



Vol.1 No.1

July-Sep 2021

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School of Economics and Social Sciences (SESS), IBA

In its vision to support research culture, and to create opportunities for practical experiences for its students, the SESS at IBA organized a number of engaging activities during the last quarter to benefit students, staff, and faculty members at IBA.

Discussion on the State of the Economy and the Federal Budget 2021-22

The SESS comprises the Department of Economics, Social Science and Liberal Arts (SSLA) Department, the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), and the Center for Population Research (CPR)

On 18th June 2021, the CBER organized a session to discuss the state of the economy and the federal budget for the fiscal year 2021-22. Renowned economist, former advisor to the Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms and Austerity, and Ex Dean and Director IBA, Dr. Ishrat Hussain was the guest speaker. Dr. S. Akbar Zaidi moderated the session.



The session was based on the report written by faculty and researchers from the Economics department at IBA. The comprehensive report included sections on labor, government policies, agriculture, health, education, major industries, social protection, and youth.

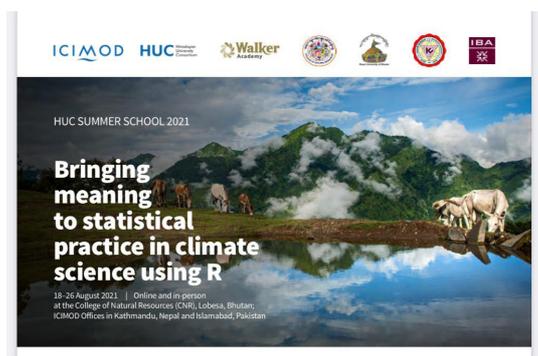
Dinner and Launch of the Strategic Document 2021-23

SESS launched their strategic document for next two years on August 20th, 2021. Dr. Asma Hyder, Dean SESS, presented the plan for the years 2021-23. The Executive Director, Dr. S. Akbar Zaidi, the entire SESS faculty, and the CBER team attended the event.

The plan highlighted the steps that the new school management has taken and plans on taking in the coming years to improve the competence of SESS. The plan will help the school to further advance and establish its presence not only nationally, but also internationally by collaborating with renowned academics and institutes.

Workshop by ICIMOD

Dr. Lubna Naz, Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics, IBA, conducted a two-week training on “Bringing Meaning to Statistical Practice in Climate Science Using R” for the faculty and students from Pakistan and Bangladesh. The workshop was held (in-person/virtual) in Pakistan, Nepal, and Bhutan from August 18-26, 2021, under the flagship of HUC summer school 2021 by Sandee/ICIMOD. Other instructors included Prof. Theodore Shepherd FRS, Reading University, UK, Dr. Niraj Poudyal, Kathmandu University,



Nepal, Prof. Om Katel and Dechen Lhamo Gyeltshen, Royal University of Bhutan. Dr. Naz was awarded the certificate of appreciation for her contribution by the director-general ICIMOD.

Movie Screening: Edhi means Love

In the last week of August, the SESS organized a movie screening of the movie “Edhi Means Love”. The movie is a digital stage biopic about the life of the late Pakistani philanthropist Abdul Sattar Edhi. Luqman Ali from Khayaal Theatre Company is behind the project.



The screening was hosted in association with Khayaal Theatre Company, a multi-award-winning theatre and drama education company based in UK.

The movie screening was followed by a zoom session, which included the Khayaal Theatre Company Team, Ms. Tehmina Durrani, and Ms. Sania Saeed. Dr. Shehram Mokhtar moderated the session.

Welcoming the 1st Batch: MS Development Studies

On 8th September, Dr. Asma Hyder organized a welcome session for the MS Development Studies students. The meeting served as an opportunity for the students and faculty to meet and greet in an informal setting.

The session was attended by Dr. S. Akbar Zaidi, Dr. Asma Hyder, and the MS Development Studies faculty and students.



Establishment of Center for Population Research (CPR)

In September, SESS signed an MoU with the Population Council. The objective of the MoU is to formally design a framework for conducting joint research by establishing a Population Research Center (PRC) at SESS. The PRC will serve as a platform for conducting research related to population, demography, and related areas. Dr Khadija Bari has been appointed as Director Center for Population Research.

Research Grants for the Faculty of SESS

Funds for a total of 13 proposals were approved that span a myriad of topics in Economics, Climate, Anthropology, Language, Media, etc. through a committee headed by Dr Qazi Masood. The aim of the grants is to promote research culture at SESS. The research grants are allocated after a rigorous review process to ensure the quality of research.

