



Ministry of Planning
Development &
Special Initiatives
Government of Pakistan

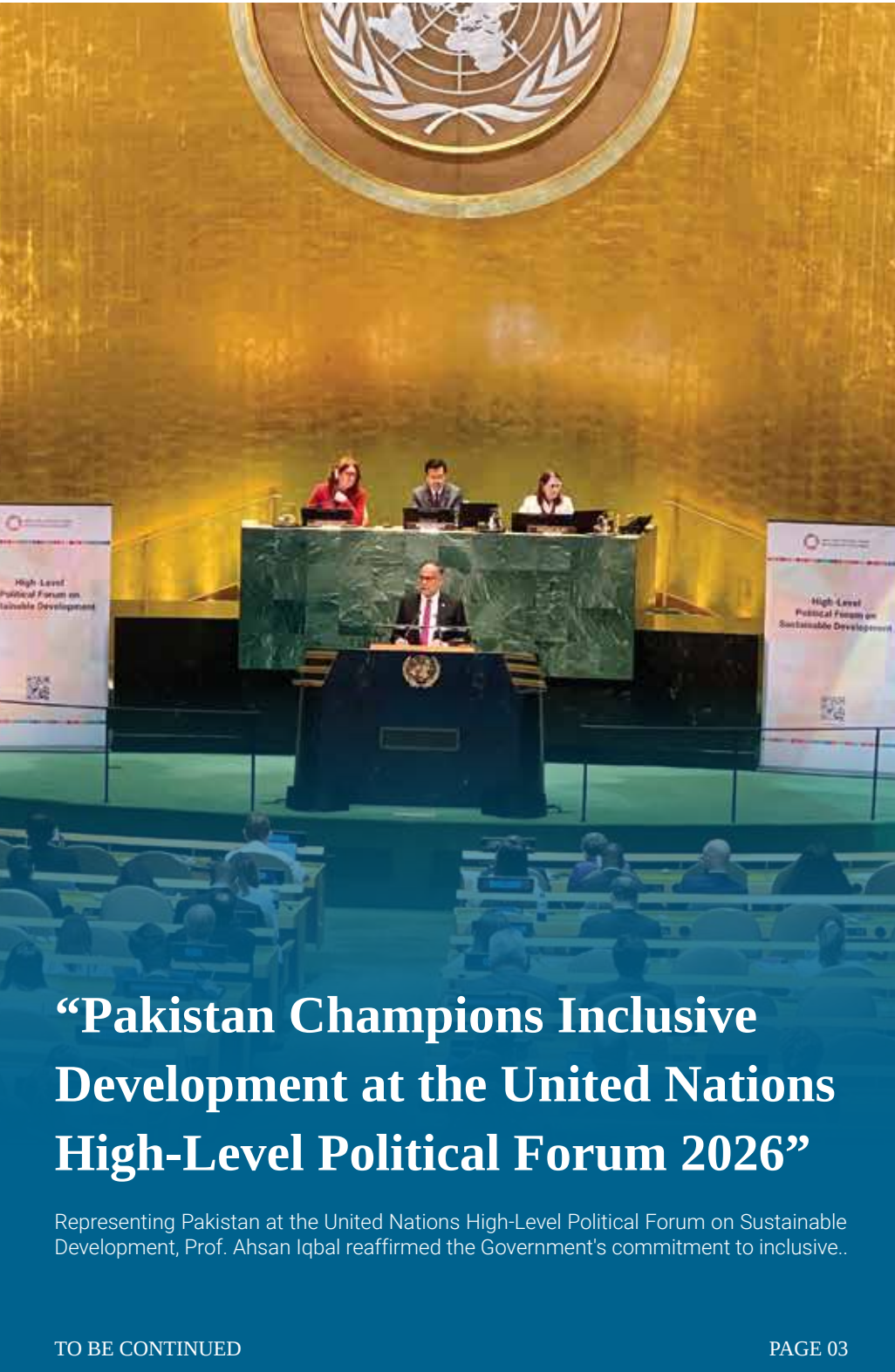


URAAN
PAKISTAN
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NEWSLETTER

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“Pakistan Champions Inclusive Development at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum 2026”

Representing Pakistan at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal reaffirmed the Government's commitment to inclusive..

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Reflecting on June's Progress: Advancing Pakistan's Development Vision

This month reflected Pakistan's continued progress toward economic stability and long-term national transformation under the vision of URAAN Pakistan. Against a backdrop of improving macroeconomic indicators and renewed development momentum, the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives remained focused on translating strategic priorities into practical outcomes. From shaping the Annual Development Plan and accelerating export-led growth to strengthening governance reforms and expanding regional cooperation, the Ministry's work underscored its commitment to building a resilient, productive and globally competitive economy.

A defining feature of the month was the Government's strong emphasis on economic modernization through innovation, industrial competitiveness and evidence-based policymaking. Development priorities increasingly centered on expanding exports, promoting research and technology, strengthening academia-industry collaboration, and enhancing Pakistan's capacity to compete in global markets. Alongside these efforts, reforms in public investment planning, market governance and institutional efficiency reinforced a development approach that prioritizes productivity, sustainability and long-term economic resilience.

