Presidential Announcement: Prof. Seyed Komail Tayebi joins as the 2nd President of the ECO Science Foundation

The ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) is very pleased to announce that Prof. Seyed Komail Tayebi has joined the Foundation as its 2nd President on 11th August 2022. Prof. Tayebi has succeeded Founder President Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro, who stepped down from the position on 10th August 2022 after 9 years of transformative leadership.

Prof. Tayebi is one of the most accomplished economists of Islamic Republic of Iran, and academic leader with rich and diverse experience in international economics and its linkages to promote R&D, technology, and scientific spillovers. With more than 25 years of international development and a long-standing commitment to socio-economic development of the ECO region, Prof. Tayebi brings a unique set of knowledge, wealth of experience, and academic excellence to lead ECOSF into the future. He will step into the presidency with confidence and experience, and with the strength needed to lead ECOSF forward on its path of success and excellence.

Prior to joining ECOSF, Prof. Tayebi served as the Professor of International Economics and Econometrics, at the Department of Economics, University of Isfahan, Iran. He also served as the Director, Center of Excellence for International Economics (CEIE), University of Isfahan and the Editor-in-Chief of the International Economics Studies. He has been a member of Asia Pacific Economic Forum (AFEF) since 2002, being appointed as the APEF president in 2008 and 2009. He has also been a member of Association of Korea Economic Studies (AKES) since 2010. Prof. Tayebi has published his research extensively in international journals in the areas of international trade and economic integration, modeling financial crisis, micro-econometrics, SMEs, and technology spillovers.

We are confident that with his deep insights into economic development, President. Tayebi shall implement his thoughtful and visionary leadership and transform the Foundation to help achieve the intended goals of promoting Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in the ECO region.

The entire ECOSF Team is excited and looking forward to work with President Tayebi to achieve great milestones under his leadership. Welcome aboard!
Minster for Science and Technology, Pakistan hosted a Welcome Meeting in the Honor of newly Joined President ECOSF Prof. Seyed Komail Tayebi

H.E. Mr. Agha Hassan Baloch, the Minister for Science and Technology, Government of Pakistan hosted a welcome meeting for newly joined President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Seyed Komail Tayebi in his office on August 15, 2022. During the meeting, H.E. Mr. Agha H. Baloch was joined by H.E. Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Memon and other senior officials of the Ministry to welcome Prof. Tayebi upon joining as the 2nd President of the ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF). Outgoing President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro and Engr. Khalil Raza, Scientific Officer ECOSF were also present.

President ECOSF Prof. Tayebi expressed his gratitude for H.E. Mr. Agha Hassan Baloch for his leadership, tremendous cooperation, and support towards the ECOSF. Prof. Tayebi expressed that he is extremely honored to have joined as the 2nd President of the ECO Science Foundation. This is a huge privilege, but also a very big responsibility, which I can only hope to fulfill with the support of member states especially the host country- Pakistan, President ECOSF further added.

H.E. Mr. Agha Hassan Baloch demonstrated his confidence that with joining of Prof. Seyed Komail Tayebi as the President ECOSF the Foundation will be strengthened further. He also hoped that the Prof. Tayebi’s stay in Pakistan will be productive, pleasant, and memorable which will help to develop close ties among the scientific community of the ECO region in promoting STI and socio-economic development in the region.
President ECOSF Prof. Tayebi assured that he is looking forward to working closely with relevant stakeholders in realizing his vision to help support in capacity building of Member Countries. Prof. Tayebi assured that he will give his best to serve the Foundation to help achieve its goals, and to promote Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) in the ECO region including our beloved countries Pakistan and Iran.

Both sides also discussed on several matters relating to promoting science and technology and critical measures particular reference to ratification of ECOSF charter by the Member States and strengthening the financial support to the Foundation. The honorable Minister and the Secretary offered their maximum possible support to realize the objectives of the ECOSF.

