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- Old Ravian donates Rs. 2 Million to GCU-EFT
- Phase I of the GCU New Campus (KSK) Completed

Vice Chancellor's Strategic Vision, 2020-2023



2020-2023

GCU GOALS

2020-2023

I. Education:

- Improving the quality of teaching to meet excellent international standards
- Increasing reach of higher education to under-privileged segments of our youth
- Strengthening employability of our graduates and developing entrepreneurial mindset

II. Research:

- Producing research leading to commercialisation and social impact
- Strengthening our linkages with policy making communities in public and private sector
- Promoting research culture by reactivating research chairs and launching of new MPhil & PhD programmes

III. Internationalisation:

- Enhancing exchange programmes for faculty and students with our international partners
- Partnering with industry and academia abroad for result oriented collaborations
- Improvement in all the underlying indicators used for international university rankings

IV. Infrastructure:

- Uplifting the work and education experience through refurbishment of old campus facilities
- Populating the new campus and building residence facilities for students and staff
- Upgrading and building of the entire IT infrastructure at the old and new campuses

V. Governance:

- Digitisation of the University's management and learning systems
- Formulating a comprehensive HR policy to attract and retain the best talent
- Effective and meaningful engagement with students, faculty and staff through VC's web portal
- Implementing merit-based appointments and promotions



VC's Research Leads to the Legislation on the Welfare of Senior Citizens

National Assembly approves the Bill aiming to socially and economically protect the senior citizens. It is a moment of great pride for the faculty and the students of Government College University Lahore as the research carried out by their Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi has led to the legislation on the welfare of senior citizens in Pakistan. The research project titled "Moving from the Margins: Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Older Persons in Pakistan", led by Prof Zaidi, provided the essential data that fed into the drafting of the Islamabad Capital Territory Senior Citizens Bill passed by the National Assembly Pakistan on April 18th.

The treasury and opposition members of the National Assembly joined hands to pass the Bill moved by Federal Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen Mazari. After the approval from the National Assembly and Senate, the bill would be sent to the President for signing into law.

The human rights related bill proposes the establishment of a Senior Citizens' Council and an Old-age home. According to the bill, the division concerned shall establish and maintain an old age-home to be known as Darul Shafqat at an accessible place to accommodate indigent senior citizens of Islamabad. "The bill aims to socially and economically protect the senior citizens of Islamabad. In this respect, it aims to establish a fund for these senior citizens. It also creates a council, including members from all relevant

departments of the government that shall ensure that all possible steps and acts are taken to provide for the wellbeing, comfort and dignity of these senior citizens," read the bill. After the approval from the National Assembly, Rabiya Javeri Agha, the former federal secretary for human rights, tweeted a congratulation message. "A special credit to Prof Zaidi and British Council Pakistan for their research on old age in Pakistan. This report provided essential data that fed into the drafting of this legislation," Rabiya Javeri revealed.

In 2019, the British Council in Pakistan identified that the problems faced by older persons are a matter of urgency in Pakistan. It therefore commissioned the research project titled Moving from the Margins: Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Older Persons in Pakistan. The project is carried out by HelpAge International Pakistan led by Prof Zaidi in collaboration with international consultants (late) Silvia Stefanoni and Camilla Williamson from Development Action. The findings and recommendations of the research project provided essential data that fed into the drafting of this human rights bill.

The Vice Chancellor said "I feel very proud that my research on Pakistan's older population has led to a Legislative Law on senior citizens. I am proud of the 'societal impact' created by this research I wish to see this aspect gaining momentum in the work of our researchers at Government College

University Lahore"

He went on to say that the real challenge of the Government is the implementation, some provincial assemblies passed similar acts five years back but implementation is falling short. The Vice Chancellor quoted his research report, saying Pakistan's older population, which reached 12.5 million in 2019, would double by 2030 and would reach close to 40 million by 2050. "It is therefore imperative that the country responds urgently to the most critical needs of its older people and at the same time promotes more profound societal changes which creates age-friendly and enabling environments in which people of all ages can flourish," he said. Prof Zaidi believes that supporting older people and particularly older women to have a secure income through universal social pensions should be a priority in Pakistan. "Ensuring that health services are aligned to the health needs of the older population especially at the primary health care level is essential to assist older people to remain active in their communities," he said. The Vice Chancellor also mentioned that eliminating all forms of age discrimination and providing an environment in which older people are protected from violence and abuse will help them exercise their choices and contribute to society. The academic staff of GCU congratulated Prof Zaidi, saying, "He's leading them right from the front."

Development Projects at GCU worth 1.84 Billion

The Federal and Provincial Governments have initiated four development projects worth Rs 1,840.75 million for the uplift of Government College University Lahore. Out of the highest ever development funds allocation for GCU, a budget of Rs. 410 million is allocated for the fiscal year 2021-22 only.

The Federal Ministry of Planning and Development approved Rs. 1158 million for Phase-II of the GCU's New Campus. The other three projects are reflected in Punjab's Annual Development Program (ADP) 2021-22. The total costs of Girls' Hostel, Swimming Pool and Sufism Center are Rs. 440 million, Rs. 143.278 million and Rs. 100 million, respectively. The most prominent of these projects is the establishment of Sheikh Abul Hasan Ash-Shadhili Sufism, Science & Technology Research Centre. The construction of girls' hostel at the main campus will also meet a long time demand from GCU's female students, and the provision of swimming pool will offer great opportunities for GCU to meet the international standards of swimming competitions.

The Phase-II of the New Campus at Kala Shah Kaku will substantiate the academic and extracurricular activities.

The Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said that GCU is the most prestigious and the oldest seat of higher learning in Pakistan but it has



been long ignored by the consecutive governments in terms of student facilities and expansion. He said that a campus built only for a few thousand students has now more than 14,000 students studying in more than 30 disciplines. He added that the female students from all over Pakistan come to GCU for higher studies but unfortunately it has only one girls' hostel with a capacity of fewer than 200 students, due to which our hundreds of students have to live in private female hostels, away from the campus. The Vice-Chancellor said that new four-storeyed girls' hostel

would be constructed at the University's Science Block with a capacity of accommodating more than three hundred students. The swimming pool is also a need of the hour.

Talking about the Sufism Centre, Prof Zaidi said that the centre is an initiative of the First Lady of Pakistan, Mrs Bushra Imran, and it will conduct research in the fields of Islamic philosophy, Sufism, spirituality, comparative study of religion and mystic traditions besides providing a platform for inter-faith dialogues at national and international level.

Phase I of the GCU New Campus (KSK) Completed

The Government College University Lahore has successfully completed Phase-I of the construction in its 400 acres New Campus at the Kala Shah Kaku with a cost of Rs. 997.608 million. In the first phase, one academic block for 1200 students, a boys' hostel with a capacity of 300 students, an administrative block, residential apartments for the staff and other facilities including road infrastructure have been constructed besides sewerage and roads infrastructure.

The Vice Chancellor GCU, Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said that the academic activities have already started in the University's new campus; and

BA/BSc (Hons.) students from the university's eight departments, including Physical Education, Botany, Zoology, Chemistry, Biotechnology, Psychology, and Fine Arts have been attending their classes in the Academic Block of the new campus. He said that with the completion of Phase-I of new campus, about 2,000 students will study on this campus from the upcoming academic year i.e. September 2021. He also said that GCU is anticipating funds from the Federal government for the Phase-II of the construction of the New Campus. He added that the Phase-II is very crucial for smooth functioning of this campus as it

involves completion of admin block, external development works related to the road network and water supplies and provision of an on-campus residence to the staff and operational transportation facilities. Prof Zaidi said that the second phase also includes a three-storeyed academic block and a hostel. Prof Zaidi said that currently GCU botanists and engineers are working tirelessly for the beautification of the new campus. The Vice Chancellor hopes that by September 2021, the Faculty of Life Sciences would be fully operational at the New Campus.

Most Exceptional Year 2021



GCU Celebrates Founders' Day

The Government College University Lahore has turned 157. Founded on January 1st, 1864, in the Haveli of Raja Dhyani Singh in the Walled City Lahore as the liberal arts and Science College, it served as a nourishing stream to the generations of talented individuals. A grand ceremony was held at GCU's Amphitheatre where the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi (T.I.) cut the Founders' Day cake along with the academic and administrative heads and students.

On the occasion, the Vice-Chancellor said that we have entered 2021 with a renewed hope of health and prosperity. "The challenges of the past year offered us the

opportunity to show our true resilience and it leaves us stronger to face any such calamity in the future," he mentioned. The VC promised that starting with 2021 the next few years would be among the best years of the GC University in terms of offering the quality of education, research and innovation, and good governance. He presented his five-point agenda which included improving the quality of education, research for the betterment of society, bridging the gap between industry and academia, modernisation / digitalisation of admissions, appointments, and other systems, and promotion of sports and co-curricular activities.





Oath-Taking Ceremony of the Old Ravians Union takes place at the Governor House

An oath-taking ceremony of the new Executive Committee of the Old Ravians Union (ORU) was held at Governor's House Lahore on April 10th. The Governor of Punjab, Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar administered oath to the newly-elected committee while Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi was also present. DIG Security & Administration Special Branch, Lahore Jahanzeb Nazir Khan was sworn in as the new President of the Union while Dr Abdul Basit and Advocate Syed Hussain Rizvi took oath for the posts of General Secretary and Senior Vice President. Speaking on the occasion, the Governor of Punjab said that the young and energetic team of ORU would support the University

administration and would play a leading role in the development of their alma mater. He said that the vice chancellors in all public sector universities are appointed purely on merit, and syndicate members and officials of these universities should support them. The governor further added that he has also issued directions for the regular appointment of Registrars, Treasurers and other officials in universities on merit. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi congratulated the new Executive Committee of the Union, saying that the elections are over now so are the divisions and groups. Prof Zaidi highlighted that the alumni associations of all major universities of the world play a

significant role in the development of their Alma Mater, and this is what he wishes to see happening in GC University as well. The vice chancellor wished that all the old Ravians should come together for reviving the glory of Government College University to be one of the top most higher education institutes of the world.



Prof Dr Shahid Mahmood Highlights the significance of Applied Research

The Chairman Pakistan Science Foundation's (PSF) Prof Dr Shahid Mahmood Baig while addressing the academic and administrative heads during his visit to Government College University laid stress on the applied research. He said that there is a realization in government and bureaucracy that the role of science and technology in resolving economic, social, and environmental problems is crucial; attaining scientific knowledge and appropriate technologies was a key to achieve economic prosperity. He proudly mentioned that ventilators developed from the funding of the Pakistan Science Foundation have

reduced their cost to one-fifth. The chairman PSF emphasized that the foundation is supporting COVID19 related research projects on war footings and if any researcher has potential, and project or research idea should contact him directly. The Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi and the Deans of Science and technology were also present on the occasion. The Vice-Chancellor said that GCU faculty had been doing good quality research despite the scarcity of resources. He hoped that this meeting with the PSF chairman would help GCU's faculty in understanding the criteria, procedures, and technicalities to get

research projects funded from the Pakistan Science Foundation and other donor agencies.