The month also demonstrated a growing recognition that sustainable development extends beyond infrastructure to encompass human capital, climate resilience and effective governance. Initiatives supporting higher education, research, disaster preparedness, flood resilience, population stabilization and public-sector reforms highlighted the Government's commitment to investing in people while strengthening institutions. International partnerships with China, Denmark, Uzbekistan and other global partners further expanded opportunities for knowledge exchange, regional connectivity and shared development goals.

Infrastructure and strategic planning continued to remain central to the national development agenda. Progress on major transport, energy, water and digital connectivity projects, together with the approval of significant development investments through the Central Development Working Party, reflected a continued focus on improving public services, enhancing regional integration and supporting balanced development across the country. At the same time, initiatives under CPEC Phase-II, Quantum Valley Pakistan and emerging technologies reaffirmed the Government's ambition to position Pakistan as a knowledge-driven and innovation-led economy.

Collectively, the developments featured in this edition demonstrate a month defined by purposeful planning, stronger partnerships and forward-looking reforms. They reflect a sustained commitment to transforming economic recovery into inclusive and lasting growth while strengthening the foundations of a prosperous, resilient and future-ready Pakistan. As the country advances toward the objectives of URAAN Pakistan, these initiatives reinforce the importance of strategic leadership, coordinated implementation and a shared national vision for sustainable development.



FEATURED STORY

Pakistan's Greatest Strength Lies in Its Youth: URAAN Pakistan Launches Overseas Pakistanis Summer Scholars Programme 2026



Bringing together talented young Pakistanis from across the globe, the URAAN Pakistan Overseas Pakistanis Summer Scholars Programme 2026 reflects the Government's commitment to investing in human capital, strengthening diaspora engagement, and nurturing the next generation of leaders. The initiative reinforces the belief that Pakistan's youth remain its greatest strategic asset in building a knowledge-driven and globally competitive economy.

Launching the URAAN Pakistan "Mitti Ki Pukar" Overseas Pakistanis Summer Scholars Programme 2026, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary described Pakistan's youth as the country's greatest strength and reaffirmed that investment in human capital remains central to the Government's long-term development strategy. The flagship initiative, organized under URAAN Pakistan, seeks to reconnect young overseas Pakistanis with their national identity while equipping them with first-hand exposure to Pakistan's development priorities, institutions, innovation ecosystem, and economic transformation agenda.

The programme received an overwhelming response, attracting over 2,000 applications from 54 countries. Following a competitive selection process, 45 outstanding scholars representing more than 150 leading international universities were chosen to participate in an immersive academic and leadership programme in Pakistan. Throughout the programme, participants will engage with policymakers, academics, entrepreneurs, innovators, and public institutions, gaining deeper insight into Pakistan's governance framework, development planning, technological advancement, and investment potential.



Addressing the scholars, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that nations achieve lasting progress by investing in education, research, innovation, and talent rather than relying solely on natural resources. He noted that URAAN Pakistan's 5Es Framework places human capital development at the heart of national transformation and seeks to prepare a globally competitive workforce capable of driving sustainable economic growth. Encouraging participants to serve as ambassadors of Pakistan abroad, he urged them to build stronger academic, technological, and commercial linkages between Pakistan and the international community.



The Minister further observed that overseas Pakistanis have consistently contributed to the country's progress through investment, entrepreneurship, remittances, and knowledge exchange. By reconnecting future generations with their heritage and development journey, he said, the Summer Scholars Programme represents an important step towards building a globally connected Pakistani diaspora that will contribute meaningfully to the country's ambition of becoming a \$1 trillion economy by 2035 and a \$3 trillion economy by 2047 under the vision of URAAN Pakistan.

SPOTLIGHT STORY

Pakistan Champions Inclusive Development at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum 2026

Representing Pakistan at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal reaffirmed the Government's commitment to inclusive growth, climate resilience, and accelerated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Leading Pakistan's delegation at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2026 in New York, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary presented Pakistan's progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while outlining the country's strategy for balancing economic recovery with climate resilience and social inclusion. Addressing the ministerial session, he emphasized that despite severe economic shocks, climate-induced disasters, and growing geopolitical uncertainties, Pakistan remains firmly committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through the implementation of URAAN Pakistan and the 5Es National Economic Transformation Framework.

Uraan Pakistan is fully aligned with the SDGs, providing Pakistan's roadmap to:

- Economic growth
- Technology-driven development
- Energy security
- Productive employment
- Climate resilience
- Inclusive development that leaves no one behind

"Sustainable development requires more than ambition, it demands sound policies, strong institutions, and the courage to undertake difficult but necessary reforms. Pakistan remains committed to building a stable, resilient, and sustainable economy."



The Minister highlighted Pakistan's efforts to strengthen education, health, social protection, digital transformation, and climate adaptation while calling for reforms to the international financial architecture that would enable developing countries to invest more effectively in sustainable development. He underscored the urgent need for increased climate finance, concessional financing, and equitable global partnerships, particularly for countries facing disproportionate climate vulnerabilities despite contributing minimally to global emissions. The Minister also emphasised that the Indus Waters Treaty has remained a model of peaceful transboundary cooperation for more than six decades. Its unilateral and unlawful suspension by one party threatens the water security and livelihoods of 240 million Pakistanis while undermining respect for international treaty obligations. Stressing that sustainable development requires peace, international cooperation, and adherence to international law, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to multilateralism and called upon the international community to work collectively towards a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable future.

