

HORIZON

April 2025

**OVERSEAS
CONVENTION**

**BUILDING STRONGER TIES
WITH PAKISTANIS ABROAD**



RESEARCH AND POLICY PLANNING UNIT
PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE - NAWAZ

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

The tragic terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Indian-Occupied Kashmir, which claimed the lives of 27 individuals, including 25 Indian and one Nepalese civilian, has once again spotlighted the volatile situation in the region. A previously unknown group, the Resistance Front, claimed responsibility for the attack, citing opposition to demographic changes and the Indian government's policies in the area.

In the immediate aftermath, the Indian government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, swiftly attributed blame to Pakistan, without presenting any evidence. Without a thorough investigation, this rapid assignment of culpability undermines the principles of justice and due process.

India's response extended beyond mere accusations. The government announced the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty — a pact brokered by the World Bank in 1960 and respected even during times of war. This unilateral action is not only a violation of international law but also sets a dangerous precedent.

Further escalating tensions, India expelled Pakistani diplomats, withdrew its military advisors from Islamabad, and ordered all Pakistani nationals with SAARC visas to leave the country within 48 hours. The Wagah-Attari border crossing, a vital link between the two nations, was also closed.

Pakistan has categorically rejected the accusations and condemned the unilateral measures. Pakistan's Foreign Office has labelled India's suspension of the treaty as illegal and emphasised that such actions violate international law. Furthermore, Pakistan has expressed its commitment to the Indus Waters Treaty and its willingness to engage in dialogue within the existing framework to address any concerns. The Pakistani government has also criticised India's actions as attempts to divert attention from its internal issues and human rights violations in Indian-Occupied Kashmir.

Pakistan has consistently advocated for dialogue and adherence to international agreements. The nation's commitment to peace and regional stability stands in stark contrast to India's recent escalatory measures. The Pakistani government and its people remain united in the face of unwarranted aggression and are prepared to defend their sovereignty and rights.

The international community must recognise the gravity of the situation. The escalation between two nuclear-armed neighbours over unverified allegations and unilateral decisions is a perilous path. Global actors must encourage restraint, promote dialogue, and ensure that longstanding treaties like the Indus Waters Treaty are upheld.

In these challenging times, Pakistan's stance is clear: commitment to peace, adherence to international law, and readiness to defend its national interests. The nation calls upon India to reconsider its actions and engage in constructive dialogue to resolve disputes amicably.

Sincerely,
Saira Bano
Editor-in-Chief

EDITORIAL BOARD

Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, Saira Bano, Attaullah Tarar, Badar Shahbaz



OVERSEAS CONVENTION BUILDING STRONGER TIES WITH PAKISTANIS ABROAD

DR RANA KHALID MEHMOOD

In a landmark moment, an Overseas Convention was held in Islamabad from 13–16 April 2025. What set this event apart was the participation of overseas Pakistanis from around the world, united not by political affiliations but by their shared love for Pakistan and a collective desire to contribute to its progress. Participants from diverse backgrounds, ideologies, and political leanings set aside their differences to express their deep-rooted connection and commitment to their homeland.

The convention was born out of the recognition that Pakistan's diaspora, now exceeding 10 million people, plays a critical role in the country's development, contributing to the economy, diplomacy, education, and the social sector. It is now imperative that the Government of Pakistan, state institutions, and overseas Pakistanis come together to form a strong, coordinated, and harmonious partnership to shape a brighter future for the country.

Organised by the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF), the convention was supported by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Pakistan Armed Forces as partner institutions. While the OPF had initially anticipated 500 participants, over 1,200 overseas guests attended. This unexpectedly large turnout posed certain logistical challenges, but they were resolved by the graciousness of late participants who arranged their accommodation.

WARM WELCOME AND NATIONAL SENTIMENT

On the first day, OPF Chairman Syed Qamar Raza and Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Chaudhry Salik Hussain welcomed the guests. National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, and several federal ministers were also present.



Pakistanis from across the globe candidly shared their concerns, expectations, and suggestions. It was evident that, despite living abroad, their hearts remain deeply connected to Pakistan's soil.

This patriotic spirit is reflected most vividly in the record-breaking remittances sent home. In March alone, Pakistan received \$4.1 billion in remittances — an all-time high for the country.

The day concluded with a graceful and memorable poetry evening, greatly appreciated by all attendees.

