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Higher Education
Commission, Pakistan

Six Bronze Medals and Three Honorable Mentions

Pakistani Students Excel at Int'l Science Olympiads

Pakistani students, selected by the STEM Careers Programme (SCP), represented Pakistan in the recently held 25th International Biology Olympiad (IBO) in Bali, Indonesia, 46th International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO) in Hanoi, Vietnam, 55th International Mathematics Olympiad (IMO) in Cape Town, South Africa and 45th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO) in Astana, Kazakhstan.

All the four teams yet again proved their mettle at the international level with their superlative performance at these Olympiads and showed excellent performance altogether by winning Six Bronze Medals and Three Honorable Mentions. International Science Olympiads are unique competitions to discover, encourage and challenge gifted young students from all over the world.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS), Islamabad are the joint organizers of STEM Careers Programme for grooming talented youth for careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The dedication and hard work of team leaders from home institutes, NIBGE Faisalabad, HEJ Research Institute Karachi, ASSMS, GCU Lahore and PIEAS Islamabad in selecting, preparing these talented students and members of the STEM Careers Programme, HEC, in providing logistic support played a key role in this achievement.

The 25th International Biology Olympiad was hosted by Indonesia. Around 240 students from 43 countries participated in the event. Of the four students who participated from Pakistan in the event, Anam Javed from Lahore Grammar School, Lahore, Ayesha Mehmood from Garrison Postgraduate College for Women, Lahore won Bronze Medal and Muhammad Bilal Ibrahim from Cadet College Hassan Abdal, Saleha Qasim from Punjab College for Women Bosan Road Multan



won Honorable Mention. The IBO team was led by Dr. Zahid Mukhtar. The 45th International Physics Olympiad was hosted by Kazakhstan. A total of 383 students from 86 countries participated in the Olympiad. The IPhO team was led by Dr. Shahid Qamar and Dr. Aman-ur-Rahman of PIEAS Islamabad.

The 46th International Chemistry Olympiad was hosted by Vietnam. Around 370 students from 77 countries participated in the event. Of the four students who participated from Pakistan in the

event, three of them won Bronze Medals. The winners are Muhammad Shujaat Mirza from Roots College International DHA-1 Campus Islamabad, Maheen Kausar Siddiqui from Generation School South Avenue Site Karachi and Maqbool Khalid of Islamabad Model College For Boys, Islamabad. The IChO team was led by Dr. Khalid M Khan and Dr. Muhammad Raza Shah of HEJ Research Institute, Karachi.

The 55th International Mathematical Olympiad was hosted by South Africa. About 560 students from 101 countries participated in the event. Of the six students who participated from Pakistan in the event, Awais Muhammad Chishti from Lahore Grammar School, Lahore won Bronze Medal and

Khurram Javed from Bahria College E-8 Naval Complex Islamabad won Honorable Mention. The IMO team was led by Mr. Mohammad Jamil, Project Director SCP and Mr. Syed Waqar Ali Shah of ASSMS, GCU Lahore.

These annual International Olympiads provide pre-university science students from around the world an opportunity to compete in solving challenging theoretical and experimental science problems that only the most talented youth of their age can answer.

Most of the Pakistani students invariably get scholarship for their higher studies in leading universities of the world.

HEC Seeks Universities' Feedback on Revised Criteria for Ranking

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has invited all public and private institutions of higher education in the country to provide feedback on the revised criteria for the ranking of universities.

The criteria have been revised by a committee of experts to address concerns expressed by universities about the ranking criteria and ranking process employed in the last two rankings conducted by HEC. Due consideration has been given in the revised criteria to the comments and recommendations received from the universities from the earlier rankings.

The HEC has also conducted a thorough review of the ranking process to enhance transparency in the future rankings of universities. The ranking provides one of the mechanisms for the assessment of quality of teaching and research in the country and ensure the enhancement of quality of higher education through healthy competition between the universities.

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The ranking criteria have been developed keeping in view the needs of higher education in Pakistan and are based on several factors including adherence to quality assurance criteria in the appointment of faculty members, faculty development, student intake, quality of MS/MPhil and PhD programmes, graduates produced, implementation of plagiarism policy, research projects, research publications, quality of research

journals, national and international awards, conferences organized and academia-industry linkages.

Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC has stressed that the criteria for next ranking will be finalized based on feedback received from the

universities. "Feedback from universities is important to ensure that ranking is more meaningful and useful for all the stakeholders. It should truly reflect the quality of teaching and research in Pakistan's institutions of higher learning," said the Chairman.

2nd Phase of HEC-USAID Needs-based Programme Launched Minister Reiterates Support for Education, Urges Youth to become Agents of Positive Change



Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms Mr. Ahsan Iqbal has reiterated Government's support for education, emphasizing that in this age innovation and research define the future of any nation.

He said this while addressing the launching ceremony of the second phase of HEC-USAID Merit and Needs based Scholarship Programme, held at HEC Secretariat.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Chairman HEC and Mr. Gregory C. Gottlieb, Mission Director, USAID Pakistan were also present on the occasion, in addition to some of the Vice Chancellors of 31 partner universities as well as scholarship beneficiaries.

The Phase-II of the USAID Merit and Needs-based Scholarship Programme will enable approximately 3000

students to continue higher education in selected public and private institutions. As part of an initiative to provide equal opportunity for the female students, 50 percent of the scholarship has been reserved for them.

The Minister said that higher education institutions should be centres of knowledge creation, dissemination as well as ensuring that this knowledge impacts society.

He termed the Vice Chancellors of universities as Corp Commanders of knowledge, who have to play leading role in bringing the much-needed change in the society. He said that the Government is committed to provide best digital means to faculty members, researchers and students. He mentioned that HEC is already working on Smart University Project through which universities will

be equipped with advanced WiFi technology to have access to digital resources/contents through blanket coverage across the campus.

The Minister praised the combined efforts of HEC and USAID for carrying out the initiative. "The support of United States has always helped in promoting education, health, agriculture, and economy and finance sectors in Pakistan," he said, adding that the government has always given special importance to create opportunities to make education accessible at doorstep of every Pakistani.