"The time for incremental progress has passed. We must act together, decisively and urgently."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Pakistan and UNDP Expand Strategic Partnership for Sustainable Development



Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary met with UNDP Administrator Alexander De Croo at the UNDP Headquarters in New York on the sidelines of the High-Level Political Forum to review ongoing cooperation and identify new areas of collaboration supporting Pakistan's long-term development agenda. Discussions focused on strengthening partnerships in climate resilience, digital governance, innovation, artificial intelligence, and sustainable financing under URAAN Pakistan.

Both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals through stronger institutional capacity, evidence-based policymaking, and inclusive economic development. The meeting also explored opportunities to deepen collaboration in climate adaptation, human development, and technology-driven public sector reforms to accelerate Pakistan's national development priorities.

Pakistan Strengthens U.S. Academic Partnerships to Advance Knowledge Economy

As part of his official visit to the United States, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary held a series of engagements with leading American universities to strengthen cooperation in higher education, research, innovation, and human capital development under URAAN Pakistan. Discussions with the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), and other academic institutions focused on expanding student and faculty exchanges, launching joint research initiatives, and building long-term institutional partnerships that support Pakistan's transition towards a knowledge-driven economy.

At UIC, the Minister held detailed discussions with the University's Provost, Vice Provost and Dean of the medical faculty exploring collaboration between the university, the proposed Jinnah Medical Complex and Research Centre (JMCRC), and the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute (PKLI) in medical education, research, innovation, and robotic surgery. At IIT, discussions centred on curriculum reform, applied research, market-oriented universities, and the university's interest in establishing a campus in Pakistan. Prof. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that such partnerships will strengthen Pakistan's technological capabilities, develop a highly skilled workforce, and connect academia more closely with national development priorities.

Recalling Pakistan's successful academic partnership with the United States, the Minister highlighted that during his previous tenure he played a key role in expanding the Pakistan-USEFP Fulbright Scholarship Programme by securing Pakistan's financial contribution, helping make it one of the largest Fulbright programmes in the world. The two sides also exchanged views on expanding collaboration under the US-Pak Knowledge Corridor by incorporating medical sciences alongside higher education. Potential areas discussed included faculty and student exchanges, scholarships, joint research initiatives, advanced surgical training and institutional partnerships.

Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary also met Mr. Raj Echambadi, President of the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), to discuss collaboration in higher education, research, innovation, and industry-academia linkages. The meeting explored student and faculty exchanges, joint research initiatives, and IIT's interest in establishing a campus in Pakistan to strengthen innovation and develop a globally competitive workforce under URAAN Pakistan.



Pakistan and Norway Enhance Cooperation on Climate and Green Development



Prof. Ahsan Iqbal held discussions with Norway's Minister for International Development Mr. Åsmund Grøver Aukrust in New York during the High-Level Political Forum to explore enhanced cooperation in climate resilience, renewable energy, sustainable development, human capital, and environmental governance. The meeting reflected the growing importance of international partnerships in addressing climate challenges facing developing countries.

Highlighting Pakistan's climate vulnerability, the Minister noted that Pakistan contributes less than 1% to global greenhouse gas emissions, yet remains among the countries most affected by climate change. He called for a dedicated global financing mechanism to help climate-vulnerable nations recover and achieve the SDGs. Both sides discussed opportunities to strengthen cooperation in blue economy, education reform, and early childhood development, while reaffirming their shared commitment to advancing global climate action and supporting Pakistan's transition towards a resilient and environmentally sustainable economy.

Pakistan Reaffirms Commitment to Multilateral Cooperation in Meeting with UN Deputy Secretary-General

On the margins of the United Nations High-Level Political Forum, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal met United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Ms. Amina Mohammed to discuss Pakistan's progress on sustainable development and future collaboration with the United Nations system. The discussions highlighted Pakistan's continued commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through integrated planning and institutional reforms.

The Minister emphasized that international partnerships remain essential for addressing shared global challenges, including climate change, food security, financing for development, and human capital development. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation in support of inclusive and sustainable development.



Planning Minister Encourages Pakistani Students at Rice University to Lead Pakistan's Knowledge Economy

During his visit to the United States, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary addressed Pakistani students, researchers, and faculty at Rice University, urging them to become active partners in Pakistan's economic transformation through knowledge, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Highlighting URAAN Pakistan's vision of building a US\$1 trillion economy by 2035, he emphasized investments in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, robotics, quantum technologies, space sciences, biotechnology, and digital innovation, while announcing expanded academic partnerships with leading U.S. universities, the revival of the Pakistan-U.S. Knowledge Corridor, and Plug and Play Tech Center's plans to support Pakistani startups. The Minister also called on overseas Pakistanis to contribute through research collaboration, mentorship, and investment, reaffirming that human capital remains the cornerstone of Pakistan's long-term development agenda.



Pakistani-American Business Leaders Invited to Invest in Pakistan's Economic Transformation

Addressing a distinguished gathering of 20 Pakistani-American entrepreneurs, AI founders, technology investors, financiers, and former Fortune 500 executives in Chicago, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal invited overseas Pakistanis to contribute their capital, expertise, and global networks towards Pakistan's next phase of economic growth. The Minister observed that following difficult but necessary economic reforms, Pakistan has restored macroeconomic stability, reduced inflation, eased policy rates, and emerged internationally as one of the world's leading economic turnaround stories under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.



