

The beautiful green belts, gardens and of course the pleasant parks of Lahore where lovely flowers bloom and dance, butterflies of charming colours move from flower to flower and where the birds sing, owes its tribute to the Parks and Horti Culture Authority — the main department working day and night to decorate the city of educational institutions, historical buildings and copious parks, reports

Osama Haye.

PHA came into existence in 1998 as a result of the merger of LDA and MCL Horti Culture Wings. PHA, having its department in Race Course Park where a large population of the city including families, children, youth, foreigners, tourists and various drama artists come for refreshment and joy, is in charge for the maintenance of the parks of Lahore. The foremost purpose of this department was to develop Horti Culture as well as to beautify the city.

Although PHA maintains the parks in addition to growing seasonal plants and flowers all

Reasons to celebrate Spring

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through the year, yet this time is the busiest one for the department when it organizes a number of events. The forceful preparations for 'Jashan-e-Baharah' start about 6 months before the awaited season as a result of which the city looks not less than a wonderland.

The jovial gala takes its start from the first week of February lasting for two months, February and March when spring is in its full bloom. As February arrives, people are seen flying kites. Basant is mostly celebrated in the second week of February and when month of Basant starts, in which international kite display and kite-flying takes place everywhere. In this joyful occasion, the parks are open for the public where kite manufacturers associations, kite flying associations, school, colleges and transporters also participate fervently.

In the festive look of the city, the streets poles of the main roads — the Mall Road, Jail Road, Gulberg and Park Lane Road are decked with kites, flowers and messages for 23rd March as well as illuminating gates, shops banks, petrol pumps and historical buildings. Infact no corner and nook of the city is ignored while adorning it. The food and craft festival is a vital part of the fantastic carnival as entertainment would be incomplete without food and craft where different crafts display take place and a variety of foodstuff are available for the visitors.

Designing is a vital part

which can rarely be done by laymen therefore, participation of talented people is very important. Colleges like NCA have active participation in decorating and designing of different items with the designing department. Mrs Sajida Haider Vandal-Principal of NCA, was the chairman of designing committee last year.

PHA has determinedly done a lot of work to give a face-lift to the city that has put in to the magnificence of the city. "Lahore has become very beautiful as compared to the one 6, 7 years back, I have come after a long time to Lahore to enjoy its spring festivals," stated a tourist Renu from America giving her comments on the condition of the city as well as the traditional

festivals observed during spring.

Places of entertainment like St Marry Park, Liberty Round About, the green belt of Main Boulevard, Airport Chowk and other parks are cared for by this department. The department not only serves the city by maintaining it all through the year and by growing seasonal plants, but also provide the citizens with free flora in order to promote Horti Culture everywhere. All the growers especially gardeners are busy in plantation of seasonal vegetation and flowers as well as spreading dung and manure to the gardens and lawns.

PHA is a big department that has various departments, South and North departments, administration, marketing,

project, finance, Law and nursery departments which take active part in the upholding of the parks.

It is noticeable that despite spending about 21 crore by LDA, the city lacked the present splendor, whereas, about 40-50 crores have been spent on the parks up till now as a result of which the city has an attractive view. And now this department is doing its best to give awareness to the inhabitants ignorant of the vitality of plant life. "Despite the fact that we get no funds from the government, PHA has done a lot of work, for banks and multinational companies have sponsored this department," revealed an employee of the department.



Illustration by Khalid