

## **Report on University-Research-Industry Exchange Activities of AETDEW Fellows in Pakistan, April 13-19, 2025**

### **Chinese AETDEW Fellow Professor QI Yuansheng and his Team Visits Pakistan**

With the efforts and coordination of a Founding Fellow and Council Member of AETDEW from Pakistan, Professor Manzoor H. Soomro, a delegation of printing and packaging professionals and industrialists from China led by AETDEW Fellow Professor QI Yuansheng, Dean of the School of Printing and Packaging Engineering, visited Pakistan from April 13-19, 2025. The team included two representatives of Printing Industry from China. Purpose of the exclusive visit was to initiate an exchange and cooperation of technical talents in printing and packaging between Chinese and Pakistani institutions, under the patronage of Academy of Engineering and Technology for the Developing World- AETDEW. The host institutions were; NED University of Engineering and Technology (<https://www.neduet.edu.pk/>) led by two AETDEW Fellows- Prof. Muhammad Tufail (Pro-Vice Chancellor) and Prof. Sarosh Hashmat Lodi (Immediate Past Vice Chancellor) and Pakistan Academy of Engineering (PAE) in Karachi, and the ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF <https://ecosf.org/>) in Islamabad. Karachi is the biggest industrial city of Pakistan; and Islamabad is the capital city. The details of activities are highlighted below.

**Day-1, April 13:** Arrival in Karachi & stay at the NED UET International Guesthouse

**Day-2, April 14:** Participation in the International Academic Symposium in Karachi, titled; "Emerging Printing & Packaging Technologies", hosted by Pakistan Academy of Engineering (PAE), Karachi. Participants of the symposium included faculty from multiple universities in the southern Pakistani region, members of the Karachi Printing and Packaging Association, and printing and packaging enterprises/industries. The President of PAE Engr. Dr. Jameel Ahmed Khan enthusiastically welcomed Prof. QI and his team to Pakistan and shared the purpose of the symposium; he also thanked Prof. Manzoor Soomro for coordinating the visit. The International Symposium was then addressed by the President of Pakistan Association of Printing and Graphic Arts Industries (PAPGAI - <https://papgai.org/>), Mr. Tarique Rehman; he highlighted the status and issues of the industry in Pakistan and welcome the Chinese experts, hoping that the first ever visit of printing and packaging professionals from brotherly country China will lead to a strong collaboration between the industry and academia of the two countries.

Professor Qi Yuansheng delivered an invited speech in the symposium, titled; "**Current Development Status and Trends of Printing Industry.**" He highlighted the history and development of printing and packaging industry in China as well as the education and training of the sector especially, the background of Beijing Institute of Graphics and Communication (BIGC). It was followed by Q&A session, wherein numerous industrialists participating in the

symposium asked questions related to printing machinery.

He also invited Pakistani academia and industry to visit and interact with BIGC for collaboration and exchange of talents in future.



Prof. QI along with his team and Prof. Soomro, also held exchange of ideas with Mr. Tarique Rehman, the President of PAPGAI and with the representatives from Pakistani printing enterprises, gaining an in-depth understanding of the development of Pakistan's printing and packaging-related industries.

On the sidelines of the symposium, Prof. QI and Prof. Soomro had a meeting with another active AETDEW Fellow in Pakistan- Prof. Ms. Arabella Bhutto the Vice Chancellor of Shaheed Allah Buksh Soomro (SABS) University of Art, Design and Heritage in Jamshoro city (<https://sabsu.edu.pk/>).

Prof. Bhutto warmly welcomed Prof. QI and his team in Pakistan and offered collaboration of her university, emphasizing on the fact that SABS University of Art, Design and Heritage is directly relevant to printing and packaging, however so far, they do not offer any such course in the university and would be happy to initiate one in collaboration with BIGC.



The visitors with AETDEW Fellow Prof. Arabella Bhutto

Finally, Prof. Soomro spoke in the symposium and thanked the visiting guests from China and the organizers of the symposium PAE Karachi and its President Engr. Dr. Jameel Ahmed Khan. It is pertinent to mention that Prof. QI Yuansheng is a Fellow of PAE as well.

**Day-3, April 15:** The visiting BIGC-AETDEW team visited the laboratories of NED University of Engineering and Technology today and participated in a seminar on possible collaboration between BIGC and NED UET. The Acting Vice Chancellor Professor Noman Ahmed welcomed the guests from China and around Sindh province, which included another AETDEW Fellow Prof. Rasool Bux Mahar, the Vice Chancellor of the Skills University Khairpur Sindh.

Then Prof. Manzoor Soomro of AETDEW Pakistan Chapter was invited to highlight the background of the visit and the mandate and activities of AETDEW around the developing world especially the collaboration with Chinese colleagues and how the visit of Professor Qi Yuansheng and his team was made possible. He thanked the BIGC Team for travelling to Pakistan and NED UET for hosting the Chinese team and organizing the seminar.

Prof. QI Yuansheng made his keynote presentation titled; **"Current Development Status of Digitalization and Intelligentization of Printing Industry"**. He also thanked the host institution and its leadership especially Prof. M. Tufail the newly inducted Fellow of AETDEW and Pro-Vice Chancellor who had invited the team of Professor QI in collaboration with Prof. Soomro.



Next, Dr. (Ms.) Xie Mingsi, Lecturer of BIGC made a presentation of printing technology and machinery used and the education offered by the BIGC. This was followed by Q&A session; and a number of Pakistani academicians and industry representatives asked questions, which were answered by Professor QI.