Brown Bag Seminar Series

Self-perceived life satisfaction: Evidence from a longitudinal study

Dr Asma Hyder presented a presentation on her recent ongoing project. Her research is a longitudinal study of the relationship between self-perceived life satisfaction and self-perceived income, health, and governance. The study also aims to attempt to include twitter analytics and

few variables from secondary data sources. The engaging session was attended by faculty members at IBA.

Launch of State of the Economy and Budget Report 2021

On 15th September 2021, the report on the State of the Economy and Federal Budget 2021, authored by faculty and researchers in the Economics department at IBA, was launched in the form of an eBook. The eBook is available on the CBER website.



Renowned economists including Dr. Mubarik Ahmad, Technical Specialist

in Agricultural Policies, Professor Dr. Samina Khalil, Director Applied Economics Research Centre, and Dr. Waqar Masood, Special Assistant to PM on Revenue were invited to the launch. The guests presented their views on the report. They commended the efforts of the faculty for presenting an accurate picture of Pakistan's economy. The engaging talk that ensued focused on the way forward for Pakistan on its road to economic progression.

Dr. Akbar Zaidi and Dr. Asma Hyder moderated the session.

Economics Research Seminar Series

On 24th September, the Economics department organized a seminar entitled 'Political Geography & Pre-Industrial Development: A Theory & Evidence for Europe, 1000-1850' feat. Dr. Paolo Vanin. The online session was attended by a myriad of faculty members and students.

Dr. Faiz Ur Rehman moderated the session.

A Tapestry of Languages and Cultures in the Indus Valley

This seminar series is organized by the School of Economics and Social Sciences (SESS) of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi. Dr. Abdul Haque Chang will be managing this language and culture seminar series.

This seminar series aims to bring the diverse cultural and linguistic voices of Pakistan into perspective. What are the histories, cultural narratives, folktales, and musical and poetic traditions of these languages? What place does Sindhi, Balochi, Persian, Saraiki, Punjabi, Pashto, Dari, Burushaski, Dhatki, Kalasha-mun, Brahui, Shina, or Kashmiri

occupy in the unique tapestry of languages and cultures of the Indus Valley? This seminar will invite scholars of social sciences, liberal arts, humanities, ethnomusicology, history, and languages to present engaged research through informal narrative-style presentations and discussion with participants.



On 25th September, the first session of this lecture series entitled “Are Homelands Metaphoric?” was organized. It was based on the story of Umar Marui - a celebrated narrative from Shah Abdul Latif's Risalo. The guest speaker for the session was Dr. Rita Kothari, Professor of English at Ashoka University, and one of India's leading multilingual scholars and translation theorists.

Faculty & Students Achievements

Dr. Faiz ur Rehman, Associate Professor of Political Economy at Department of Economics, School of Economics and Social Sciences, IBA Karachi, recently had his research article titled 'Does Terrorism Reduce Trust? Empirical Evidence from Pakistan', published in the Defence and Peace Economics, W (Bronze) category. The paper focuses on how individuals' trust in Pakistan is affected by the persistent shock of terrorism.

Dr. Nausheen H. Anwar, Professor City & Regional Planning, Department of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts, School of Economics and Social Sciences and Director Karachi Urban Lab, has recently penned an article titled, 'Equality Matters'. The piece is published in the latest edition of UNDP's Development Advocate Pakistan magazine. The study explores the relationship between gender equality and climate change.

Shagufta Shabbar, Ph.D. Economics student, has successfully defended her Ph.D. thesis topic entitled “Impact of Cash Transfers on Pakistani Households”. The thesis will contribute to literature by gauging the impact of CTs on labor supply and on the food consumption levels of the households. It also seeks to compare UCT and lumpsum transfers to deduce which is a better program to alleviate poverty. A primary survey will be conducted in three districts of Sindh. Dr. S. Akbar Zaidi will be supervising the thesis.

Muhammad Nadeem Sarwar, PhD Scholar, Department of Economics, under the RASTA Competitive Grants Program (CGP) secured a research grant of PKR 1.7 million for Policy-oriented research on the topic, 'Evaluation of Different Tax Reform Proposals'. Professor & Dean, School of Economics and Social Sciences, Dr. Asma Hyder will supervise the project, while Dr. David Orden and Dr. Ahmad Jamal Pirzada will provide guidance.

The research project aims to explore the impact of a change in tax structure on tax revenue, economic growth and income distribution. Since Pakistan has a low Tax to GDP ratio, the study will help in choosing a better tax rate structure for the economy. Furthermore, the project will follow a general equilibrium framework that will provide the government and policymakers with a comprehensive comparative analysis of various tax rate proposals.