Overseas Pakistani Physicians Urged to Drive Healthcare Innovation and Human Capital Development

Addressing the APPNA 49th Annual Convention 2026 in Orlando, Florida, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary called upon overseas Pakistani physicians to become active partners in strengthening Pakistan's healthcare system through knowledge transfer, technology partnerships, and institutional collaboration. Describing the Pakistani-American medical community as one of the country's greatest national assets, the Minister emphasized that their global expertise can play a transformative role in modernizing healthcare through the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies under the e-Pakistan pillar of URAAN Pakistan. Highlighting healthcare as a cornerstone of human capital development, he identified Hepatitis C, diabetes, tuberculosis, polio, and Pakistan's 40 percent child stunting rate as major national challenges requiring coordinated action. He also announced the establishment of the Pakistan Population Council, chaired by the Prime Minister with all Chief Ministers as members, alongside the Government's Hepatitis C Elimination Programme in Islamabad Capital Territory, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu & Kashmir, and a forthcoming nationwide diabetes awareness campaign.

The Minister also outlined Pakistan's economic recovery and long-term development vision, noting that difficult reforms undertaken since April 2022 had helped stabilize the economy after it faced the risk of sovereign default. He highlighted the reduction in inflation from nearly 38 percent to around 5-6 percent, the successful implementation of the first phase of CPEC, which attracted nearly US\$25 billion in investment within three years, and Pakistan's resilience following the 2022 floods, which caused an estimated US\$30 billion in losses.

Stressing that these achievements must now translate into sustained economic growth, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal reaffirmed the Government's commitment to URAAN Pakistan, emphasizing export-led growth, AI-driven innovation, and human capital development as national priorities. Noting that Pakistan's exports currently stand at around US\$40 billion, compared to Vietnam's US\$450 billion, he reiterated the national target of exceeding US\$100 billion in exports by 2035 and urged overseas Pakistani professionals to contribute their expertise, innovation, and international networks towards building a healthier, more prosperous, and globally competitive Pakistan.



Lahore-Chicago Partnership Gains New Momentum Through Mayoral Engagement



During his visit to Chicago, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal met Mayor Brandon Johnson to discuss expanding cooperation in education, innovation, cultural exchange, and people-to-people connectivity. Appreciating the longstanding sister-city relationship between Lahore and Chicago, the Minister highlighted newly established academic partnerships with leading Chicago-based universities and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening institutional collaboration.

The Minister also reiterated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting regional peace under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir. Mayor Johnson welcomed closer collaboration, appreciated Pakistan's commitment to peace, and accepted the Minister's invitation to visit Lahore, reaffirming a shared commitment to stronger Pakistan-United States relations.

Pakistan and Boston University Expand Collaboration on Climate Research and Evidence-Based Policymaking



Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary met Dr. Benjamin Sovacool, Director of the Institute for Global Sustainability (IGS) at Boston University, to strengthen cooperation on climate resilience, sustainable development, and evidence-based policymaking under URAAN Pakistan. The Minister proposed institutional collaboration among IGS, the Global Development Policy Center (GDP Center), and the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) to generate research-based policy solutions tailored to Pakistan's development priorities.

Referring to the devastating 2022 floods, which caused over US\$30 billion in losses, he underscored the urgent need for global support for climate adaptation and resilience-building efforts. The proposed partnership aims to deepen collaboration on climate policy, sustainable development, and research capacity while supporting Pakistan's efforts to integrate scientific evidence into public policy. The initiative reflects the Government's broader commitment to strengthening international research partnerships and advancing climate-resilient development through knowledge, innovation, and institutional cooperation.

University of Chicago Partners with Pakistan on Education, Governance and Climate Action



During his visit to the United States, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary held a series of meetings at the University of Chicago to advance collaboration in higher education, public sector reform, curriculum modernization, and climate resilience. The two sides agreed to develop a hybrid academic programme for Pakistani students, launch a Public Sector Transformation Programme to strengthen civil service capacity, and collaborate with PIDE on curriculum reform and climate research. Discussions also focused on emissions trading, energy inclusion, early warning systems, and technical cooperation, reinforcing Pakistan's commitment to human capital development, institutional excellence, and climate resilience under URAAN Pakistan.

Boston University Backs Pakistan's Knowledge Corridor and AI-Ready Higher Education



During his visit to Boston, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal met Kenneth Lutchien, Vice President and Associate Provost for Research at Boston University, to advance academic collaboration under URAAN Pakistan. The Minister proposed a collaborative model for the U.S.-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor, enabling Pakistani PhD scholars to conduct research on national development priorities at leading American universities while expanding opportunities for academic exchange and international collaboration.

Boston University also agreed to collaborate with Pakistan on preparing higher education institutions for the AI era through curriculum reform, assessment systems, and cooperation with the Higher Education Commission (HEC). Highlighting the Government's efforts to raise Pakistan's higher education enrolment rate from its current 13 percent, the Minister emphasized that investment in knowledge and global academic partnerships remains fundamental to national competitiveness.

