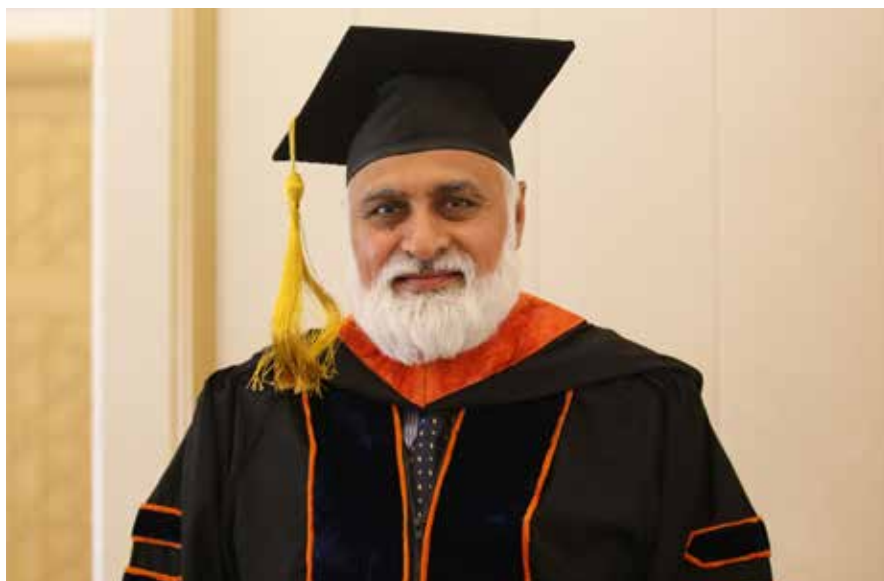# QUEST

FROM THE DESK OF VICE CHANCELLOR

Education should impact socio economics of the country

Dr Niaz Ahmad Akhtar

In his address to the second convocation of Information Technology University (ITU), Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, Vice Chancellor ITU, expressed his belief in the marketability of ITU's degree. Together with knowledge, skills, the right attitude, and professional ethics, a degree from the institution attributes to the success of our graduates, owing to their status of global citizens, he believes.

In Pakistan, there is a gap that needs to be fulfilled with regards to bringing highly qualified faculty in to academia. At present, for 150,000 students, there is only 40,000 faculty available in the country, whereas, that number is expected to reach 75,000. Being part of the global village, Pakistan provides enormous opportunities for our educated, skilled youth, demonstrated by the fact that 90 per cent of ITU's graduates have gotten jobs both inside and outside Pakistan.

Dr. Akhtar urged both students and faculty to get their research work published in national and international journals, and provided incentives in the form of stipends and tuition waivers. Citing ITU's resources, infrastructure, and addition of new subjects, he is confident that the university is on an upward trajectory.

IN THIS ISSUE

QEC SEMINARS

Editors
Mr. Farrukh Jamal, Ms. Saba Aziz

Design
Abu Sirkhel

REGISTRAR'S MESSAGE

" I take pride in introducing myself as Registrar and among the founding members of Information Technology University (ITU). ITU was established in 2012 with an aim to further the ladder of research, innovation and creativity in the world of science, technology and engineering.

Being the Registrar, I have seen ITU face various adversities while maintaining its institutional capacity and academic excellence at par with the very few highly rated and most prestigious degree awarding institutions in this part of the world. Although, ITU is a relatively new institution, it has shown some remarkable progress in the disciplinary domains of science, technology and engineering in its short life span. ITU mainly focuses on inculcating a sense of critical analysis and independent thinking in its young minds to produce world class professionals. Moreover, ITU has highly motivated, foreign qualified faculty with a collaborative academic environment and access to cutting edge research facilities. I believe ITU has a promising future to explore the diversified sphere of knowledge and achieve success simultaneously.

As Registrar, I assure my unprecedented support and services to the brilliant minds striving for the advancement of the university.

ZAHEER SARWAR
Registrar
Information Technology University

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Patent filing and registration in Pakistan

Intellectual property rights, including patents, gives legal protection to scholarly research work like scientific invention. For academia, there is a dire need to understand how to file a patent and protect their intellectual work. Within this context, QEC @ ITU arranged a seminar where Ms. Shakra Khurshid, Assistant Director Patents IPO. The main points of the lecture focused on patent and patent systems, Patents ordinance of Pakistan 2000, patent life and expiry, patentable inventions in Pakistan, invention novelty, types of patent applications, and necessary procedures applicable in Pakistan.

Dr. Saeed Ul Hassan, Director QEC, thanked IPO Pakistan for collaborating to arrange a successful event and briefing the ITU faculty about patent filing in Pakistan.

