COMSTECH launches PhD and Postdoc Fellowships Programme for Refugee Scientists

An advanced team of Pakistani doctors visited Niamey, capital of Niger, west Africa, last developed Muslim country during November 21-28, 2021 to inspect the facilities available at the Eye Hospital Niamey for repair & maintenance of faulty equipment, and to conduct Eye surgeries and training of local doctors.

During the visit Dr. Khalid Mssoud, a member of the team, performed 25 cataract surgeries. The visiting team of experts repaired most of the faulty equipment and set it up in order to conduct more than 400 cataract surgeries during the forthcoming visit of Pakistani doctors.

The objective is to deliver high quality cataract surgeries to improve vision quality and reduce blindness related poverty.

The visit had been arranged by COMSTECH in collaboration with Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) under its Alliance to Fight Blindness.

COMSTECH, IsDB and LRBT Perform Eye Surgeries and Training of Ophthalmologists in Niger

OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation

COMSTECH Funds Over 39 Million Rupees Science Projects in OIC States

COMSTECH is an OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, based in Islamabad, Pakistan. It is an institutional platform which provides a unique opportunity to develop scientific and technological cooperation and partnership among the member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) have partnered in the formulation and implementation of a $39 million science projects programme, which is part of the 60th OIC Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting held in Istanbul this year. The programme targets scientific and technological research, innovation, and human resource development.

The programme will support universities, research institutions, and organizations in the OIC member states in conducting research and innovation in a wide range of fields, including biotechnology, medical sciences, environmental sciences, and information technology.

The funds will be distributed among the OIC member states, with the aim of enhancing the overall scientific and technological capacity of the OIC member countries.

The programme is expected to contribute significantly to the economic and social development of the OIC member states, and to promote scientific and technological collaboration and partnership among the member countries.

Professor Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH, said: “This programme is a significant step towards achieving our goal of developing a knowledge-based economy in the OIC member states. It will provide a platform for the scientific and technological community to work together and contribute to the development of our nations.”

The programme is expected to benefit a large number of researchers and students in the OIC member states, and to contribute to the overall economic and social development of the region.

The programme is expected to be a model for other similar initiatives, and to inspire other organizations and countries to support scientific and technological cooperation.”

COMSTECH & ICGEB Start Scientific Cooperation Programme Worth Rupees 46 Million

COMSTECH signed a memorandum of understanding with ICGEB to establish a general framework for cooperation in science, education and technology.

COMSTECH-ICGEB programme, launched in January 2022, is offering research grants, fellowships and visiting professorship scheme to organize workshops in emerging technologies for capacity building of OIC states in various aspects of biotechnology and genetic engineering. International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) is based in Trieste, Italy, Durban (South Africa), and New Delhi (India).

COMSTECH is an OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation based in Islamabad, Pakistan.
COMSTECH celebrates World Science Day on Wednesday. Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman FRS, Chairman, Prime Minister Task Force for Science and Technology graced the occasion by addressing the gathering.

Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman said that it is alarming that we are unable to see the light at the end of the tunnel in case of impact of climate change. He added that it is high time we start focusing on technologies that can equip us with young generation with high impact modern knowledge to compete in the world. Directer General IIFS, Mr. Yerlan Baidulaev, shared the vision, missions and activities of IIFS. He said climate change have deep impact on all spheres of life and we need to collectively prepare for it.

Mr. Ali Taqveer Sheikh informed the audience that the global concern about climate reality by 4°C on Celsius is considered bad but by 2 degrees it would be disastrous. He said that for this purpose we are also working on climate change. Mr. Sheikh said that it is good to share that the global discourse on climate change is now spreading. Prof. Rahman also mentioned that OIC states will be affected by climate change events as well. He suggested to prepare in advance and plan to mitigate climate change challenges.

Dr. Muhammad Ali Shah, Vice Chancellor, QAU said that we in collaboration with COMSTECH working on developing consortium of universities to share knowledge and collaborate. He said that today nanomaterials are very important. There is an urgent need of awareness of issues at hand and the technologies available to deal with them.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH, said that today nanomaterials are very important. There is an urgent need of awareness of issues at hand and the technologies available to deal with them.