Government Prioritizes Early Childhood Development to Build Pakistan's Human Capital

During his visit to Houston, United States, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary inaugurated the Early Childhood Care Clinic at Avicenna Clinic (Ibn Sina Foundation) and reaffirmed the Government's commitment to investing in early childhood development as a cornerstone of human capital under URAAN Pakistan. Announcing the launch of pilot projects on Early Childhood Development (ECD), the Minister identified early childhood education and the reduction of child stunting as among his foremost priorities, emphasizing that the two challenges are closely interconnected. He also announced that Pakistan will host an International Conference on Early Childhood Development later this year in collaboration with UNICEF, following the country's successful proposal at the first global conference on ECD. Highlighting the National Early Childhood Development Policy 2025, he said the Government is actively engaging provinces to accelerate its adoption and implementation across the country.



Expressing concern that nearly 40 percent of Pakistani children have remained affected by stunting for the past four decades, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal stressed that reversing this trend requires sustained investment in education, health, nutrition, and early childhood care rather than short-term interventions. He observed that while many countries with similar challenges have made significant progress, Pakistan must strengthen public awareness, mobilize civil society and the media, and promote greater accountability to improve early childhood outcomes. The Minister emphasized that investing in the earliest years of life yields long-term national dividends by fostering a healthier, more productive, and prosperous society, reaffirming the Government's resolve to place human development at the centre of Pakistan's economic transformation agenda.

Pakistan Marks 150th Birth Anniversaries of Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal with Renewed Commitment to National Transformation

As Pakistan commemorates the 150th birth anniversaries of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (2026) and Allama Muhammad Iqbal (2027), Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary addressed the Pakistani diaspora at Jinnah Library, Houston, urging Pakistanis worldwide to honour the nation's founding leaders by building a confident, knowledge-driven and globally competitive Pakistan. Describing the Jinnah Library as a remarkable tribute to Quaid-e-Azam and a symbol of the diaspora's enduring connection with the homeland, the Minister emphasized that nations rise through ideas, self-belief, disciplined leadership, and strong institutions. He reaffirmed that URAAN Pakistan provides the roadmap for transforming Pakistan into a knowledge economy powered by artificial intelligence, digital technologies, research, innovation, human capital, exports, and productivity, while stressing that economic sovereignty remains the strongest guarantee of political sovereignty. He also called for sustained investment in education, research universities, technology, and climate resilience, guided by Quaid-e-Azam's principles of constitutional democracy, merit, equal opportunity, rule of law, and integrity in public service.



During his visit, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal toured the Jinnah Library's extensive collection of historical documents, rare publications, speeches, biographies, and archival material documenting Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Pakistan Movement, and the nation's constitutional evolution. He commended the Library's leadership for preserving Pakistan's intellectual heritage and connecting younger generations of overseas Pakistanis with their roots. In recognition of his commitment to advancing Quaid-e-Azam's vision through national development, institutional reform, and the URAAN Pakistan agenda, the Minister was presented with the Jinnah Cap, a distinguished symbol of leadership and national service. Concluding his address, he encouraged overseas Pakistanis to leverage their expertise, investment, technology, and global networks to strengthen Pakistan's innovation ecosystem, replace pessimism with confidence, reinforce national unity, and collectively work towards building a prosperous Pakistan by 2047.

Pakistan Advances Space Cooperation with NASA to Promote Science, Innovation and Youth Development



During his visit to the NASA Space Center Houston and the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary held high-level meetings with NASA officials and leading American aerospace companies to advance Pakistan's long-term space vision through cooperation in research, education, technology, and capacity building. The Minister presented plans for a state-of-the-art Space Learning Centre & Museum in Narowal, which received strong interest from NASA and industry partners, reaffirmed Pakistan's ambition to land on the Moon by 2035 and establish a Pakistani presence on the lunar surface by 2047, and invited collaboration in scientific research, technical training, satellite technology, software development, and innovation to empower Pakistan's youth and strengthen the country's emerging space programme under URAAN Pakistan.

Pakistan Signs Landmark Partnership with Plug and Play to Connect 300 Startups with Silicon Valley



Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary witnessed the signing of a Letter of Intent (LoI) with Plug and Play Tech Center during his visit to Silicon Valley, marking a major milestone in strengthening Pakistan's innovation ecosystem. The partnership will facilitate Plug and Play's expansion into Islamabad and Karachi, provide 300 startups from Pakistan's leading universities with global acceleration opportunities, connect entrepreneurs to a network of more than 600 multinational corporations, and promote investment, mentorship, AI-driven innovation, and international market access, reinforcing the Government's commitment under URAAN Pakistan to building a globally competitive, knowledge-based economy.

Planning Minister Unveils National Vision for Pakistan's Digital Geospatial Future



Addressing the 1st National Seminar on "Powering Pakistan's Digital Geospatial Future," organized by the Survey of Pakistan in collaboration with NUST, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary called for positioning geospatial intelligence as a strategic national asset under URAAN Pakistan. He proposed a National Geospatial Strategy, the establishment of a National Spatial Data Infrastructure, investment in GIS and AI talent, promotion of geospatial startups, and stronger international cooperation in satellite technology and earth observation. Highlighting that nearly 80 percent of government decisions have a location component, the Minister emphasized that geospatial technologies are critical for evidence-based policy-making, climate resilience, disaster management, food security, infrastructure planning, and achieving Pakistan's goals of becoming a \$1 trillion economy by 2035 and surpassing \$100 billion in exports.

