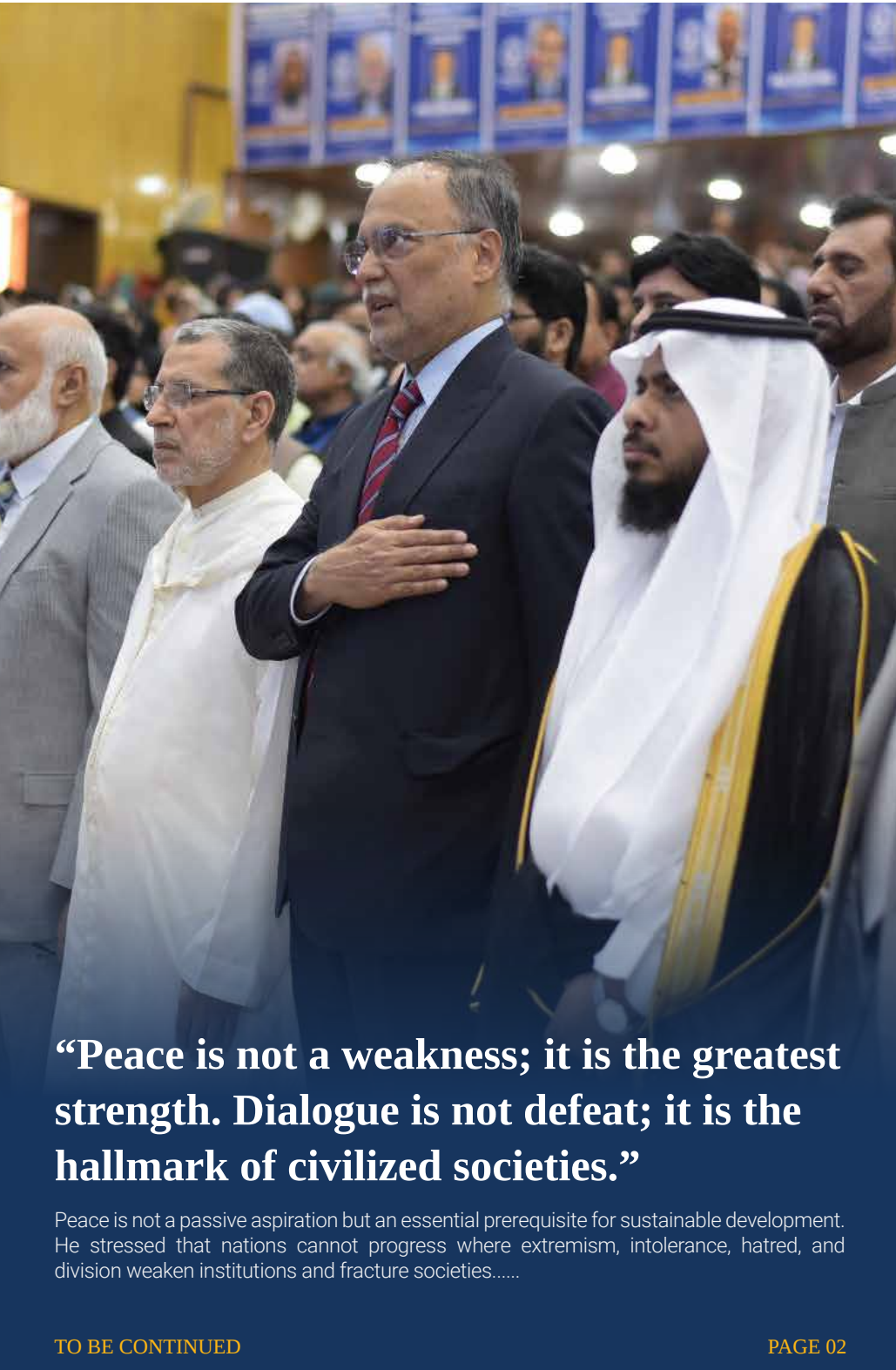




NEWSLETTER

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“Peace is not a weakness; it is the greatest strength. Dialogue is not defeat; it is the hallmark of civilized societies.”

Peace is not a passive aspiration but an essential prerequisite for sustainable development. He stressed that nations cannot progress where extremism, intolerance, hatred, and division weaken institutions and fracture societies.....