COMSTECH holds MoST Institutions Meeting to Strengthen Cooperation with OIC States

Coordination meeting between COMSTECH and the OIC organizations and institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Pakistan held at COMSTECH on Tuesday. The meeting was chaired by the Additional Secretary MoST, Syed Atta-ur-Rehman. In his welcome remarks Dr. Rehman said that there is a need of improved cooperation and coordination among OIC institutions. He said that the government is committed to achieve the goal of success in the development of science and technology. Dr. Rehman said that having COMSTECH is a great privilege as well as a challenge. He emphasized the need of mutual cooperation and coordination among OIC institutions. Dr. Rehman said that Pakistan has done a number of projects in the field of science and technology.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH welcomed the representatives from the OIC states. Prof. Choudhary emphasized the need of linking Pakistani OIC institutions and institutions with the institutions of other OIC states to achieve socio-economic development through mutual cooperation and coordination and accomplish successful science diplomacy. Prof. Choudhary offered OIC institutions full support in creating linkages with institutions in OIC member states initiatives for joint projects and programs.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH thanked the Pakistani OIC institutions participated in the meeting. He shed light on the establishment of COMSTECH, its mandate and status in Muslim World. Prof. Choudhary

COMSTECH organized a lecture on “The Role of Amino Acids in Bioenergetics of Trypanosoma Cruzi” by M. Silber, Department of Parasitology, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Prof. Silber talked about Trypanosoma cruzi, and its life cycle and metabolism. He unfolded the very basic fundamentals of mitochondria and its properties as driven by science. He said the contribution of three amino acids, Proline, Histidine, and Alanine. Prof. Silber concluded his talk on answering the question of how we can obtain some numbers of mitochondrial bioenergetics.

Coordination meeting between COMSTECH and the OIC organizations and institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Pakistan held at COMSTECH on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by the heads of 12 leading OIC institutions affiliated with MoST: PCRW, PCPSR, NUTECH, CSIT, PCB, STEDEC, NIE, NIO, NAC, PHA, PPS, and PCRFT. The heads of institutions presented their prospective projects, discussed and gave recommendations.

Next meeting would be hosted by STEDEC in Pakistan. COMSTECH and OIC institutions would present doable projects for seeking funding from international funding agencies and partner organizations from OIC states.

Webinar on Use of Nanomaterials in Medicine

COMSTECH has started a lecture series program on “Emerging Technologies for Development” as an effort to help upcoming scientists in identifying key areas of scientific research which are contributing immensely in the well-being of the humankind.

The first lecture of this series was given by Dr. Abdoolreza Simchi of Shari’ah University of Technology, Iran, on the applications and development of nanomaterials in medicine. Dr. Simchi mentioned the use of many applications of nanomaterials along with the application in the field of medicine. He also addressed some of the problems like illiteracy, lack of medical supplies, healthcare costs that today nanomaterials are used for drug delivery, therapy, bio-imaging, regenerative medicine, bio-sensing and bioinformatics.

Dr. Simchi talked about the basics of nanomaterials and their use. He also informed that it is used for drug delivery, therapy, bio-imaging, regenerative medicine, bio-sensing and bioinformatics. He mentioned experiments conducted by his team. Dr. Simchi concluded his talk by saying that there is a plenty of room for development of nanomaterials and their applications.

Dr. Abdoolreza Simchi is a distinguished Professor of Engineering Science and Materials Engineering at the University of Colorado at Boulder and a Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Bonn, Germany. He is among the top 1% highly-cited researchers on Web of Science, and ranked among the top 150 scientists worldwide in “Emerging and Strategic Technologies Materials” identified by Sandford University in 2021.

From Coordinator General's Desk

Looking Umma, in contrast to the current stereotype and Islamic image of Muslims emerged in the west. In this pursuit of understanding the emergence of new technologies and the technologies available to use to address climate change. He said that at the moment we are not able to see the light at the end of the tunnel in case of impact of climate change. He added that it is high time we start focusing on technologies that can equip us with young generation with high impact modern knowledge to compete in the world.

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Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman FRS, Chairman, Prime Minister Task Force for Science and Technology, Pakistan outlined the need of awareness of issues at hand and the technologies available to deal with them.

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Webinar on “Escherichia coli”

Dr. Römling informed that microorganisms play a role in resistance against bacteria that are globally challenging. She said her lab has been engaged in hospital-acquired infections in the clinics in susceptible patients and those that are critical to stay. She said that older population require more medical care. Her complete video lecture is available on Youtube channel “comstech-oic”.