GCU Observes Kashmir Solidarity Day

A seminar was held at the Government College University, Lahore to mark the Kashmir Solidarity Day and highlighted the fascist oppression let loose by Indian armed forces on our innocent Kashmiri brothers and sisters. Mian Iqbal Salahuddin, an illustrious Pakistani socialite, philanthropist, and maternal grandson of Allama Iqbal, was the chief guest at the seminar. The event was manifested by the fiery speeches of the University's orators and an Urdu play highlighting the struggle of Kashmiris for independence. Mr Salahuddin urged politicians, media, academicians, and civil society to understand the enormity of what befell

Kashmiri people and their women and expose the crimes of Indian barbarian regimes. The Vice Chancellor Prof Zaidi announced that, that this year, GCU would establish the Centre for Excellence on Kashmir Issues where eminent researchers would compile the data of human rights violations in the valley and deliberate upon the ways, means, and foreign policy strategies for independence in the light of teachings of Allama Iqbal. He paid tribute to the members of GCU Kashmir Society which played an instrumental role in promoting research on the Kashmir issue and organizing debates to highlight the Indian



autocracies in the occupied valley. Writer Prof. Iqbal Sindhu, Chairman Kashmir Commission of Pakistan Rai Muhammad Nawaz Khan Khari, political analyst Salman Abid, and senior journalist Salman Ghani also addressed the seminar. Nazir Ahmad Music Society also presented Milli-e-Naghmas on the occasion. The seminar was organized by the GCU Kashmir Society and followed by an on-campus solidarity walk led by the Vice-Chancellor and a poster exhibition on the issue of Kashmir.

Commandant Pakistan Naval Academy Sohail Ahmad Azmie visits GCU

Commodore Sohail Ahmad Azmie, Commandant Pakistan Naval Academy Karachi visited the Government College University and addressed an awareness seminar on the importance of maritime security and its role in Pakistan's economy. The Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi conducted the seminar which was attended by faculty, deans, chairpersons and heads of academic and

administrative departments, and presidents of students' societies at the Bukhari Auditorium.

On the occasion, Commodore Azmie said that Pakistan Navy is a force with air, ground, water, and sub-surface capabilities. He briefed the participants about the hierarchy and functioning of the Pakistan Navy as well its warships and submarines. The Vice-Chancellor concluded the session with a note of thanks to



Commodore Azmie. The seminar was followed by a question and answers session.

GCU Recommends Honorary PhD Degree to the Social Worker Anwaar Khan

The Government College University Lahore has recommended to the Chancellor/Governor Punjab that an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Philosophy may please be conferred upon the country's one of the top philanthropists and a dedicated social worker, Mr. Anwaar Ahmad Khan, for his meritorious services to the society. The agenda for conferment of honorary degree was placed before the Syndicate through circulation under section 2(i) of GCU Business Rules 2004. The Syndicate via majority

decision approved the agenda. Anwaar A. Khan's Ghani Foundation spends over Rs. 400 million per annum on marriages of daughters of laborer class, serving food to 10,000 families daily, provision of financial assistance to widows and orphans, operating 175 first aid points in glass markets, and provision of clean drinking water nationwide. He is also a member Board of Directors of a 600-bed hospital that provides indoor and outdoor free medical treatment to over one million

individuals annually. He is General Secretary of Jamiat Taleem ul Quran Trust which is providing basic and Islamic education to 80,000 students in over 2000 maktabs and 69 jails. The Vice-Chancellor GCU, Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi emphasized the fact that Mr. Anwaar A. Khan did exemplary social work for people affected by COVID-19 last year, and this honorary degree would be a token of the recognition for his great services to society.



Intermediate Sports Gala at GCU



The fourth annual sports gala for intermediate students began at Government College University with a grand march ceremony at the university's Oval Ground. The Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi and President Punjab Olympics Association, Secretary Energy, Aamir Jan inaugurated the sports gala which was also attended by the senior faculty members and intermediate students. On the occasion, Mr Aamir Jan

pledged that the association would provide trainings and scholarships to the outstanding sportsmen of GCU. He said that sports competitions always prove to be a source of Health and excitement for the students and we have the responsibility to provide them the incentives. Prof Zaidi said that sports and co-curricular activities are as important as academic achievements for the overall grooming and personality

development of students, so they should be widely promoted to curb the inclination of youth towards negative and unhealthy activities. He mentioned that eight games including football, basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and tug of war are included in the intermediate games this year. Later, the tug-of-war contests were held on the first day of the sports gala.

Inter-University Gymnastic Championship at GCU

The three-day Inter-University Gymnastic Championship began at Government College University under the auspices of the Higher Education Commission. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi was the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony which was attended by the Directors of Sports from different public and private sector universities. Teams from eight universities including Punjab University, Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, GCU Lahore Superior University, and University of



Central Punjab participated in the championship. The Vice Chancellor said that sportsmen are the real ambassadors of a country, adding

that universities should act as nurseries to produce national and international sportsmen for Pakistan.



GCU Students Design Advertisement Campaigns

The final-year students of the Department of Fine Arts Government College University exhibited the awareness and advertisement campaigns on different brands and social issues, as their semester thesis. The campaign included a new food chain and e-shopping ideas, fashion brands, and a digital campaign to promote tolerance in

society. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi inaugurated the exhibition at the Salam Hall, while the Chairperson Department of Fine Arts Prof Dr Erfan Ullah Babar was also present. The Students of Bachelors in Fine Arts (Hons.) displayed their projects in the first instance which comprised of complete digital and print promotional material including

calendars, pamphlets, and social media pages for promotion of their brands and raising awareness about social issues.

The Vice-Chancellor appreciated the creative ideas of the students and directed the Chairperson to invite professionals from different national and multinational companies to visit the project display exhibition.

GCU Holds Workshop on the Professional Development Skills

One-day workshop was held at Government College University Lahore on "Professional Development Skills" to make graduating students aware of the banking sector trends before landing in the job market. The workshop was organized by the Career Guidance and Placement Centre (CG & PC) in collaboration with the Faysal Bank. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi chaired the workshop which was addressed by Muhammad Zeeshan, a banking sector executive, and led by the Placement Officer Zainab Sanik. Mr Zeeshan explained the benefits of comprehensive research on the company profile,

making an attractive resume, creating a personal profile, and equipping one's self for written and interview tests. He also briefed the students about their hiring procedures and job opening programs. He stated the initiatives of Faysal bank for hiring eighteen different positions. The Vice Chancellor commended the initiative of the Career Guidance and Placement Centre and emphasized that students must work on being a good human and must contribute as an asset in society. The ceremony was closed by a vote of thanks from the In-charge CG&PC Dr. Jamal Abdul Nasir.



Old Ravians XI win Hockey Match by 4-1 at GCU

A festival hockey match was played between Old Ravians XI and Vice-Chancellor XI at the Oval Ground of Government College University Lahore. The Old Ravians XI won the hockey match by 4-1. Eminent international hockey players including Pakistan former President Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) Akhtar Rasool Ch, Chief Executive Asian Hockey Federation Tayyab Akram, Ch. Manzoor Senior, Manzoor Junior, and Olympian Tahir Zaman took part in the match at their alma mater. The Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi, Chairman Sports Board Ammad Uppal, and Director Sports



Muhammad Waseem were also present.

On the occasion, the Vice-Chancellor pledged to make GCU one of the finest sports nurseries in Pakistan and producing and grooming sportsmen for national teams in all sports. He



appreciated the participation of a large number of Old Ravian Olympians in the festival hockey match, saying that they are the pride of GCU. He announced establishing Hockey Complex at the new campus of GCU to revive this sport among the students of GCU.



Seminar on Women's Role in Science and Technology Held at GCU

The speakers of the seminar emphasized the need of empowering women by providing them equal opportunities in science and technology so that they can polish themselves academically, socially, and professionally and play role in the development of Pakistan. The seminar was organised by the Ravian Forensic Society and Dunicliff Chemical Society to celebrate the International Day of Women's Role in Science and Technology.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi chaired the seminar which was addressed by Dr Farhat Yasmin from the University of Engineering and Technology Lahore, Dr. Sammia Shahid from University of Management and Technology,

Lahore, and Dr Shaghrif from Curtin University Australia. Dr Farhat Yasmin, Tech-Women Fellow 2019, highlighted the importance of being a woman in a society where gender discrimination is witnessed frequently. She encouraged the young female students to set their goals and aim for the stars. Dr Sammia Shahid, Dean Research

UMT Lahore shared her lifelong struggle and dedication to stand out in the field of sciences. She enlightened the students with the percentage of women scientists and researchers working in the world, and asked the young female Ravians to participate more and make the most of their opportunities present in their institution.

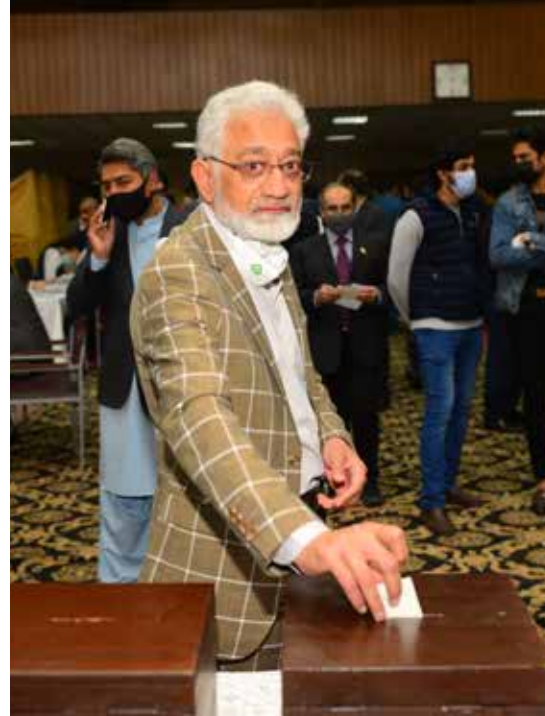


VC Incentivizes Faculty to Research for the Benefits of Society

Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi, the Vice Chancellor GCU has emphasized the need to motivate the faculty in universities to research for the benefit of society and economic prosperity instead of just for the appointments and promotions. He was addressing a meeting with the members of Education Reporters Association (ERA) at GCU. The Vice Chancellor mentioned that

he had initiated a research award that would be given to one teacher from each faculty on the basis of the research that would benefit society or play a vital role in the country's economic development. He concluded that the creative and intellectual apparatuses of GCU have been well engaged in order to make GCU the topmost educational institution of the country.

ERA members Saima Warraich, Azhar ul Haq Wahid, Imran Younas, Shafique Sharif, Arshad Mehdi, Usman Ghani, Omer Khalil, Main Ali, Ali Arshad, Faizan Warriach, Kahsif Daudi, Sana ullah Nagra, Bhuran ud Din, Nasir Ch, Main Amer and Hassan Abbas were also present.



Old Ravians Union Elections held at GCU

The much-anticipated elections 2021 of Old Ravians Union (ORU) were held at Government College University Lahore. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi constituted a four-member Election Commission headed by the former Judge, Lahore High Court, and Chairman Red Crescent Society Justice (R) Sheikh Ahmed Farooq to ensure fair, and transparent elections. As many as 30 alumni of GCU are contesting for 14 prestigious posts of the Union for which polling will be held from 10 am to 5 pm at the Bukhari auditorium. Around 9300 members of the union are expected to cast votes to get their favourite candidates elected. Eminent Old Ravians SSP Jahanzeb Nazir,

advocate Rana Asad Ullah Khan, and college teacher Syed Abbas Haider were contesting for the coveted post of the President, Old Ravians Union, while Mr Tayyab Rizvi and Sajid Atta Goraya were the candidates for the slot of the Senior Vice President Brig(R) Khawaja Naseem Iqbal and Dr Abrar Ilahi Malik were elected unopposed on the seats of Executive Member (1940s) and Executive Member (1950s) respectively. Dr Abdul Basit and Mr Asad Ullah Gondal were competing for the post of General Secretary, while Mr Jahangir Iqbal Khan and Muhammad Aslam Bhatti were contesting for the slot of Finance Secretary Dr Tanvir Hussain Bhatti and Mian Sohail Anwar were contesting for

the post of Vice President (Male), while Ms Rabia Afzal Wahla and Dr Haleema Naz Afridi were the candidates for the slot of Vice President (Female). The contests for the posts of joint secretaries were Hafiz Haroon Javaid, Syed Faizan Abbass, Usman Saeed, Dr Kiran Khursheed and Ms Roheen Rafique. Dr Muhammad Zakareya Butt, Muhammad Javed Khan, M Anwar-ul Haque, Mehmood, Saeed Rawan, Altaf Ahmad Sukhera, Muhammad Amjad Watoo, Ziauddin Khan Burki, Syed Muhammad Farhad Tirmizi, Muhammad Asif Ali Khan, Sultan Nisar Soraya, Fakhar Hayat Khan and Abdur Rehman Babar were contesting for the seats of Executive Members in their respective decades.