A three-day Pakistan-Iran Trade Exhibition’ launched in Islamabad. It was held at Pak-China Friendship Center from 24-26 August 2022. The Exhibition was opened by Chairman Senate Committee for Defense of Pakistan H.E. Senator Syed Mushahid Hussain was the Chief Guest of the Inauguration Ceremony held on 24 August 2022. The ceremony was also attended by the Deputy Minister for Corporate, Labor and Social Welfare of Iran H.E. Mehdi, Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan H.E. Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini, President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other delegates from Iran and Pakistan. President ECOSF Prof. Seyed Komail Tayebi also attended as invited guest.

The aim of the exhibition was to enhance cooperation between the two countries for mutual trade and investment. This trade exhibition was organized under the auspices of the Embassy of Iran in Islamabad with the support of the Iran National Innovation Fund and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare Iran.
Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed said that relations between Pakistan and Iran are reaching new heights on economic, trade and diplomatic sides. He said that Pakistan and Iran are facing hardships and both countries are moving forward in their excellent relations. Mushahid Hussain said that the work on the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline will also be completed, which will promote cooperation in the energy sector in both countries and fulfill Pakistan’s energy needs. He said that Pakistan and Iran have a very important role in regional trade and economic integration, which will promote regional trade.

H.E. Mehdi Maskani said that this is the first event to be held after the Pakistan-Iran Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meeting. The Minister said that currently, 33 companies from Iran are participating in this exhibition. He said that for the prosperity of both nations, the two countries have to come closer to each other in different sectors of the economy.

H.E. Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini in his address said that the purpose of the Pakistan-Iran trade exhibition is to increase cooperation in the fields of trade, industry and investment in both countries. The Ambassador added that such trade and industrial exhibitions and conferences in both countries will prove helpful in bringing the business communities of both countries closer. According to him, 33 companies from Iran are participating in this three-day exhibition, including 11 knowledge-based companies that are working on science, technology and innovation. He further added that various sectors including Information Technology, Telecom, Dairy and food industry, Kitchen wares, Technology, Carpet and Science and technology companies are participating in the exhibition. The Ambassador said that various companies of Pakistan are also participating in the exhibition from cloth, handicrafts, jewelry and many other sectors. He said that recently Pakistan Iran Joint Economic Commission (JEC) talks have been held in Pakistan and Iran has assured the promotion of mutual trade between the two countries. The aim of which is to increase the volume of trade between the two countries, which will increase mutual cooperation in many fields, he said. He said that after these negotiations, agreements were also signed between the two countries in four different fields.

President ECOSF Prof. Seyed Komail Tayebi attended the inauguration ceremony on special invitation and delivered his remarks. In his remarks, Prof. Tayebi introduced ECOSF and said that ECOSF is an intergovernmental organization of ten countries working in the field of science, technology and innovation based economic development in ECO region. He also said that knowledge-based economy is vital to achieve prosperity in the region thus, the Exhibition is a very important step to bring together the such companies of Iran and Pakistan to boost the economic ties. He added our hope is to witness the expansion of knowledge-based corporations’ activities together with the regional connectivity in the ECO.
Addressing the Pakistan-Iran trade exhibition, other speakers said that Pakistan and Iran are located at an important geo-strategic position, which will facilitate the development of regional trade and investment and the achievement of Geo-economic goals by the countries of the region.

A large number of people from Islamabad and Rawalpindi visited the exhibition and took keen interest in the products of Iranian companies. It is pertinent to mention that Prof. Tayebi also visited the exhibition along with Engr. Khalil Raza, Scientific Officer ECOSF on the 3rd day of this Pak-Iran event, where he interacted with Iranian companies and discussed means of cooperation to help promote the regional trade in the ECO region.

New President of ECOSF Prof. Tayebi made an Introductory Call on the Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan

New President of ECOSF Prof. Seyed Komail Tayebi made an Introductory call upon the Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan H.E. Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini at the Embassy on 23 August 2022. The Ambassador warmly welcomed Prof. Tayebi.

Prof. Tayebi briefed the Ambassador about his joining as new President ECOSF and discussed his future plans pertaining to the promotion of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in the ECO region. He emphasized that STI is very important for socio-economic development of the ECO region.