CONCRETE MEASURES

The second day of the convention saw participation from Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, the Chief Minister of Balochistan, the Governor of Sindh, and other senior officials.

General Asim Munir emphasised the significance of Pakistan, which was founded on the vision of the two-nation theory. He stated: “Many of us are now in a stage of life where we are preparing to pass the baton to the next generation. It is our responsibility to ensure our children understand Pakistan's identity, its human and natural resources, and its place in the world.”



He encouraged overseas Pakistanis to proudly represent the country, highlighting that they belong to a great nation.

OVERSEAS PAKISTANIS' DEMANDS AND THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

In response to the 14 key demands presented by OPF Chairman Syed Qamar Raza, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif acknowledged the vital contributions of overseas Pakistanis and announced a comprehensive package of practical reforms, despite the country being under fiscal strain due to the IMF programme.

The prime minister shared that several of these demands had already been approved and were moving toward implementation. These included legal relief measures, educational opportunities, and institutional support to ease the diaspora's connection with the homeland.

IMPROVED ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND LEGAL PROTECTIONS

Recognising the legal challenges overseas Pakistanis face, the government has established a dedicated court in Islamabad to fast-track their cases, with plans to replicate the model across all provinces. In a major digital step, overseas citizens will be able to submit evidence and legal documentation via video link and online platforms, thanks to a new NADRA-



“

OUR BODIES MAY BE ABROAD, BUT OUR HEARTS BEAT WITH THE SCENT OF PAKISTAN'S SOIL.

A PARTICIPANT AT THE OVERSEAS CONVENTION

WE OWE IT TO THE NEXT GENERATION TO TELL THEM ABOUT PAKISTAN'S IDENTITY, RESOURCES, AND GLOBAL IMPORTANCE.

GENERAL SYED ASIM MUNIR, CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF

OVERSEAS PAKISTANIS ARE THE TRUE AMBASSADORS OF THIS GREAT NATION.

PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF

THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF A STRONG AND LASTING TRIANGLE BETWEEN OVERSEAS PAKISTANIS, THE GOVERNMENT, AND STATE INSTITUTIONS.

CHAIRMAN OPF SYED QAMAR RAZA

”

led initiative expected to go live within 60 days. Additionally, legal reforms are underway to shield expatriates from false or malicious litigation.

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND SKILLS TRAINING

A 5 per cent quota has been reserved for the children of overseas Pakistanis across chartered universities, including 15 per cent seats in medical colleges. Degree-awarding institutions in the federal capital will also follow this allocation. On the vocational front, NAVTTC will offer 5,000 technical training courses tailored for overseas youth. The government has also introduced age relaxation — up to five years for men and seven for women — for overseas applicants seeking public sector jobs.

INCENTIVES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT

In a major shift, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) will officially grant ‘filer’ status to overseas Pakistanis, enabling them to benefit from lower tax rates in financial and commercial transactions. On the investment front, the prime minister himself pledged to act as the ‘CEO’ of diaspora investment, promising hands-on facilitation and oversight. Civil awards will now be granted yearly on 14 August to those sending top-tier remittances, verified by the State Bank of Pakistan, to honour their role in the country’s economy.

To ease travel, the Green Channel at airports will be reinstated within the week. Property-related



grievances — often a major concern — will now be addressed through special facilitation desks in Punjab and Balochistan, with similar setups being rolled out in KP, Sindh, and AJK. A pilot project for online sale deed registration is also being launched at the Pakistan High Commission in London.

Perhaps the most welcome announcement was the institutionalisation of this engagement: from now on, the Overseas Convention will be held annually every April, ensuring regular dialogue between the diaspora, the government, and key state institutions.

RECEPTION AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE

To mark the close of the convention, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif hosted a formal dinner at the Prime Minister's House, attended by members of the federal cabinet. In his remarks, he conveyed a heartfelt message of love, solidarity, and appreciation from the people of Pakistan to the overseas community.

The participants of the Overseas Convention pledged to continue promoting the country's dignity and honour abroad, while also seeking new economic, educational, and diplomatic opportunities to serve their homeland. Powerful speeches by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief General Asim Munir further strengthened this collective resolve.

The convention reflected the government's firm commitment to empowering the diaspora through tangible steps. A promising takeaway from the event was the emerging consensus that sustained and structured engagement between the government, state institutions, and overseas Pakistanis is essential for Pakistan's future.