Jahanzeb Nazir Khan elected as President Old Ravians Union

The members of the Old Ravians Union of Government College University elected the new Executive Committee of the Union for session 2021-2023. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Jahanzeb Nazir Khan has been elected as the new president of the Old Ravians Union. Syed Tayyab Hussain Rizvi won the seat of Senior Vice President while Dr Tanvir Hussain Bhatti and Ms Rabia Afzal Wahla elected Vice President (Male) and Vice President (Female) respectively. Dr Abdul Basit won the seat of Secretary General. Muhammad Jangair Iqbal Khan elected Secretary Finance. Usman Saeed and Dr Kiran Khursheed secured the seats of joint secretaries. Dr Muhammad Zakraya Butt, M Anwar-ul Haque, Altaf Ahmad Sukhera, Syed Muhammad Farhad Tirmizi, Sultan Nisar Soraya and Abdur Rehman Babar are elected Executive Members in their respective



decades.

The Vice Chancellor University of Health Sciences Professor Dr Javed Akram, VC King Edward Medical University Prof Dr Khalid Masood Gondal and a large number of other senior bureaucrats, politicians and businessmen cast their votes at the Union's elections. The Vice Chancellor GCU Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi congratulated the new executive committee of the union and hoped that

they would actively participate in the progress and development of their alma mater. He added that all Old Ravians are part and parcel of GCU and hopefully continue to play their role in development of the alma mater. ORU Chief Election Commissioner Justice (R) Farooq Ahmad Shiekh announced the results.



Federal Minister for Education, Shafqat Mehmood Concluded the 120th Annual Sports at GCU

120th Annual Sports of Government College University began on 18th February, 2021 in a grand inaugural ceremony at GCU's New Campus in Kala Shah Kaku. The Opening Ceremony included a vibrant and fervent march past and athletics meet. The GCU athletes took oath that they would take part in annual games abiding by the rules and in the true spirit of sportsmanship for the glory of sports and the honour of their teams. Eminent Old Ravian and Chairman Planning and Development, Punjab Abdullah Khan Sumbal was the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony. The event was attended by a large number of local and foreign students and faculty members. About 26 contingents participated in the grand march past, while the musicians hailing from GCU Nazir Ahmed Music Society (NAMS) presented special anthems.

Ali Haider, a student of Physical Education, won the 3000 Meters Race, at the second day of Annual Sports which was marked by the athletic competitions among students, faculty and staff members. Ms Sehar Fatima from Physical Education Department won the Long Jump (girls), while her department fellow Qaisar Abbas won the Discus-Throw. The Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi, GCU Sports Board Chairman Amad Upal,



Director Sports Muhammad Waseem Akhtar and other senior faculty members gave away medals to the winning students and departmental teams.

The three day Annual Sports concluded with a colourful ceremony at the university's Oval Ground marked by the Gymkhana events including Girls Chatti Race, Cricket Ball Throw, Staff Children Race, Wheel Barrow Race, Four legged Race, 60 Meter Race for special students and Sack Race. About 8,000 students, teachers, staff members and Old Ravians participated this year in the more than 70 different competitions of GCU annual sports gala. Maliha Yousaf and Hadiqa Nasir, both of Physical Education Department, won the title of Best Female Athlete of



GCU for their extraordinary performance in different sports competitions. Muhammad Waseem, another student of Physical Education Department was declared the Best Male Athlete. Federal Minister for Education Shafqat Mehmood was the chief guest at the concluding ceremony of Annual Sports.

The Vice Chancellor GCU Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi, VC King Edward Medical University Prof Dr Khalid Masood Gondal, VC Home Economics University Dr Kanwal Ameen, former Vice Chancellor University of the Punjab Prof Dr Mujahid Kamran and former Chairman Punjab Higher Education Commission Prof Dr Nizam ud Din attended the concluding ceremony.





Leadership Training by the Anti-Narcotics Force

The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Academy, Punjab organized an intense and essential multi-sectorial leadership training for the students of Government College University. The members of the Anti-Narcotics Society and presidents of other leading societies of GCU including Debating Society, Dramatics Club and Kashmir Society also participated in the training. The objective of the session was to train the students about the working and structure of human brain,



physical and social environment and their effects on the brain, most significantly emphasizing on the information related to drug demand, supply and trafficking within and



outside the educational institutions. The students were also briefed about the role of Anti-Narcotics Force in fighting the menace of drug abuse and prevention strategies.

President Azad Jammu Kashmir visits GCU

Sardar Masood Khan, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) visited Government College University. He encouraged the Pakistani youth to excel in their fields, saying that a strong, united and economically prosper Pakistan guarantees the independence of Kashmir. The president urged youth to develop the advance skills of communication and write posts and blogs to expose the inhumanity and cruelty of Indian regime in Kashmir. He stated that about twelve to fifteen boys under the age of 23 daily were brutally martyred in the occupied valley. The students of GCU Debating Society, Dramatics



Club and Music Society made very expressive and heartening

presentations on the contemporary situation of their Kashmiri brethren.

Chancellor approves the Service Statutes of GCU

The Vice Chancellor and Academic Staff Association of GCU Lahore expressed gratitude to the Honourable Chancellor, Governor Punjab Chaudhry

Muhammad Sarwar as he approves service statutes for regular appointments for the posts of Registrar, Treasurer and Controller of Examinations. The Vice Chancellor

Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi welcomed the development and endeavoured to set up a search committee for the posts in consultation with the Syndicate.



Pashtun Cultural Festival held at GCU

Playing the traditional music instruments including rubab, wearing the culture dresses, performing the traditional dance Attan and peace walk, the students of Government College University celebrated the Pashtun Cultural Festival on the campus with enthusiasm and passion. The event

was aimed at promoting diversity and inclusivity along with cultural integration among students and also to showcase the diversely beautiful Pashtun Culture to the external world.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi inaugurated the festival which was marked by traditional food

stalls, drama and live music. However, the traditional dance performances by groups of students remained the most enthralling event of the day. The venue was decorated in traditional Pashtun style. The day concluded with a very appealing and emotional theatrical performance.

Workshop on the Science of Temperaments at GCU

A workshop was held at the Government College University on "Science of Temperaments". The Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi and motivational speaker Sahibzada Syed Israr-Ul-Hassan shared their experience and knowledge with the university faculty. The speakers discussed human temperament from religious, psychological, and social perspectives.

Syed Israr-Ul-Hassan talked about "Do You Know Your Self", saying that the scope of discovery within the human being is as vast as the cosmos itself. He emphasized on the message of Dr Allama Iqbal about "khudi" which brings to the importance of self-realization and the role of human leadership. The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the need for holding such workshops every



month for the character-building and personality development of students, faculty members, and staff.

Tariq Farani Center for Music established at GCU

In a heart-warming tribute was paid to the great music maestro, Tariq Suleman Khan Faraani at the Government College University Lahore and established "Tariq Salman Khan Farani Center for Music" in his office of "Nazir Ahmed Music Society", besides erecting a portrait of the late music teacher and in-charge NAMS, in Bukhari Auditorium.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi along with the eminent classical singer Ustad Hamid Ali Khan inaugurated the center named after the music whiz, the late Prof Tariq Suleman Khan Farani, for his 50 years long illustrious

contributions for the promotion of music at GCU. Musician singer Jawad Ahmad and family members of Prof Farani were also present at the occasion along with many eminent artists and students of Tariq Faraani. The inauguration was followed by a ceremony, organised by the GCU Nazir Ahmad Music Society (NAMS), to pay a glowing tribute to Mr. Tariq Farani for his invaluable services for the art and music at GCU Lahore. The students presented many of melodious compositions by their legendary teacher and mentor Tariq Suleman Khan Faraani.



Female Yoga Classes commence at GCU

The Government College University Sports Complex has initiated regular yoga classes for the female students and faculty members. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi inaugurated the yoga classes entitled "Let's Get in Shape" organized by the Directorate of Sports in collaboration with the

Pakistan Yoga Council (PYC). On the occasion, the Vice Chancellor pledged to make 2021 one of the best years in the history of GCU. Chairman Sports Board Dr. Ummad Uppal and senior faculty members also attended the Opening Ceremony of yoga classes.





GCU forms First Time Girls Cricket Club

The Directorate of Sports at Government College University has formed its first ever Girls Cricket Club. The distinguished Ravians and international cricket players Sidra Amin and Ayesha Zafar will work as the mentors and coaches of the female cricket team. The announcement was made by the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi at the Annual Inter-Departmental

sports where Sidra Amin and Ayesha Zafar, our national women's cricket team players, were the Guests of Honour.

The Vice Chancellor has laid great stress on providing equal opportunities to women in all fields of life including sports. He said that students who play sports have higher levels of confidence and lower levels of depression. The Vice

Chancellor directed the GCU Sports Board to provide equal attention and facilities to the University's Girls Cricket team and hold their cricket camps. Faculty members Sumera Khalil (English Department) and Kanita Shah (Institute of Industrial Biotechnology) are appointed as President and Vice President of the Women Cricket Club.

GCU celebrates Baloch Culture Day

The Baloch Culture Day was celebrated at Government College University with great zeal and fervour, as a large number of male and female students wearing traditional Balochi dresses, turbans and shalwar qameez and waistcoats paraded through the Bukhari Lawns, performed folk dances and sang Balochi songs. The Vice Chancellor inaugurated the Baloch Culture Day and appreciated the enthusiasm of the young students at GCU in removing the misconceptions, protecting and promoting awareness about their

cultures, values and heritage. He said that celebrating culture days are pertinent for spreading awareness, promoting cultural integration and making efforts to keep alive all customs, traditions, cultures and unique life-styles of people of the province. He announced the formation of university level Baloch, Pukhton, Kahsmiri and Sindhi cultural student societies at GCU. Later, Vice Chancellor led an on campus student walk in connection with the Baloch Culture Day.



Donation of 40,000 Plants to GCU

Sophia Mahmood Ali Foundation has donated as many as 40,000 indigenous plants to the Horticulture Society of Government College University to beautify 367 acres new campus of GCU at Kala Shah Kaku(KSK). The donation was made in the memory of Sophia alias Gulae, a beautiful girl who loves plants and roses, but she unfortunately lost her life at the age of 24. Dr Ajaz and Mrs Shazia Ajaz, the Gulae's parents, made this donation of plants to GCU. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi inaugurated the month-long mega plantation drive New Campus at KSK where he along with faculty members and students of Botany Department, Sustainable Development Study Center and Chemistry Department planted the donated plants of Moringa, Neem (Azadirachta indica), Suhajna, Rose, Gaua and Sheesham. The Vice

Chancellor assured that this mega planation drive would have a huge positive impact on the environment of whole Kala Shah Kaku and Shiekhpora area. He expressed gratitude to GCU's Horticultural Society members and their advisor Dr Zaheer-ud-Din Khan for their tireless efforts for this mega planation drive that would completely change the landscape. Ms. Saliha Leghari, a board member of Sophia Mahmood Ali (SMA) Foundation, told students that the Gulae was a vibrant and loving human being, and her parents would like to keep her memory alive through this foundation. She said that trees are of invaluable importance to their environment and to human well-being; they give us clean air to breathe, shade and food. District Forest Officer Muhammad Saleem, Chief



Conservative Forest Officer Faisal Haroon and eminent botanist Syed Ajmal Rahim also attended the inauguration of the ceremony of plantation drive.