The Minister said that the Government will ensure that, in next three years, each district of Pakistan should have a University or its sub-campus.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Chairman HEC, expressed gratitude to USAID for their

support in promoting higher education and thanked the Government of Pakistan for making education, especially higher education, as its top priorities.

Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed mentioned that allocation for HEC in the last national budget was highest in the history of Pakistan. He said that USAID is also supporting HEC in establishing centres of excellence in three priority areas, water, agriculture, and energy.

“These Centres are critical for Pakistan’s development and will bring together best minds in academia, government and the business community to research and find solutions to some of Pakistan’s greatest challenges as well as other problems that inhibit industry, commerce and adversely affect Pakistanis’ quality of life.” He also mentioned that next phase



of HEC-USAID Fulbright Scholarship Programme is under discussion and will be finalized soon.

Mr. Gregory C. Gottlieb, US Mission Director said that it is an occasion of great significance in many ways. He said that it is a celebration of the cooperation of two countries who are committed for promotion of a noble cause.

“The Government of Pakistan, at all levels, has taken a number of important steps, both symbolically and

pragmatically, for the smooth transition of the programme.” He said that the event serves as a celebration of a new endeavour on educational front, which not only foresees strengthened ties between Pakistan and the US but also complement ongoing cooperation between the two countries on various educational projects.

Under HEC-USAID Merit and Needs-based Scholarship, over 1800 scholarships have been awarded since 2004 of which 1400 students have completed their degree programmes.

HEC Condoles Death of Dr. Shakil Auj

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has expressed sorrow and grief on the sad demise of Dr. Muhammad Shakil Auj, Dean, Faculty of Islamic Studies, University of Karachi.

In a condolence message to the University of Karachi and the bereaved family, the Chairman HEC and employees have expressed sorrow on the murder of Dr. Shakeel Auj. Praising his services to

education, the statement said that Dr. Auj was the first to receive Doctor of Letters (D. Litt) in Islamic Studies.

He was also awarded Tamgha-i-Imtiaz by the President of Pakistan recently for his contributions to the field of education.

A member of various committees of HEC, Dr. Shakil Auj earned his Doctorate in Islamic Studies in 2000 and the

title of thesis was “Comparative Study of Eight Selected Urdu Translations of Holy Quran.”

His research Interests was Quranic Translations and Commentaries, Hadith, Fiqh and Seerat-Un-Nabvi. He was the author of 15 books and 77 research papers on various topics. He was a director of Seerat Chair and Editor of two research journals. He has produced nine PhDs.

New S&T Cooperation between French and Pakistani Research Laboratories

HEC, French Embassy Sign Letter of Intent



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, represented by its Embassy in Pakistan and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan signed a Letter of Intent at HEC Secretariat on Tuesday. The Letter of Intent, signed by Mr. Philippe Thiebaud, Ambassador of France in Pakistan and Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC, is within the framework of cultural, scientific and technical cooperation between France and Pakistan. Both sides have agreed to implement the Hubert Curien Partnership, called Peridot Research Programme.

The objective of this programme is to develop new scientific and technological cooperation between French and Pakistani research laboratories by supporting the mobility of researchers. This partnership will be led jointly in France by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR), represented by its Embassy in Pakistan, and in Pakistan by the

Higher Education Commission (HEC). The French organization that will manage these programmes is Campus France. The programme will allow the cooperation of French and Pakistani scientific teams on joint research projects. A call for projects will be published annually to receive applications in France and in Pakistan. The joint research projects submitted simultaneously in both countries will be selected and evaluated by the subject experts.

The shortlisted or recommended projects will be re-evaluated by a French-Pakistani Joint Committee for selection and approval. The Committee will meet every year alternately in Pakistan and in France.

The tender will only concern selected laboratories and research teams dependent on Institutes, Universities or Higher education institutions. All fields of knowledge are eligible and duration of each project will be of three years.

Speaking at the occasion, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed thanked the French Government for taking steps to enhance scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries, which he said will certainly provide an opportunity to Pakistani researchers to further enhance R&D collaboration at international level. The Ambassador welcomed the step to further higher education through enhancing university partnerships. He termed the

mutual cooperation a key to development. The Ambassador and the Chairman also discussed revising a previous model of establishing an Engineering and S&T University in Pakistan with the help of French universities and set-up centres of excellence which can work on signature projects that will benefit research community of Pakistan and France.

Federal Minister for P&D Ahsan Iqbal Reviews New HEC Projects

Plans for establishment of Federal Women University, National Skills University and establishment of Seerat Chairs in universities across Pakistan came under review at a meeting held at HEC Secretariat, Islamabad recently. Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning Development and Reforms chaired the meeting. Mr. Baleegh-Ur-Rahman, Minister for Federal Education and Training and Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC were also present.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Ahsan Iqbal stressed the Government's vision in prioritizing the higher education sector to fulfil development goals, according to Vision 2025. He spoke of honing human and social capital for the country's development. He said that the importance of education and research cannot be stressed enough, adding that highest budget had been allocated for higher education sector in FY 2014-15.

The Minister recommended that by 2017-18, the medium term goals should be achieved which entailed setting up a university or its sub-campus in every district of the country, so that students desirous of acquiring higher education would be available at their doorstep. He stressed that HEC should also ensure that access to higher education is increased without any compromise on quality.

Commenting on presentation of Up-gradation of Islamabad's Federal Women College F/7-2 to Women University, he hoped that all formalities should be completed in September. Speaking

about National Skills University, he said that skills based training is a critical component of the national development. He said that the Skills University would provide better employability to the youth. "This University will also certify and accredit the skills programmes across the country that will enable youth to gain employment overseas."

The project to set up Seerat Chairs in various universities is also direly needed, which will be Centres of Excellence and each of these chairs will be dedicated for research in different subjects pertaining to the life of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) which may include leadership, gender issues, rights of minorities, etc.

