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## IIUM promotes the significance of KHAIR values

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The University's Sejahtera Academic Framework (SAF) includes KhAIR values: *Khalīfah*, *Amānah*, *Iqra'* and *Rahmatan Li'l ʿĀlamīn*. These are so crucial that academics must incorporate them in course outlines during the curriculum review to be addressed in class discussions and applied by students as they navigate their academic and professional life. The following explanation may help comprehend these values' significance and meaning and how they can be applied appropriately and effectively.

### ***Khalīfah's* Attributes**

*Khalīfah* is one of the intrinsic aspects of KhAIR values expressed in the University's Sejahtera Academic Framework, although students' role as *Khalīfah* has been advocated since the University's inception as stated in the Philosophy of the University.

According to the Philosophy of the University, "*Knowledge shall be propagated in the spirit of Tawhīd, leading towards the recognition of Allah as the only Absolute, the Creator and Master of mankind. The spirit behind this recognition of Allah as the Lord of the Worlds (Rabb al-<sup>al</sup>-<sup>al</sup>Ālamīn) represents the apex in the hierarchy of knowledge. Thus, all disciplines of knowledge should lead towards subservience to this truth. This is because knowledge is a form of trust (amānah) from Allah to man, and hence man should utilise knowledge according to Allah's will in performing his role as **servant and vicegerent of Allah on earth**" (International Islamic University CATALOGUE:1990/91, 5).*

The University's non-formal educational programmes consistently reminded students that a human is Allah's *Khalīfah* based on a verse from *Sūrat al-Baqarah*: "*Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth'" (Qur'ān, 2:30).*

The verse communicates that Allah declares humans are His vicegerents.

Hence, students have to function as Allah's vicegerents and accomplish all obligations Allah delegated, indicating that Revelation is a source of knowledge, governance, law, ethics, culture, and civilisation, cultivating essential qualities for holistic and comprehensive excellence in light of divine command.

In the context of our University, academics, administrators and students are to fulfil their role as *Khalīfah*; they must demonstrate all of its attributes.

With divine direction and guidance in Islam's core principles and practices, staff and students should operate as change agents to transform society and humanity to live in sustainable peace, harmony and tranquillity and administer justice, regardless of race, religion and culture.

As a *Khalīfah*, one of the spheres of life-long learning is to practise and execute good governance after graduation to bring citizens

to hope for sustainable development.

Creating consciousness of the institution of *Khalīfah* in students is essential that they will encounter a difficult task: rebuilding society internally and externally in the face of atheistic, liberal and secular ideologies, philosophies and worldviews and their disrespect for the eventual rendezvous with Allah Almighty.

The dangers and ramifications of secular systems should be discussed to guide students in regulating their lives and confronting and overcoming transgressions as rapidly as is practical as a *Khalīfah*.

Whether or not to pay attention to the unprecedented challenges brought forth by modernisation and liberal culture must be included in debates, making students realise their roles as agents of change.

Towards transforming students as *Khulafā'*, making provisions in courses to include the notion is timely, allowing them to comprehend and realise its significance in their lives after graduation for sustainable development in all areas of human existence.

Suppose this is done correctly with the utmost sincerity and determination. In that case, students will realise their responsibility as leaders within the '*Khalīfah* framework' to **lead the way** and make the world better for all humanity.

### **The Value of *Amānah***

Understanding and applying the concept of *amānah* (trust) as an institutional priority that fosters integrity as a fully comprehensive Islamic trait is a priority.

It is also a component of the Sejahtera Academic Framework.

The term *amānah* has been used since the University's establishment, and its meaning has been extensively debated in numerous forums to remind academics and educate students of its importance and application.

Indeed, students must be continually motivated to internalise the concept of *amānah* and apply it in the University first and later in

the workplace.

It is crucial to constantly keep in mind the guidance contained in the Qur'ān, which states that one of the attributes and hallmarks of the Believers is faithfulness to trusts and covenants: “*Those who faithfully observe their **trusts** and covenants*” (Qur'an, 23:8).