GCU Pays tribute to Ali Sadpara

A candlelight vigil was held at the Amphitheatre of Government College University to pay tribute to Pakistan's legendary mountain climber, Muhammad Ali Sadpara, who lost his life during an expedition to summit the world's second-highest peak, K2, in the winter season. The Vice-Chancellor

Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi also participated in the candle vigil organized by the students from Gilgit Baltistan. Sajid Ali Sadpara, the son of Ali Sadpara, also joined the candlelight vigil through a video link. A one minute silence was observed in the memory of Ali Sadpara and his fellow mountaineers John Snorri and

Juan Pablo. The Vice Chancellor talked about the importance of remembering the lives of national heroes, saying when we remember heroes such as Ali Sadpara, their life stories inspire the youth and give them courage and motivation to do something of a cause for their country.

Dr Aman Ullah's Lecture on RASTA

Under the patronage of Mehbub ul Haq Economic Society (MHES), an insightful and informative lecture was held at the Government College University which was delivered by Dr. Aman Ullah, the Joint Chief Economist for Planning and Development Department, Government of Punjab. The Vice Chancellor Prof Asghar Zaidi, Chairperson Department of

Economics, Prof Dr Babar Aziz and senior faculty members were also present. Dr Aman Ullah presented on the importance of multi-year competitive grants program for policy-oriented research in Pakistan titled 'Research for Social Transformation and Advancement' (RASTA) grants and shared the information that how these could be achieved focusing on the real issues of the society.



Seminar on the Role of Women in a Male-dominated Society

In commemoration of International Women's Day, a seminar on the role of women in a male-dominated society was at GCU to discuss the different stereotypes and challenges faced by females in society ranging from an uncomfortable sense of being viewed as less rational, excessively sensitive and less capable of performing certain activities, to the difficulty of reconciling work along with motherhood. Eminent jurist Justice

(R) Nasira Javed Iqbal, Lahore High Court judge Hon'ble Justice Ms Ayesha A. Malik, human rights advocate Ms. Anoo Shay Shaigon addressed the seminar chaired by the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi. The seminar was organized by the University's Quaid-e-Azam Political Science Society. The speakers stressed that there are still many barriers in the way of women's progression which reinforces the importance of

present-day gender studies. They asked women to fear none, raise their head high and make their own way in all fields of life.



"Are Women Marginalized in Pakistan?"

A Panel discussion organized at GCU

A panel discussion titled as "Are Women Marginalized in Pakistan?" was held at Government College University in connection with International Women's Day. Prof. Dr. Rubeena Zakar Director Institute of Social and Cultural Studies Punjab University, Ms Malieka Farah Deeba Chairperson Law Department Bahria University and Imran Ali Sultan CEO Lahore Waste Management

Company (LWMC) participated in an hour-long discussion chaired by the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi.

On the occasion, the Vice Chancellor stressed that youth has great responsibility to bring in change in our society; they should not get challenged and worried by any expression of opinion and protest. The panel discussion was organized



by the Department of Philosophy, Government College University.



Sufi Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum Conference

A two-day "Sufi Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum" Conference was organized by the Department of Persian at Government College University. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar chaired the inaugural session, which was also addressed by Reza Nazeri Iranian Consul General, Jafar Ronas Director

Khana-e-Farhang Iran and Dr Fouzia Tabassum, the granddaughter of Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum. Sufi Tabassum joined Government College Lahore in 1931 and retired as Head of the Persian Department in 1954. He taught three generations of students, including Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Noon Meem Rashid and Ahmad

Nadeem Qasmi, who later became renowned poets. Noted writer Mazoor Afaq, anchorperson Dr. Umer Adil, senior advocate Zia Haider Rizvi and Dr Iqbal Shahid Chairperson Department of Persian also addressed the conference.

Old Ravian donates Rs. 2 Million to GCU-EFT

Dr. Farooq Ahmed, an expatriate Old Ravian, has donated PKR Two million to Government College University Lahore Endowment Fund Trust (GCU-EFT) for the scholarships of deserving students. The Vice Chancellor and Chairman GCU-EFT, Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi and Mr. Zafar Iqbal President Executive committee

GCU-EFT expressed gratitude to Dr Farooq Ahmed, saying that the University would initiate two perpetual golden scholarships from his generous donation. The Vice Chancellor added that this was the second donation of rupees two million from Dr Farooq Ahmed, and now his total valuable contribution

to the trust stood at four million rupees. He hoped that this donation will inspire other Old Ravians as well because this is the most exemplary way to pay back the love and invaluable contribution of one's alma mater in one's life and support the financially-challenged students.

Sahir Ludhianvi's Centennial Celebrations

An international conference was held at Government College University to celebrate the 100th birth anniversary of eminent poet Sahir Ludhianvi; remembering his timeless poetry and passionate lyrics for Indian films. Eminent poet and playwright Mansoor Afaq chaired the conference's inaugural session which was also joined by the renowned Indian writer and poet Javaid Akhtar through a live video link from India.

Speakers from four countries including the UK, USA and Sweden participated in the conference. The need for a literary corridor between Pakistan and India for promotion of Urdu language was stressed upon by the worthy Vice Chancellor GCU Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi in his inaugural address. He proposed that the corridor could be established through the GCU Lahore to connect the poets, writers and critics from



both sides. He announced to establish a new student body, GCU Bano Qaudsia Society, for gender sensitization. He said a gender sensitive society would work to raise awareness and enhance opportunity and status for both men and women. Javed Akhtar said Sahir Ludhianvi was known as the "people's poet" as his writings reflected their loves, sufferings, angst and joy. He also worked

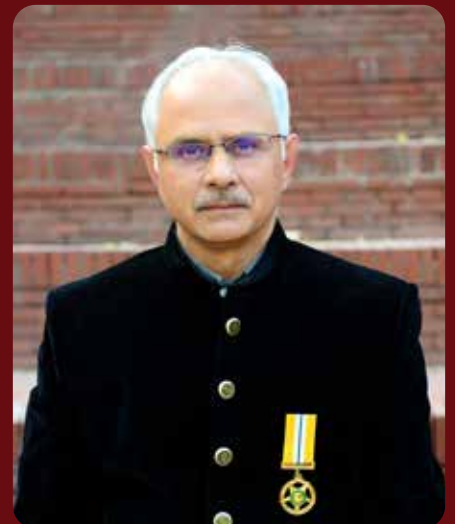
extensively as a film song lyricist, and always gave same energy, concentration and respect to his filmi songs which he used to give to his other writings. The conference was concluded with an evening of Ghazal Singing in which the celebrated old Ravian, Dr Amjad Pervaiz along with the students of NAMS paid a singing tribute to Sahir Ludhianvi.



Tamgha-i-Imtiaz Awarded to Vice Chancellor GCU

Professor Dr Asghar Ziadi, the Vice Chancellor GCU was conferred upon the "Tamgha-i-Imtiaz" by the Governor Punjab Chaudhar Muhammad Sarwar at a graceful ceremony at the Governor House. Prof Zaidi was awarded Tamgha-i-Imtiaz for his meritorious contributions in the field of research and education especially attributing to his innovative research on population ageing. Working along the lines of the Human Development Index of Dr Mahbub ul Haq, Prof Zaidi developed two global indexes, namely Global AgeWatch Index and Active Ageing Index. These indexes provided insights in studying the well-being of older populations around the world. His contributions

were also recognised for the first of its kind study of dementia experiences in Pakistan with Alzheimer's Pakistan and in developing a nation-wide survey of human rights of older population for British Council Islamabad. The Academic Staff Association of Government College University, faculty members and Old Ravians congratulated Prof. Zaidi on the tremendous achievements. Prof Zaidi's reward was ascribed to his international research works on population ageing, on older people and people with disabilities. The Government of Shanghai also awarded him the 1,000 Foreign Experts Scholarship in 2019.



25th GCU Parliamentary Style Debating Championship (online)

GCU Debating Society conducted 25th GCU Parliamentary Style Debating Championship online in which more than 60 teams and adjudicators from Pakistan, India and Malaysia took part. LGS IZMIR and FCCU bagged trophies in English and Urdu University category respectively, while City School Ravi clinched the title in both English and Urdu U-19 category.

The GCU debating society made the lockdown crisis an opportunity by opening contest to international competitors. GCU alumnus and Pakistan's UN representative Zulqarnain Chheena chaired the Urdu Final.





GCU Introduces a New Student Advisory System

The Government College University Lahore is introducing a new student advisory system on the pattern of leading global universities to ensure that informed and updated academic advice is available all the time to every student of the University. As per the new system, the University would assign an academic advisor from the faculty to each undergraduate and postgraduate student. "Academic advisors will provide the students with advice on academic careers, scholarships, choice of subjects, and strategies to overcome problems related to learning," said the Vice Chancellor

Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi. He further explained that they are adopting this student-centric approach to improve their learning processes. "As a first step, our academic advisors will be responsible for an assessment of students' needs and as a response will also facilitate them by organizing workshops and conducting non-credit courses, in case, students require extra attention," Prof. Zaidi said. The Vice Chancellor directed that the heads of academic departments would ensure that advisors remain in regular contact with their advisees. "We will also give credit to the faculty members for



their advising services in the annual review reports, promotions and appointments," he concluded. The newly-established GCU-VC Secretariat will regularly take feedback from the academic heads and the students on the advisory system.

Donation of Personal Library to GCU

Mr. Tairq Khosa, a celebrated Old Ravian and former Inspector General of Police, Punjab, has donated his personal library comprising of highly valuable books to the Government College University, Lahore through the Old Ravians Union (ORU). Mr Jahanzeb Nazir Khan, the President ORU and current DIG Punjab Police, handed over the books to the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi at a congenial meeting. The General Secretary ORU, Dr Abdul Basit was also present at the occasion. The Vice Chancellor Prof. Zaidi

appreciated the valuable gift for GCU with the assurance that the students and faculty would immensely benefit from these books. He reiterated his strong conviction to strengthen the linkage between GCU and its alumni so that the Old Ravians could contribute towards the welfare of this historic citadel of higher learning. Prof. Zaidi said that the GCU library houses a collection of more than 150,000 books donated by around 60 reputed personalities including eminent names such as Prof. Sufi Tabassam, Prof. Qayyum Nazar,



Ashfaq Ahmad, Bano Qudsia and Malik Meraj Khalid. He also paid a glowing tribute to the services of Mr. Khosa, a celebrated civil servant whose services were acknowledged nationally as well as internationally.

A Generous Donation to the GCU Endowment Fund Trust

An alumnus of Government College University Lahore has set a great example by initiating a permanent scholarship to pay homage to one of his teachers. The scholarship consists of a generous donation of Rupees one million to the University's Endowment Fund Trust (EFT). Mr Danyal Barkat Syed, an overseas Pakistani and Old Ravian, donated this amount to GCU-EFT to initiate the Golden

Scholarship in memory of his mentor and teacher Muhammad Asghar. Mr Danyal wanted to pay gratitude to his teacher for making him capable of facing and solving challenges of the life and also making him a better human being. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi thanked Mr Danyal Barkat saying, "He has set a golden example for all the Old Ravians to follow." The Vice Chancellor further

said that the total donation of Mr Danyal Barkat to GCU-EFT stood at Rs. 1,100,000. Prof. Zaidi said that Muhammad Asghar Golden Scholarship would be given to a deserving student every year on merit. The President of the Government College University-EFT's Executive Committee Mr Iqbal Z Ahmed also commended this generous donation.



