Dr. Mujahid Abbas said that the conference would cover all the major areas of Mathematical sciences and public numerical issues such as Fixed Point Theory and its Applications, Fuzzy logics, Topological Vector Spaces and Nonlinear Operator Theory, Best Approximations, Soft Set Theory, Convex Optimization Theory. He said that foreign mathematicians from South Africa, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Italy also participated in the conference spread over many technical sessions.



ORU Distributes Wheelchairs Among Physically-Challenged Students

The Old Ravians Union distributed automatic and manual wheelchairs and white canes among the physically-challenged students of Government College University Lahore at a graceful ceremony at the university's Meeting Rooms. Punjab Higher Education Minister Syed Raza Ali Gilani chaired the ceremony which was also addressed by Head of Akhuwat Foundation Dr Amjad Saqib and Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah. ORU Honorary Secretary Prof Dr Khalid Manzoor Butt, Secretary Rana Asad ullah Khan, Finance Secretary Dr Salman Kazmi and Mr Najam Latif were also present.

In his opening speech, ORU President Kazi Afaq Hossain called upon the government to notify a ban on the words like “special” and “disabled” for the persons facing physical or mental challenges. “Indeed, they be called, written and mentioned as 'persons with special abilities' for all practical purposes, especially in all official and policy documents,” he said.

Dr Amjad Saqib, an Old Ravian, said this visit on a cold and cloudy morning to his alma mater had made him feel all nostalgic about his college days dated back of late 1960s. He assured the union of full support from Akhuwat and Punjab Educational Endowment Fund (PEEF) for the university's students with special abilities.

Punjab Minister Syed Raza Ali Gilani said he would personally ensure that the words “people with special abilities” were part of the government's manifesto and policies. He said Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was a role model for mankind and his teachings must be part of curriculum of all classes.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Hassan Shah appreciated Old Ravians Union who has been playing a key role in the development of their alma mater. He said that more than 200 students with special abilities were currently studying at GCU, and the university was making all efforts to provide maximum support to them.

ORU Executive Member Dr Abdul Basit briefed the participants about the activities and role of the union.



Planting Sunflowers – GCU Students Propose Eco-Friendly Solution to Combat Smog

Students from the Government College University Lahore have held an on-campus walk to raise awareness in the society against smog and proposed the government a very innovate and ecofriendly idea of growing sunflowers to combat this extremely injurious form of air pollution. GCU IIB Director Prof Dr Hamid Mukhtar led the walk from the University's Sports Complex which was followed by the formation of a human sunflower in Oval Ground.

Talking to media, Prof Mukhtar said smog was biggest threat to their health and multiple syndromes occurred including eyes and respiratory infections. “Smog's identity is maintained by the particulate matter. Particulate matter consists of small particles or droplets suspended in the air that have width of 2.5 micron or less. These are air pollutants and can enter even in the smallest airways of human body,,” he explained.

The IIB director said multiple solutions of smog were available worldwide which included smog eating buildings, smog towers and chemical reduction of smog components. All these treatments are either too expensive for a third world country like Pakistan or the treatment creates secondary problems and persistence in environment.

“To solve this problem, students of Institute of Industrial Biotechnology (IIB), have proposed a better and ecofriendly remedy i.e. mass planation of sunflowers. They studied the activity of Sunflower plant to solve environmental problems. It has been shown scientifically that sunflower plant can reduce the major components of smog and degrade them to harmless components. So, planting sunflower can reduce the continuous persistence of smog that we face,,” the GCU IIB director claimed.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah appreciated the idea by the IIB students, saying that Institute had always played its role in providing solutions for various environmental issues. He said sunflowers, reported to absorb the main pollutants of smog, was a neutral and ecofriendly solution of the problem. He said after the Hiroshima, Fukushima, and Chernobyl nuclear disasters, fields of sunflowers were planted across the affected landscapes to help absorb toxic metals and radiation from the soil.

The Vice Chancellor said it was not only government's responsibility to combat pollution. “Indeed, the scientists and common people have a greater role. We must do research and promote planation of trees and flowers in the surroundings for the better future of next generations,,” he concluded.

Academics List Steps to Check Population Growth

“The 2017 Population Census has brought critical issues to the forefront that has far-reaching implications for the development of Pakistan. Unprecedented growth rates, emerging urban poles, youth bulge and a growing elderly population are some of the many challenges that our country faces today”, said Prof Nizam while addressing a conference at the Government College University Lahore, aimed at launching the objectives of the 18th National Population Research Conference.

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin said that there was a need for imposing an emergency in the country on population growth and investment in human resource development. “If the current pattern of fertility continues, then on the 100th birthday of Pakistan, our population is estimated to be around 390 million. We require to take concerted efforts now on the federal and the provincial levels in order to address these issues in a timely manner,” said Prof. Nizam who is also the President of Population Association of Pakistan (PAP).