H.E. Seyed Hosseini said that joining of Prof. Tayebi as President ECOSF will strengthen the ties between the member countries especially Pakistan and Iran. He further said that there is great potentials between Pakistan and Iran to enhance the trade in various fields such as energy, gas, electricity, agriculture, textile, leather, etc. He also shared that knowledge-based exhibition is being launched in Islamabad tomorrow (24-26 August 2022) wherein 30 companies for Iran are participating. This will boost the economic ties between both the countries.

The Ambassador also appreciated the role of ECOSF in promoting STI activities in ECO region. The Ambassador said that Iran is the founding and key member of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) who also hosts the headquarters of ECO, thus, ECO and its allied organizations and institutes are very much supported/cooperated by Iran. He also assured his maximum possible support to ECOSF specially to resolve the issue of transfer of funds from Iran; which is mainly due to international embargo on Iran.
The Deputy Minister of Labor, Cooperatives and Social Welfare of Iran visited ECOSF

H.E. Mr. Maskani, the Deputy Minister of Labor, Cooperatives and Social Welfare of Iran along with Mr. Mohammadi, the head of the Knowledge-Based Companies Commission of the Iran Cooperative Chamber and Officials from Iranian Embassy visited ECOSF Secretariat on August 30, 2022. The delegation was warmly welcomed by the President ECOSF Prof. Komail Tayebi.

During the visit, a meeting was also held. Main focus of this meeting was to discuss the cooperation between ECOSF and the Iranian Institutes. Following ideas/points were agreed in principle:

- Supporting knowledge-based companies and corporations in the region with the goal of economic development,
- Identifying activities and comparative advantages of Start-ups corporations and accelerators in the ECO region,
- Working well to implement and promote innovation centers, as well as to support them for knowledge and technology transfer, and
- Understanding a major role of ECOSF on the creation of a cooperative innovation center in the organizational body of the ECOSF. The purpose of this idea is to bring 10 ECO member countries on a single platform to improve the technology and relations among the member countries.

The visit was cordially ended.
A Webinar on “71 Years of China-Pakistan Research and Development Cooperation: Way Forward” was organized in Islamabad on 3rd August 2022 by Centre for BRI and China Studies and Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies (IPDS) in collaboration with Pakistan Research Center, Inner Mongolia Honder College of Arts and Sciences, China. The webinar was organized to review research and development progress and build a way forward under Belt and Road Initiative. During the webinar, IPDS President Farhat Asif said that educational collaboration is important between China and Pakistan.

Prof. Tang Jun from the Inner Mongolia Honder College said various joint research programs between China and Pakistan contributed towards promoting collaboration on issues of mutual interest and there was a growing opportunity for both sides to share research and intellect in various fields.

Ambassador of Pakistan to China H.E. Mr. Moinul Haq, in his video message, said Pakistan and China’s friendship was defined by resilience, trust and active partnership. The Ambassador highlighted the role of research centers and thinktanks in exploring the complex matrix of politics, economies and socio-cultural areas of cooperation between Pakistan and China.

ECO Science Foundation President Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro said that Pakistan and China could learn a great deal from each other’s experiences and there were various avenues that could be explored between the two countries in exchange of knowledge and technology.

In the academic session, Dr. Zhang Jiegen a Chinese expert explained in depth dynamics of geo-strategy, geo-economic and geo-security compulsion that were offering challenges and opportunities for both China and Pakistan.

Prof. Dr. Zahid Anwar, pro-vice-chancellor and director of China Study Centre, University of Peshawar, mentioned various agreements between research centers of China and Pakistan and said these were active agreements that were regular and robust.

Prof. Dr. Song Zhihui, Director of Pakistan Study Centre at Sichuan University said; China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was an important milestone in China-Pakistan relations and both sides might work together to remove negative propaganda through robust media research and cooperation.

Dr. Chen Ruihua, Director, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Research Centre, Kashi University, said Afghanistan and Central Asian states must also be incorporated into the CPEC project as they play a crucial role in integrating the region.