GCU to Establish a Grand Library at the New Campus Kala Shah Kaku

The Government College University Lahore has planned to establish one of Pakistan's largest libraries spread over 12.5 acres in its New Campus located at Kala Shah Kaku. The proposed state-of-the-art Library Complex will have capacity of more than 12,000 readers in its five blocks. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi confirmed that they have completed the initial working on the PC-1 of the project with the input from the university's library staff and Directorate of Planning

and Development. Prof Zaidi further added that modelled after the libraries in Cambridge (UK) and Singapore, the proposed library complex would have five large blocks with reading halls, individual study spaces, mini cinema, conference halls and archives section. "The computer and printing room will cater to 500 users at a time, while the library complex will also have a museum, an art gallery and cafeterias," he added. The Vice Chancellor explained that

the GCU Library Complex would strive for a minimal carbon footprint through the inclusion of green spaces, solar panels and a green roof, as well as through other design features which maximise the efficiency. Prof Zaidi explained that the funding for the library complex will be drawn from multiple sources. The Vice Chancellor also referred to developing a beautiful Oval Ground at the New Campus as well with the support of gardeners and staff from the Engineering Cell.

GCU Admits 235 Students to the Last Session of MA/MSc Programme

The Government College University Lahore has admitted 235 students to the last class of MA/MSc in nine disciplines including Chemistry, Mathematics, English and Political Science. A virtual orientation ceremony was held for the newly admitted scholars. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi talked in detail about the glorious traditions of the university since its inception as a college in 1864. The Deans of various faculties including Prof. Dr. Ahmad Adan and Prof Dr Raiz Ahmad were also present in the meeting. This is the last batch of MA/MSc programme which is discontinued by the University under

the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) guidelines. The Vice Chancellor said, "For the last 157 years, we have pursued, nurtured and celebrated excellence in a wide variety of disciplines, it is no coincidence that our motto "Courage to Know" is a call to students, faculty and staff members alike to realize their fullest potential and the University's mission. Our Ravians, young and old, have been contributing strongly to the shaping and development of Pakistan." The Vice Chancellor told the newly-admitted students that they have become part of GCU in very testing times of COVID-19.

He welcomed the students hoping that GCU would be able to resume its traditional method of on-campus teaching soon. The Controller of Examinations Muhammad Shahzad briefed the new class about their academic calendar and examinations rules, while Chief Librarian Muhammad Naeem pledged to make available all the library resources digitally during the lock-down. The Chief Proctor Dr Muhammad Ibrahim and the Adviser Student Affairs Mr Siddique Awan also addressed the orientation ceremony.



Inauguration of Student Cabinet for Narcotics Control at GCU

Federal Minister for Narcotics Control, Brigadier (r) Ijaz Ahmad Shah inaugurated a student government body for narcotics control titled "GCU Anti-Narcotics Society" (ANS), at the Government College University Lahore and administered the oath to the student cabinet. The GCU Anti-Narcotics Society (ANS) aims at incorporating, enabling, and empowering students through the process of leadership and capacity development to promote drug-free culture in the university. Brigadier (r) Ijaz Shah said a Centre of Excellence for Neurosciences would be established at the GC University Lahore on the directions of the Prime Minister Imran Khan. Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Regional

Directorate Commander Brig Rashid Minhas, Punjab government spokesperson Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy, and emeritus consultant psychiatrist, University of Sussex, UK Prof. Dr. Shakil Jehangir Malik also addressed the ceremony attended by senior faculty and students of GCU-ANS. President Insaaf Lawyers Forum Mr. Ansees Hashmi, members Punjab Assembly Ms. Talath Fatima Naqvi, Ms. Zainab Omair and Ms. Sadiqa Sahibdad, and MNA Dr. Seemi Bukhari also attended the ceremony.

The Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi said that GCU is the first university in Pakistan to establish on campus student government body to prevent drug abuse in the university. He called upon ANF to



initiate training for university students and faculty members, saying that drugs are a threat to campuses, students' well-being, and a hurdle to their educational mission.

GCU to Adopt Futuristic Online Education Policy

A team of academics from GCU, who graduated from the top most universities of the world, prepared the University's Online Education Policy after studying various models adopted by the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford, and Singapore. The policy is approved by the University's Academic Council. Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi, the Vice Chancellor of GCU said, "We can comfortably claim to have devised one of the best, forward-looking online education policies in South Asia. This policy is an integral part of our four-year strategic vision (2020-2023)." Online education policy focuses on four key elements: course readiness, teacher training, technology and students' preparedness. To ensure

the course readiness for online teaching, faculty members revised more than 1600 courses by adding e-resources, weekly distribution of lectures, grading strategies and reading material. All the courses are approved by relevant chairpersons and the Panel of Digital Learning Environment of the University. The Library staff worked 24/7 for providing the students and teachers with reading material by electronic and postal services. Recently established Directorate of Information Technology trained 800 faculty members and forty IT Coordinators for using the newly acquired online system. The University adopted a "Distance Learning Model" for the students who have internet connectivity issues.

"Despite having no prior experience, more than 800 faculty members and approximately 15,000 students shifted to online mode in a short time. We made sure that no students were left behind because of technology or humble background", Prof Zaidi said.

GCU conducts mid-term and final examinations online for all degree programmes in accordance with the online education policy. The Controller of Examinations said, "Teachers could take 24-hour or less open book exam, long essay and/or viva for assessment. Assessment strategies in each department vary depending on the requirement of the discipline. Teachers also check the submissions for plagiarism."



Capacity Building Workshops for the Staff at GCU

The Government College University Lahore has initiated an innovative capacity-building training programme for its administrative staff to create a more effective working environment suitable to meet the emerging challenges in the higher education sector. The University has engaged its linguists, psychologists and social scientists for the training of the staff of Registrar office, Examination Branch, Treasurer and Library.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said that the training programme is designed to encourage and nurture a culture of learning, to motivate the participants, to better appreciate the strengths and needs of the individuals and to train the employees to further improve their skillsets. "With a blend of theory and discussion, these workshops are offered in small groups for more effective and comfortable

participation and a long-term learning to improve work ethics," Prof Zaidi further added. The Vice Chancellor said that the main focus of the trainings is to develop and enhance soft-skills and to encourage participants to work for their self-improvement and also to help their co-workers. "These training workshops will be a permanent feature of our academic calendar from now on," he concluded.

Dismissal of the Petitions against Old Ravians' Union Elections

The Election Commission of the Old Ravians' Union (ORU) has dismissed the complaint filed by Rana Asad Ullah Khan and others challenging the validity of the ORU election with a majority of verdicts. Two of the three members of the Commission, Prof Dr Sultan Shah and Prof Dr Ahmad Adnan stated in an order that the election was conducted in accordance with the ORU Constitution and the Rules governing the ORU Election. They further said that the notifications issued by the Commission on

14.02.2021 and 16.02.2021 and the final notification issued by the Patron-in-Chief/Vice Chancellor GC University Lahore on 19.02.2021 are upheld. Thus, the newly elected ORU Executive Committee comprising the elected representatives/office bearers of the Union are legally authorized to exercise all the executive and financial powers entrusted to them by the ORU Constitution.

Prof Adnan and Prof Shah pointed out that the quorum required for the hearing by the Honourable Justice

(R) Sheikh Farooq had not been maintained and the arguments on the maintainability of the complaint have also not been submitted by the counsels of the University and the winners of the election. Prof Adnan and Prof Shah said that the Registrar GC University Lahore has already intimated Justice (R) Sheikh Farooq three days in advance that the two members were not available for the hearing on 12th April 2021 due to their engagement in the GCU Selection Board.

GCU Introduces Zero-Semester Policy

The academic departments of Government College University Lahore have formally adopted the policy of Zero-Semester and non-credit mandatory courses/training for the students who require extra-attention. The policy is approved by the Academic Council. According to the policy, the admission committees and the students' academic advisors will identify courses for the students with

special attention. Non-credit courses will be of foreign languages such as Persian, Arabic, Chinese, French, Communication Skills, and other basic courses.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said, "This initiative is a part of the recent drive to improve the quality of education at GCU. Top-ranked universities around the globe offer Zero-Semester and non-credit courses to equip their

students with the skills necessary to be highly competitive in the job market." The Vice Chancellor further added that unfortunately, Pakistani Universities are still reluctant to adopt this strategy due to limited financial and human resources. "Despite these problems, GCU is committed to go extra miles for the students. We will not charge our students any additional amount", he said.



GCU to Offer Salaries to the Top Postgraduate Students

The Government College University Lahore will offer salaries to the postgraduate students in order to attract the brightest minds from across the world from September 2021. These studentships will comprise of not just monthly salaries but will also offer fee waivers for the selected top M Phil and PhD Scholars. MPhil students will be offered Rs. 40,000 per month along with a fee waiver, while Ph.D. scholars will get Rs. 60,000 per month plus a fee waiver. The required funds will be generated from additional seats in the undergraduate programmes.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said, "These postgraduate studentships will be highly competitive. We are replicating this model from the leading global universities which allocate a portion of their income from undergraduate programmes for strengthening postgraduate research." He further added that the selected postgraduate scholars in GCU would be required to teach two courses per semester related to their research topic. "This will anchor them in their research and will bring in fresh ideas in teaching. I am glad our Academic Council has

already approved this scheme," he added. While explaining the rationale, Prof Zaidi said, "It is unfortunate that some universities are minting money by offering self-supporting postgraduate degrees. They admit a large number of students irrespective of their competence to make the programme financially feasible. MPhil and PhD are degrees of excellence and they cannot be offered for monetary benefits alone. Offering studentships to postgraduates is part of our recent drive to improve the teaching and research at GCU."

Zero Tolerance Policy for Plagiarism at GCU

The Vice Chancellor Government College University Lahore, Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi has declared that GCU has zero tolerance policy for plagiarism in online examinations. "We prepare questions in such a way that the paper tests the students' ability to consult and comprehend multiple sources, analyses the information they gather and make a critical argument," said Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi in a press statement issued on April 27th with a schedule of the university's online examinations. GCU Lahore will be conducting online examinations for the

Bachelor degrees in the last week of May. The examinations will be conducted according to the University's new online education policy. "The mode of examination can be a time-bound open book, open internet paper or long essay and viva," said Prof Zaidi. The Vice Chancellor said that they are conducting the online exams not only due to the pandemic situation but also because it has potential to be a better system of assessment than the conventional sit-in examinations. The Vice Chancellor also highlighted that GCU's online assessment policy

develops students' argumentative skills which is the main objective of higher education. "A committee is deliberating to adopt this online assessment policy permanently as one of the modes of examinations for the faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences," Prof Zaidi revealed. During online examinations, the University will give a user id to each student for every course to submit their papers to Turnitin software for the plagiarism check. This will ensure original and timely submissions.



GCU Empowers Students in the University's Decision Making Process

GCU has significantly increased the role of the students in the University's process of decision-making by providing them with an opportunity of attending official meetings. The representatives of various societies of the University will also be given an opportunity to provide feedback on University's administrative and academic matters. According to the Vice Chancellor GCU, Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi, "the students are our main stakeholders in the University's affairs. It is unfortunate that we do not involve them enough in

decision-making. The students' presence in the official meetings not only gives us their perspectives on the policies but it also builds their capacity as the future leaders of our country."