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**Narowal Peace Dialogue
2026**



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Highlights from the Previous Month

Looking Back: Momentum for Growth, Connectivity, and National Transformation in April 2026

As Pakistan advances on its journey toward sustainable economic transformation, the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives continues to drive a comprehensive agenda focused on growth, resilience, innovation, and institutional reform. The month preceding this edition witnessed significant progress across a wide spectrum of national priorities, reflecting the Government's commitment to implementing the vision of URAAN Pakistan and laying the foundations for long-term prosperity.

From strengthening economic governance and accelerating export-led growth to advancing climate resilience and water security, policy efforts remained firmly focused on addressing both immediate challenges and structural development needs. Strategic initiatives were undertaken to improve competitiveness, enhance transparency, modernize governance systems, and promote evidence-based decision-making. Major discussions on water security highlighted the urgency of integrated resource management in the face of climate change, while resilience and flood recovery programs reinforced Pakistan's commitment to building adaptive and climate-smart development pathways.

The period also marked important milestones in regional connectivity and international cooperation. Progress under CPEC 2.0 continued to support infrastructure development and economic integration, while engagements with global partners including the European Union, UN agencies, and international development institutions strengthened collaboration in investment, governance, and sustainable development. At the same time, efforts to modernize public institutions through digital transformation, geospatial technologies, and data-driven governance reflected a growing emphasis on innovation as a catalyst for effective policymaking and service delivery.

A defining achievement was Pakistan's entry into a new era of scientific advancement through the launch of its first human spaceflight mission training programme, demonstrating the country's ambition to invest in knowledge, technology, and future generations. Alongside initiatives supporting economic recovery, market stability, social cohesion, and institutional accountability, these developments collectively underscore a broader national objective: transforming Pakistan into a resilient, competitive, and forward-looking economy capable of meeting the aspirations of its people.

The stories highlighted in this newsletter build upon this momentum. Together, they reflect a continuing commitment to inclusive development, strategic planning, and national transformation, ensuring that progress remains not merely an objective, but a measurable reality for the citizens of Pakistan.



SPOTLIGHT STORY

CPEC 2.0 and the Next Chapter of Pakistan-China Partnership



As Pakistan and China marked 75 years of diplomatic relations, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary presented a forward-looking vision for the next phase of bilateral cooperation at the China-Pakistan Political Parties Forum in Beijing. Describing Pakistan-China friendship as Pakistan's strongest national consensus, supported across political divides and government transitions, the Minister highlighted how the relationship has evolved from diplomatic engagement into a comprehensive strategic partnership driving economic modernization, regional connectivity, and shared prosperity. He noted that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, has transformed Pakistan's development landscape through investments in energy, infrastructure, transport networks, and industrial growth, laying the foundations for long-term economic stability and investor confidence.

Looking ahead, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that CPEC 2.0 represents a new era of cooperation focused on industrialization, innovation, agriculture modernization, green development, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and people-centered progress. Built around five strategic economic corridors, Growth, Livelihood, Innovation, Green Development, and Open & Inclusive Regional Development, the next phase seeks to accelerate Pakistan's transition toward a knowledge-based and globally competitive economy. To reinforce these economic initiatives with long-term institutional continuity, the Minister proposed the establishment of "Five Political Corridors" between Pakistan's political parties and the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC), focusing on strategic dialogue, governance cooperation, youth leadership development, cultural connectivity, and regional peace. He stressed that political trust remains the force multiplier behind economic transformation and that stronger institutional linkages are essential for sustaining development partnerships across generations.



A major milestone of the visit was the signing of two landmark agreements with China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), opening new avenues for cooperation in macroeconomic planning, artificial intelligence, industrial innovation, mining, human resource development, youth capacity building, and agricultural modernization. The agreements align closely with Pakistan's URAAN Pakistan framework and reflect a shared commitment to building resilient economies, strengthening food security, fostering technological advancement, and expanding opportunities for future generations. Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to the timely completion of all CPEC projects and the security of Chinese nationals working in the country, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal stated that the Pakistan-China partnership remains rooted in mutual trust, sovereign equality, and a shared vision of development. Quoting the visionary poetry of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, he observed that the rise of Asia and the deepening Pakistan-China partnership are increasingly becoming a living reality through CPEC and the shared aspirations of both nations for a prosperous and interconnected future.