Prof Nizam revealed that the GCU, PHEC and PAP were holding the Population Research Conference where all stakeholders were convened at one platform to deliberate upon all issues related to population growth and human resource development. The PAP President further said that the onus of population growth could not put on the government alone, rather is shared. “And, I believe that universities and non-government organizations have a bigger role in creating awareness,” he added. He proposed to establish the Population Welfare Studies Center in all universities, saying that GCU must take lead in this regard. The PHEC Chairman also said that average population growth rate of Pakistan was 2.4 but it was less than 2 in cities which meant that NGOs or government's population control programme were not reaching the rural areas.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah said that population growth should be handled proactively rather reactively. “We know that our population is estimated to be around 400 million in next 30 years, so we have to start taking concerted steps now on all levels instead of taking reactive measures later,” he added. He also proposed that population studies should be part of curricula at all levels of education.

University of Education Vice Chancellor Prof Rauf-e-Azam said that population control is a sensitive issue for which we need to take all the stakeholders on board to suggest pragmatic solutions. “This conference by PAP is a right step in a right direction and its proceeding will be sent to the government and policy makers for developing a future roadmap,” he concluded.

Bargad Executive Director Ms Sabiha Shaheen believed that they could not control population growth, rather initiatives must be taken to manage it now. “There is a huge youth bulge in the country which should be managed so that they could play an effective role for the development of the country instead of becoming burden on the economy” she added. She also laid stress on cultivating entrepreneurial mindset among youth.

GCU Political Science Department Chairman Prof. Dr. Khalid Manzoor Butt said that many models were available for population control such as Chinese and Malaysian models but there was lack of political will in the country. He said that there are pressure groups which don't allow the government to introduce radical reforms in this direction.



'Walk in the Memory of APS Peshawar Martyrs'

Time could never heal or make us forget those school children who went to school and never came back, said Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah, the Vice Chancellor of Government College University Lahore, while addressing a walk organized by the university's students and security staff in connection with the third anniversary of Army Public School, Peshawar massacre.

Muhammad Bilal, a psychically-challenged student of GCU Computer Science Department, led the on-campus walk from the University's Postgraduate Block to Clock Tower. Punjab Higher Education Commission (PHEC) Chairman Prof Dr Muhammad Nizamuddin, GCU Dean of Engineering Prof Dr Raiz Ahmad and Registrar Mr Saboor Khan also participated in the walk widely attended by the university's students and faculty members.

Muhammad Bilal said that children of Pakistan had failed the terrorists and they could not deter them from their journey to enlightenment. He said that APS Peshawar had developed hatred in their hearts for these terrorists and extremists.

Vice Chancellor Prof Shah said unity and tolerance were the need of the hour to defeat terrorism. "Terrorist attack on a church in Quetta shows that the threat is not completely over yet, so we must be vigilant all the times and support our armed forces and law enforcement agencies in this fight against terrorism," he added.

PHEC Chairman Prof Nizam said that extensive security measures had been taken by the government to beef up the security of schools, college and university campuses so that such incident could never take place again. He said pain and agony, we felt, for attack on innocent schoolchildren in Peshawar could not be described in words. He said that the commission had organized week-long activities to express solidarity with the families of APS, Peshawar martyrs on the third anniversary of the tragedy.

Later, one-minute silence was also observed by the participants of the walk in the memory of victims of APS Peshawar massacre.



GCU Celebrates Christmas

The Government College University Lahore faculty and staff members celebrated the Christmas with the university's Christian community at a colorful ceremony at the university's Bukhari Auditorium which was especially decorated in a traditional style with lights, balloons, flowers, flags and a Christmas tree. Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah, Philosophy Department Chairman Dr Sobia Tahir and Forman Christian College University Lahore Professor Emeritus Dr Christy Munir cut the Christmas cake with the university's Christian staff, students and faculty members.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Christy Munir said the Christmas is a time of delight, sharing the joys and sufferings of others, acceptance, forgiveness, reconciliation, celebrations and promoting love and peace. He asked that students to focus on their studies so that they could play an active role in the economic development of their country. He said that in every religion, peoples' rights had a preference over other rights.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Hassan Amir Shah said GCU had always stood out for promoting tolerance and religious harmony. "If we want peace in Pakistan, we must eradicate extremism and develop tolerance towards the beliefs, faith, race, religion and ideas of other people," he added.

The VC also said that they should not only learn to accept the minorities, but also celebrate them. One-minute silence was also observed for the victims of Quetta Church blast.

Earlier, GCU Christian staff members expressed gratitude to the Vice Chancellor and other guests for celebrating Christmas with them. They said that Christmas gave the message of peace and love to all humanity.