The enthusiasm, love, and extraordinary turnout of participants conveyed a clear message — that next year's convention in 2026 might require an even larger venue to accommodate the growing interest and participation of the global Pakistani community ■



FACING THE STORM

PAKISTAN'S RESPONSE TO SECURITY THREATS

RESEARCH AND POLICY PLANNING

In recent times, Pakistan has faced a complex array of security challenges, ranging from internal insurgencies to escalating regional tensions. The resurgence of militant activities in recent months, particularly in regions like Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has posed significant challenges to Pakistan's internal security. In August 2024 alone, the country experienced 59 terrorist attacks, highlighting the escalating threat landscape. Groups such as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Baloch separatist outfits have intensified their operations, targeting both civilian and military entities. The escalating tensions with India have further compounded Pakistan's security challenges.

The government's response has been marked by decisive action, strategic initiatives, and a commitment to safeguarding national stability.

JAFFAR EXPRESS HIJACKING



On March 11, 2025, the nation was jolted by the hijacking of the Jaffar Express by Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) militants. The assailants seized the train in Balochistan, taking over 400 passengers hostage. In a swift and coordinated response, the Pakistan Armed Forces launched "Operation Green Bolan,"

ANALYSIS

successfully rescuing 354 hostages and neutralising 33 insurgents. The operation, however, came at a cost, with 64 individuals, including 18 soldiers, losing their lives.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the attack as a “cowardly act” and reaffirmed the government’s resolve to combat terrorism. In the aftermath, Pakistan Railways implemented enhanced security measures, including increased patrols and surveillance, to prevent similar incidents.

On March 13, 2025, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired a high-level security conference in Quetta, attended by key federal and provincial officials, including the deputy prime minister, foreign minister, federal minister for planning, minister of information, governor and chief minister of Balochistan, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, and senior civil and military leaders. The conference focused on assessing the prevailing security situation in Balochistan, reviewing ongoing counterterrorism efforts, and discussing the successful rescue operation related to the Jaffar Express incident. Participants unanimously condemned the terrorist attack and reaffirmed Pakistan’s unwavering resolve to uphold a policy of zero tolerance against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Shafqat Ali Khan, stated that the terrorists were in contact with their handlers and ringleaders in Afghanistan and alleged that India has been involved in terrorism in Pakistan. Despite these serious allegations, Pakistan refrained from immediate retaliatory actions, opting instead to conduct thorough investigations and present its case to international forums, including the United Nations Security Council.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION

In a show of national unity, the National Assembly passed a unanimous resolution on March 13, 2025, condemning the hijacking of the Jaffar Express and all acts of terrorism that threaten the lives of citizens and disrupt peace. The resolution, presented by Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhary, praised the swift and successful operation

by security forces in rescuing the hostages. It also emphasised the need for a unified national strategy to confront terrorism and declared that no extremist ideologies would be allowed to operate within the country.



LAW AND ORDER MEETING IN BALOCHISTAN



Chief Minister of Balochistan, Sarfaraz Bugti, chaired a meeting focusing on law and order and the Jaffar Express attack. He labelled the attack intolerable and called for strict action against those responsible. The chief minister emphasised that terrorists would not be allowed to occupy even an inch of territory and directed that all resources be provided to security institutions to protect the people. He also stressed that there would be strong action against the facilitators of terrorists and that tough decisions must be made to maintain law and order in Balochistan.

“IT IS TIME FOR CITIZENS TO RISE ABOVE POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS AND PERSONAL INTERESTS, STANDING TOGETHER IN SOLIDARITY AGAINST THOSE WHO SEEK TO DESTABILISE THE COUNTRY.”

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SESSION



In response to the escalating security concerns, the Parliamentary Committee on National Security (PCNS) was convened for an in-camera session in the National Assembly. The meeting, called by Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on the advice of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, aimed to provide lawmakers with an in-depth briefing on internal and external threats, including the resurgence of militancy in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Top military leadership was expected to participate, and representatives from all major political parties were invited to attend.

These meetings underscore the government's commitment to addressing the security challenges facing Pakistan and ensuring the safety and well-being of its citizens.