Dr. Tahir Mumtaz Awan, head of China Study Centre at COMSATS University, Islamabad, mentioned that study institutes are essential towards bridging relations between China and Pakistan for research and development cooperation.

Prof. Jin Qiang, Assistant Director, Intercultural Communication Research Centre, Hebei University in his in-depth presentation said that both countries’ media have to play a role in refuting negative propaganda of western powers against the Pak-China friendship.

Dr. Samina Sabir, coordinator, CPEC Centre, University of Azad Jammu shared about progress in Pakistan-China relations. A large number of students, faculty members from both China and Pakistan participated in the webinar.
COMSTECH and Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) jointly celebrated the Accreditation Day 2022 by organizing a seminar on “Accreditation for Quality Assurance and Socio-economic Development in OIC Countries” on 3rd August 2022 at COMSTech Secretariat – Islamabad.

The event was hybrid, attended by in-person and online participants comprising of experts, faculty, students and social workers. President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro along with Engr. Khalil Raza Scientific Officer ECOSF participated in the seminar.

The Secretary for Ministry of Science and Technology, H.E. Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Memon participated as the chief guest in the event. He said that the event emphasized on the importance of accreditation and its role for socio-economic development. Mr. Memon further said that sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction can be achieved by augmenting the international trade which can only be possible through robust accreditation, certification, quality and testing infrastructure recognized by the relevant international forums. He appreciated COMSTech and PNAC joint initiative to strengthen accreditation bodies to enhance the conformity and assessment quality in Pakistan and least developed African countries.

The Assistant Secretary General of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Ambassador Askar Mussinov said in his message that the OIC is at the same page in celebration of the accreditation day. He further said that it is important to ensure the quality measurement for socio-economic development of any country. The accreditation and conformity assessment play major role in achieving technical competence, integrity and impartiality of organizations along with making them to conform to international standards. He further said in the message that international standards organizations also open ways to secure markets to provide sale able products.

Coordinator General COMSTech, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, welcomed the participants and shed light on the importance of accreditation for OIC member states. Prof. Choudhary said that accreditation is an extremely important approach towards standardization of the processes and products, analytical and diagnostic methods, scientific research or even business. He further said that accreditation is now globally accepted as the gold standard of best practices in all forms of human endeavors. He briefed the audience about the large portfolio of S&T capacity building programs of COMSTech in its 57 member states, as well as its role in Pakistan’s science diplomacy initiative.

The Director General PNAC, Ms. Ismat Gul Khattak gave a comprehensive talk on the importance of accreditation in achieving sustainable economic growth. She talked about the PNAC initiatives and achievements. Ms. Khattak said that PNAC can collaborate with OIC member states to provide accreditation training, develop pool of assessors, help in capacity building, share experiences, conduct joint assessment, provide accreditation services and conduct peer evaluation.

The President of Kazakhstan National Center of State Scientific and Technical Expertise (NSCTE), Prof. Dr. Adil Ibrayev, joined the session through Zoom. He talked about the aims, objectives and current achievements of NSCTE. Prof. Ibrayev offered collaboration of NSCTE with COMSTech, PNAC and the OIC member states to work together.
The Innovation & Entrepreneurship Committee (I&EE) of Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) led by Prof. Bhawani Shankar Chowdhry, organized a seminar titled; ‘Innovations in Healthcare’ on 3 August 2022 in Islamabad. Alsons Group of Industries, a leading industrial group in Pakistan collaborated in the event, sponsored by Systems Limited- a premier technology company in Pakistan.

A globally known surgeon Prof. David J. Howard from the United Kingdom was the main speaker. He gave a detailed presentation on the historical developments and latest innovations in medical sciences, biomedical engineering, and devices. He also shared his global experience regarding new needs and requirements in the field of health care systems in developing countries.

Chairman Pakistan Engineering Council Engr. Najeeb Haroon, Chairman of Alsons Group Mr. Abdul Rehman Allana, Prof. Dr. Bhawany Shankar Chowdhry, an HEC Distinguished Professor and Mr. Ashraf ul Kabir, Senior Vice President, Engineering, Systems Limited participated in the seminar as keynote speakers.

