The government of Pakistan has announced to bestow the Sitara-e-Imtiaz on Agha Hasan Abedi. He was patron of FAST, founder CEO of United Bank (the third largest bank in the country), and Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), the only global bank to have been founded in Pakistan.

The announcement was made by President Mamnoon Hussain’s office on February 9, 2015, saying that the award will be officially made during a ceremony on March 23.

“The late Agha Hasan Abedi was a famous banker and he backed many literary and educational institutions in Pakistan and other third world countries.”

Born in India’s UP state in 1922, Agha Hasan Abedi earned a Master degree in English from Lucknow University. He is remembered in Pakistan for supporting leading health and educational institutions like FAST-NU, GIKI and SIUT.

He patronized FAST with a donation of Rs. 100 million, to promote education in computer science. FAST founded National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, which is now the first multi-campus university in Pakistan. It has five campuses situated in Islamabad, Peshawar, Karachi, Lahore and Chiniot-Faisalabad.

Agha Hasan Abedi died on August 6, 1995 at the age of 74.

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FAST-NU Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) obtains the score of 72.31 out of 100 points, placing it in category X, in Higher Education Commission’s (HEC) annual ranking of QECs for year 2014. The score obtained in year 2014 has been increased by 32.61 points as compared to the year 2013 HEC ranking. This substantial increase in the points scored has been achieved through rigorous focus in all campuses on quality assurance parameters prescribed by HEC.

The pertinent quality centered parameters of HEC ranking include academic programs’ self-assessment, active contribution of QEC on scholarly platforms at national and international levels, participation in HEC quality assurance forums, periodic capacity building of QEC teams, faculty development on quality assurance, development of best practices database, periodic publicity of QEC activities for general public awareness through various mediums, and other efforts for standardization.

HEC has already appreciated the FAST-NU QEC efforts on various platforms specifically during its PhD review visit conducted in Islamabad Campus in November, 2014. The commission has also honored FAST-NU QEC on conducting one-day training workshops on “six sigma in higher education” for directors of QECs of other public and private sector universities of Pakistan.

INQAAHE which is a global body for promoting quality in higher education has also recognized quality assurance activities of FAST-NU QEC multiple times by giving due coverage in its high circulating news bulletins for the months of September and December 2014.

In addition, Mr. Farrukh Idrees, Manager QEC FAST-NU, has contributed twice as technical reviewer for the prestigious Quality World magazine, the membership publication of Chartered Quality Institute UK, with readership of more than 30000 per month globally.

Management and QEC teams of all campuses are committed to bring all the academic programs at FAST-NU in the loop of HEC quality assurance cycle aligned with QEC yearly activity calendar to achieve the highest “W category” in HEC ranking of QECs for year 2015.
Educational trip to steel manufacturing industries

The FAST Association of Civil Engineers (FACE) at Lahore campus recently arranged an educational trip to two steel industries including Model Steel and Black Gold Steel. Students from 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th batch of Civil Engineering department were amongst the participants.

The purpose of the trip was to accustom students to the steel manufacturing process from the raw material. In the first part of the trip, the students visited Black Gold to observe the procedure of scrap metal melting and molding into steel rods. The unit engineer explained the process and five key sections of the factory were shown to the students. Later the students visited Model Steel. The students were shown the melting chamber of scrap at above 1000°C temperature. The visit was very helpful for students in understanding the process of steel manufacturing and gaining practical and in-depth knowledge of overall operations of steel industry.

Research paper published in IEEE journal

A research paper written by Muhammad Ahmad Raza and Dr. Arshad Hussain titled “Cramer-Rao Bound for SNR Estimation of Hyper-Cubic Signals over Gaussian Channel” has been published in a very high reputed and prestigious IEEE journal “IEEE Communication Letters”.

This journal has the Impact Factor of 1.463, the Eigen Factor 0.01882, and the Article Influence Score 0.568. This is the first time that the research work done in FAST-NU Lahore has been published in the IEEE journals. The university categorizes it as the first ever Gold journal publication of Lahore campus.

In this paper, the authors have derived analytical expression for the Cramer-Rao lower bound (CRLB) on the variance of unbiased non-data-aided (NDA) signal to noise ratio (SNR) estimates of the hyper-cubic modulated signals. Underlying channel is assumed to be additive white Gaussian noise (AWGN) channel. Asymptote of the CRLB for higher SNR case is also derived in closed form.

It has been shown that in low SNR region the CRLB changes significantly for different dimensions of hyper-cubic constellation (HCC) and observations. For higher dimensions corresponding CRLB is large but it gets reduced considerably as number of observations is increased. However at high SNR the behavior is reversed.

The asymptote of published DA-CRLB for multi-order square-QAM is compared with the asymptote of NDA-CRLB for the HCC, and it is shown that at high SNR both depict same behavior.

Papers accepted for publication

Two research articles by Mr. Mubashir Qayyum, Assistant Professor and Ph.D scholar at Peshawar campus, under the supervision of Dr. Hamid Khan have been accepted for publication in ISI indexed journals. A paper titled “Modeling and Analysis of Unsteady Axisymmetric Squeezing Fluid Flow through Porous Medium Channel with Slip Boundary” has been accepted by PLOS ONE journal having Impact Factor 3.534. PLOS ONE falls under the Gold category. This journal has a quality percentage score of 98.6 percent. According to Thomson Reuters, PLOS ONE is ranked at 4th position with respect to Eigen Factor score, and is among the top 10 journals with respect to number of citations.