ESCALATING TENSIONS WITH INDIA



In April 2025, a terrorist attack in Indian-administered Kashmir resulted in the deaths of 26 civilians. India attributed the attack to Pakistan-based militants,

“

INDIA'S RESPONSE STANDS IN STARK CONTRAST TO PAKISTAN'S APPROACH FOLLOWING THE JAFFAR EXPRESS HIJACKING IN MARCH 2025.

”

leading to a series of retaliatory measures, including the suspension of diplomatic relations and the Indus Waters Treaty. Pakistan denied involvement and warned that any interference with its water rights would be considered an act of war. It also announced the suspension of the 1972 Simla Agreement, closure of the Wagah Border Crossing, halting of trade, closure of airspace, and diplomatic retaliation such as the expulsion of Indian diplomats.

India's response stands in stark contrast to Pakistan's approach following the Jaffar Express hijacking in March 2025. Despite publicly attributing the attack to Indian sponsorship — citing evidence of the Baloch Liberation Army's (BLA) communication with handlers in Afghanistan— Pakistan refrained from immediate retaliatory actions. Instead, the government emphasised diplomatic channels, presenting its case to international forums, including the United Nations Security Council, and calling for global condemnation of terrorism. This strategy highlights Pakistan's commitment to addressing security threats through international cooperation and legal avenues, rather than unilateral punitive measures.

The situation highlights the fragile nature of regional relations and the importance of diplomatic engagement. Pakistan has called for international mediation to de-escalate tensions and has reiterated its commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes. As Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has emphasised, combating terrorism is not solely the responsibility of the armed forces but necessitates a collective effort from all segments of society. It is time for citizens to rise above political affiliations and personal interests, standing together in solidarity against those who seek to destabilise the country■



PML-N'S EXPORT DRIVE IN A TIME OF RISING TARIFFS

DR SOHAIL BADAR

The PML-N government, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has set Pakistan on the path to economic stability and prosperity within its first year in office. The steady and significant rise in exports, both in terms of quantity and dollar value, will play an important role in attaining a current account surplus and improving key macroeconomic indicators.

In the first seven months of the current fiscal year (July 2024 to January 2025), Pakistan's total exports reached \$19.6 billion, compared to \$17.8 billion during the same period last year. The country's international credit ratings have improved during the PML-N government's first year in office, with consistently positive outlook reviews from global financial institutions.

However, President Donald Trump's imposition of the "Liberation Day" tariffs has created significant challenges for Pakistan's strategic vision to develop

an export-driven economy. The 29 per cent tariff on Pakistani goods, particularly textiles, threatens to reduce demand in the US market, potentially leading to an estimated export loss of \$564 million in the fiscal year 2025-26.

Despite these hurdles, Pakistan maintains a competitive edge over several regional competitors; for instance, Bangladesh faces a 37 per cent tariff, Thailand 36 per cent, Vietnam 54 per cent, Indonesia 32 per cent, and China up to 145 per cent. In response, the Pakistani government is actively engaging in diplomatic efforts, including plans for a high-level delegation to Washington, aiming to negotiate tariff relief and explore avenues to restore its Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) status.

The prime minister has set an ambitious goal of achieving an annual export target of \$60 billion within five years. Given his vision, his team's collective and tireless efforts, and the PML-N's proven track



record of boosting exports in previous governments, this target appears highly attainable. The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) also plays a pivotal role in achieving higher export targets.

Data from the first half of the fiscal year 2024-25 confirms a significant 10.52 per cent increase in exports across various sectors. This steady rise is attributed to overcoming tariff and non-tariff barriers in exports to different regions, and implementing essential measures to address supply chain constraints, inflationary pressures, and sluggish global growth.

The three primary sectors of the economy — agriculture, manufacturing, and services — have shown better performance compared to the same period last year. A reduced trade deficit, combined with stable foreign exchange remittances averaging \$3 billion per month from overseas Pakistani workers, is contributing to economic stabilisation. This trend has been a hallmark of all PML-N governments, both past and present. Additionally, the country has recorded its lowest inflation rate in a decade, at 2.41 per cent.

Despite negative campaigns by shortsighted opposition politicians, the PML-N government has

successfully averted any risk of default or the loss of Pakistan's GSP+ status in the European Union. The US GSP programme, which provided duty-free access to certain Pakistani products, expired on 31 December 2020, during the PTI government's tenure, affecting all beneficiary countries. The current PML-N government is actively engaging in efforts advocating for the programme's renewal, aiming to restore these trade benefits.

