The Journey of Reestablishing a Physics Community in Somalia

Revival of physics curricula in Somalia – where do we stand?

The oldest public university in Somalia, initially established in 1954 as Università Nazionale Somali, was officially founded as the Somalia National University (SNU) in 1971 following the country’s independence in 1960. The university offered a diverse range of faculties and disciplines. Throughout the years, the university grew in leaps and bounds, establishing multiple campuses with different faculties and departments. From 1971 to 1990, it remained the sole university in the country. By the late 1980s, the Department of Physics was established under the Faculty of Science, boasting several staff members.

SNU shuttered in 1990 following the collapse of the Somali military government. After closing down for several years, the university reopened in August 2014. Since its reopening, the growth has been slow. As of now, the Faculty of Science at SNU houses only 3 departments: the Department of Geology, the Department of Marine Science, and the Department of Mathematical Sciences. The departments which are earmarked to be established in the near future within the Faculty of Science include the Department of Chemistry, the Department of Physics, the Department of Biology, and potentially others.

In the wake of 1990, following the collapse of the Somali military government, a transitional government was established, leading to the emergence of many private universities. Presently, the country possesses many private universities but only one public university. Currently, there is no dedicated physics department in the country. Physics is only offered as a minor subject within the Faculty of Education. Universities in Somalia that offer physics as a subject include: (i) Somali National University, (ii) Somali International University, (iii) Mogadishu University, (iv) Simad University, (v) Benadir University, and (vi) Somali University.

Editorial note: Since the revival of the Somalian physics community is on the move, we strongly encourage the involvement of those among our readers who might find interest in capacity-building and research initiatives in Somalia. The author can be contacted at tarbiici43@gmail.com; Tel No.: +252617244713

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