The second article, titled “Analysis of Unsteady Axisymmetric Squeezing Fluid Flow with Slip and no-Slip Boundaries using OHAM”, has been accepted for publication in Mathematical Problems in Engineering (MPE) having Impact Factor 1.082.

Achievement

The faculty and management of FAST-NU Lahore campus congratulate Dr. S. M. Sajid and his students on their academic achievements and acceptance of two major Journal articles.

Dr. Sajid and his students received acceptance for two major journal articles, one at the top-notch American journal JOCN and another at Journal of Radio-Engineering. These papers had been in reviews for more than a year. They are expecting three major journal papers to be published during 2015, which have been accepted, and have been authored by the Electrical Engineering department of FAST-NU Lahore campus without the involvement of foreign authors or collaborators. Moreover, the foreign review reports for the first ever doctoral thesis in Electrical Engineering department have also been received with minor suggestions.
QEC holds capacity building session for universities

Quality Enhancement Cell at FAST-NU conducted a Higher Education Commission (HEC) sponsored workshop on “Six Sigma in Higher Education” for the directors of QECs of 15 W category private sector universities of Pakistan in 9th QEC Progress Review meeting held in HEC headquarters from December 23 to 24, 2014.

The workshop was attended by QEC directors from GIKI, SZABIST, IoBM, Zia Uddin University, Indus, Riphah International, ISRA, Faisalabad University, and other universities. The quality of the workshop was highly appreciated by the participant universities and HEC. HEC recognized FAST-NU’s remarkable contribution in December edition of its monthly news bulletin “News and Views”. The visibility and recognition by the country’s top body in higher education is a great testimony and acknowledgment of quality assurance activities of FAST-NU. This also highlights FAST-NU for its quality centered approach in education. This achievement is credited to the collective work of the management and QEC teams at Islamabad, Karachi, Chiniot-Faisalabad, Lahore and Peshawar campuses of FAST-NU.

HEC Best Teacher Award for our faculty member

Dr. Muhammad Hanif, Associate Professor, FAST School of Management Islamabad, has won the Higher Education Commission (HEC) University Best Teacher Award in a ceremony held at HEC headquarters on December 23, 2014. This award is given for two academic years 2012 and 2013. Under the Best University Teacher Award, outstanding university teachers are conferred upon an award with cash prize of Rs 100,000 and a certificate for their outstanding performance during the award year. To make process more transparent and efficient, the criterion to judge performance of teachers has been revised. The teachers are judged: 5 percent for their qualification, 50 percent for teaching, 30 percent for research, and 15 percent for co-curricular activities. We congratulate Dr. Hanif on winning this prestigious award.

SAP Training Program

FAST-NU is the pioneer university of Pakistan offering SAP training to its students under SAP University Alliance Program. SAP is a multinational technology company in enterprise application software. To introduce one of emerging technologies, the university is affiliated with SAP - UAP. FAST-NU has plans to use SAP in Computer Science and Business Management courses in all its campuses. Currently, SAP is a part of curriculum in an industrial course “Enterprise Information System” being offered in Islamabad campus. Dr. Ejaz Ahmed, Assistant Professor Computer Science, Islamabad campus, will assist FAST-NU faculty and students in training and curriculum enhancement. Our students with SAP expertise will have more chances to get better career opportunities within the country and abroad.
FSM organizes Marketing Mavericks event

The 12th event of Marketing Mavericks series “KALEIDOSCOPE 2014” was recently held at the FAST-NU Islamabad campus. Eleven competing teams from the BBA 2014 intake showcased their marketing projects in the form of creative campus activations including adventure sports demos, a sky lantern show and interesting product sampling campaigns. The teams delivered their marketing plan presentations to a panel of marketing professionals, academicians and entrepreneurs. The event this year hosted two “Branding Boot camps” in partnership with Mobilink GSM and IPSOS Pakistan. Mr. Saadi Rauf, Brand Manager at Mobilink GSM, and Mr. Abdul Sattar Babar, Managing Director at IPSOS Pakistan, and a renowned consumer research expert were invited to conduct two brand management workshops for the participating students. The event was sponsored by a number of leading institutions and corporations including Capital Development Authority (CDA), A&N Foods, Mobilink GSM, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), Khushhali Bank and Nestle Pakistan. Team “Wolfpack” (Cadbury Roses Group) won the event, scoring 10 event points. Mahad Tariq and Ufaq Zohra were declared the best presenters of the event. A separate award ceremony was also held to distribute certificates and awards to the winning participants.

Presidential Award for faculty member’s book

Assistant Professor of Sciences & Humanities at FAST-NU Karachi campus, Dr. Aziz-ur-Rehman Saifee’s recently published book “Comparative Analysis of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and stages of Human Development” has received the annual Presidential Seerat-un-Nabi Award 2015. President of Pakistan, His Excellency Mr. Mamnoon Hussain presented the award to Dr. Saifee in a conference held in Islamabad on January 4, 2015. The conference was attended by several key figures including cabinet members, parliamentarians, religious scholars and prominent personalities of the country. Dr. Saifee’s book is aimed to promoting human values of tolerance and brotherhood. It highlights invaluable lessons from the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), and highlights the importance of religious harmony.