Ms. Shakra Khurshid, Assistant Director Patents IPO

ECONOMIC POLICIES

Exploring Pakistan's Relationship with IMF

Pakistan is facing a challenging economic environment, with lackluster growth, elevated inflation, high indebtedness, and a weak external position. This reflects the legacy of uneven and procyclical economic policies in recent years aiming to boost growth, but at the expense of rising vulnerabilities and lingering structural and institutional weaknesses. The authorities recognize the need to address these challenges and in this regard, the government has already initiated a difficult, but necessary, adjustment to stabilize the economy, including support from the State Bank of Pakistan and also have reached a staff level agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) to support the economic revival by a 39 months extended fund arrangement for about 6 billion dollars.

Quality Enhancement Cell in collaboration with School of Humanities and Social Sciences arranged a seminar under its Faculty Development Program to give some insight on Pakistan's Relationship with IMF and its implication on country's economy in past - present and future.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SDG Tech Lab, hosted at School of Humanities and Social Sciences

On February 20th, 2019 the SDG Tech Lab was launched at Information Technology University (ITU) in collaboration with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). It was officially inaugurated on February 20th, 2019.

The official inauguration ceremony was graced by Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, Acting Vice Chancellor ITU, Mr. Ignacio Artaza, Country Director, UNDP Pakistan and Ms. Lina Mousa, Country Representative, UNFPA.

SDG Tech Lab at Information Technology University (ITU)

The objective of the SDG Tech Lab is to conduct cutting edge research and development, and leverage Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), for the implementation and timely completion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Paki-

Front from Left to Right - Mr. Ignacio Artaza (Country Director, UNDP), Ms. Lina Mousa (Country Representative, UNFPA), Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar (Acting Vice Chancellor, ITU), Dr. Izza Aftab (Director SDG Tech Lab, ITU)

stan. The Lab uses technology based solutions to solve various socio-economic problems in Pakistan, to facilitate the timely achievement of the SDGs in Pakistan.

The SDGs are 17 global goals rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which is a "plan of action for people, planet and prosperity," according to the UN.

Above: Inaugural Workshop with SDG Units (Federal and Provincial)
Below: Group Picture SDG Tech Lab Inauguration

SDG Tech Lab Workshop

On February 20th 2019, a collaborative workshop organized by ITU and UNDP highlighted the core objectives of the SDG Tech Lab and its scope of work. The representatives from the federal and all four provincial and regional SDGs Units identified various socio-economic and governance issues where the use of technology can contribute towards timely completion of SDGs in Pakistan. The Lab's team would be looking into the technology based solutions to the identified problems.

Dr. Akmal Hussain, Dr. Izza Aftab and Shakeel Ahmad highlighted the need for greater interprovincial collaboration for the effective implementation of SDGs in Pakistan.

The Director of the SDG Tech Lab and Head of Economics Department at the ITU, Dr. Izza Aftab, who was the moderator of the workshop, stressed the importance of taking ownership of the lab, saying that this lab is as much your lab as it is ours. She highlighted the contingency of success upon collaborative feedback and harnessing the potential of the lab through evidence-based research for the better.

S T U D E N T S   C O R N E R

Iqra Safdar, PhD Scholar

I joined ITU as a Ph.D. Scholar in 2016. I must mention joining ITU is one of the best decisions I have taken in my life. The cross-disciplinary research culture, state-of-the-art academic environment and professional grooming opportunities are truly remarkable. Whether it's presenting at a conference, working with world-class faculty or writing for research proposals, doctoral candidates are a key part of the outstanding research being conducted at ITU.

Irtza Javaid (2nd Year), President ITU Amenity Club

My experience here at ITU has given me a deeper understanding of things and ideas. The environment here promotes conceptual learning and provide the students with a competitive edge over other students. The work been done here at ITU for poverty alleviation and development through information and communication technologies really grabbed my attention and motivated me to get a platform through which students can also play their part for the betterment of society.

SELF APPRAISAL

Institutional Performance Self Evaluation (IPSE)

In order to improve the performance of HEIs, HEC has started with the primary step of outlining Performance Evaluation Standards for the HEIs to be used for this purpose.

A total of eleven standards are defined in this document and all are equally important to be met by the HEIs to achieve the desired certification for quality provision in higher education, international visibility and significant place in the regional and international rankings of the HEIs.

QEC @ ITU initiated the Institutional Performance Evaluation (IPE) of university where university portfolio report (UPR) was prepared after collecting data from departments. Afterwards, a five-member committee was formed to conduct the Self-Performance Evaluation of the university. The committee meeting was held on 30-04-2018 and the self-evaluation report was submitted to Higher Education Commission upon completion.

Self Assessment Reports (SARs)

QEC alongside undertaking many other measures for enhancing academic quality in HEIs, also implements quality assessment mechanisms to improve academic programs and ensure high academic standards. Moreover, it helps to provide students with essential skills to enter the workplace well prepared. Therefore, QEC initiated Self Assessment Reports (SAR) of academic programs offered by the university. Three program teams were formed to carry the process in an effective manner. QEC highly appreciates the commitment and hard work of the concerned focal persons and looks forward to their continued support and cooperation.

SAR Focal Persons

Dr. Rehan Hafiz
Department of Electrical Engineering

Dr. Hina Khalid
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences

Mr. Waqar Ahmad
Department of Computer Science