**A Legacy of Timeless Traditions**

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February 21, 2021

Government College University Lahore is deeply rooted in history. It was established on January 1st, 1864, with a small class consisting of nine students. After 138 years of meritorious academic excellence and exemplary achievements, Government College, Lahore was raised to the status of a University in 2002. It was renamed as GC University Lahore. The academic life here has been re-shaped in accordance with its new challenges and we hope to fulfil the expectations that go with a University. GC University Lahore is committed to act as a promoter of quality education for all. This institution is one of the oldest seats of learning in the sub-continent. As a seat of higher learning GC University, Lahore blends grand old traditions and modern educational standards to meet the ideals set by persons such as the first principal Dr. G. W. Leitner, the poet philosopher, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal and the Nobel Laureate, Dr. Abdus Salam. Through its majestic corridors have walked men and women who went on to become leading scientists, economists, bureaucrats and politicians. An introduction to GC University Lahore is incomplete without the mention of the Ravian Spirit. This spirit is best encapsulated in the word “quest” – a passionate spirit of inquiry and the ability to question, probe and endeavor. This institution’s motto – Courage to Know – has over the time span of nearly a century and a half promoted the spirit of curiosity, inquiry and independent pursuit of knowledge among generations of students. GC University Lahore is a modern, demand-driven, futuristic, quality conscious public university. The University wishes to build its future through internationally recognized research work, scholarships and learning within a distinctive scholarly environment. GC University Lahore has attained a distinguished place among Pakistani Universities due to its strong commitment to learning, teaching and research pursuits.

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It goes beyond saying that visit to one’s alma-mater essentially evokes a sentiment of infatuation which is nostalgically reminiscent of the times bygone. Yet somehow it relates to the present time as well. It is afresh and vivid both in collection and remembrance. Government College University Lahore (GCUL) is one of the oldest seats of learning in the subcontinent. It possesses splendid heritage, proud history and timeless traditions. For too long and for too many, it is, and it has been, a pilgrimage place. It has impacted, shaped and influenced scores of individuals since the time of its inception. The alumni of GCUL are famously called Ravians –a proud epithet that speaks volumes of the grandeur and glory of the institution to whom they owe. The term Ravian is originated from Ravi which signifies a transmitter who bequeaths and transfers the illustrious traditions, timeless values, vast knowledge to the posterity for their enlightenment. This spirit to transfer knowledge is the core of Ravians’ traditions. The rationale is to ignite the flame of knowledge in others so as to light up the fire of curiosity and acquisition of knowledge in a broader perspective.

Its majestic building, a masterpiece of Gothic architecture, shows the signs of weathering agents, yet it is intact and preserved in its pristine form. Though the structure is the relic of the past, yet it stands with an awe-inspiring presence in the heart of the city, enthralling in appearance and appeal. Since 1864, it has spectacularly witnessed different transformative eras: colonialism, partition and creation of Pakistan as a separate state. It has always been known for its liberal values where only knowledge deserves merit. In 2002 it was upgraded as a university which mandated it to embark upon research and innovation in the realm of knowledge both in the fields of science and arts. The environment of Government College University Lahore(GCUL) is heterogeneous; it acts as a crossroad of divergent ethnic identities where students from different parts of Pakistan combine together make a glittering galaxy sparkling with knowledge and enlightenment. This cosmopolitan environment creates amity, cooperation, respect, and a feeling of coexistence. Discussions and discourses in the campus enable them to rise above the prejudices and stereotypical thinking that otherwise clouds their judgement. They learn to respect difference of opinion without being disagreeable. This characterizing feature has been instrumental in strengthening federation and to ward off divisive tendencies. The mutual learning enables them to find similarities and iron out differences to chart away that leads to inclusion and prosperity.

The institution takes pride in its enduring traditions and timeless values and aims at instilling these ideals that define the character of a human being; respect for dissenting voice –no matter how hard and difficult it is to resist–, the audacity to express opinions freely without any fear, to learn from others with attention and respect so as to dismantle the monument of vanity and ignorance. With an ardent belief that seeking knowledge and learning is a continuous process, and this realization that we can become better only when we are ready to admit our follies and determined to correct them. A sense of discipline and responsibility that just improved life is worthy of credence. The institution has a proud and illustrious history of producing eminent individuals who had a lasting impact. The towering figures like Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Doctor Abdul Salam, Sufi Tabassum and Professor Ashfaq Ali Khan stand testimony to the brilliance of its alumni and teaching faculty. Their glorious legacy and contribution stir yearning among the young students to follow their footsteps and make their lives better. Even, these days, the ubiquitous presence of Ravians in politics, civil service, judiciary and armed forces signifies their role in the policy formation at the highest level and adds to the credible credentials of this dignified institution.

The culture of vibrant and eventful societies is the hallmark of Government College Lahore. These societies provide a platform to the aspirants to polish their innate talent by participating in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Debating and dramatic club has earned numerous laurels by fielding contests at the national level. A graduate can harness his true potential when he zealously participates in capacity building and confidence boasting activities during his stay at the university. Besides this, recently, an endowment fund has emerged as an example of trust and credibility. It is geared to support the financially poor and marginalized students by rallying philanthropic alumni and affluent members of the society. The fund works under the basic principle that the donated money is never spent, only the income earned on its investment is used. Although the institution has a tantalizing appeal to pool together the best and the brightest students from all the spectrum, yet it is losing its luster nowadays. It is much to do with the overall fate of the education in Pakistan. However, some areas can be improved with proper overhauling. Unfortunately, at the present time, it has woefully failed to woo the scholars and intellectuals of international stature. It is mainly because it is unable to offer remuneration in lieu of their services, corresponding to the market trends. Resultantly they are forced to choose private institutions that offer salaries of prodigious proportion in accordance with their hard work and investment. In this regard, it is necessary that the Government should dole out money to meet the expenses and to improve the financial capacity of the institution.

One of the most beautiful traditions which binds all Ravians as the beads of a rosary is the Old Ravians Union which is elected after two years on regular basis. This is truly the representative body of all Ravians and it serves the entire fraternity, without any bias or prejudice. Irrespective of rank, status or position, all Ravians are equal and this is what defines Ravians’ spirit to its precision. That’s exactly why studying at this prestigious seat of learning has been a fascination for many and it has become a dream place to be.

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