While reviewing key export statistics from the first half of FY 2024-25, Pakistan's exports saw a significant 10.52 per cent increase, rising to \$16.5 billion from \$14.9 billion during the same period in the previous financial year. This double-digit growth in just six months of a fiscal year is unprecedented for any government in office in Pakistan's history.

The textile sector witnessed a 10 per cent increase in exports, reaching \$9.08 billion. This growth includes higher exports of knitwear, ready-made garments, bed linen, cotton fabrics, cotton yarn, towels, and other textile products. Accounting for approximately 77 per cent of Pakistan's exports to the United States, this sector will be most affected by new US tariffs. However, astute diplomacy and strategic decisions can minimise the expected decline in textile exports.

“

WHILE THE IMPOSITION OF STEEP US TARIFFS PRESENTS A SHORT-TERM CHALLENGE, IT ALSO OPENS THE DOOR TO STRATEGIC RECALIBRATION.

”



The food and cereals sector recorded an 18 per cent increase in exports, reaching \$4.61 billion. Notably, rice exports grew by 19 per cent, reaching \$2.19 billion. Other food and agricultural exports, including cereals, fish and fish preparations, tobacco, sugar, meat, and meat products, also saw positive growth. However, exports of fruits, vegetables, spices, and nuts experienced a decline due to reduced international demand.

The IT sector showed remarkable growth, with exports increasing by 21 per cent to \$1.86 billion, alongside gains in related technologies and services. Under the Prime Minister's Uraan Pakistan programme, the PML-N government has set an ambitious target of \$10 billion in IT exports by 2029, reflecting an impressive compound annual growth rate of 28 per cent.

Cement exports have risen by 24.8 per cent, reaching \$188 million. Other sectors also experienced significant growth, including chemicals and pharmaceuticals (10 per cent increase), petroleum-related products (85 per cent increase), automotive parts, and various segments of large-scale manufacturing.

The success in export-led growth under the PML-N government is driven by better policies, enhanced efficiency, institutional capacity building, stronger regional and global trade engagements, and the development of a more skilled workforce.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif recently concluded successful state visits to Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Belarus which are expected to boost bilateral trade and exports. Over the past year, he has actively participated in key multilateral summits and conferences, alongside bilateral visits both by him and reciprocated by significant heads of state and government.

The prime minister and his team's vision focuses on strategic financial partnerships and collaborations with major economies and international financial institutions. The government aims to diversify export sectors and expand into new global markets. The PML-N government has actively engaged with multilateral organisations such as the EU, OIC, D-8, SCO, and AU to strengthen Pakistan's presence in their respective economic zones.

Further efforts are needed to enhance manufacturing capabilities, streamline trade regulations, and empower young entrepreneurs through targeted initiatives. An increased focus on high-tech exports, regulatory reforms, and policy advancements will further drive export growth and solidify Pakistan's path toward sustainable economic development.

While the imposition of steep US tariffs presents a short-term challenge, it also opens the door to strategic recalibration. With significantly higher tariffs on regional competitors such as Vietnam, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and China, Pakistan retains a relative advantage that can be tactically leveraged. The current PML-N government's commitment to economic diplomacy, diversification of export markets, and value-added production provides a timely response to evolving global trade dynamics. Rather than viewing tariffs as a setback, Pakistan must seize this moment to expand into untapped markets across Central Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, while deepening its presence in the EU under the GSP+ regime ■

The writer has a diverse career as a medical doctor, writer, and businessman across multiple countries, with a special interest in research and narrative building.



A JOURNEY OF PURPOSE HORIZON CELEBRATES SIX YEARS

SAFDAR ALI DANISH

March 2025 marked a significant milestone as PML-N's Research and Policy Planning Unit and Horizon magazine celebrated their sixth anniversary at the historic Faletti's Hotel in Lahore. The event was a tribute to the tireless efforts of a team committed to truth, public service, and informed policymaking.

The event's host, Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, addressed a hall packed with lawmakers, provincial ministers, international delegates, media professionals, and civil society members.

"Horizon is not just a magazine — it's a voice for policy, a guide for the youth, and a pillar of democratic dialogue," he said. "Its role in shaping informed citizenship and supporting Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's reform vision is nothing short of remarkable."

