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# "PATHWAYS TO PAKISTAN'S PROSPERITY"

## A. Introduction.

## B. The Pathways to Pakistan's Prosperity

1. Bringing political reforms that focus on inclusivity.

- Case study of USA.

2 - Formulation of long-term economic policy.

- Escape vicious circle of debt trap and loans.

3 - Strengthening social fabric for national unity. (i.e. Social Sector)

- welfare states possess free education to eradicate

relative deprivation

4. Establishment of IT parks, strengthen IT sector.

- Case study of India.

5. Bring Institutional reforms for effective penalization/better administration.

- FIA, NAB, CTA ... EXCEL

6. Policy formulation for environment sustainability.

- No Plastic Bags, Go Green Initiatives.

7- Revival of Agriculture sector.

- Subsidies, Irrigation

8- Promotion of entrepreneurship and start-ups to counter youth bulge.

- 13M migrations for work (ESP 2023-24)

9- Eradication of Gender Disparity.

- Pakistan ranks 164<sup>th</sup> on GPI

10- Protection of minorities.

- Jaranwala Church Incident

11. Energy Sector Reforms.

12- Addressing security issues.

- Operation Azm-e-Istehkam.

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13 - Strengthen Regional and Global Cooperation by Diplomatic Practices.

- 23<sup>rd</sup> HSC Summit of SCO in Islamabad (15-16 October)

14 - Striking balance b/w Muslim brotherhood and globalism.

- walk out during 48<sup>th</sup> UNGA session for solidarity with Gaza.

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Pakistan is the fifth most populous country in the world with a population of more than 240 million people. The challenge lies in facilitating such an enormous number of people, catering their basic rights and ensuring a prosperous upbringing of the youth. Ever since the country's inception, the state and its people have witnessed iconic lows but there is still hope for better days. The adoption of certain accurate steps in the rightful direction can lead the country towards a prosperous tomorrow. The first and foremost step is to reform the political setup and create ~~inerts~~<sup>an</sup> inclusive environment for people to join hands and take up political roles. The most crucial measures are needed in the economic domains in order to strive the country out of economic crisis, debt traps and elevating inflation. Progress in fields of technology, focus on creation of sustainable environment and removal of terror elements remain significant steps in the pathway of Pakistan's prosperity. Collective, sincere and long-term steps



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in economic, socio-political and cultural domains can prove effective as the pathways to Pakistan's progress.

The introduction of reforms in the political arena can pave way for progress in Pakistan. The country should adopt to trend of inclusive politics, where learned youth could take-up roles in politics by joining mainstream parties or formulating their own ones instead of dealing with favouritism and hierarchical leadership as appears to be the case in Pakistan. The United States, for instance, allows young students to participate in policy formulation and parliamentary debate.

The establishment of a long-term, realistic economic plan is direly needed to bring the economy of Pakistan back on track. The state is currently caught-up in a vicious cycle of loans and repaying them leading to an unending debt-trap. The country has been one of the largest lenders of the International Monetary Fund with the on-going

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bail-out program declared as its 23<sup>rd</sup> package. The country needs a comprehensive and sustainable economic policy deprived of foreign interference to solve its fiscal constraints. The appointment of a technocrat as the Finance Minister could prove fruitful in the near future.

A united and unified society are the guarantors of a country's progress. Pakistan requires to work towards strengthening the social fabric of the nation that is currently fragmented on ethno-lingual grounds. Equal distribution of resources and ~~big~~ equity in budget allocation to provinces are pre-requisites for unification of the masses into a single nation. Where people are provided with similar social services in health and education sectors, the divide or exploitation based on any deprivation is very unlikely to occur. Taking the Scandinavian states like Sweden as a case study, they are prosperous

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nations with remarkable HDI's considering equal and free educational and health privileges to all its population.

Improvements in the technology sector are pivot for prosperity in contemporary times. The world is progressing in new domains and IT, AI and gadgets remain the centres of innovation. Pakistan must also focus on advancement in this particular dimension. The government must take-up initiatives like formulation of technology parks, providing scholarships for IT-based fields and sponsoring web or game developer projects in order to boost this very industry. Our neighbouring India, has evolved as a major regional power and a strong economy in the global arena mainly by developing its IT sector and setting-up institutions like IIT and IIM to become famous as the CEO state globally.

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Tactfully formulated policies are of no benefit unless properly implemented by district and provincial administration. Pakistan needs to reform the administrative structure of government institutions so that seamless application of inclusive political and ever-green economic policy are ensured. This would require strict institutional guidelines and penalties in case of violations so that institutions like FIA, NAB, NCTA could function in the best possible manner and align themselves with the national interest of Pakistan instead of corruption and political interventions.

Protection of Environment remains crucial for Pakistan's prosperity since the agrarian country demands optimal climate conditions to favor crop yields. The government must come-up with policies to control pollution, manage urbanization with environmental preservation and control over carbon emissions to repress climate change and rise of temperature. currently.



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initiatives like ban on plastic bag for environment sustainability by Islamabad Administration, Go Green Initiative or provincial level efforts like 80-hours mark to run brick-kilns in Punjab for pollution control in cities are run but penalization among offenders and awareness within masses is mandatory for everlasting impacts.