During the conference, the visiting BIGC-AETDEW team received strong support from the NED UET of Karachi, Pakistan, especially Professor TUFAIL, the Pro-Vice Chancellor (AETDEW fellow), and other university leaders, laying a solid foundation for future cooperation between the two sides.

The visiting team held in-depth discussions and gained a detailed understanding of the teaching and training, scientific research work, and laboratory facilities of NED UET. In a



concluding meeting with key officials led by Prof. TUFAIL, the two sides expressed satisfaction and pleasure upon the conclusion of the interaction. It was mutually agreed that this initial interaction will be followed up with further collaborative actions, beginning with invitation to NED UET for participation in

the forthcoming conference on printing being organized by the School of Printing and Packaging of BIGC on 16 May 2025.

**Day-4, April 16:** Visit to NED UET Laboratories and departure to Islamabad.

**Day-5, April 17:**

- i. **ECOSF Conference:** Economic Cooperation Organization Science Foundation (ECOSF) had organized an international conference themed; **"International Conference on Science, Technology & Innovation (STI): Catalyst for Regional Connectivity and Sustainable Development in the ECO Region (ECONEX-2025)"** on April 17-18, 2025 at the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan in Islamabad. Participants of the conference included scientists, scholars, policymakers, and others from multiple countries and regions, including; Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. Prof. QI Yuansheng and the team joined him in attending the opening ceremony of the ECONEX 2025. Prof. QI was among the invited keynote speakers in the conference. Professor QI delivered the presentation titled; **"Pillars of Success: Decoding China's Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) Ecosystem"**.



During the ECONEX 2025 conference, the team had in-depth exchanges with representatives from multiple organizations in Pakistan, including the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, the Pakistan National Science Foundation, and the Pakistan Engineering Council, further promoting the Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication and deepening the understanding of relevant Pakistani organizations about BIGC university.



- ii. Meeting with the Chairman of Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC):** A formal meeting with the Engineering Education and Regulatory Body of the country- Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) was arranged by the AETDEW Fellows Prof. Manzoor Soomro and Engr. Dr. Nasir M. Khan (Registrar PEC). Prof. Qi along with Prof. Soomro and the team visited PEC and met the Chairman PEC Engr. Waseem Nazir, who enthusiastically welcomed the team and explained the mandate and functioning of PEC.



Prof. Qi then shared the Printing, Packaging and Graphics Communication education by BIGC. After detailed discussion, the PEC team agreed to initiate a course on printing and packaging in the degree syllabus as well as can develop a short certificate course in collaboration with BIGC. This was appreciated by Prof. Qi and Prof. Soomro.

#### **Day-6, April 18: Meetings and Institutional Visits in Islamabad**

- i. Meeting with the Chairman of Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan:** The team called upon the Chairman HEC (AETDEW Fellow) Prof. Mukhtar Ahmed in his office. HEC Executive Director Prof. Zia Ul Qayyum also joined in the meeting. AETDEW Senior Fellow Prof. Soomro introduced the team to Chairman HEC and highlighted the purpose of the visit, i.e., introduction of printing and packaging education at degree level in Pakistan in collaboration with BIGC and under the patronage of AETDEW.

Prof. Mukhtar Ahmed warmly welcomed the team to HEC and shared that the organization is an independent government regulatory and funding organization in the higher education sector and takes responsibility of human resource development in the country, thereby providing scholarships to competent scholars for higher education within country and abroad.



**ii. Visit to Pakistan Science Foundation:** After the meeting with HEC leadership, the team visited Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) and visited the two subsidiaries of PSF viz., Pakistan Scientific and Technological Information Centre (PASTIC) and its printing press, and Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH). PSF Member Science and DG PASTIC Prof. M. Akram Shaikh and the Director Research Support of PSF Dr. Mirza Habib Ali welcomed the visiting team and briefed about the ongoing collaboration



between PSF and NNSFC. It is pertinent to mention that PSF and National Natural Science Foundation of China (NNSFC) have a long-term collaboration for joint funding of collaborative research projects. Hence the discussion was around the possible collaboration between BIGC and

Pakistani institutions under the ongoing collaboration between PSF and NNSFC. The two sides agreed to include printing and packaging engineering projects in the next call for proposals. BIGC team showed their willingness to submit a proposal or two under the ongoing cooperation.

### **Day-7, April 19: Departure from Islamabad to Kashgar China**

#### **Conclusion:**

It can be concluded that through the academic exchanges, Chinese scholars could not only provide solutions for Pakistan and the ECO member countries, but can also promote the export of science and technology from China under the framework of the "Belt and Road Initiative", achieving mutual benefits and win-win results. Currently, ECOSF has established multi-level cooperative relationships with China in fields such as scientific and technological innovation, education and training, and industrial cooperation viz-a-viz, with China

Association for Science and Technology (CAST), Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU) and other institutions.

Furthermore, being invited to participate in the two major international academic forums (at Karachi and Islamabad) proved to be of positive significance for better deepening mutual understanding and recognition between Chinese and Pakistani universities and enterprises, as well as promoting China's achievements in digital intelligence in the printing and packaging field. It is also of great importance for developing exchange and cooperation opportunities with Pakistan, promoting the integration of China's and Pakistan's printing and packaging industries, enhancing the professional and academic construction of the School of Printing and Packaging Engineering, and building an international platform for scientific research and education and teaching.

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