The importance of research and analysis in shaping national policy and educational reforms has been highlighted at the highest levels of government. On one occasion, the Prime Minister of Pakistan stated, "In the footsteps of Quaid-e-Azam, who believed in reason, research, and knowledge, we must foster a culture of critical inquiry and evidence-based decision-making to drive Pakistan forward."

This emphasis reflects the state's growing recognition of intellectual efforts in the development sector. Supporting this notion, the Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar remarked, "Promoting platforms of academic dialogue and national narrative is vital."

Senior journalist Salman Ghani noted, "In a time of noise and misinformation, Horizon stands out for its

“AS HORIZON ENTERS ITS SEVENTH YEAR, THE JOURNEY AHEAD IS BOTH BOLD AND PROMISING. AMBITIOUS PLANS ARE UNDERWAY TO EXPAND ITS DIGITAL FOOTPRINT, INTRODUCE YOUTH-CENTRIC EDITIONS, PUBLISH MULTILINGUAL CONTENT, AND ORGANISE NATIONWIDE POLICY FORUMS.”



from devoted party workers to the most senior leadership, who faced arrests and fabricated cases. But history has a rhythm, and positive resistance always finds a voice.

In this challenging environment, party President Shehbaz Sharif chose to respond not with agitation, but with strategy. He initiated the Research and Policy Planning Unit (RPPU) — a think tank within the party focused on evidence-based policymaking and strategic planning.

“We needed more than slogans — we needed substance,” Saira Bano, a founding member of the RPPU, recalls. “The country was hurting. Our response had to be intelligent and humane.”

PML-N leader Hamza Shahbaz devoted his office to RPPU’s activities and the publication of its seminal newsletter Horizon.

clarity and focus. It reminds us that politics isn’t just about power — it’s about people.”

These statements reflect a shared commitment among national leaders to revive a tradition of thoughtful investigation rooted in Pakistan’s founding vision.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

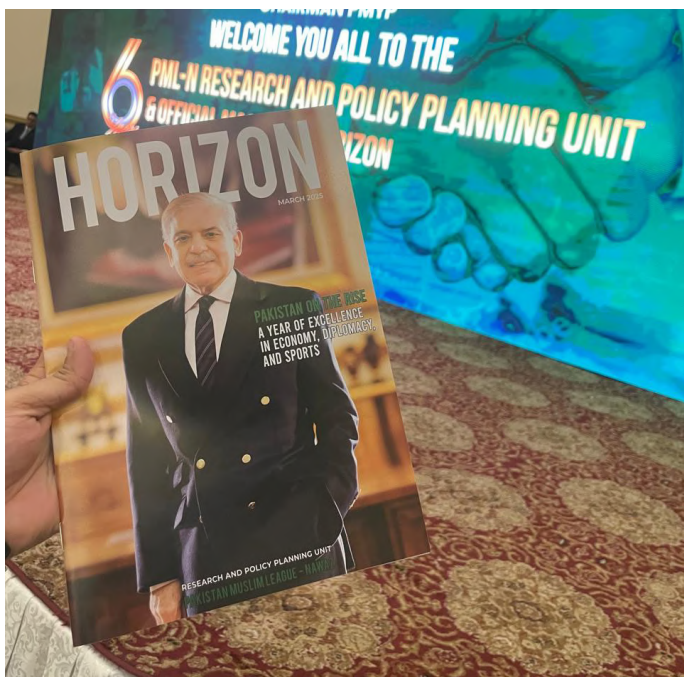
To truly appreciate the RPPU and Horizon’s current stature, one must reflect on the turbulent times from which they emerged.

Back in 2019, Pakistan’s political landscape was fraught with repression. A heavy cloud of repression loomed over Pakistan’s democratic landscape. It was a period of profound suffering and political persecution — one that witnessed the mass incarceration of the PML-N members. Countless voices were silenced,

THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF HORIZON

Horizon started modestly, as a simple internal bulletin of RPPU’s research and news. But soon, its relevance expanded. By its third year, Horizon had grown into a 20-page monthly magazine, gaining popularity among party circles, academics, journalists, and youth.

The magazine delved into issues like education reform, youth engagement, healthcare, and food security, always grounded in data, analysis, and public impact.



“Horizon became our way of explaining the ‘why’ behind our policies,” said Sultan Ali Ranjha, an editorial team member. “We weren’t just writing; we were educating.”