Another element of this student-centric approach is that the University adopts a policy of taking course and teaching feedback from the students three times in a semester. Prof Zaidi said, "Now the students will help the University to improve the quality of learning. Their feedback will provide the course

instructors, academic, and the administrative management with insights into the teaching and learning outcomes, and methods of imparting knowledge. This exercise guarantees our students the best possible learning environment at GCU." Prof Asghar Zaidi goes on to say, "The early course feedback will help us to know whether the students have received the course material and they have understood the policies related to rubrics, assessment and plagiarism."

Webinar on "Ramadan in the time of COVID-19" at GCU, Talk by Dr. Javed Iqbal

A webinar on "Ramadan in the time of COVID-19" was held under the auspices of Disease Awareness and Prevention Society of Government College University Lahore. Eminent laparoscopic surgeon and motivational speaker Dr. Javaid Iqbal, the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr Asghar Zaidi and clinical nutritionist Dr Arooj Gillani were the guest speakers at the webinar, which was attended virtually by a large number of faculty members and students. Dr Javed Iqbal laid a great stress on changing lifestyles and eating habits, saying that the public health during this pandemic not only requires medical facilities, but also calls for changing their lifestyles and social behaviours

including the dietary habits. He also called upon the youth to stay positive in life, saying, "When you think good, your body's defences work better." He also shared stories of the people who converted lockdown into opportunities and set up successful online businesses.

Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi shared the journey of shifting from conventional to online mode of teaching at the GCU in a very short period of time. He said that the teachers deserve special appreciation as many faculty members and their families suffered from COVID19 but they continued teaching and did not compromise on students' learning. He also said that Pakistani universities cannot shy away from



e-learning, it is the need of the hour and the government needs to make heavy investments to improve internet connectivity and online teaching systems. Dr Arooj talked about the importance of fasting and adopting healthy eating habits during Sehr and Iftar. The webinar was followed by a question and answer session.



Webinar on the Human Rights Violations in Kashmir

A webinar was held on May 9th at the Government College University Lahore on human rights violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir. Lord Nazir Ahmed, the former member of the House of Lords, UK, joined the students and faculty live from the Syndicate Committee along with the Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi and the office-bearers of GCU-Kashmir Society.

Lord Nazir highlighted that India is committing severe human rights violations and is involved in the genocide of the Kashmiris in the occupied territory for which India should not only be exposed but must also be tried in the International Criminal Court. He also highlighted

the plight of Kashmiris who had been locked up ahead of August 5th last year - the dark day when the Indian Government stripped the valley of its special status. He also stressed that all symbolic gatherings need to be converted into a mass movement for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute in the light of United Nations' resolutions. He also said that every mass movement and research work need finance and resources for which youth can do fundraising from the philanthropists and Pakistanis living abroad. Lord Nazir also highlighted the need for a special website and digital newspaper where daily reports about the human rights violations and articles

about the Kashmir issue can be published on daily basis.

The Vice Chancellor said that GCU will establish the Centre for Excellence on Kashmir issues during the current year where eminent researchers would compile the data about human rights violations in the Valley and deliberate upon the ways, means and foreign policy strategies for independence in the light of the teachings of Allama Iqbal. The Chairman International Kashmir Rights Commission of Pakistan, Rai Muhammad Nawaz Khari, Prof Zafar Iqbal Sindhu, Tehmeena Shiekh and the founder of the Door of Awareness Ruba Hamayun also addressed the webinar.

Grant Approved for the Employees Affected by COVID-19

The Board of Management of GCU's Benevolent Fund for the Employees unanimously approved the amount of Rs 50,000 for each employee who is tested positive for COVID-19.

The grant of Rs 25,000 will be given from the Benevolent Fund and the remaining amount will be given from other University funds. The amount from the University funds will be readjusted later from the employees' salary. A meeting of GCU's statutory body was held on April 30th and was chaired by the Vice Chancellor GCU Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi, and was attended by the representatives of the academic

and administrative staff and the GCU's Academic Staff Association.

The Board also approved Rs 150,000 for the religious pilgrimage (Hajj, Umrah and Ziyarat). All permanent employees will be eligible for the COVID-19 and pilgrimage grants. Prof Zaidi said, "These are difficult times for the GCU community. I personally know teachers and administrative staff who have tested positive, but they continue to serve without any complaint. Many have lost their dear ones. These employees are our heroes. There is no point in keeping the amount in Banks for profits when our community is suffering. We are also

giving salaries to the families of our deceased employees who died during service. The families will continue to receive salaries till the retirement date of the deceased employee." The Board also approved marriage grants for employees' daughters and gave Rs 80,000 to each applicant. For Educational Scholarships for the employees' children studying at intermediate level and above, the Board approved all cases. The amount of Rs 28,000 was fixed for each applicant for F.A. and B.A. scholarships. Rs 32,000 were given to each applicant for the postgraduate scholarships.



GCU Decides to Reform 22-year Old Grading System

The Government College University Lahore will be replacing a 22-year old relative grading system by a rubric-based absolute marking system.

The Vice Chancellor GCU, Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi chaired the first meeting of the Committee to review the current relative marking system. The meeting was attended by the Deans and faculty members. As the main stakeholder, students from each faculty were also invited to share their views about the grading. The students highlighted that relative grading involves bringing together grading of multiple sections. Since teachers' evaluation methods vary, good students in some sections end up with less GPA.

It affects their applications for scholarships and higher studies. Prof Zaidi said, "We have to review this 22-year old grading policy, especially because it puts GCU students at a disadvantage in the external competitions. Modern Universities cannot afford to stick with decades-old practices. We must replicate best academic practices at other top institutions to keep ourselves relevant to the changing world." He clarified that by adopting the absolute marking system, we do not mean to give high grades to students. Marks must reflect students' skillset and knowledge. That is why we have already introduced a policy of rubrics in the University's

departments. Rubrics will make marking fair. Our teachers will design a rubric for each evaluation component of their course. Rubrics will be shared with the students when a semester begins. It is a right of the students to know what constitutes a good answer. Chairpersons will ensure that the teachers evaluate scripts according to the given rubrics. The Controller of Examinations informed, "In the first phase, students in each section will be graded relatively. In the second phase from the Fall 2021 onwards, the University will follow a policy of absolute grading system based on rubrics".

Life Skills Workshops Initiated for the Students at GCU

The Government College University Lahore has initiated a series of life skill workshops that will equip the students with the soft skills required to get through the practical life. The program has adopted three skills as its core focus: critical thinking skills, social interaction skills and emotional intelligence. The first workshop in the series was held at GCU on the "Art of Conversation" that focused on the verbal and non-verbal communication, barriers

in conversations, handling difficult situations and micro-skills involving effective conversation.

Addressing the opening ceremony, the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said, "We are equipping our students with the necessary skills to become highly competitive in the global market. When we discuss as to how to make our bright students better than the students at topmost universities of the world, I have identified one issue which is lack of

communication skills, and that is the key focus of the first workshop."

The Vice Chancellor mentioned that most of GCU students come from a middle or lower middle class where life skills are unfortunately ignored. It makes them socially awkward in the modern academic and professional settings, so we will be making life skills workshops a permanent feature of learning at GCU, often during the zero semester arrangements.

GCU Appoints New Director at the Institute of Industrial Biotechnology

The Government College University, Lahore has appointed the eminent biotechnologist Prof Dr Muhammad Nauman Aftab as the new director of its Institute of Industrial Biotechnology. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said, "Our Biotech Institute is a premier centre of teaching and research in Pakistan. Each year, we receive applications of a large number of students who aspire to get admissions to the Institute. It has started showing its popularity among international students as well. Currently, the focus of our Institute's research is to improve the efficiency, productivity and cost-effectiveness of the processes related to industrial and agricultural biotechnology. We are also working on new alternatives to scarce natural import substituting resources. I strongly feel that this Institute can become our nation's lifeline. Considering its significance, the Institute requires a committed, honest and highly competent leadership to meet the emerging challenges."

The new Director, Prof Aftab, has a dual PhD. He has earned one PhD in Bioinformatics from the Institute of Biophysics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. His second PhD is in Biotechnology. He also did a post-doctorate in Biotechnology/Cancer Biology from the Sanford Burnham Medical Research Institute, Florida. Prof. Aftab has more than 60 academic



publications to his credit and is proficient in Chinese and Russian languages.

Prof Aftab said, "I am taking the charge of Director with a highly ambitious plan. I want this Institute to train immensely competent experts who will be instrumental in developing in-house technologies for the global biotechnology market,

worth more than \$752.88 billion at the moment. It requires a major expansion in our infrastructure and academic programmes. In the first phase, we will establish new laboratories and increase the number of classrooms. We also intend to launch an MPhil. programme for full-time scholars."

Newly Established GCU Press Publishes Research Journals

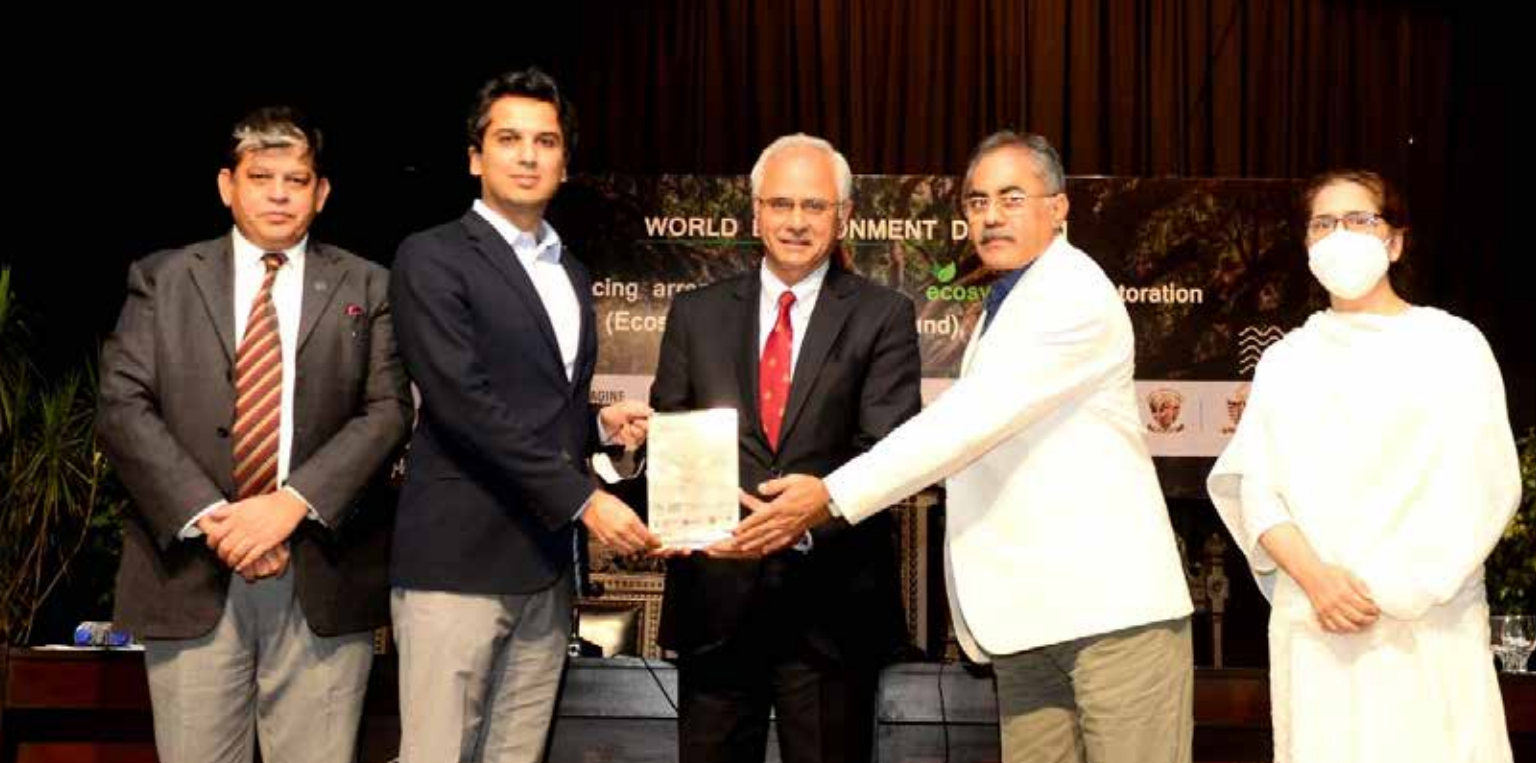
The Government College University Press has started publishing academic journals and other university publications. During its first year, the GCU Press has published scholarly journals in the disciplines of English, History, Persian, Punjabi and Psychology. It has also published university's prospectuses and other similar documents. GCU Press is a not-for-profit organization. The university is now considering diverting a portion of research funds to the Press to commission innovative academic monographs

by the scholars.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said, "Establishing a Press is an exceptional measure for GCU but it is also the need of our time. The GCU Press is modelled after Cambridge and Oxford University Presses and we will publish works of scholars from across the globe. As a Public University, it is our obligation to publish researches that shape the ideas which can make human lives better."