Another project entitled "Technology Development Fund" also came under discussion. The Minister said that the project is aimed at ensuring that returning PhDs should not only teach but also actively get involved in research in the relevant areas. He also asked HEC to identify disciplines in which PhD scholarships will be offered in the next five years, stressing that disciplines that are directly related to country's society and economy. The Minister directed HEC to complete all formalities related to all these projects in September.

Earlier, in his presentation, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC gave an overview of all these projects.

Facilities will strengthen research on tropical and viral diseases in Pakistan

HEC to Spend Rs. 2210 Million on Medical Research Infrastructure

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) will spend more than Rs. 2210 million in the coming 3-4 years to promote research on health and medical sciences in the country.

For this purpose, HEC will provide funding to public sector universities for research infrastructure development, establishment of hi-tech research labs and training of professional in specialized areas. These facilities will be established in three institutions; Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi, Khyber Medical University, Peshawar and International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences, Karachi. The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) has approved HEC's proposal in its meeting held on September 23, 2014.

The tropical diseases such as malaria, leprosy leishmaniasis and viral diseases hepatitis, tuberculosis, dengue fever etc. have been affecting masses in

the country and besides proper treatment facilities, there is a need to conduct indigenous research on these health issues.

HEC also plans to develop a core team of researchers in allied health sciences. Under the scheme, existing research facilities at International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences, University of Karachi will be strengthened by provision of modern research laboratory equipment. Similarly two research institutes, one in pancreatic surgery and transplant and other in diabetic and endocrinology will be established in Khyber Medical University, Peshawar.

CDWP has also approved a scheme of Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi to enhance its capacity to enrol more research students in dental and oral health. Pakistan Medical and Dental Council statistics show that presently around 12,500 dental surgeons are registered in the country,

one dental surgeon each for 14,000 peoples in the country as compared to WHO standard of one dental surgeon per 5000 peoples. The specialists in oral health are only 1000 in Pakistan.

PMDC data depict the acute shortage of graduate and specialists in dental and oral health sciences. The facilities at Dow University of Health Sciences will enhance its ability to enrol more postgraduate students at the campus.

Elaborating the plan, Dr. Mazhar Saeed, Director General (Planning) HEC said that HEC is using a balanced approach to develop research infrastructure in universities so that capacity of these institutions be enhanced to solve indigenous issues of Pakistan. HEC is also engaging universities to serve the local communities. He added that in all the above schemes diagnostic facilities will be developed and local community will be the direct beneficiary of this investment.

NAEAC Meeting Reviews Accreditation of Agricultural Institutions

The 10th meeting of the National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC) was held at HEC Secretariat, Islamabad. Dr. M. E. Tusneem, Chairman NAEAC, presided over the meeting. Dr.

Riaz Hussain Qureshi, former Adviser HEC and other Council Members representing agriculture universities, leading agro-industries and R&D institutions in public and private sectors attended

the meeting. It was noticed that evaluation rating of the newly initiated degree programmes, generally in the newly established institutions, shows that a lot of improvement is required.

The Council reviewed the progress of the accreditation activities during 2013-14 carried out in different agriculture institutions in the country besides confirmation of the minutes of the ninth Council meeting. Annual Work Plan for 2014-15 was endorsed subject to minor modifications, besides approval of budget for 2014-15.

The members agreed that the Council will work proactively to implement its mandate and carry-

out major activities of external evaluation and accreditation of degree programmes, conduct awareness seminars, and strengthen institutional database, etc.

In recent years, HEC has taken several initiatives to improve both access and quality of higher education. Establishment of the Accreditation Councils (ACs) is a major step towards improving the quality of degree programmes and bringing them at par with international standards.

Accreditation is both about quality assurance and quality improvement. Accreditation process determines the minimum acceptable educational standard.

— Chinese Award for Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman —

Noted scientist and former Chairman of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman has been conferred "Friendship Award of China" at a ceremony held in Beijing.

The award is the People's Republic of China's highest national award for foreign experts who have made outstanding contributions to the country's economic and social progress.

The award has been given for the tremendous contributions of Prof. Atta-ur-Rahman to develop strong linkages between China and Pakistan in various fields of science and higher education.

He was responsible for initiating a major programme of academic collaboration and linkages with Chinese universities and other institutions as Federal Minister for Science and Technology and later as Chairman HEC. Under these programmes, some 400 students were sent to various Chinese universities and research institutions for PhD level training.

Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman has initiated strong collaborations with many Chinese Institutes. He signed an Executive Protocol for Scientific

Cooperation between Chinese Academy of Sciences and Pakistan Academy of Sciences under which many workshops have been organised in Pakistan and China. Dr Atta-ur-Rahman has also initiated a nationwide project for training students in universities of Pakistan in Chinese language through video-conferencing.



Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman's book, 'The Wondrous World of Science' has been recently translated into Chinese language. He has also recently been awarded International Cooperation Award from the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

He has 976 publications in several fields of Organic Chemistry including 720 research publications, 37 international patents, 151 books and 68 chapters in books published largely by major US and European presses.

Prof. Rahman has won four civil awards including Tamgha-i-Imtiaz, Sitara-i-Imtiaz, Hilal-i-Imtiaz, and the nation's highest civil award, Nishan-i-Imtiaz.

Award Ceremony held for HEC-UNDP Fellowship on Federalism



An award ceremony was held recently at HEC Islamabad for the recipients of HEC-UNDP Fellowship on Federalism. Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC was the chief guest and Marc-André Franche, Country Director UNDP was the guest of honour. The Higher Education Commission in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has launched the Indigenous MPhil Fellowship and offered 12 Fellowships for study in Pakistan's universities and degree awarding institutions.

The selected scholars, who were already enrolled in MPhil programmes, are undertaking research on following key subjects: federation of Pakistan after 18th Amendment; the political economy of decentralization in Southern Punjab; fiscal federalism in Pakistan and 18th Amendment; the 18th Amendment and development outcomes through local government systems - case study of KPK

focusing on decentralization and local government; analysis of 7th NFC with reference to Balochistan; Devolution Plan 2001 and its implications for district bureaucracy; politics of provincial autonomy studying Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and community mobilization.