With every edition, Horizon brought forward fresh voices — young writers, senior analysts, parliamentarians, and policy professionals. It gave space to opinions, debates, interviews, and reform ideas that helped build a culture of constructive discourse within the party and beyond.

ROLE IN PARTY POLICY AND 2024 ELECTION MANIFESTO

In addition to publishing white papers on PTI’s government’s performance and providing research inputs to parliamentarians, one of RPPU’s standout achievements was participation in the development of the PML-N’s 2024 Election Manifesto. Experts from RPPU developed concrete proposals for various sectors, which were consolidated in the final draft of the manifesto. RPPU’s team also reviewed more than 4,000 suggestions by members of the public and prepared summaries. This venture wasn’t just internal — it represented a new political culture where research and communication worked hand-in-hand.

LOOKING FORWARD

As Horizon enters its seventh year, the journey ahead is both bold and promising. Ambitious plans are

underway to expand its digital footprint, introduce youth-centric editions, publish multilingual content, and organise nationwide policy forums. With Pakistan moving decisively in the right direction — socially, economically, and intellectually — every facet of national life shows signs of positive transformation. In this evolving landscape, the Horizon team also aspires to collaborate with civil society and academic institutions, further solidifying its position as a trusted platform for progressive thought and visionary discourse.

Six years may not seem long, but they represent a chapter of courage, commitment, and consistency for Horizon. It has been proven that meaningful dialogue can still flourish in the realm of politics. When truth is anchored in research and guided by empathy, it holds the power to shape nations. Magazines, when driven by a clear purpose, transcend their physical form. They evolve into movements, serve as guiding compasses, and offer both political and ethical solutions for parties and policymakers alike.

The ceremony to celebrate the RPPU and Horizon concluded with a solemn moment of silence in honour of the martyrs of the Jaffar Express tragedy in Quetta, followed by heartfelt prayers for the oppressed people of Gaza. The evening ended with a sumptuous Iftar dinner ■

The writer, who holds an MPhil in English Literature, is an educationist and youth activist affiliated with the PML-N.



ONE PORTAL, ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

DIGITAL YOUTH HUB UNVEILED

SABA ALI

In the gentle hum of earnest ambition, the inauguration ceremony of the Prime Minister's Digital Youth Hub was a significant achievement in youth empowerment. With eyes glistening with dreams and hearts pulsating with determination, youth and dignitaries gathered to witness this important event that aligns with the prime minister's vision of nurturing a generation of creative, empowered, and digitally adept leaders.

The Digital Youth Hub, a cornerstone of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP), is a groundbreaking initiative designed to connect young Pakistanis with opportunities in education, employment, engagement, and environmental sustainability. This AI-driven platform acts as a "one-stop shop," offering resources such as scholarships,

job listings, entrepreneurial support, and volunteer opportunities. It embodies the government's commitment to leveraging technology for inclusive growth and development. It is not only about learning to code or tapping into cybersecurity, but also about giving everyone the chance to explore, create, and innovate. Interactive workstations, high-speed internet, and digital labs have been designed to help anyone turn their ideas into reality.

In his address, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif referred to the youth of Pakistan as both a great challenge and an opportunity, stating the need to polish our youth through the latest technology. He said the government's main objective is to provide productive youth employment through this portal. The prime

“

THE DIGITAL YOUTH HUB, A CORNERSTONE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S YOUTH PROGRAMME (PMYP), IS A GROUNDBREAKING INITIATIVE DESIGNED TO CONNECT YOUNG PAKISTANIS WITH OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, ENGAGEMENT, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.

”



minister expressed his firm commitment to fight for the rights of youth, provision of education and modern training in collaboration with all the provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Addressing the ceremony, Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan termed youth the driving force behind the nation's progress and the architects of a brighter future. He said the Digital Youth Hub is designed using cutting-edge technology and global best practices.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Officer In-charge Sharmeela Rasool said it is a platform of opportunity and hope. She said this programme aims to make the country's youth stronger and productive people.