More than 65 % of our academics have either PhD. or postdocs and fellowships from the leading

universities of the world. They know what it takes to prepare an excellent manuscript for publication. We also have a strong network of seasoned international scholars who can serve as referees. The faculty of languages at GCU provides us with experienced copy editors. The Fine Arts department has excellent graphic designers and photographers. The library staff and the Directorate of Information Technology will take care of online publications. The Management Studies department will contribute through the remarkable marketing skills.



Seminar on the World Environment Day

A seminar on “Financing Arrangements for Ecosystem Restoration in Pakistan” was held at the GC University Lahore under the auspices of Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in connection with the World Environment Day 2021. The Finance Minister Punjab Makhdoom Hashim Jawan Bakht and Provincial Minister for Environment Muhammad Rizwan graced the event with their presence.

Addressing the seminar via video link, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Climate Change Mr Malik Amin Aslam said that the government is focusing on nature based solutions for the ecosystem restoration to benefit people and the planet. He revealed that last week Pakistan has floated worth USD500 million green euro bonds. He further said that Pakistan is going to start dialogues with some bilateral lenders for debt for nature swap, adding that Pakistan would be the first country to go for this financial instrument for their nature performance.

The Finance Minister Punjab Makhdoom Hashim Jawan Bakht highlighted that PTI has converted 150 million hectares into green lands and aimed to move to 30% green energy. He said aquifer in Lahore is depleting and to refill it is important to create lake around Lahore. He also said Lahore would be the first city to monetize water. The minister revealed that the Punjab



Environment Endowment Fund has been established and five billion rupees would be allocated for it in the budget.

The Provincial Minister for Environment Muhammad Rizwan talked about the Punjab government’s initiatives to reduce carbon emissions.

In his opening remarks, SDPI’s Executive Director Dr Abid Q. Suleri said that Pakistan despite being one of the least polluter countries has been facing the brunt of climate change. Mr. Suleri further said that Pakistan would be working with other countries and the United Nations to initiate nature performance bonds as our performance to protect nature is visible now in terms of 10 billion tree tsunami.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi appreciated that leading policymakers, organisations, environmentalists and figures in the financial community were calling for actions and initiatives that integrate nature, climate and other sustainable development goals

(SDGs) into the response to the debt crisis, by funding short-term recovery needs whilst kick-starting a virtuous circle to rapidly scale up international nature and climate finance. He elaborated the “three S’ strategy adopted by GCU which comprise of Sermons, Surveillance and Science. He called upon youth to be the flag bearer of this green movement to make Pakistan greener and prosperous.

The Vice Chancellor LCWU Prof Dr Bushra Mirza said that only with healthy ecosystems we can enhance people’s livelihoods, counter climate change and stop the collapse of biodiversity.

The Director SDSC, GCU, Prof Dr Faiza Sharif, The Chairperson Environmental Sciences Department, LCWU, Prof Arifa Tahir, and SDPI’s Research Fellow Dr Shafqat Munir and the Director Advocacy & Campaigns Moazzam Sharif Bhatti also addressed the seminar and emphasized the use of technology and public private partnerships to work to restore the ecosystem.



GCU Grants Promotions to 125 Staff & Faculty members

The Government College University Lahore has granted promotions and higher scales to 125 staff and faculty members which also include 8 Lectures who are promoted as Assistant Professors (BS-19). "Majority of these promotions and up-gradation to higher scale cases have unfortunately been pending for many years," said the Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi in a press statement on May 8th. He added that the delays in the

promotions lead to dejected employees and also create unnecessary frustrations. He said that his team has also been working hard on digitalization of university's record and in developing a campus management system that will lead to more transparent and timely processing of promotion cases. These 125 promotion cases of the staff range from the post of Superintendent to Assistant Registrar, Deputy Superintendent to Superintendent, Junior Clerk to the

Senior Clerk, Security Assistant to Assistant Security Officer, Security Guard to Security Assistant, Account Clerk to Account Assistant and the Library Attendant to Library Assistant. The University also granted as per rules higher scales to the Computer Operators, Senior Lab Attendants, Girls Room Attendants, Moazzan, Machine Operators, Technicians, Water Men, Drivers, Helpers, Sanitary Workers and Gardeners.

GCU to Establish a Global Centre of Excellence on Sufism

The Sheikh Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi Centre for Islamic Studies, Science & Technology Research Centre will be established at the new campus of Government College University Lahore located at Kala Shah Kaku. The initiative comes from the Chief Minister Punjab and the Department of Higher Education, upon the vision and special interest of the honourable First Lady of Pakistan, Mrs Bushra Imran. A briefing about the Centre was provided to the First Lady by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi at the inauguration of the e-library and web portal. The modern Ash-Shadhili research centre for religious, social and scientific disciplines would be linked with all the leading libraries and universities of the world, and its

digital resources would be remotely accessible to millions of students across Pakistan.

On the occasion, Nadeem Mahboob, Secretary HED, said that the academic block of the research centre would be established at the New Campus of GCU Lahore in Kala Shah Kaku at a cost of Rs. 100 million. He said that the libraries established in various districts of Punjab would be linked with this research Centre in the coming days.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Zaidi said that the Centre will conduct research in the fields of Islamic philosophy, Sufism, spirituality, comparative study of Sufism and mystic traditions besides providing a platform for inter-religious studies and inter-faith dialogues at national

and international level. Prof. Zaidi explained that the Centre would serve as a platform for advanced learning and research on the philosophical doctrines of the great Islamic philosophers. He added that the special courses including Islamic philosophy, Sufism and comparative religions will be introduced for BS (Hons), MPhil and PhD classes. The Vice Chancellor also announced that the Centre would benefit from the Rehmat-ul-lil Alaameen Scholarships for MPhil/PhD for national and international students doing research on divinity, Sufism, and spirituality. He said that 3000 physical books, 13 million e-books, 150 million e-thesis and 78 global e-journals will be available to this Centre.



Webinar on “Commit to Quit” on World No Tobacco Day

A webinar titled “Commit to Quit” was held at the Government College University Lahore on May 31st in connection with the World No Tobacco Day under the auspices of the University’s Anti-Narcotics Society and Disease Awareness and Prevention Society. Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Punjab, Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan was the chief guest at the webinar hosted by the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi, while students and teachers attended it online via zoom.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan said that smoking or use of tobacco in any form is a serious threat to human health; it causes cancer, lungs diseases, heart attacks and diabetes in early ages. She said increasing trend of smoking amongst the younger generation was a matter of serious concern and it was the collective social responsibility of the media, educational institutions, government and parents to come forward to check the unhealthy activities. In



response to questions by students, Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan said that there is a complete ban on telecasting smoking or use of taboo scenes in dramas and films, but there is a need to ensure effective check on this ban by the sensor board and other government institutions.

The Vice Chancellor said that GCU is empowering the youth by giving them the right to ask i.e. the right to question teachers, experts and public representatives about their actions, social issues, government policies and initiatives at such webinars and events.

He told the students that the World Health Organisation (WHO) regional office has announced the World No Tobacco Day 2021 Award for Pakistan which is the result of the government’s effective anti-tobacco policies. The Vice Chancellor also spoke about different initiatives taken to make the GCU a drug-free and no-smoking campus, saying that the University is strictly screening and monitoring cafeteria staff and hawkers outside the campus, besides engaging students in surveillance of suspicious activities.

Mandatory Training of the Intermediate Teachers at GCU

The Government College University, Lahore has made at least one month of training compulsory for the newly-inducted faculty for the intermediate classes. Under the University’s new induction policy, the faculty will be hired one month prior to the beginning of classes, so that they can pass through the compulsory training programme which will focus on developing the communication skills and understanding about the university procedures, course requirements, examination rules and lecture planning.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said that the new faculty members will also be briefed about emotional intelligence, work ethics,

best ways of interacting with students, ideal classroom environment and other relevant techniques. “The training will give the teachers best possible start to their role,” he added. Prof Zaidi also talked about the empowerment of the University’s Directorate of Intermediate Studies (DIS), saying that the FA/FSc/ICom and graduate studies are altogether different. “So from now onwards, the DIS would manage the hiring of faculty independently which would help to recruit teachers most suitable for intermediate classes,” the Vice Chancellor said. However, he mentioned that relevant subject experts from the University’s academic departments would assist

the DIS in the selection process. Previously, GCU academic departmental heads used to make a selection for the intermediate students. The University has also made the DIS responsible for monitoring and evaluation of teachers’ performance during the academic year.

The Vice-Chancellor said that they are adopting the best practices of the world’s leading academic institutions with serious consideration to the induction process, monitoring, and students’ feedback. He hoped that the new induction process will attract the best talent, integrate new teachers into the University’s culture and significantly improve the learning outcomes.

GCU Introduces Ranking System for the Academic Departments

The Government College University Lahore has introduced an international standard ranking system to measure the performance of its various academic departments. The faculty and staff of the top three departments will be offered honorariums for their work. The key evaluation indicators of this ranking system include efficiency of the department's student advising system, designing of rubrics for the assessments, updated course handbooks, seminars, conferences and training workshops, and collective teaching score according to the students' evaluation. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said that the University would also give weightage to regular meetings of research supervisory committees and Board of Studies, and to introduction of new courses and academic programmes. Prof

Zaidi believes that the ranking system, designed after a lengthy consultative process will strengthen the newly introduced reforms, and will generate a healthy competition among the university's departments to improve their learning processes. The Vice Chancellor said that a handsome amount is being allocated in the upcoming budget of the University in the form of incentives and honorariums. "The amount will be given to the faculty members of the first three departments of the University," he added. Prof Zaidi further explained, "Most of the universities in Pakistan are aiming to gauge and improve their performance. Many of them intend to compete at the topmost level. Our ranking system of academic departments will offer an example of quality checks and indicators to address the issues." The ranking



system of the departments would be in place from the upcoming academic year i.e. the Fall 2021.

