**We are Sorry!**

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PM Imran Khan recently reiterated his government’s stance to reform the education system. Certainly, it is the need of the hour but before going for the syllabus reforms of the madrassa system, PM must make sure that modern universities under his nose are providing basic facilities to the students.

Reportedly, three university students lost their precious lives in last ten days in the capital city of the country, Islamabad. The universities involved are not only top ranked in Pakistan but are well known for their respective faculties abroad. Apparently, all three cases of unlucky students, Haleema of Bahria university, Inam of COMSATs university, and Misbah of Quaid-e-Azam university fell victim to the negligence of their respective university’s poor management and policies.

Female student Haleema, allegedly died of succumbing to her injuries after falling from the fourth floor of the under construction building in the university, where according to the students, classes were scheduled. Other two cases are supposedly being reported as unavailability of proper medical facilities and delay in provision of treatment, lead to the deaths.

In other case of Misbah, a Gender studies student of Quaid-e-Azam University, died after having severe headache. According to social media reports, she was taken to the university’s first aid facility but there was no doctor in the medical center. Later, she passed away.

The incident of the COMSATs university is even more disturbing. Inam, a 22-year-old BBA student fell on the stairs after having low blood pressure and later had cardiac arrest, was allegedly not provided with the facility of ambulance to be rushed to the hospital in time. According to the students, they tried to seek help from a faculty member, who was leaving the university in his car, who supposedly refused by saying that, “it’s not my responsibility”. According to the students they also tried to get in their own cars in the university premises to rescue their friend but the guards at main gate refused the entry as it was against university’s policy. The poor boy died after half an hour struggling for his life.

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Followed by the students protests and media reports, the management of all three universities declined the allegations and gave their so-called official version i.e. administration was not responsible for the respective incidents and university facilitated the unlucky students to every extent.

As a student and academician, I have remained connected to the capital’s universities now for last 10 years. It is observed generally; the universities are not having medical services in their premises and if luckily few of them do have a building tagged for the purpose, it doesn’t have the proper facilities including qualified doctor and staff.

Additionally, it is important to mention that two out of three above mentioned universities have most expensive fee structure in the country. These universities are collecting handsome amount from students in the name of providing the facilities in accordance to the international standards. Alas, still such allegations arise, and facilities are limited.

On this Teacher’s day, 5thof October, when I am writing these lines, unfortunately, the education institutions in Pakistan are in the news, earning bad name. As an academician, I feel unpleasant for being unable to provide quality education and proper environment and facilities to our future generation. Plagiarism, financial and moral corruption, nepotism, intolerance, students being beaten to death, murders of teachers is todays sad story. Even few educators are compromising on ethics to get pity favors, thus earning bad name to whole fraternity. These evil practices are damaging our institutions. It’s the time to get on the right track else our generation would curse us.

Anyhow, the recent incidents must be taken seriously. Higher Education Commission (HEC)essentially should investigate the matter and probe a strict inquiry. It must not let the respective universities management to manipulate the facts. It is the need of the hour that HEC must link its accreditation of a certain university after examining medical facility (basic medical clinic, at least two ambulances and proper medical staff with qualified doctor) along with other standards. In case, HEC does not have such a provision in the sanction process, it should immediately inculcate it, else its implementation should be assured.

HEC should also make it compulsory for higher education institutions to train the students for first aid service. Workshops, camps and seminars should be made mandatory for an institution on semester basis. A community service course could also be introduced in bachelors level among other courses, which would help provide society with responsible and empathetic citizens. Organizations like the Red Crescent, Pakistan Girls Guide Association and Pakistan Boys Scouts Association should also play their due role in building responsible community.

Moreover, basic health facilities in Pakistan are already inadequate. The government must deliver on its promise and should work on improving the overall health structure in the country,especiallyit mustmake sure that all the educational institutes have proper medical facilities.

Concluding, three precious lives are lost. As a true academician, every teacher in the country must be repentantfor this loss of the nation! Our prayers and thoughts are with the families, friends and parents of the deceased students. We are indeed Sorry!

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