The use of *amānah* has significance because it encourages and stimulates students to consider Allah's gift of our lives as a form of *amānah*, or trust from Him, and to actively defend and use it to fulfil their obligations in learning, internalising, and acquire knowledge in pursuit of holistic excellence, including the University's vision and mission.

Faculty members should also remember that the job entrusted to them is an extension of this *amānah*, which motivates them to devote themselves to the expectations of the University in teaching, supervision, responsible research and innovation, publications, and community engagement, as duties that are part of this sacred trust – even observing the University's work ethics, attending official meetings and all university programmes and activities.

Staff do these deeds as means of *ʿibādah* (acts of worship). Similarly, students should remember that it is *amānah*, so they should handle the sacred learning task.

Hence, the University community is reminded that we had previously accepted the concept of *amānah* as life and obligation and that a human should not breach this priceless, precious and sacred trust.

The Qur'ān's verse: “*We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the mountains: but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: **but man undertook it...***” (Qur'ān, 33:72), informs that humans undertook the burden of *amānah* while other creatures turned down and therefore they should fulfil their duty unreservedly.

### **The Culture of *Iqra'***

*Iqra'* is another essential virtue of SAF, as it is expressly referenced in the first Revelation of the Qur'ān: “*Proclaim! (or*

*Read!)* in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created, created man out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: Proclaim! and thy Lord is Most Bountiful, He Who taught (the use of) the Pen, taught man that which he knew not” (Qur’ān, 96: 1-5).

Everyone should remember that Allah prioritises learning in the above verse, for it alone will lead a person to be knowledgeable with wisdom, prosperity, and success, offering what is essential and relevant for humanity.

The essentiality of learning and producing new knowledge in line with the objectives of Divine Command is inherent in the verse.

*Iqra’* means “reading the Qur’ān, studying the Qur’ān, and putting the Qur’ān’s Message into practice.” So, the culture of *Iqra’* is divinely inspired.

*Iqra’* also represents the growth and development of knowledge and sciences. It may be extended to responsible research leading to the creation of new knowledge benefitting all of humanity.

As asserted above, the first epiphany necessitates reading. So, the term *Iqra’* has to be understood broadly in that it also refers to the creation of new knowledge considering the divine theoretical framework, also comprehended as Islamisation or Islamicisation of Human Knowledge in the context of IIUM.

Hence, expanding the culture of *Iqra’* is indispensable and intellectual activities should take place in the name of the Lord Who created, which implies the application of a proper methodology in knowledge creation and production to benefit humankind.

It signifies that Allah, the Creator, directs believers to read, recite, study, or practise. It is done in His name, implying that whatever intellectual activity is fostered and knowledge produced must adhere to the Divine will, acknowledgement and affirmation.

It necessitates intellectual effort following divine aims, implying that the knowledge developed must be sustainable, constructive, valuable, and beneficial to develop humanity.

### **The Concept of *Raḥmatan Li’l ‘Ālamīn***

*Raḥmatan li'l ʿĀlamīn* is another principle of SAF. Hence, the University community must understand its meaning, significance and essentiality. Academics, administrators, technical officials and students are expected to manifest this incredible value on campus and later in life, for the Prophet (pbuh) was *Raḥmatan Li'l ʿĀlamīn*.

The Islamic worldview is futuristic, addressing the needs of humanity. It is relevant to everyone. Hence, studying the concept of *Raḥmatan li'l-ʿĀlamīn* is timely to understand Islam's precise way of life.

It is helpful to know how Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) demonstrated compassion and mercy with unwavering integrity as a model for his followers and people.

The Prophet's interactions with the people of his time inspire everyone today to consider him a one-of-a-kind gift to humanity. His existence was distinguished by love, pity, mercy, forgiveness and compassion: "*And We have not sent you but as a mercy for all the worlds*" (Qur'ān, 21: 107).