A total of 36 applicants had applied of which 11 scholars have been awarded the Fellowship. The scholars, from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan were selected on merit from Government College University, Lahore, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad, University of Peshawar, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad and the International Islamic University, Islamabad, respectively.

Speaking at the occasion, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed thanked UNDP for collaborating with HEC to encourage research on important national issues. He

hoped that after doing their research on issues like 18th Amendment, Fiscal federalism, Decentralization and Local Government in Pakistan, the scholars will be able to contribute to these subjects at the national level. He assured the scholars of HEC's support in further studies if they come up with quality research work.

Marc-André Franche, Country Director UNDP said that study of Federalism has gained significance at the global level. He said that creation of knowledge is imperative for sustaining Federalism, adding that indigenous research is crucial for that purpose. He also mentioned that with the same objective, HEC-UNDP Fellowship on Federalism has been launched. Giving a Comparative perspective Mr. Franche said that federalism connects diverse societies and the 18th Amendment envisaged as a landmark political consensus in Pakistan. UNDP is committed to support decentralization in Pakistan, he added.

Meeting held at Islamabad

Establishment of Pan-Islamic Research & Education Network

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan in collaboration with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) organized a two-day “3rd Meeting of Country Coordinators for Establishment of Pan-Islamic Research and Education Network (PIREN)”. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC was the chief guest in the opening ceremony held at a local hotel in Islamabad.

Besides participants from Pakistan, six representatives from the Islamic countries and two participants from ISESCO attended the two-day session.

In 2012, ISESCO planned to establish the Pan-Islamic Research and Education Network (PIREN) among the Member States. The main objective of PIREN is to connect local research and education networks of Islamic Countries to enhance exchange and cooperation between researchers and education communities by promoting use of PIREN and its applications. It may be mentioned here that in order to launch this Network, ISESCO convened first meeting of Country Coordinators from selected Islamic countries in March 2012 at ISESCO Headquarter in Morocco, while the second meeting of PIREN was held in March 2013 in Jordan.



Speaking at the occasion, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC said that it was an honour for Pakistan, particularly HEC, to host this important meeting. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, who was part of ISESCO team that conceived the idea for establishing PIREN, hoped that the participants of the meeting will come up with a concrete action plan for effective functioning of the Network.

The Chairman said that PIREN will bring the Muslim countries closer for sharing their knowledge base, adding that many good activities are taking place in different Muslim countries, the need is to share their experiences and achievements. He said that HEC will provide all possible facilitation for success of all initiatives taken under the auspices of PIREN.

Dr. Faiq Bilal, Director of Sciences, ISESCO, appreciated Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed and Mr. Anwar Amjad, Director General (IT) HEC for their active role in the establishment of PIREN as well as efforts to make this

platform useful for the academicians and researchers of the Muslim world.

He said that the idea of establishing PIREN has been endorsed by all the OIC Member States. He said that before holding a bigger meeting, a small group has been invited here to prepare an action plan that will provide basis for future activities.

Mr. Anwar Amjad, Director General (IT) HEC extended a warm welcome to the participants, particularly those who have come from Malaysia, Lebanon, Jordan and Morocco.

He hoped that the participants, belonging to diverse backgrounds, will come up with an effective action plan for different initiatives to be taken through PIREN. He thanked ISESCO for their continuous support to accomplish a goal which, when fully materialized, will greatly help the Muslim countries in strengthening their higher education and research.

HEC Signs MoU with PMDC



The Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen collaboration and coordination with each other. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Chairman HEC and Dr. Masood Hameed Khan, President PMDC, signed the MoU. The MoU aims to revamp and strengthen process of accreditation of programmes in Medical and Dental Education offered in all Institutions of Higher Education in Pakistan, and to develop criteria for recognition of programmes in Medical and Dental Education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels,

curriculum of programmes and criteria for appointment of faculty. It also aims to establish a Medical and Dental Education Accreditation Board/Committee (MDEAC) as accreditation body for undergraduate, postgraduate programmes being offered in Pakistan. Furthermore, HEC will recognize the programmes accredited by the MDEAC and will not recognize the programmes in Medicine and Dentistry which are not accredited by MDEAC. HEC has already signed such MoUs with Pakistan Council of Architects and Town Planners (PCATP), Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) and Pakistan Veterinary Medical Council (PVMC), etc.

Workshop for Principals of Affiliated Colleges

The World Bank has signed an agreement to support HEC Medium Term Development Framework-II (MTDF-II) through its Tertiary Education Support Programme (TESP). One of the projects is related to enhancement of Minimum Quality Standards (MQS) related to up-gradation of academics including training of principals, teaching faculties and administrative staff. The aim of the project is to enhance standard of education in affiliated colleges and to identify colleges that meet MQS as advised by HEC. The programme would also provide the baseline knowledge and skills necessary for Principals/Administrators of the affiliated colleges to involve effectively in academics, good governance and administrative functioning of the affiliated colleges of public sector universities.

In this connection, the Academics Division, HEC organized a Pilot Testing Workshop for Principals/Vice Principals/Senior Faculty Members

of affiliated colleges, which was held from September 15-19, 2014 at HEC Regional Centre, Lahore and over 35 participants attended workshop.

Dr. Zahid Majeed, the workshop focal person, during his welcome address, emphasized the need for implementation of Self Assessment Manual. During the workshop, the challenges of improving quality education were discussed, considering the regional scenarios. It was realized that research should be promoted at the college level.

Mr. Fida Hussain, Director General (Academics) HEC appreciated the overall efforts. He guided the participants regarding planning and implementation of various programmes and projects. On the basis of this pilot testing workshop, the Academic Division will conduct nine more workshops in different cities.

HEC holds Workshop on Academic Writing Skills in Social Sciences

A two-day workshop on Academic Writing Skills in Social Sciences was organized by the Academics Division, Higher Education Commission at HEC Islamabad. Twenty PhD scholars in Social Sciences from seven universities, both in public and private sector, of Islamabad and Rawalpindi attended the workshop.

Dr. Muhammad Naeem Khalid, Adviser (Academics) HEC inaugurated the workshop and welcomed the participants. He briefed them regarding endeavours of HEC for uplift of higher education in the country.

