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How to Establish MIT-Standard Institutions in Türkiye and Pakistan?

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Abstract – Although the Muslims have the honor to establish the first university of the civilization, University of Al-Karaouine, Fez, Morocco, in 859 AD, which is functional to date, there is a lack of institutions like California, Berkeley; Caltech (author visited Caltech during August 1980); Cambridge; Harvard; Johns Hopkins (established 1876, representing migration of German higher academic system to America through President Gilman’s efforts, who travelled through America and Western Europe to consult on key appointments — the author studied at the Johns Hopkins University during 1983-1986); MIT (the author delivered Summer Luncheon Seminar at Harvard-MIT Biomedical Engineering Center on July 16, 1990); Princeton and Stanford as well as research centers like Institute of Advanced Study (established 1933, under the leadership of Director Flexner, who was able to bring 23 illustrious permanent faculty, including Albert Einstein, and 160-170 distinguished scholars every year) and SLMath. Türkiye (METU) and Pakistan (AKU, LUMS) have established some good universities through collaborations with reputed US knowledge centers. However, they are just a drop in the desert. Prior to establishing such an institution, members of boards of trustees of high-ranking universities, world-wide, should be consulted. A customized green campus should be built for this seat-of-learning. There should be a balance of student activities cum teaching and research. Key focus should be on fundamental research. Graduating students should be trained in entrepreneurship through industry-university interface. There should be freedom *to acquire* knowledge, *to create* knowledge and *to disseminate* knowledge, without influence and interference of nonacademic personnel. External audit should be mandatory to maintain standards and minimize corruption (both soft and hard). This institution should provide ample opportunities for faculty development and grooming, at the same time creating atmosphere for employee satisfaction. The appointment process for vice chancellors and rectors should include screening for plagiarism, financial corruption and moral turpitude. The potential leader of this academic enterprise should have a clear and a realistic vision as well as able to devise a series of measures to execute its mission. There should be entrance legitimacy, as per appointment criteria (must have some prior experience at a senior-admin position, *e. g.*, Dean/Acting-Vice Chancellor, in a university, comparable in size and in program diversity to the one, in which the applicant is aspiring to serve — incidentally, in the public-sector universities of Pakistan, individuals holding dual citizenships are not eligible for appointment as vice chancellor/rector) and performance legitimacy, determined through monitoring (follow-through) and evaluation (follow-up) of policies and accomplishments. The backbone of such an institution is a vibrant and a dynamic curriculum. As convener of NCRC for Mathematics, Higher Education Commission, the author integrated best practices from top-ranking US universities in the model scheme-of-studies prepared for the Pakistani universities. The same exercise was repeated for preparing the NTS Detailed Curriculum for Mathematics intended for GAT (Subject) conducted by National Testing Service — on the pattern of GRE (Subject) administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS). Curriculum development should be a process, not an event, integrating different aspects — philosophy (based on cultural norms and values), contents (addressing indigenous problems) and andragogical techniques (tangible examples given from locally-available material).

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Keywords – Balance of student activities and teaching cum research, Employee satisfaction, External audit, Faculty development and grooming, Fundamental research, Green campus, Industry-university interface

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