Webinar on “Building Academic Career”

COMSTECH organized a webinar on “How to build a successful academic career” which was delivered online by Prof. Dr. Mohamed Ali Farag, Professor and Program Director, American University in Cairo, Egypt. Prof. Farag said that there is a difference between what we think and what is the reality. He termed that “Laws of Metabolism”, as it involves many factors like metabolism. Prof. Farag delved deep into the academic activities and talked on how to research, write a scientific paper and present it in a conference. He suggested that the job of an academician is to break the bottlenecks and free the mind of scientists who are faced with them. His full lecture is available on Youtube channel “comstech-oic”.

Webinar on “Technological Trends Beyond 5G”

COMSTECH organized a webinar on “Beyond 5G: a new paradigm in universal broadband and networks” which was delivered by Prof. Dr. Mohamed Saleh Alouini. Prof. Alouini is a very high caliber scholar, who has contributed immensely in the field of science and technology in the region and has elevated the global viewpoint about how these will move, said Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH in his introductory remarks. Prof. Alouini talked about digital inclusiveness, digital divide and capacity. He has not only produced scientific research but also helped others good science but also helped others to produce good science, said Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH.

Webinar on “Immunology of Kala-Azar”

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Webinar on “Stem Cell Therapy”

Lecture on “Stem Cell Therapy”

Prof. Dr. Rasul Choudhary is Coordinator General, COMSTECH, said Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH in his introductory remarks. In his talk, he encompassed the techniques of Dr. Römling in long-lasting and in the next generation is extremely essential to treat infections like VL. Although human VL is characterized by high Leishmania infection, severe and life-threatening, the number of cases has increased. Prof. Dr. Iqbal Choudhary in his introductory remarks, that COMSTECH is an online course which was delivered by Prof. Dr. Mohamed Saleh Alouini. Prof. Alouini is a very high caliber scholar, who has contributed immensely in the field of science and technology in the region and has elevated the global viewpoint about how these will move, said Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH in his introductory remarks. Prof. Alouini talked about digital inclusiveness, digital divide and capacity. He has not only produced scientific research but also helped others good science but also helped others to produce good science, said Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH.

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**OIC CHIEF CALLS FOR INTENSIFIED EFFORTS TO TACKLE CHALLENGES FACING CHILDREN**

Jeddah (UNA-OIC) – Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Hissein Ibrahim Taha, assumed his office Wednesday, 17 November 2021, at the OIC General Secretariat headquarters in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Taha was elected in November 2020 during the 47th Session of the Ministerial Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held in Niamey, Republic of Niger, as a representative of the African Group. He succeeds the late Abdurrahman bin Mohammad Al-Eryani, from the Republic of Yemen, who passed away last year. Taha was elected for a five-year term, starting November 2021. Taha is a Chad diplomat who held several positions in his country, including Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration, and International Cooperation, Minister (Assistant Deputy Secretary-General of the Presidency of the Republic), Diplomatic Advisor to the Presidency of the Republic, Minister Plenipotentiary, and Ambassador Extraordinary to France, Spain, Portugal, Greece, and the Holy See. He also served as Ambassador of the Embassy of the Republic of Chad in Saudi Arabia. Taha, the new OIC chief, who speaks French, Arabic, and English, was awarded the National Order of Chad (Knight), which is the highest order of merit of the Republic of Chad, the French National Order of the Legion of Honor (Officer), the highest French order of merit, and the honorary ambassador merit.

Taha pointed out that KAUST has become prominent in science and technology in Saudi Arabia, quickly becoming an international platform to inspire and nurture young scientific minds to unlock the power of science and advance the UN’s sustainable development goals.

He noted that this year’s festival will feature a schedule including a variety of science fairs, daily evening science shows, science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics challenges for children, and science projects presented by KAUST students.

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**Turkish scientist enters list of ‘100 Women in Polar Science’**

(Hurriyet DN) - Ebru Caymaz, an academic from Onsekiz Mart University in the northwestern province of Çanakkale, has become the first Turkish woman scientist to be selected in the “100 Women in Polar Science” initiative. The initiative, funded by the Foundation of Curtis and Edith Munson and conducted by the Ocean Foundation and Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, enables women scientists to conduct research at the poles.

Caymaz, who has conducted her research in Norway, Greenland and Iceland since 2015, now goes to Siberia with the help of the Ocean Foundation to study the impacts of global warming.

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**iran Develops Rapid Test Kits for Omicron**

Teheran, RNA – The knowledge-based E-Health Barakat Company, based in Iran, has developed a rapid COVID-19 test kit that is capable of detecting the Omicron variant, the company’s CEO said. Dr. Mahdi Farzanevi told RNA correspondent that these test kits have been developed and are now being used in the country. The knowledge-based E-Health Barakat Company produces about 200,000 test kits of this kind on a daily basis, according to Dr. Moravej.