Planning Minister Strengthens Pakistan-US Academic and Healthcare Partnership at NYU



During his visit to New York University (NYU), Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal oversaw the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Planning and the NYU Pakistani Medical and Dental Students Association to strengthen medical education, healthcare collaboration, research, and diaspora engagement. The MoU provides for mentorship and admissions guidance for Pakistani students, diaspora delegations, community health outreach, and joint research and academic exchanges. Addressing students, faculty, and healthcare professionals, the Minister reaffirmed the Government's commitment to expanding the Pakistan-US Knowledge Corridor, promoting collaboration in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, digital health, and medical sciences, while encouraging overseas Pakistani students to contribute to Pakistan's knowledge economy through innovation, research, and entrepreneurship.

Planning Minister Calls on Overseas Pakistanis to Champion Brand Pakistan and Export Growth

During a community reception in Houston, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary inaugurated the launch of a Pakistani mango brand, commending the efforts of entrepreneurs in introducing Pakistan's premium mangoes to the U.S. market while emphasizing that building "Brand Pakistan" must accompany every export. Addressing the Pakistani-American community alongside U.S. Congressman Al Green, the Minister urged overseas Pakistanis to become ambassadors of Pakistan's economic transformation by promoting exports, investment, technology transfer, and knowledge partnerships. Highlighting Pakistan's economic stabilization, strategic security, and growing global diplomatic role, he reaffirmed the Government's export-led vision of achieving a \$1 trillion economy by 2035 under the 5Es Framework, announced progress on the U.S.-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor and the proposed Illinois Institute of Technology campus in Pakistan, and concluded by calling for national unity and stronger global representation of Pakistan's products, innovation, and potential. During the event, Congressman Al Green presented the Minister with a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition in acknowledgment of his contributions to development, innovation, and strengthening Pakistan-U.S. relations.



Overseas Pakistanis Urged to Help Realise Vision of a \$1 Trillion Economy

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary held an interactive breakfast session with members of the Pakistani community in Northern California, where he outlined the Government's long-term economic transformation agenda under URAAN Pakistan. Addressing professionals, entrepreneurs, academics, technology leaders and students from institutions including Stanford and Berkeley, he described the diaspora as a strategic partner in achieving sustainable national development and called on them to promote Pakistani exports, strengthen innovation, and contribute through investment, technology transfer and knowledge sharing.

The Minister highlighted e-Pakistan and artificial intelligence as key drivers of future growth, noting the establishment of National Centres for Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Big Data, Robotics, Satellite Technologies, Genomics and Applied Mathematics, alongside plans for a National Centre for Quantum Computing. He also reviewed progress under the U.S.-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor and recent partnerships with leading American universities, while urging overseas Pakistanis to place national interest above political differences and work collectively towards achieving the vision of a US\$1 trillion economy and over US\$100 billion in exports by 2035.



Dallas Regional Chamber to Lead Texas Business Delegation to Pakistan

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary held a meeting with Mr. Brad Cheves, President and CEO of the Dallas Regional Chamber (DRC), during which both sides agreed to strengthen Pakistan-U.S. cooperation in investment, innovation, technology, education, clean energy and trade. The meeting concluded with an understanding that the Dallas Regional Chamber will lead a high-level Texas business delegation to Pakistan to engage with leading universities, technology companies, logistics firms, chambers of commerce and businesses in exploring new investment opportunities and expanding business-to-business collaboration.

During the meeting, the Minister highlighted Pakistan's emergence as a regional hub for technology and innovation, supported by a young English-speaking workforce, growing digital infrastructure and expanding investment in the IT sector. He emphasized opportunities for collaboration in research, higher education, renewable energy, water management and regional economic integration, while encouraging stronger partnerships between Pakistani and American chambers of commerce and universities. Appreciating the Dallas Regional Chamber's development-oriented approach, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal reaffirmed the shared commitment to building long-term partnerships that advance sustainable development and further strengthen Pakistan-Texas economic relations.

"The Dallas Regional Chamber is not only promoting business but also working to improve the quality of life of its people. This is the true role of business communities and representative chambers," said Prof. Ahsan Iqbal.



Planning Minister Explores Global Best Practices to Strengthen Pakistan's Investment Climate



Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary met with Robert Marrocco, Vice President and Global Head of ETF, to discuss strategies for strengthening Pakistan's investment ecosystem by drawing on Dallas' experience in attracting foreign direct investment. The discussions highlighted the importance of political stability, policy continuity, investor-friendly governance and business courts in building investor confidence. The Minister underscored Pakistan's strategic location, expanding infrastructure, energy potential, youthful workforce and growing financial sector, reaffirming that under URAAN Pakistan the Government is pursuing institutional reforms and global best practices to position Pakistan as a competitive destination for long-term investment and sustainable economic growth.

