



CAMPUS NEWS

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2nd Three-Day International Conference & Expo on Plant Biodiversity and Food Security



The 2nd Three-Day International Conference & Expo on Plant Biodiversity & Food Security in the Wake of Climate Change was organized by the Faculty of Sciences in collaboration with the university's ORIC office and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) at PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) on Nov 19-21, 2024. The conference aimed to highlight the latest advances in plant biodiversity with a special focus on food security in the context of climate change.

The event brought together leading scientists, researchers, and entrepreneurs from across the globe. Vice Chancellors from Pakistan and Mr. Johnny Shields, Senior Facility Manager, US Embassy Islamabad also attended the conference as the Guest of Honor, along with Mr. Kye IL Ko and Mr. Michael Lee Betts.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC, inaugurated the conference and commended the organizers for creating a platform for meaningful collaboration. He emphasized the urgent need for research-based planning to ensure sustainable agricultural practices and tackle food security challenges in the face of climate change.

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naeem, Vice Chancellor of PMAS-AAUR, addressed the gathering and underscored the growing importance of plant biodiversity at local, national, and global levels. He highlighted the university's

commitment to advancing research and solutions for climate-related challenges.

Prof. Dr. Rahmatullah Qureshi highlighted key achievements of the conference, including signing of an MoU with the Institute of Cannabis Research, Colorado State University, USA, the acceptance of a book proposal by Springer Nature, launch of Himalayan Hemp & Herbal Products (Pvt.) Limited, a spin-off company of PMAS-AAUR and the exhibition which showcased the transformative potential of research-driven product development in Pakistan.



Workshop on Kjeldahl Method for Protein Analysis



The University Institute of Biochemistry and Biotechnology (UIBB), PMAS-AAUR organized a HEC-funded workshop on the Kjeldahl method for protein analysis on November 13, 2024. The title of Hands-on Training workshop was "The Kjeldahl Experience: From Theory to Practice,".

Vice Chancellor PMAS-AAUR Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naeem thanked all guests, speakers, faculty and participants for their support, emphasizing UIBB's commitment to providing essential scientific training. He encouraged more hands-on sessions to bridge theoretical learning and practical skills.

The chief guest, Prof. Muhammad Mukhtar, Vice Chancellor of National Skills University Islamabad

inspired students by stressing the importance of protein analysis and essential tools like the Kjeldahl apparatus in research.

This training session highlighted UIBB's progress as a center of scientific innovation in biochemistry and biotechnology. Experts from the National Institute of Health (NIH), National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS), National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC), and other research institutions shared their knowledge, while students from various universities attended, showing strong interest in practical protein analysis skills. At the end, the Organizer Dr. Feroza Hamid Wattoo also thanked HEC for funding the training, noting that the Kjeldahl apparatus was purchased through an HEC-supported project.

Awareness Seminar on Combating Violence against Women through Community Policing



An awareness seminar was organized by the University Institute of Management Sciences, PMAS-AAUR in collaboration with the Pakistan Council of Human Rights (PCHR) on 7th November, 2024 with a focus on combatting violence against women through community policing.

The Speakers including Dr. Shoaib Suddle (Former IGP, Sindh), M. Shafeeq Chaudhry (Executive Director, PCHR), Muhammad Haseeb Raja (SP, Punjab Police), Dr. Ikram Ali Malik (Director UIMS) and

Dr. Abida Raza (Technical Director, NCIB) presented an in-depth analysis of historical and contemporary issues related to law enforcement and women's rights. Their insights addressed the broader challenges within the law, police reforms, and the essential role of community policing in fostering a secure environment for women.

The speakers also highlighted recent initiatives aimed at enhancing support for women within the police system. They

mentioned the introduction of virtual women's police stations and the establishment of women's front desks.

Representing PMAS-AAUR and the university's harassment committee, Dr. Abida Raza emphasized the institution's commitment to fostering a dignified, respectful work environment where both men and women can feel safe and valued. She outlined the university's zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment.

Two-Day Conference on Women Empowerment for Food Loss Mitigation

Two-Day Conference on “Women Empowerment for Food Loss Mitigation” was organized by the Department of Agricultural Extension, PMAS-AAUR and School of Economics, Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad in collaboration with Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) on November 6–7, 2024. The event brought together stakeholders from government, academia, research organizations, and the corporate sector to discuss strategies for empowering women in agriculture to reduce food losses in mango and tomato value chains in Pakistan.

The Chief Guest Ms. Naela Chohan, discussed her role as ACIAR's former Country Manager, where

she promoted female participation in decision-making and agriculture. Ms. Naela highlighted the transformative potential of empowering women in agriculture and applauded the efforts of the conference for addressing these crucial issues.

Dr. Aneela Afzal welcomed the guests, highlighting the importance of the project and the need for collaborative efforts to achieve its goals. Dr. Anwar Shah, professor at the School of Economics, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, and the Project Lead for Pakistan in the ACIAR initiative, then introduced Pakistan's component of the project. He provided a detailed overview of the project's

objectives, focusing on strategies for reducing and mitigating food losses.

The conference emphasized that while women have always been integral to agricultural production, their involvement in commercial activities has been minimal until recently. The efforts of corporate representatives such as Nestlé, Bayer, and Fatima Fertilizer to promote women empowerment in agriculture value chains were highlighted as critical steps towards sustainable development. The corporate participants showed their eagerness and excitement to forge the relationship with academia in general and PMAS Arid Agriculture University in particular.



Arid Varsity Team rewarded with Special Prize at AFS Venture Spark 2024

Dr. Arslan Afzal, Assistant Professor at FAE&T, PMAS-AAUR along with his team, participated in the AFS Venture Spark 2024, organized by the Business Incubation and Agriculture Entrepreneurship Centre at MNS-University of Agriculture, Multan. The event, held to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in agriculture, witnessed the submission of over 500 business ideas, out of which 150 were selected for participation. The event also saw representation

from 36 universities and engagement with 24 industries from across Pakistan. Dr. Arslan Afzal from PMAS-AAUR and his team presented an innovative and impactful business plan that received widespread appreciation from the judges and participants. Their efforts were rewarded with a special prize, underscoring the excellence of their work in the field of agricultural entrepreneurship. Additionally, the team's business plan garnered interest from five industries, expressing their willingness to invest and collaborate.



Seminar on Upscaling Irrigation and Climate Advisory Services Through Citizen Science

A seminar on “Upscaling Irrigation and Climate Advisory Services Through Citizen Science,” was organized by the Department of Land and Water Conservation Engineering in collaboration with the Office of Research, Innovation & Commercialization (ORIC) and the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), appears to have been an insightful event focused on addressing critical challenges in agriculture and climate resilience. The



collaboration with the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) and Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) highlights an important initiative aimed at supporting farmers with real-time climate data and irrigation advisory. The seminar successfully brought together experts, students, and researchers to discuss the role of citizen science in improving the efficiency and sustainability of irrigation practices, contributing to greater climate resilience in agriculture. In his address, Dr. Arfan Yousaf, Incharge, Faculty of Agricultural Engineering & Technology, emphasized the importance of continued collaboration with PCRWR and encouraged faculty members to explore new avenues for research and development in areas such as irrigation advisory services, citizen science, and climate change. By integrating real-time climate data with irrigation advisory, the initiative aims to provide farmers with actionable insights, ultimately ensuring both agricultural sustainability and climate resilience.



Awareness Walk and Seminar on Food Security



Seminar on “Kashmir Dispute: The International Relation Perspective”

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