Dr. Meredith McCormac, Country Representative, World Learning, Islamabad, was the Resource Person. She shared literature on academic writing skills with the PhD scholars,



and also shared her own experiences in academic writing. In order to augment scholars' understanding on literature, Dr. Meredith engaged them in various activities such as how to develop a research question and various ways in which a scholar can structure his/her literature review, research methodology, finding and discussion/conclusions, etc.

Mr. Fida Hussain, Director General (Academics) HEC admired active participation of

scholars and appreciated efforts of Dr. Meredith McCormac as Resource Person. He said that Academics Division has planned to conduct such workshops in HEC's regional offices and different universities across Pakistan.

The participants highly appreciated significance of the workshop for their work. The scholars also appreciated HEC's vigilance about their academic needs and its commitment to deliver on these needs.

News in Picture

The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan completed 12 years of its existence on September 11, 2014.

At a ceremony held at HEC Islamabad, Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi, Executive Director HEC, cut a cake to mark the occasion. Dr. Naeem Khalid, Adviser (Academics) and other staff members were also present.



Plagiarism Prevention & Academic Integrity

HEC Organizes Int'l Video Conference Sessions

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) organized a series of international video conference sessions on "Plagiarism and Academic Integrity" for public and private sector universities of Pakistan.

Three separate sessions were organized over a period of four weeks with resource persons from the United Kingdom and Lebanon.

The sessions, organized as part of HEC efforts for capacity building of universities, provided a platform to faculty members and management staff of universities to interact with international experts and learn best practices being adopted worldwide.

The resource person of the first session was Mr. Gary Finnigin,

Integration Specialist of iParadigms. He joined the video conference from the United Kingdom and talked about integration of Learning Management System (LMS) with plagiarism detection software Turnitin. He shared various parameters which universities are required to consider for LMS integration.

The resource person for the second session was Ms. Frances Chapman, Head of Nursing and Lecturer in Quality Assurance, Leeds Metropolitan University, United Kingdom. She talked about Plagiarism Policy of the Leeds Metropolitan University.

The third and last session of the video conference series, was on Academic Integrity. The resource person of the event

was Ms. Randa Al Chidiac, Executive Director of Library, Holy Spirit University, Ksalik, Lebanon. She talked about academic integrity and plagiarism prevention practices in Lebanon, and shared a universal roadmap for eradication of plagiarism from the academic institutions.

The video conference sessions were organized by Quality Assurance Division of HEC. The sessions were opened by Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad Khan from Quality Assurance Division, HEC who welcomed the resource persons and participants, and shared objectives of HEC for promotion of quality higher education in the country. He emphasized that the universities must focus on the quality of education.

HEC, UoB holds Seminar on Balochistan Development

The Higher Education Commission in collaboration with the University of Balochistan organized a one-day seminar as part of celebrations of Pakistan's Independence Day. The theme of the seminar was "Balochistan Development".

The chief guest of the programme was Provincial Minister for Education, Sardar

Raza Barech. Provincial Information Minister and Minister for Planning and Development were also present. Prominent among others were Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi, Executive Director HEC, Dr. Javeid Iqbal, Vice Chancellor UoB and Dr. Rukhsana Jabeen, Vice Chancellor, Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University.

Speaking at the occasion, the chief guest appreciated the efforts of HEC and the University of Balochistan for organizing a useful seminar. He hoped that in future also such events will be organized for awareness of the people.

He lauded the role of HEC in promoting higher education and bringing opportunities for

people in field of research and development for Balochistan province.

Earlier, Dr. Akhtar Muhammad from UoB's Geology Department, deliberated on various types of minerals that exist in Balochistan. He also apprised the audience about usefulness and quantity of these minerals, as well as economic value of ores.

Mr. Dostain Jamaldini, Chairman, Gwadar Port Authority talked about development work on Gwadar Port. He highlighted the Port's crucial role for economic development of Balochistan

and Pakistan. Dr. Jahangir Achkazai, Professor at Economics Department UoB highlighted functions and responsibilities of Economic Cooperation Organizations (ECO) and Association of South East Asian nations (ASEAN). He also deliberated on Free Trade Agreement.

Dr. Waheed Noor from IT Department UoB discussed the role of IT in higher education institutions. He also apprised the audience about developments in the field of IT.

Dr. Zahoor Bazai from Botany Department, University of Balochistan delivered his

presentation on environmental changes and factors causing environmental hazards.

Mr. Tayab Lehri, Additional Secretary, Education delivered his presentation on developments in schools and colleges. He informed about the initiatives being taken by the government to strengthen education in the province.

Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi highlighted the role of HEC and initiatives being taken by HEC for Balochistan. He said that HEC is putting in its best to promote higher education in Balochistan.

Private Universities of KP Donate Funds for IDPs

A group of four private universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) have donated Rs. 0.85 million to HEC for depositing in the account opened by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to support IDPs.

The delegation led by Mr. Imran Ullah, Chancellor, Abasyn University visited HEC Secretariat recently and presented the cheque to Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC. Other delegates included Dr. Attaullah Shah from City University of Science and Technology, Dr. Salim ur Rahman from Sarhad University, and a representative from Qurtaba University.

It may be mentioned here that HEC has been mobilizing all public and private universities of the country to play an effective role in supporting IDPs who have been displaced due to the ongoing military operation in North Waziristan.

Speaking at the occasion, the Chairman HEC appreciated management of these universities for



contribution to a noble cause. He said that different Committees set up for this purpose are working to address three core issues of education, health, and administrative support for IDPs.

The Chairman briefed the delegation about different programmes of HEC for facilitating higher education institutions in the private sector. He emphasized the significance of private sector institutions and stressed the need to enhance academia-industry linkage. Dr. Mukhtar also underlined HEC's efforts for ensuring quality of education and stressed upon the delegates to strictly follow HEC's quality assurance guidelines.

Tertiary Education Support Programme Advance Management Visit Programme for Treasurers of Public Sector Universities

Under the Technical Assistance component of the Tertiary Education Support Programme (TESP), an Advance Management Visit Programme of Thai and Australian universities was conducted for Treasurers of public sector universities recently.