Speaking on the occasion, United Nations Resident

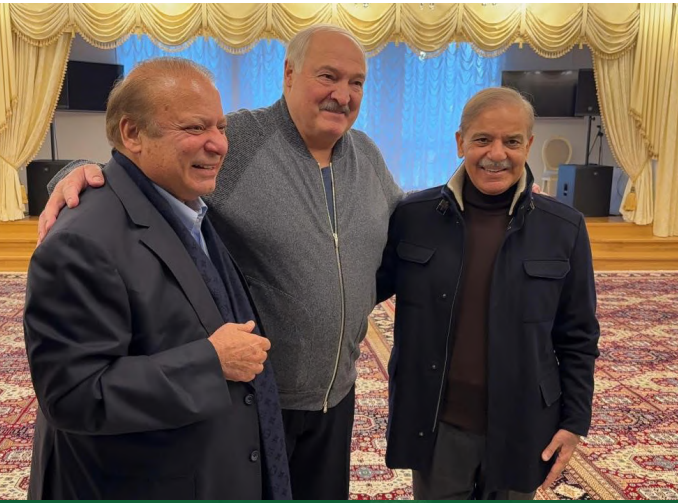
Coordinator, Mohamed Yahya, said the Digital Youth Hub has been designed to make youth capable of exploring their capabilities. He said the launch of this hub is the beginning of a journey of development and prosperity for Pakistan.

The hub is set up to welcome young people from all walks of life, ensuring that even those in remote areas can access the latest digital tools and training. This initiative makes an effort to ensure no one is left behind and every budding innovator has a fair chance at success.

Distinguished guests, including government officials, IT experts, and youth representatives, graced the inauguration ceremony■

The writer is a social media executive at the Prime Minister's Youth Programme.

PICTURE GALLERY



FORMER PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD NAWAZ SHARIF AND PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF SHARING A LIGHT MOMENT WITH BELARUSIAN PRESIDENT ALEKSANDR LUKASHENKO IN MINSK. 12 APRIL 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF VISITS EXHIBITION STALLS WITH CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF GENERAL ASIM MUNIR AT THE PAKISTAN MINERALS INVESTMENT FORUM 2025, ISLAMABAD. 8 APRIL 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF WITH BALARUS PRESIDENT ALEKSANDR LUKASHENKO DURING A TWO-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO BELARUS. MINSK. 12 APRIL 2025



FOREIGN MINISTER OF HUNGARY PÉTER SZIJJÁRTÓ CALLS ON PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF DURING HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO PAKISTAN. 17 APRIL 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF ADDRESSES A CEREMONY TO SEND 1,000 AGRICULTURE GRADUATES TO CHINA FOR TRAINING IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, ISLAMABAD. 16 APRIL 2025



CHIEF MINISTER PUNJAB MARYAM NAWAZ INAUGURATES THE PUNJAB CULTURE DAY CELEBRATIONS, HIGHLIGHTING THE VIBRANT CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE PROVINCE. 18 APRIL 2025



CHIEF MINISTER PUNJAB MARYAM NAWAZ PARTICIPATES IN A PANEL DISCUSSION AT THE ANTALYA DIPLOMACY FORUM 2025, ALONGSIDE GLOBAL LEADERS AND EXPERTS. ANTALYA. 12 APRIL 2025



CHIEF MINISTER PUNJAB MARYAM NAWAZ SHARIF INTERACTS WITH A WOMAN IN WHEELCHAIR DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE ASSISTIVE DEVICES PROGRAMME IN LAHORE. 17 APRIL 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF MEETS WITH TURKISH MINISTER OF ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES ALPARSLAN BAYRAKTAR IN ISLAMABAD. 8 APRIL 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF VISITS THE EMBASSY OF MYANMAR IN ISLAMABAD TO OFFER CONDOLENCES OVER THE LOSS OF LIVES AND DESTRUCTION CAUSED BY THE EARTHQUAKE. 4 APRIL 2025



CHAIRMAN PRIME MINISTER'S YOUTH PROGRAMME RANA MASHHOOD AHMED KHAN MEETS FORMER PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER HAMZA SHAHBAZ SHARIF IN LAHORE TO DISCUSS YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND THE NATIONAL POLITICAL LANDSCAPE. 16 APRIL 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF MEETS CHIEF MINISTER OF BALUCHISTAN SARFRAZ BUGTI IN ISLAMABAD TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND LAW AND ORDER ISSUES, ALONG WITH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. 2 APRIL 2025



HORIZON

Research and Policy Planning Unit
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz



HorizonEdition



HorizonEdition



HorizonEdition



www.horizonedition.com



info@horizonedition.com