International webinar on "Disaster Risk Reduction"

The Government College University Lahore's Disaster Risk Management Society (GCU-DRMS) organized a one-day international webinar on "Disaster Risk Reduction" in collaboration with the University of Peshawar and Jacksonville State University, USA. The webinar, chaired by the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi, focused on the strategies for disaster risk reduction including policies framework and mitigation. Dr Alessandra Jerolleman from the Jacksonville State University and Dr Atta-ur-Rahman from the University of Peshawar addressed the webinar

and talked about the working of the SENDAI framework that focuses on disaster risk reduction. This framework follows four major steps i.e., understanding disaster, strengthening the governance, investing in resilience strategies and enhancement of disaster preparedness. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi congratulated the GCU-DRMS and collaborating universities for the successful proceedings of the event. He also discussed old-age vulnerabilities. The participating departments from GC University included Geography, English

Literature, Political Science, Economics, Zoology, History, Urdu, Chemistry, Physical Education, MBBS, BAF, CDPM Disaster Management, Mathematics, Physics, and IT department. The international audience in the webinar was from China, Malaysia, Turkey, USA, and India. Mr. Sahibzad Khan, the Chief Meteorologist of the Pakistan Meteorological Department, also attended the webinar. The closing remarks were given by Dr Shakeel Mahmood, the Chairperson of the Department of Geography.

Old Ravian Donates for the Employees Affected by COVID-19

An eminent Old Ravian and businessman Mr Nasir Ali announced an amount of Rupees twenty-five thousand for each staff member of Government College University Lahore who is affected by COVID-19 and require extensive medical treatment. A few days earlier, the Board of Management of GCU Benevolent Fund Employees has also unanimously approved the

amount of Rs 50,000 for each employee infected with this virus. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi expressed gratitude to Mr Nasir Ali on behalf of the GCU employees for his generous donation. Prof Zaidi said, "No university in the world can excel without the help of its alumni. They build and grow the institution's brand in the market by the word of mouth, work ethics, and social

services. We are fortunate to have an alumni network that has a strong sense of association with their alma mater. They always prioritize the welfare of the University, especially in difficult times." He added, "This is a very generous offer from Nasir Ali. I wish to express my sincere thanks on behalf of the GCU employees at this time of need especially for the low income staff."



Vaccination Centre for COVID-19 at GCU

A special Coronavirus Vaccination Centre was set up at GCU Lahore under the auspices of District Health Department for the vaccination of the university's employees and students.

On the occasion, the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi hoped that the GCU Lahore will achieve the target of 100 % vaccination of its employees by June 7th, 2021. He said that almost 2000 employees of GCU would be vaccinated at the camp besides students. Prof Zaidi believes that the

misconceptions and disinformation spread through social media about the vaccination undermine the confidence of the public. He said that the vaccine hesitancy is a threat to public health, so to overcome this we are running awareness campaigns among our employees and students against the false and distorted information about the vaccine. The Vice Chancellor mentioned that the medical teams of GCU and district health department are also present

for the guidance of staff and students at the camp. He said that the students aged over 30 can walk in and get vaccinated immediately; however those who are younger will have to get registered by sending their CNIC number to 1166.

The faculty and staff appreciated the efforts of the Vice Chancellor in this regard. The GCU is the first university where special Coronavirus Vaccination Centre has been set up.

Governor Punjab Visits the Vaccination Centre at GCU

The Governor of Punjab, Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar visited the special vaccination centre set up at the Government College University Lahore. The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi was also present. The Chancellor, GCU and the Governor of Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar has assured that the restrictions related to mask would be eased once a good number of the country's population is vaccinated. The governor said that all the teachers and students will be vaccinated for which special vaccination centers are being set up by the Health Department in other universities as well. He believes that the students should not adhere to misinformation being spread on social media about the vaccination as all eminent doctors and scientists

across the world have a consensus on vaccination. The governor said he and his wife participated in the trials of CanSino vaccine.

The Vice Chancellor briefed the governor that 95 % teaching and non-teaching staff members have been vaccinated and now the students are being vaccinated. He also laid stress on fighting the misconceptions and disinformation about the vaccine through affirmative measures such as the vaccination centre at the GCU's Salam Hall.

District Primary and Secondary Department's Ataka Butt said that female students are more concerned about their health, and they appeared in large number at the special center for vaccination.





Palestine Society Established at GCU to Raise Voice for the Palestinian Plight

The Vice Chancellor, Government College University Lahore, Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi established the Palestine Society to initiate a youth movement against human rights violations and Israeli apartheid in Palestine. The announcement to establish the Society was made during a symposium on "Human Rights Violations In Palestine And Kashmir" at the University's Bukhari Auditorium. The Minister for Housing and Urban Development Punjab, Mian Mehmood ur Rashid addressed the symposium and said that the young generation is now more aware and concerned, and they have already proved that they will not give up the fight until the oppression in Palestine and Kashmir is over. The minister explained the religious, historical, and geographical importance of Palestine, and stated that the only acceptable solution will be according to the previous

geographical status of Palestine in 1966.

The Vice Chancellor said that GCU will offer admission to around 10 Palestinian students, two in each department, under the scholarship programme of the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) for the Palestinians. He added that all 500 Palestinian students coming to Pakistan for studies would gather at GCU for one week for the orientation and social networking before joining their respective universities in different parts of the country.

Prof. Zaidi announced that the Governor of Punjab and the Chancellor, Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar has been invited to become the Co-Patron-in-Chief of the GCU Palestine Society, as he has always been one of the strongest voices for the people of Palestine in the world. "Besides advocacy and awareness campaigns, the GCU Palestine Society would also document the

violations of Palestinian human rights and international law." He mentioned.

The Coordinator General of COMSTECH, Prof. M. Iqbal Chaudhry said that the Palestine's educational institutions, from schools to universities are also victims of Israeli airstrikes along with the killing and arresting of many teachers and students. He called upon the leaders of Muslim countries to provide support and educational opportunities to the youth of Palestine. The eminent journalist Salman Ghani also addressed the seminar held under the auspices of GCU Kashmir Society.

The seminar was followed by a Peace Walk and a Plantation Drive which was led by the Provincial Minister Mian Mehmood ur Rashid and the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi.

GCU Joins Hands with Majlis-e-Taraqqi-e-Adab for the Promotion and Publication of Urdu Literature

The Government College University (GCU) Lahore and Majlis-e-Taraqqi-e-Adab (MTA) have inked a Memorandum of Understanding for joint publication of manuscripts and rare books for the promotion of Urdu Literature in the country.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi and Director of Majlis Tarraqi-e-Adab, Mansoor Afaq signed the accord at a graceful ceremony at MTA's office on June 9th. The eminent journalist Sohail Warraich and the Chairperson of

Persian Department, GCU, Prof Dr Muhammad Iqbal Shahid also attended the ceremony.

Mansoor Afaq said that according to the MoU, the GCU Press will publish the books of Majlis-e-Tarraqi-e-Adab, while these books will be available to the University's students on half price.

The Vice Chancellor Prof. Asghar Zaidi said that GCU Press is non-profit organization modelled after Cambridge and Oxford university presses and we will publish works of the scholars from



across the globe. According to the MoU, GCU Lahore and MTA would also make joint efforts to promote Urdu Literature national and international forums.



Research Competition on Challenges and Opportunities during COVID-19

The Vice Chancellor, Government College University Lahore, Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi has initiated a research competition on the theme of “Challenges and Opportunities in the COVID-19 World”, and cash prizes would be awarded to the best three research projects/articles. The undergraduate students of eight academic departments would research on the theme/s from the perspective of their discipline. “It is our prime responsibility to produce research that creates an impact beyond academia, and that can change the experiences of our society. We cannot afford to churn out research that is irrelevant to our present-day needs.” The Vice Chancellor mentioned that he sees a huge gap between academia,

state and industry, adding that in the Western world, funding agencies and Universities always encourage graduate applications and research which have the potential to help the governing institutions and industries to improve the quality of life.” While explaining the benefits of this initiative for students and society, Prof Zaidi said, “By encouraging our students to write on such themes, we will prepare them for new opportunities of scholarships at the topmost institutions and industries on global level. At the same time, we will be producing a body of knowledge which will be used by policymakers, state officials and even general public to understand the impact of the pandemic and take concrete steps to make human

life better”. Prof. Zaidi further explained that the students of the Economics Department would research on the impact of COVID-19 on Pakistan’s economy, and literature students would analyze literature produced during the pandemic, while GCU’s psychologists would look at the impact of COVID-19 on the mental and physical health of people. History students will write on the pandemic from the historical point of view. GCU’s environmentalists will highlight the role of environmental studies for reducing the impact of pandemic, and geographers will study the spatio-temporal patterns of Covid-19.

Student Exchange Programme between GCU and German University

The Government College University Lahore and the University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg (UASN), Germany have agreed to exchange ten students every year. The agreement says that no tuition fee will be charged from these students by the host university for the next five years. The Vice Chancellor, GCU, Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi and UASN Germany’s President Prof Dr Gred Teschke signed the Memorandum of Understanding (online) for the faculty and student exchange, research collaboration and training of staff members. The online 16-point accord signing was followed by a video conference

among the heads and officials of both universities. Prof Dr Andreas Wehrenpfennig from the Department of Landscape Architecture and Civil Engineering and the Head of International Office Dorina Mackedanz also attended the video conference. The Vice Chancellor assured Prof Teschke of providing maximum facilities to the German students in Pakistan including on-campus accommodation, and requested the UASN Germany administration for the same for his students. He said that the internationalization is the third pillar of his strategic vision and he would be very happy to host the students and teachers from UASN at



GCU Lahore. He also told the German university officials about the history and traditions of GCU.

Panel Discussion on “Growth, Poverty Reduction and Food Security” at GCU

A panel discussion on “Growth, Poverty Reduction and Food Security” was held at the Government College University Lahore on June 18th.

The Finance Minister of Punjab Makhdom Hashim Jawan Bakht chaired the discussion held in the light of the current provincial budget. The Vice-Chancellors Prof Dr Sarfraz Khurshid, Prof Dr Rafu-i-Azam and the Member of P&D (Education Sector) Khalid Sultan also participated in the debate.

The Vice-Chancellor GCU Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi moderated the panel discussion, saying that policymaking without detailed analysis never provides desired results, so they have started a movement to initiate much-needed productive debates among key experts, academics and top-level policymakers on social and economic issues.

In his keynote address, the eminent development economist Prof Dr Sohail Jahangir Malik said that the actual poverty is even much higher than it exists in figures, and the country's economy has been severely constrained in its ability to provide inclusive growth due to inequitable distribution of resources, disparities across people, gender and regions, rampant corruption, rapidly growing population, debt management, energy and water

crisis, decayed institutional structures, natural calamities, war on terror, and decades of poor governance and economic mismanagement.

The Finance Minister of Punjab Makhdom Hashim Jawan Bakht said that it is incorrect to attach progress and development to the construction of buildings as for inclusive human development, service delivery expenditures also play a vital role. The minister said that they have focused on the real development instead of optics like the Orange Train. He added that the Punjab government this year will bear a debt burden of 86 billion rupees to provide road infrastructure, clean drinking water and drainage and sewerage systems to the people in 16 underprivileged districts of Punjab. The minister revealed that the government is providing rupees 85 billion subsidies on wheat but from the next, they will be moving from overall subsidy to target subsidy. He said flour is available to five-star hotels at the subsidized rate which is not right.

The Minister of Agriculture, Punjab, Hussain Jehanian Gardezi claimed that the province has harvested 1.5m tonnes more wheat this season than the last year. He said that the boost in the agriculture economy will reduce poverty and provide food security.

Dr Shujaat Ali, a former federal secretary, also participated in the panel discussion. Later, the Minister Makhdom Hashim Jawan Bakht along with the Vice Chancellor inaugurated the recently-renovated Squash Court, and planted trees at the University's Bukhari Lawns.



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