The main theme of the programme was Organizational Financial Planning and Challenges of Revenue Diversification - training for capacity building and improvement in the higher educational institutions (HEIs).

As many as 20 Treasurers/Director Finance of the universities and five relevant officers of the HEC attended the training programme coordinated by Asian Institute of Technology, (AIT) Thailand. The participants were able to know about best practices in university financial management and fund diversification, during their visits to Thailand's top university, Chulalongkorn, and some of the leading universities in Australia such as University of Queensland (UQ), Griffith, Bond, New South Wales (UNSW), Macquarie and University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

The delegation also visited the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) Australia and the Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC),



Thailand. The delegation also joined the Pakistan Independence Day celebrations at Pakistan's High Commission in Canberra, where they were warmly welcomed by Ms. Asima Rabbani, Acting High Commissioner.

The purpose of the whole programme was to prepare University Treasurers and top management from the Finance units of HEC to administer diversified institutional funds through exposure to best practices in fiduciary oversight and resource management at reputable international universities.

It introduced participants to innovations and policy frameworks in financial management, drawing lessons for Pakistan's higher education institutions in general and HEC in particular. It engaged participants in experience-sharing with peers in reputable international HEIs about challenges in planning, maintaining and managing a diverse portfolio of institutional funds with the ultimate objective of achieving transparency and fiscal responsibility.

Designed around an experiential- and peer learning approach, the programme comprises study visits to international counterparts, where participants interact with senior peers and observe working examples of best practices in fiduciary responsibility and financial management.

Expert presentations and panel discussions respond to the needs of senior financial personnel, consolidating existing experience and knowledge and providing new perspectives that can be applied at home.

End-programme synthesis, video-documented as part of the deliverables, helps build an ongoing training resource for future in the areas such as Emerging paradigms in HEI financing and FM, Accountability and fiduciary responsibility, International benchmarks and standards IPSAS, Fiduciary responsibility and stewardship, Oversight of FM, budgeting and controls, Challenges of financial sustainability within HEIs, Approaches and methods for resource generation, Partnerships and fund

diversification opportunities, Financial strategies and investment proposal analysis, Peer seminar and Synthesis, etc.

The delegation was given a guided tour of vast campuses of

the universities they visited. At many universities a tea gathering was arranged by a number of Pakistani professionals and students.

The occasions served as a platform for dialogue and

socialization. The visit has helped prepare the delegation to meet the challenges of revenue diversification and financial management in the higher education sector of Pakistan.

Balochistan Government Grants Land for HEC Centre, Sibi University

The Balochistan Government has issued directions for allotment of land in Sibi and Quetta for establishment of Sibi University and HEC Regional Centre in Quetta, respectively. The decision comes at the heels of a request from Chairman HEC, Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed for the required land as HEC has been instrumental in promoting higher education for the youth in less developed areas. In order to achieve this target, HEC upgraded the existing higher education institutions in its first phase and also recommended the establishment of new institutions in different parts of the country on need basis.

To this effect, a detailed feasibility study was carried out in 2007, to assess the potential of new universities and sub campuses of existing universities in each district of Balochistan. Turbat, Loralai and Sibi were found feasible for the establishment of new universities. Accordingly, the University of Turbat and University of Loralai have been established and are in development phase while University of Sibi has been proposed in the current year. Now that the land will be allotted, development work will be able to begin. Likewise the land for HEC Regional Centre will also enable construction work.

ELTR Project holds Seminar at LCWU

A one-day international seminar on "Understanding the Processes, Procedure and Practices of Action Research" was recently held at Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) Lahore, under the auspices of HEC's English Language Teaching Reforms Project (ELTR) Phase II.

Prof. Dr. Anne Burns, University of New South Wales Sydney facilitated this seminar and highlighted need of Action Research in Education. The seminar was attended by faculty from the host University, Samanabad College, APWA College, Kinnaird College, FC College University, Beaconhouse National University, UMT Lahore and affiliated colleges. The seminar explored concepts and processes of action research and what it can offer teachers and teacher educators who want to conduct investigations in relation to their own practice. Participants took a closer look at

developing an action research focus, deciding on classroom interventions, and collecting and analysing data to inform decisions about further practice. The role and purpose of reflection in action research was also highlighted.

Dr. Sabiha Mansoor, Vice Chancellor, LCWU in her welcome address thanked HEC and applauded the efforts of ELTR project. She highlighted the importance of English language learning and teaching in Pakistan and the need for research in this area.

Mr. Nazir Hussain, Regional Director, HEC highlighted the Government's support for promotion of research in Pakistan and stressed upon the commitment and effort required by ELT professionals for raising awareness about pedagogical issues and collaboratively seeking solutions.



Windows Phone Hackathon - Karachi

Microsoft Innovation Centre, Karachi organized a successful three-day Hackathon around the “Build for a Better Pakistan” theme. The event was arranged in collaboration with Ecommerce Gateway at ITCN Asia 2014, Pakistan's biggest IT Extravaganza at Expo Center, Karachi. The focus of the event was development on Windows Phone, and students and developers alike took part in the Hackathon, including faculty members.



The hackathon had five major categories: Build for better Pakistan, Games, Kids and Education, Lifestyle and Food, and News and Weather applications. As many as 20 Windows Phone devices were contested between the participants, and each category had separate division of devices depending upon the genre.

Total registrations for the hackathon were in excess of 600, with 300 students attending the actual event. More than 335 teams registered for the competition. Teams from as far as the University of AJK, University of Turbat, BUITEMS Quetta were present at the hackathon. The judging panel consisted of Usama Mustafa and Muhammad Umer from MIC Karachi, Syed Abdul Basit from Microsoft and Mr. Imran Ali from Bahria University Karachi. Three days of hacking resulted in an unprecedented 100+ Windows Phone applications. The hackathon leaves a mark on the IT Ecosystem in Karachi, and it is hoped that similar big events will be held in Lahore and Islamabad to promote creativity among youth.

