

IMSciences hosts KP Pre-Budget Citizens Consultations Session

On 29th April, 2019, the Finance Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and German Company, GIZ held a seminar on *Pre-Budget Citizens Consultations* in IMSciences, Peshawar. Ms. Shabana Gul, Assistant Professor at IMSciences moderated the session. Representatives from KP's Finance Department included Mr. Usman Khalil; Advisor to Minister Finance on E-Governance, Mr. Sajeer Alam; Advisor to Minister Finance on Communication and Media, Mr. Arsalan; Representative Personal Team Minister Finance, and Mr. Jehanzeb Parvez; PFM Advisor Finance Department. The students and faculty of IMSciences attended the seminar.

Ms. Shabana Gul gave a brief introduction about the budget making process. Then Dr. Muhammad Mohsin Khan; Director IMSciences formally welcomed the guests and remarked that the pressing issue is that our country has more often than not experienced budget deficit. He talked about why taxes are so important and how in our society, people are not paying enough taxes, which causes many issues.

Then, Dr. Waqar, Professor of Economics at IMSciences, came to the stage to give a detailed presentation on budget and its components. He also had a few suggestions to the Finance Department that can help with budget related issues. Then he talked about the allocation of budget in different sectors and claimed that the housing sector, albeit a strength of our economy, has been ignored in budgets of the past. He also suggested that the Finance Department, KP should have a Vision-Mission Statement for their budget as that will guide them in the right direction.

Afterwards, Ms. Shabana gave a presentation on the topic of Social Accountability. She stated that a budget is made in order to serve the needs of the people. Talking about her past experiences of working with the World Bank, the FATA and KP governments, she said that strategies and annual budget plans should be aligned with each other.

Then the representatives of the Finance Department gave their presentation, which focused on "Allocation VS Utilization of Budget". They said that the main purpose of this seminar was to promote awareness and transparency. They talked about a Skill Development Fund for the people of KP that is in process.

Towards the end of the session, the students participated in an online survey which carried budget oriented questions. The representatives of the Finance Department answered all the queries of the students and the faculty as well.

The session proved to be very informative for the students of the Institute as it helped them understand the process of budgeting and the thought that goes into developing budgets. IMSciences hopes to conduct more of such seminars in the future.