The tests detect the virus within 15 minutes and digitally register the patient and the sample IDs to allow tracking of infected people, Dr. Moravej said.

He added that the kits, with 92% accuracy and 98% sensitivity, have been developed domestically and are now being used in the counting. The knowledge-based E-Health Barakat Company produces about 200,000 test kits of this kind on a daily basis, according to Dr. Moravej.

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**Digital Innovation: NITDA to Hold Hackathon Challenge**

(NAN) - The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) of Nigeria, says it will organise editions of its annual Hackathon challenge in three states: Adamawa, Oyo and Cross River. Mrs. Hadiza Umar, Head, the Communications, and External Relations of the agency, said in a statement released in Abuja Tuesday that the agency is determining a novel and powerful AI capabilities of InstaDeep’s DeepChain platform, combined with BioNTech SARS-CoV-2 know-how and technology.

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**DHA, EPA beneficial for bone health: Qatar University study**

Doha: A Qatar University study has disclosed that supplementation of fish oil (FO) with a maximum content of docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) starting at middle age may be beneficial for maintaining better bone health as one age.

The study, published in the 16th Bone Health as one age. The study, published in the 16th Bone Health Magazine, also stated that fish oils aren’t all the same, adding “the EPA and DHA content are essential elements as well as the quality of the fish oils.”

The researchers discovered that the supplementation of 4% CFO is very efficient in maintaining BMD in aging mice, whereas 1% CFO is only mildly beneficial.

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**BioNTech, InstaDeep Develop Early Warning System to Detect Potential High-risk SARS-CoV-2 Variants**

(TAP) - BioNTech SE and Tunisian InstaDeep Lab announced the development of a new computational method that analyses worldwide available sequencing data and predicts high-risk variants of SARS-CoV-2.

The Early Warning System (EWS) developed in collaboration by BioNTech and InstaDeep is based on artificial intelligence (AI) calculated immune escape and fitness metrics.

The new method combines structural modeling of the viral Spike protein and AI algorithms to quickly flag potential high-risk variants of SARS-CoV-2. Sequence data repositories within less than a day based on metrics scoring their fitness as well as their lower fitness, making it less of a threat.

With the advanced computational method we can analyse sequence information of the spike protein and rank new variants according to their predicted immune escape and ACE2 binding score, said Ugur Sahin, M.D., CEO and Co-Founder of BioNTech.

The Co-Founder and CEO of InstaDeep, Karim Beguir said that more than 10,000 novel variant sequences are currently discovered every week, and as such, it is important for the scientific community to be able to quickly detect new variants and to be able to respond to new threats. InstaDeep’s platform is capable of processing millions of sequences every day. The current state of the art does not allow a quick and comprehensive detection and analysis of SARS-CoV-2 variants. InstaDeep’s platform can help to address this challenge by deploying the powerful AI capabilities of InstaDeep’s DeepChain platform, combined with BioNTech SARS-CoV-2 know-how and technology.

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**Saudi Arabia’s KAUST Launches Science Festival at Thuwal Beach**

JEDDAH: King Abdullah University of Science and Technology has launched its annual Science Festival for 2022, which will be held Jan. 20-21.

The festival, which will be held at Thuwal Beach, aims to inspire young talents in Saudi Arabia, the Middle East and North Africa region.

KAUST President Tony Chan said that the world is moving towards innovation as a basis for discovery and invention, and there is an urgent need for young people to confront the most essential problems in global societies and participate in solving them.

He pointed out that KAUST has become prominent in science and technology in Saudi Arabia, quickly becoming an international platform to inspire and nurture young scientific minds to unlock the power of science and advance the UN’s sustainable development goals.

He noted that this year’s festival will feature a schedule including a variety of science fairs, daily evening science shows, science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics challenges for children, and science projects presented by KAUST students.

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**Bioequivalence Center to be Operational Soon**

ALGIERS - The first bioequivalence center in Algeria will be operational in two weeks,” announced CEO of the National Agency for New Drug, Mohamed Saïd, at the press group Sandal Fatoum Aceule.

**First Algerian Mineral Sciences Lab Accredited to International Standards**

ALGIERS - The Mineral Sciences Laboratory of the National Office of Geological and Mining Research (ONOGM) has been officially accredited on Thursday, in a ceremony organized in Algiers, to the international standards by obtaining the standard ISO 17025:2017.