Secretary Planning and Development, Special Secretary Health, CEO Ignite, officials from DRAP, professors from NUST and other engineering universities, NESCOM, doctors, and medical technologists attended the seminar. ECOSF President Prof. Manzoor Soomro also attended the seminar.

Mr. Ashraf ul Kabir from Systems Limited highlighted the market and technology trends present in the healthcare sector and the contributions made by Systems Limited in terms of expertise and solutions to healthcare clients globally. “Systems Limited is working tremendously and in-depth in the healthcare sector by leveraging data in each stage of the whole pharma process using data analytics,” said Mr. Ashraf ul Kabir.

Engr. Haroon, Chairman PEC shared the council’s efforts to support innovative ideas by the industry and academia and informed the moot about resolving issues between the engineering community and the industry. Mr. Allana shared his experience of how his industry started manufacturing biomedical devices and became the very first Pakistani company to produce the locally manufactured devices.

Upcoming Events posted on ECOSF website and Facebook page

6th Training Program - BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Center - Powering the Belt and Road - Lithium-ion Batteries

BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Center aims to bring China’s extensive expertise and best practices to help guide entrepreneurs and research scholars to develop a regional lithium-ion battery manufacturing value chain that creates equitable clean-energy and hi-tech jobs in the Belt and Road (B&R) countries while mitigating climate change impacts.

In this respect, BTBU – ECOSF Joint Training Center is planning to host its 6th training program entitled on “Powering Belt and Road – Lithium – ion batteries” at 2 PM (Beijing Time - GMT+8) on...
**September 28, 2022.** In this backdrop, this training program will seek to understand and learn from China’s expertise and capabilities about viable options for creating a strong lithium-ion manufacturing based in the B&R region, show case best practices, success stories, and barriers on implementation of policies and programs promoting low carbon development, and match the potential cooperation among BRI counties in Lithium-ion Battery production.

Interested participants can register [http://www.ecosf.org/signup.aspx](http://www.ecosf.org/signup.aspx) Once registered, you will receive further information with login and password to access the training sessions. Interested participants are requested to register themselves by September 26th, 2022. On successful registration, participants would receive access to zoom webinar links.

For more information, please see the link: [http://ecosf.org/-1255](http://ecosf.org/-1255)

**Call for Abstracts: Delivering for Nutrition in South Asia Conference**

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the virtual conference, ‘Delivering for Nutrition in South Asia: Transforming Diets’ that will be held November 9-10, 2022, which is being co-hosted by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Agha Khan University and many other leading global institutions.

This conference aims to bring together relevant evidence and stimulate dialogue to inform and guide policy and program initiatives in South Asia for improving equitable access to and consumption of healthy diets. The key objectives are to:

- Examine evidence on current dietary patterns at the local, country-, and regional-levels, and the determinants of these patterns
- Identify strategies for shaping healthy dietary behaviors, including what has worked, has not worked, why, and in what contexts
- Identify potential program and policy levers for transforming diets

Conference is inviting abstracts on (1) research studies, and (2) implementation experiences, explicitly focused on COVID-19, and related to the following topics:

- Implementation, coverage, and quality of maternal and child health and nutrition interventions/programs
- Implementation, coverage, and quality of social safety net programs
- Impacts on infant and young child feeding practices, diet quality, food security, nutritional status, or other outcomes
- Other relevant implementation or research on nutrition and COVID-19

The guideline for submission of abstract is attached for your kind information. Deadline for submission of abstract is September 10, 2022.


**Invitation for participation in 2nd International Conference on Research in Special Education**

The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan is hosting the 2nd International Conference on Research in Special Education 2022 (ICORSE-2022) on November 17-18, 2022. This conference aims to bring together leading researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences about all aspects of Special Education. It also provides the premier interdisciplinary forum for researchers, practitioners and educators to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, concerns, and practical challenges and the solutions adopted in the fields of Special Education.

ECO Science Foundation would highly encourage to participate and contribute to the Conference through the submission of their research abstracts and papers. Also, high-quality research contributions describing original and unpublished results of conceptual, constructive, empirical, experimental, or theoretical work in all areas of Special Education are cordially invited for presentation at the conference.