MSP Orientation Lahore

Microsoft is currently recruiting Microsoft Student Partners throughout Pakistan. A new student partner, when taken aboard, is taken through a couple of training sessions wherein he/she is given basic information on how to proceed further with the academic year, their responsibilities in effectively communicating the role HEC is playing in the current education landscape of Pakistan, and being an Ambassador of Microsoft, they are given a roundup of all current technologies under Microsoft umbrella.



Upon completion of the recruitment process in Lahore, Microsoft held an introductory Orientation session for the new MSPs in MIC Lahore. This session was attended by 34 Student Partners. MSP Programme is one of the most effective means of reaching out to students in universities all across Pakistan. This can be seen from the following statistics of the central region. Applications were received from 32 different universities, with 172 individuals applying from the region. Out of these applicants, 40 students were

shortlisted for interviews, and eventually 23 students were selected. These students represent universities in Lahore, Bahawalpur, D.I. Khan, Faisalabad, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Multan, and Sahiwal.

The orientation session covered HEC and Microsoft Education Alliance in detail, with students given a brief introduction to each and every programme covered in EAA. The role of an MSP as a Microsoft Ambassador was highlighted and clarified, and students were given a brief introduction to some of the technologies they are expected to work with, and ultimately train their peers on. The whole recruitment process and the orientation process was conducted and completed by MIC Lahore team, Mr. Zaigham Ikram Butt, Mr. Awais Khan Niazi and Mr. Muhammad Shahid Aziz.

PYF 14 Windows Store Hackathon Prize Distribution Ceremony

Microsoft in collaboration with the Government of Punjab organized a Windows Store hackathon in Punjab Youth Festival. The event witnessed a huge participation from across the country. The hackathon was held and focused towards realizing the true potential of our developers as Microsoft is committed towards developer, startups and entrepreneurial ecosystem in Pakistan. Students from all over Pakistan participated in Punjab Youth Festival 2014 (Windows Store Hackathon), the event saw the best of 300 Computer Science students coming with brilliant ideas which they brought to reality using the latest of Microsoft Technologies. Microsoft Innovation Center, Lahore in collaboration with the Punjab Information Technology Board awarded the skillful students of Pakistan with prizes. A total of 16 high-end Windows Phone devices were distributed in winning teams. All apps developed during this hackathon are available on Windows Store.

Student Highlight

This month's student highlight comes from Rahber Ashraf, a recent graduate from Bahria University Islamabad. It is short story of a student, whose collaboration with HEC and Microsoft took him to heights unimagined. Rahber Ashraf was a part of Microsoft Student Partner group, as a representative of Bahria University Islamabad. All throughout his tenure as an MSP, Rahber has shown immense skills and passion for embracing new technologies and turned out to be a true professional by not only delivering quality technical sessions within his University but also benefiting other universities in Islamabad.



After graduation, Rahber was given an opportunity to be a part of Microsoft Internship programme, impressing everyone with his unique ability to apply technology, in all its forms, from business processes to hardcore development. He was given different tasks from streamlining the business requirements and build sound applications to delivering technical training sessions and conduct internship programmes at Microsoft. Working as an intern, Rahber worked with more than 60 students and produced a total of 27 applications as a result of this collaboration. Some of the applications had 50,000+ downloads. Due to his potential and brilliant track record during the nine months internship at Microsoft, Rahber was hired as a permanent Microsoft employee in July 2014. He is currently in Microsoft Turkey, for a month-long training programme. His current skillset includes XAML, C#, .NET, SQL Server, Office 365, Windows Azure, Kinect along with HTML5 and JavaScript.



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

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The **Educational Alliance Agreement** between HEC and Microsoft has been a remarkable initiative, whose objective is to deliver programmes that provide faculty, students and staff with benefits such as access to latest Microsoft software products, trainings and workshops by trained Microsoft staff and community, opportunity to participate in global technology competition, content for curriculum design, staff technical training, faculty connection and other global Microsoft programmes as well as material for developing teaching content.

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HEIs of Sindh and Balochistan

Training on Procurement/Purchase Process

The Higher Education Commission, as part of capacity development programme for management staff of Higher Education Institutions of Sindh and Balochistan, organized a training at HEC Regional Centre Karachi for procurement staff who are responsible for initiating the purchase process and executing it in accordance with the fiduciary

system/practices prevailing in their respective provinces at HEC Regional Centre, Karachi.

Mr. Rehan Hyder, Sr. Procurement Specialist from World Bank was resource person for the training. In his presentation he explained different procurement techniques and objectives of procurements. He also explained techniques of

designing a procurement plan and challenges that can be faced demurring procurement process.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Asad Khan, Programme Coordinator, TESP said that such trainings are very important for capacity building of HEIs and strengthening their management and governance.

HEC Scholar completes PhD from France

Dr. Mohammad Zahid Mustafa, Centre for Advanced Studies in Vaccinology and Biotechnology (CASVAB), University of Balochistan, Quetta has completed PhD from University of Paris Sud 11, France. Dr. Mustafa was awarded HEC scholarship under the scheme "Masters leading to PhD for Teachers of Weaker Universities".

His PhD research project is aimed at finding new diagnostic markers of cholangiocarcinoma. Cholangiocarcinoma is challenging because it is difficult to distinguish benign from malignant strictures. Recently, several advances have helped in the diagnosis of cholangiocarcinoma but no

success to diagnose it in early stages. It is always diagnosed at advanced stages when treatment options remain limited. But in literature no data are found corresponding to the autoantibodies in cholangiocarcinoma.

Considering this fact his research work is unique and he proposed some autoantibody signatures defined by serological proteome analysis in sera of patients with cholangiocarcinoma and if these signatures are verified by future research as universal autoantibody signatures for diagnosing cholangiocarcinoma then it would be a great achievement for him and for the country as well.

News in Picture

Dr. Muhammad Akram Chaudhry, Vice Chancellor, University of Sargodha (UoS) presents a shield to the Nuclear Scientist Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan who was chief guest at the concluding ceremony of Indigenous On-Campus Training held under Modern University Training Programme held at UoS recently. Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi, Executive Director, Higher Education Commission (HEC) was also present.