Allah Almighty proclaimed the Prophet (pbuh) the *raḥmah* (mercy, compassion) of the universe. He is acknowledged, admired and eulogised by contemporary historians, writers, thinkers and authors, including opponents, competitors and adversaries.

All objective, impartial and fair-minded historians believe that the Prophet's conduct, character, personality and behaviour were praiseworthy and outstanding in every occasion and circumstance, thus becoming a model for his associates, companions, successors, followers and the entire Muslims.

The Prophet (pbuh) was sent to guide humanity from spiritual blindness to spiritual illumination as "*mercy for all the worlds*" (Qur'ān, 21: 107). Muslim exegetes argue that the gracious compassion in the phrase pertains to all humanity, not simply his companions or followers.

Thus, his personality and example serve as a beacon for all nations since his universal traits transcend time, space and location. The Qur'ān states, "*There is indeed a good model for you in*

*the Messenger of Allah – for the one who has hope in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah profusely” (Qur’ān, 33: 21).*

Indeed, the message of Muhammad (pbuh) is a manifestation of grace to his people and humanity. The principles he laid down sounded strange initially because humanity was far away from spiritual life.

Numerous aspects confirm that Muhammad’s message manifested divine grace is available for whoever wishes to benefit. Many are influenced, willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly, by the code of living he outlined.

Humanity now sorely needs this grace as most people are entangled in a web of materialism, constant violence, extremism, and spiritual emptiness.

*Al-Anbiyā’s* verse 107 indicates that Allah Almighty sent the Prophet (pbuh) to the world as a blessing and mercy. He awoke a slumbering world to the criteria that distinguished truth from error, forewarning all approaching imminent disaster and laying the path to peace and harmony.

The mercy mentioned in *al-Anbiyā’s* verse 107 alludes to Allah’s mercy in the world. Allah sent the Prophet (pbuh) as a guide to lead the ignorant and misguided to the path of truth and contentment.

The passage implies that the concept of mercy he brought is universal and includes all aspects of life under the term *li’l-‘Ālamīn* (for all the worlds). All creatures, including people, *jinn*, animals, plants, and everything else, must benefit from Islam’s mercy.

Many examples of the Prophet’s compassion for people of many races and faiths can be found in his life.

Yes, Prophet’s life is his message.

Indeed, the Prophet (pbuh) showed mercy to everyone he met, whether Muslims or Others, because He was sent to be the most merciful and compassionate human being: “*He (Allah) has sent me as a mercy for all worlds*” (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book of Prayer, Chapter 11, vol. 4, p. 215, no 64).

The Prophet (pbuh) demonstrated affection, compassion and empathy through which he cared for them and wanted the best. He prayed for mercy and penance for others, not for bad things to happen to others, even infidels and hypocrites, **because praying for evilness is not mercy**. Consequently, it shows that the Prophet (pbuh) was kind and compassionate to all people.

Once, the Companions asked the Prophet (pbuh) if he would pray for infidels who persecuted him. He replied: **“I was not sent as a curse; rather, I was sent as a mercy”** (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, The Book of Virtue, Enjoining Good Manners, and Joining of the Ties of Kinship, Chapter 25, vol. 6, p. 460. no 2599*).

These traditions exhibit that the Prophet’s blessings extend to all humankind, whether Muslims or Others. His mercy extended to his adversaries, demonstrating that Islam values *rahmah* in all situations and circumstances.

Therefore, the value of *Raḥmatan li’l-‘Ālamīn* must be understood, internalised and applied by the faculty, students and others on campus with the utmost sincerity and full of enthusiasm. Wherever relevant, academics must incorporate it into course outlines in order to foster students to be *Insan Sejahtera* embedded with mercy to work for the betterment of humanity and lead the world.

In other words, every member of the IIUM community has a moral responsibility to create a sustainable eco-system at the University and outside, upholding, affirming and developing the attributes of *Khalīfah*, nurturing the value of *Amānah*, expanding the culture of *Iqra’* and demonstrating the principles and characteristics of *Raḥmatan li’l-‘Ālamīn*, uninterruptedly. \*\*\*

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