Revival of the Agriculture sector holds an important position in the progress of Pakistan. The country with a golden history of exporting wheat, rice and cotton crops has now become victim to food shortage for its own people. The government must formulate policies like subsidy provision to farmers or establishment of irrigation systems for revival of staple crops yield. Apart from traditional farming, development in trade infrastructure like transport facility and packing for freshness are also needed for turning agriculture into a major economic contributor. According to

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stats, mango production in Southern Punjab decreased by 35% (for export quality product) owing to mishandling the fruit in extreme climate and loss of land due to construction of housing societies. A certain level of check and balance is needed at district, provincial and federal levels to monitor agricultural exports.

Initiatives to support start-ups and entrepreneurship with Pakistan are essential to counter the challenge of unemployment and youth bulge in order to ensure prosperity. Traditional businesses require hefty fundings to be established but self-sustaining startups prove to be great alternatives. The state could come up with innovative ideas like signing-up MOUs with a local, youth-based lights company rather than spending extravagantly on importing that very product. According to 2023-24, Economic Survey of Pakistan, over 13 Million young minds have the country for work. The provision of initiatives, funding or promotional support for small, individual-run

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companies could prove beneficial for both ends.

The inclusion of women and provision of opportunities to all genders shall ensure unwavering development in Pakistan. Unfortunately, we have deprived most of our females of their basic rights, excluded them from joining hands in national economic progress, and confine them merely to domestic roles.

This is why a country where 50% of the population is female has reserved 30 seats on women quota in the Parliament. Women are treated like minorities making ranking Pakistan 164<sup>th</sup> on Gender Parity Index (GPI).

The eradication of gender disparities, inclusion of women and inter-sexes into all realms of life could prove a significant step in Pakistan's prosperous future.

The formation of Pakistan is linked to provision of equal rights to minorities. The struggle for independence depicts how Muslims were harshly

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treated in United India and marginalised due to dominant Hindu majority rule. Unfortunately, the state of Pakistan is unfair towards its minority inhabitants. Merely adding the star and crescent in National flag as emblem does not guarantee the provision of equal rights and opportunities for Christians, Sikhs and Hindus residing within the borders of Pakistan. Incidents like the Jaranwala Church burnings and the unsettled case of their burnt properties indicates the indifferent behaviour adopted towards them by state institutions, LEAs and even natives. Pakistan's prosperity, as the Quaid envisioned, lies on inculcation of minorities into the society and protection of their rights.

Energy sector reforms are need of the hour for the country's future. Pakistan is currently facing historic crisis in the power sector and requires adequate measures for meeting the energy needs of its population. The issue prevails that the cost

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of electricity is very high, considering use of hydrocarbons for the manufacture of power. These are imported at high rates. The issues of power sector require reforms. The government should work towards transitioning to ~~new~~ renewable sources like wind power, solar panels or biofuels. The issues with IPPs must be sorted and awareness spread for consumption control.

Addressing Internal and External Security Threats are essential for stability of the country. Recently, a resurgence of terror incidents is witnessed which is an alarming indicator for Pakistan; a country labelled as a terrorist nation on various global forums. Non-State Actors remain a prevalent security threat ~~to~~ not just militarily attacking state but also morally weakening the social fabric of the country. Foreign workers are attacked like the recent Karachi explosion that resulted in death of two Chinese officials or the Bisham attack. BLA (Majeed Brigade) has taken responsibility



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of the former. Such attacks are devastating not just for regional and global reputation of Pakistan but also for investment by foreign businesses because they become insecure. Careful and calculated execution of operation Azm-e-Istehk<sup>am</sup> requires addressing IDPs issue as well as calculating cost-benefit analysis of the military operation.

In order to foster bilateral and multilateral ties, Pakistan must put emphasis on soft power initiatives, practice of good diplomacy and credible negotiations. The world is a global village today and no state, let alone Pakistan could survive in isolation. There is an evident need of engaging in regional and global talks to show presence and interest. In 2023, when IMC was signed during the G20 summit in India, MBS visited our neighbourhood but showed minimal interest in Pakistan; it was a negative diplomatic signalling. In order to avoid any such instances



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in the future, we must focus on diplomatic fostering of relations based on mutual benefits. The hosting of 23<sup>rd</sup> SCO Heads of State Council Summit proves to be a successful initiative in this direction.

Fostering Muslim Brotherhood in matters of utmost significance to our principles of morality are pivot in Pakistan's progress. The leadership of the country must be able to strike a balance between regionalism, globalism and claiming to be the only Muslim State to be formed on the basis of ideology. Our presence in the OIC decision-making must be evident in order to portray solidarity with the Muslim population of the world. The walkout of the Pakistani delegation led by PM during Netanyahu's speech at 48<sup>th</sup> UN GA Session in order to show rigid stance against genocide in Gaza is one such practise.

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In a nutshell, better policy-making, stricter legal prosecutions, ensured implementation of laws for protection of rights of people, integrity of institutions and practises on diplomatic front could prove as baby steps towards the prosperity of Pakistan. These are common ideas that require rigid implementation to ensure effectiveness. The state authorities must address problems of gender disparity and ensure that minorities are equipped with their fundamental human rights. The revival of agriculture sector and environmental protection could positively influence the declining economy. If the LEAs successfully reform institutions like FIA and NAB, greater accountability could result in less corrupt practices. The eradication of evils like terrorism could prove beneficial in alleviating standard of life and also global status of Pakistan. Good diplomatic initiatives can also guarantee Pakistan to hold a significant global position. Special emphasis on social



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domains like health and education are required for fast and effective development.

Even if things are slow or progress is stalled at the moment, every individual must continue to put in their part in the struggle for betterment because a flower eventually blooms and the storm usually ends but only the patient and resilient are left to witness greatness!

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