**Sub Themes**

**Hearing Impairment**

- Speech & Language Impairment
- Blended Learning
Curriculum Development in Special Education E-Learning in Special Education
• Early Childhood Care for Special Need Children Pedagogy in Special Education
• ADHD

Visual Impairment
• Learning Disability
• Inclusive Education
• Research and Development in Special Education Role of Science Education in Special Education Educational Psychology
& Special Education Human Growth and Development
• ICT In Special Education

Key dates
• Abstract’s submission deadlines: October 25, 2022
• Abstract Acceptance: November 4, 2022
• Registration: November 07, 2022
• Full paper Submission: November 10, 2022
• Submission of Presentation: November 12, 2022
• Conference camera ready program: November 20, 2022
• Conference dates: November 17-18, 2022 (Thursday and Friday)

All the abstracts should be submitted as the email attachments to the conference secretary & coordinator Dr. Imran Latif Saifi at the email address: icorse.spe@iub.edu.pk before the deadline (October 25, 2022)

For more information, please explore the flyer and call for papers.

Call for Participation in the Sheikh Bahai Technopreneurship Festival (SHTF) 15-17 November 2022

Venue: Isfahan Science and Technology Town (ISTT), Isfahan, IRAN

Sheikh Bahai Technopreneurship Festival (SHTF) is an annual event hosted by Isfahan Science & Technology Town (ISTT), the founder of technology parks in Iran. The event which co-organized by the UNESCO Center, IRIS, aims at fostering the culture of creativity, innovation and technopreneurship, as well as praising technopreneurs as an essential factor in Knowledge-based economy. SHTF, as the first and leading technology and innovation event in Iran, tries to enhance cooperation among technopreneurs and k-based companies to encourage them find solutions to the technological challenges through providing support and introducing successful technopreneurs to investors.

SHTF has held 16 successive festivals since 2003. Apart from the competition sections of the event, the festival, in its 17th edition, includes a variety of programs.

- An exhibition introducing the latest achievements of technology companies and technopreneurs,
- B2B sessions,
- training workshops
- Experience transfer sessions.

In the competition section of the festival, startups and technology companies will be identified and evaluated in various fields. Afterwards, the superior technopreneurs and business planners will be introduced to the audience and investors while receiving a cash prize to develop their market.

Currently, the competition section of the festival is open to register; competition entry requirements are as follows

1- Being a legal entity
2- Submitting accurate feasibility study
3- Having the minimum product available (MVP). The most important evaluation indicators in this section are technical indicators, commercialization capability and readiness to attract investors’ support.
Applicants need to fill in the attached registration form (https://bit.ly/3RvFm9L) by October 3rd and send it to this email address: international.affairs@istt.ir

**Note:** The judgment process will be held online, and the finalists will be announced and awarded in the closing ceremony on 17 November 2022 which is coincident with Global Entrepreneurship Week.

For more information, please visit: www.shtf.ir

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**Invitation to participate in the 3rd KANS Scientific Competition 2022**

Mustafa (pbuh) Science and Technology Foundation (MSTF) which is our strategic partners of the ECOSF - is planning to host 3rd round of the KANS Scientific Competition 2022.

The KANS is a scientific competition among university students, scholars, inventors, and instructors (under 45 years of age) throughout Islamic countries. The objective of this competition is aimed at finding the best scientific solutions to spot and tackle the challenges of society.

The competition will be held in 6 main areas as listed below:

1. Energy, Water & Environment
2. Health & Med-tech
3. ICT & AI
4. Electronics, and Robotics
5. Agriculture and Food Industries
6. Mining and Mineral Industries

For further details, please visit http://www.kans.mstfdn.org/.

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**Distinguished Visitors to the ECOSF**

August 3: Prof. Dr. Bhawani Shankar Chaudhry, HEC Distinguished Professor and Mr. Tahir Mehmood, Chairman Computer Society of Pakistan called upon President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro at his office and discussed matters of mutual interests.