Workshop for Evaluators of NBEAC Organized by QAA

A two-day training workshop for the evaluators of National Business Education Accreditation Council (NBEAC) was held at HEC Regional Centre, Lahore. The resource persons included Dr. Zahoor Hassan Syed, Professor LUMS, Dr. Rasheed Kausar, Pro Rector, University of Management Technology Lahore, Prof. Amanullah Khan, Dean Management Sciences, Riphah University, Dr. Sadia Nadeem, Associate Professor, FAST NU, Islamabad, Dr. Zaki Rashidi, SZABIST Karachi, Dr. Farooq e Azam Cheema, Dean Management Sciences, Bahria University Karachi and Dr. Hanif Muhammad, Consultant.

The workshop was designed for the experienced evaluators of NBEAC with the purpose of bringing all evaluators on one page about NBEAC standards and accreditation process. There were almost 30 evaluators who were invited to participate in the workshop. Eight discussion sessions on RUBRIC were arranged to identify gaps in RUBRIC standards and NBEAC proforma.

The objectives of the workshop were to share best practices and experiences during peer review process (Lessons learnt after completing 35 Peer

Review Visits). How to manage possible conflicts during the visit? And to improve and review the existing peer review process.

The participants of the workshop were mostly senior faculty members, Deans and HoDs of public and private sector universities. The workshop provided the insight of NBEAC Accreditation model and the best practices of peer review visits. Participants discussed the questions to be asked during the peer review visit to collect evidence to verify the information provided in Self Assessment report of the Business School.

In his opening speech, Dr. Hasan Sohaib Murad, Chairman NBEAC briefed the audience about evolution of NBEAC standards during three years. He appreciated the involvement of evaluators in NBEAC accreditation process. He mentioned that now NBEAC has the repository of trained evaluators having experience gained through faculty/student meetings during peer review visit. The voluntary process of programme accreditation by the NBEAC is the key element to enhance the quality of business education.

News in Picture

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman, Higher Education Commission (HEC) recently visited the residence of Mr. Ajmal Khan, Vice Chancellor, Islamia College University, Peshawar and congratulated him on his safe release. A number of Vice Chancellors of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and senior HEC officers were present on the occasion. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed hoped that under the leadership of Mr. Ajmal Khan, the University will become one of the leading HEIs of the country.



TESP ACTIVITIES...

Orientation Session on HRM Training Programme

TESP convened an orientation session for trainees of human resource management. Mr. Faisal, resource person from Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) Thailand briefed the participants about travel arrangements for Thailand and Australia. Participants asked different question about culture and traditions of the two countries, and boarding and lodging arrangements. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC, congratulated participants of the foreign training and stressed upon the importance of such trainings for capacity building of public sector universities and also for HEC.



Training on Procurement/Purchase Process

HEC as part of capacity development programme for management staff at HEIs organized a training for procurement staff who are responsible for initiating the purchasing process and executing it in accordance with the fiduciary system/practices prevailing in their respective provinces. As a first step of the activity TESP carried out gap analysis of the purchases/fiduciary system of HEIs.



Mr. Rehan Hyder, Procurement Specialist from World Bank, was the resource person of the training. In his comprehensive presentation, he explained different procurement techniques and objectives of procurements. He also explained the techniques of designing a procurement plan and challenges that can be faced during procurement process. Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi, Executive Director HEC formally inaugurated the training session. In his remarks, Dr. Kundi said that such trainings are very important for capacity building of HEIs and strengthening their management and governance.

LUMS Internees Complete internship at TESP of HEC

TESP Secretariat of HEC inducted four interns under the ASP-LUMS Internship Programme for a period of two months. The internees have successfully completed their internships and a certificate distribution ceremony was held at TESP Secretariat. The evaluation ceremony was co-chaired by Ms. Mahreen Khan, Assistant Manager, Internship Programme, APS-LUMS and Mr. Asad Khan, Coordinator TESP.



Supervisors of TESP secretariat appreciated the positive attitude and hard work of the internees and offered valuable suggestions to the internees for their career development. Ms. Mahreen Khan praised TESP and HEC for offering internship opportunities and the guidance and training provided by TESP secretariat. She said that such opportunities are very useful for fresh graduates to understand the working of public sector organizations.

HEC, ILO Collaboration

Training on Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) Programme

The certificate distribution ceremony of the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme, organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Higher Education Commission, was organized at HEC Secretariat, Islamabad.

The two-week Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop was attended by Business Development Service Providers, including representatives from universities and other organizations, which have enterprise development programme as their mandate.

Universities provide a perfect setting for students to generate business ideas and get support and guidance to turn them into real enterprises. Business Incubation Centres, established at different universities, enable their graduates to become job providers instead of job seekers.

On the occasion, HEC and ILO also signed an agreement entitled "Create enabling business environment for entrepreneurs: SIYB Roll out", which aims to create a pool of 28-30 officials to provide effective business development services by rolling out gender mainstreamed SIYB in Pakistan, and improve the access of



women and men to gender mainstreamed business development services and establishment of small/medium sized enterprises. Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC and Mr. Francesco d'Ovidio, Country Director, ILO Pakistan signed the agreement.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Francesco d'Ovidio emphasized the contribution that women make to the economy especially millions of women involved in small and medium sized enterprises.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Chairman HEC said that ILO's SIYB programme is in line with the HEC objectives. He said that the Government has enormously invested in the higher education sector, adding that promoting entrepreneurship among university students was an important part of different HEC initiatives. "The trainers that have been trained in SIYB

programme and they will now replicate this training in their own institutions. They will reach hundreds of women and men and help them bring their creative business ideas into reality."

The participants also shared their experiences with the audience and praised the participatory training session. "This has been one of the most unique learning experiences of my life. The training was practical and interactive," said a training participant.

The SIYB training was delivered by Mr. Gemenunu Wissenaja, Senior Master Trainer SIYB Association of Sri Lanka. He hoped that the Programme would be rolled out successfully as the trainers were all well qualified professionals committed to making the business centres hubs of innovation and entrepreneurship in their areas.

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