Pakistan and Egypt Advance Development Partnership at United Nations



On the sidelines of the United Nations, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary met his Egyptian counterpart, Mr. Ahmed Rostom, to reaffirm the longstanding friendship between Pakistan and Egypt and explore new avenues for bilateral cooperation. Both sides agreed to establish a Pakistan-Egypt Joint Working Group and pursue a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen collaboration in development, innovation, entrepreneurship, skills development and knowledge exchange. Emphasizing the shared legacy of two great civilizations and the potential of their youthful populations, the ministers expressed confidence that enhanced cooperation would deepen government-to-government, business-to-business and people-to-people ties while contributing to sustainable growth and regional prosperity.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia Strengthen Strategic Partnership for Innovation and Growth



Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary met Saudi Minister of Economy and Planning H.E. Faisal F. Alibrahim on the sidelines of the United Nations to advance Pakistan-Saudi economic cooperation. The discussions focused on artificial intelligence, innovation, human capital development, technology partnerships, industrial collaboration and investment, with both sides agreeing to institutionalize cooperation through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between their ministries. Aligned with Saudi Vision 2030 and URAAN Pakistan, the partnership aims to promote knowledge-based growth, strengthen long-term economic integration, and expand bilateral collaboration for shared prosperity.

Pakistan and Cornell Partner for Climate-Resilient Agricultural Innovation

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary visited Cornell University's Integrated School of Plant Sciences, where he met with Prof. Dr. Awais Khan to explore collaboration in agricultural innovation, applied research and climate-resilient farming under URAAN Pakistan. Discussions focused on enhancing agricultural productivity, strengthening food security, establishing a centralized applied research laboratory, and developing a comprehensive agricultural ecosystem encompassing breeding, mechanization, irrigation, modern farming practices and commercialization.

Both sides also explored agricultural cluster mapping, supply chain analysis for high-value crops, and the establishment of a Fruit Research Institute to support research and innovation. The meeting concluded with an agreement to establish a Joint Expert Group to develop a concrete framework for future cooperation, reinforcing Pakistan's commitment to building a resilient, technology-driven and globally competitive agriculture sector.



Cornell Partnership to Advance Pakistan's Innovation Ecosystem

During his visit to Cornell University's Center for Life Science Ventures (CLSV), Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary explored collaboration to strengthen Pakistan's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem through startup incubation, technology commercialization and industry-academia partnerships. Discussions with Cornell leadership, Prof. Walcher, focused on establishing Innovation Centers in Pakistan, promoting applied research, supporting startups with mentorship and technology, and fostering a knowledge-based economy under URAAN Pakistan through stronger global partnerships and innovation-led growth.



Cornell Engagement Inspires Pakistani Students to Lead the Nation's Knowledge Economy

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary interacted with Pakistani students at Cornell University, urging them to become ambassadors of knowledge, innovation and public service by contributing to Pakistan's transformation into a knowledge-driven economy. Highlighting the Government's investment in human capital, he emphasized the expansion of the US-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor, the Fulbright Scholarship Programme, and growing partnerships between Pakistani and leading American universities to strengthen research, faculty exchanges and technological innovation.

Sharing his own experience as a graduate of the Wharton School, the Minister encouraged students to pursue excellence while remaining committed to national development, whether in Pakistan or abroad. He also called on young scholars to mentor future generations, strengthen academic linkages and apply their global expertise to advance education, innovation and socioeconomic development under the URAAN Pakistan vision.



Harvard Growth Lab to Support Pakistan's Export-Led Growth Agenda

Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary met with representatives of the Harvard Growth Lab at Harvard Kennedy School to advance collaboration on export-led growth, productivity and evidence-based policymaking under URAAN Pakistan. The discussions focused on addressing Pakistan's structural economic challenges, strengthening industrial competitiveness and developing practical policy solutions to achieve the Government's targets of US\$100 billion in exports and a US\$1 trillion economy by 2035, with Harvard Growth Lab expressing its willingness to support Pakistan through research, policy diagnostics and institutional capacity building.



Pakistan Moves Towards Building a Global Innovation Hub Through Quantum Valley Partnership



Under URAAN Pakistan, Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal engaged with Cambridge Innovation Center (CIC) to explore collaboration for establishing an MIT-inspired Quantum Valley in Pakistan. Drawing on CIC's global experience in nurturing startups and innovation ecosystems, the partnership aims to create a world-class hub for technology commercialization, entrepreneurship and youth-led innovation. The initiative reflects Pakistan's vision to harness global expertise and emerge as a regional leader in emerging technologies.

Evidence-Based Partnership to Advance Human Development



Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary met with Prof. Iqbal Dhaliwal of J-PAL to explore collaboration on evidence-based policymaking for poverty reduction, human development and inclusive growth under URAAN Pakistan. The discussions focused on strengthening education, health and population management under the Equity, Ethics and Empowerment pillar, while advancing institutional reforms and research-driven policy solutions to ensure sustainable development and improved quality of life across Pakistan.

Prime Minister Reviews Development Progress, Stresses Timely Completion of National Projects

Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal briefed Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on the progress of key development initiatives, including projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). The Prime Minister emphasized timely execution, quality standards and stronger coordination among ministries to accelerate project delivery. The meeting reaffirmed the government's commitment to advancing public welfare, creating employment opportunities and driving sustainable economic growth through effective development planning.



PEEF Scholars Encouraged to Lead Pakistan's Knowledge Economy

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary engaged with scholars of the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund (PEEF) pursuing higher education at leading universities around the world, reaffirming that human capital development remains the cornerstone of Pakistan's long-term development strategy. Addressing the scholars, he emphasized that nations which consistently invest in education, innovation and skills are best positioned to lead the global knowledge economy. Reflecting on his own journey from studying at the Wharton School on scholarship to serving in public office, the Minister encouraged students to pursue their ambitions with determination, resilience and a strong sense of national responsibility.



"There is no dream you cannot realise in this country through hard work, determination and perseverance."

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal shared that his own scholarship experience inspired the establishment of the National Endowment Fund, now the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund (PEEF), to provide talented students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds with access to world-class education. Stressing that Pakistan's future competitiveness depends on a highly skilled, innovative and globally connected workforce, he urged scholars to return with international knowledge, research expertise and professional experience to contribute to the country's sustainable development. The Minister noted that through sustained investment in education and talent development, PEEF continues to strengthen Pakistan's human capital and expand opportunities for academically outstanding and deserving students.

Pakistan Charts a Sustainable Demographic Future Through Whole-of-Government Action

Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary chaired a high-level meeting on population balance and sustainability, reaffirming the government's commitment to addressing demographic challenges through coordinated action. With Pakistan's population projected to surpass 380 million by 2050, the meeting emphasized the need for integrated planning focused on education, skills, health and productivity. Under URAAN Pakistan, a comprehensive national framework is being developed to align population dynamics with inclusive growth and sustainable development.



Pakistan Strengthens National Drive to Combat Childhood Stunting and Build Human Capital

Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal reaffirmed the government's commitment to reducing childhood stunting, which currently affects around 40% of Pakistan's children, through coordinated nutrition and food security initiatives. During a meeting with World Food Programme (WFP) Country Director Ms. Anita Hirsch, the Minister emphasized a whole-of- government approach to protect children's growth, learning potential and future productivity. The government is advancing evidence- based interventions and stronger federal-provincial collaboration to secure Pakistan's human capital future.



Pakistan-US Partnership Reimagined for the Future Through Innovation, Knowledge and Shared Prosperity

Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal welcomed a bipartisan US Congressional delegation and American business leaders, highlighting a renewed vision for Pakistan-US relations rooted in economic cooperation, innovation and mutual trust. Addressing a reception in Islamabad, the Minister emphasized that decades of collaboration have delivered transformative milestones and now present an opportunity to build a future-focused partnership under URAAN Pakistan.

The Minister called for expanding cooperation in emerging fields including AI, technology, aerospace, energy, health and education, while highlighting the Pakistan-US Knowledge Corridor as a pathway to equip youth for the knowledge economy. He also urged stronger collaboration between universities, research institutions and industry to advance innovation, skills development and investment opportunities.

Emphasizing climate resilience as a shared priority, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal proposed a new era of Pakistan-US cooperation through Green Revolution 2.0, climate-smart agriculture and water security initiatives. He underscored the strategic role of the Pakistani diaspora in driving investment and knowledge exchange, reaffirming that a partnership built on innovation and shared prosperity can help achieve Pakistan's vision of sustainable economic transformation.



Monthly Development Update Highlights Economic Recovery and Reform Agenda for FY2026-27

Launching the Ministry of Planning's Monthly Development Update - July 2026, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary reaffirmed that Pakistan has entered the next phase of its economic journey by transforming macroeconomic stability into sustainable growth, exports, innovation and future-ready human capital under the URAAN Pakistan agenda. Despite global geopolitical tensions, energy market disruptions and volatile oil prices, the Minister noted that prudent policy-making and fiscal discipline enabled the economy to achieve 3.7 percent GDP growth, driven by Agriculture (2.9%), Services (4.1%) and Industry (3.5%), while S&P Global Ratings upgraded Pakistan's sovereign credit rating from B- to B. Inflation remained at 7.1 percent, remittances reached a record US\$41.6 billion, exports of goods and services stood at US\$40.9 billion, the current account deficit was contained at US\$139 million, Large Scale Manufacturing grew by 5.8 percent, and FBR revenues increased to Rs13 trillion. Looking ahead, the Government has set a 4 percent GDP growth target for FY2026-27, supported by exports, private investment, productivity, innovation and technology, while the CDWP approved 192 projects and referred 96 to ECNEC, with approved initiatives expected to generate 289,000 direct and 424,000 indirect jobs alongside savings of Rs12.6 billion. The Minister also highlighted progress on the Islamabad Smart City Governance Model, curriculum reforms, modern teacher training and investments in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, biotechnology, genomics, satellite technologies and digital skills. He further noted that his recent visit to the United States opened new opportunities for collaboration through the University of Illinois Chicago, the revived U.S.-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor, Plug and Play Tech Center, and expanded partnerships with Türkiye, Uzbekistan and Denmark, reaffirming the Government's commitment to sustaining economic recovery and ensuring its benefits reach every Pakistani.



NEWS IN PICTURES



The 68th Meeting of the National Logistics Board (NLB), chaired by Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary



Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary addressing the participants of the 3rd Senior Management Course of the Provincial Civil Service



Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary, chaired a meeting of the National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) to review the prices of essential commodities and food quality standards



Pakistani delegation commenced its learning sessions under the Seminar on Emergency Management and Disaster Prevention for Pakistan, hosted by the National Development and Reform Commission of China.



Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary engaged with scholars of the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund (PEEF)



Planning Minister Announces enrolment of one million youth as Agents of Change to Champion Social Transformation Across Pakistan at the Launch of Development Advocate Pakistan Report





Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives

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