FEATURED STORY

Narowal Peace Dialogue 2026: Advancing Peace as a Foundation for National Development



At a time when the world faces rising polarization, extremism, misinformation, and geopolitical instability, the International Narowal Peace Dialogue 2026 emerged as one of Pakistan's most meaningful global platforms for promoting peace, tolerance, coexistence, and social harmony.

Held on 5-6 May in Narowal, the second edition of the Dialogue brought together international delegates, policymakers, diplomats, scholars, youth leaders, and civil society representatives from multiple countries, including former Prime Minister of Morocco Dr. Saad Fine El Otmani. The conference transformed Narowal into an international center for dialogue and peacebuilding, reinforcing Pakistan's constructive role in promoting diplomacy, mutual respect, and regional harmony.

Addressing the conference, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary emphasized that peace is not a passive aspiration but an essential prerequisite for sustainable development. He stressed that nations cannot progress where extremism, intolerance, hatred, and division weaken institutions and fracture societies.

The Dialogue carried profound symbolic significance. Reflecting on the assassination attempt he survived on 6 May 2018, the Minister described how personal adversity was transformed into a national mission against hatred and extremism. He noted that the bullet that remains in his body serves as a daily reminder of the responsibility to build a more peaceful and inclusive society.

"Peace is not a weakness; it is the greatest strength. Dialogue is not defeat; it is the hallmark of civilized societies."

Discussions throughout the conference emphasized that extremism cannot be defeated through force alone. Participants highlighted the importance of education, social cohesion, critical thinking, justice, and youth engagement in countering radicalization and promoting national resilience. Speakers also addressed emerging global challenges such as digital misinformation, deepfakes, weaponized narratives, and social polarization, identifying them as serious threats to democratic institutions and social stability.

A major theme of the Dialogue remained Pakistan's founding vision rooted in equal citizenship, religious freedom, and mutual respect. The concluding declaration, inspired by the principles of Paigham-e-Pakistan, the Charter of Medina, and the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, reaffirmed the country's commitment to pluralism, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence.

The conference also emphasized the transformative role of youth in shaping Pakistan's future. More than 4,000 students and 200 national delegations participated in the Dialogue, reinforcing the importance of empowering young people as ambassadors of peace, understanding, and development.

Ultimately, the Narowal Peace Dialogue 2026 projected a powerful national narrative to the world: societies flourish through dialogue, nations rise through unity, and sustainable development can only thrive where peace prevails.

"Today, Narowal is not merely hosting a peace conference; it is delivering a meaningful message to Pakistan, the region, and the world that hatred can be answered with healing, extremism with dialogue, and personal animosity with peace."



Development Highlights

Pakistan Population Projections 2023–2050: Shaping the Future Through Evidence-Based Planning



In one of the Ministry's most consequential policy initiatives of the year, the Government launched the "National and Provincial Population Projections 2023-2050" report in collaboration with UNFPA, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of National Health Services, and the National Institute of Population Studies.

The report represents a major step toward evidence-based governance and long-term development planning, offering critical projections regarding Pakistan's demographic trends, workforce expansion, urbanization, healthcare demands, education needs, and future resource requirements.

Addressing the launching ceremony, Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary described population planning as a core national development priority directly linked to economic stability, human development, national security, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. He emphasized that balanced population growth is essential for ensuring equitable access to education, healthcare, employment, housing, food security, and public services.

According to the projections, Pakistan's population, recorded at 241 million during the 2023 Digital Census, has already reached approximately 257 million by 2026. If current trends continue, the population could approach nearly 400 million by 2050, placing unprecedented pressure on national infrastructure and resources.

The report further highlighted that Pakistan's population under the age of 18 may rise from 117 million to nearly 140 million by 2050, while the working-age population is expected to increase from 135 million to 255 million. The Minister noted that this demographic transition could either become Pakistan's greatest economic strength or a source of serious social and economic stress depending on policy choices made today.

The launch also drew attention to Pakistan's human development challenges, particularly child malnutrition and stunted growth. Nearly 40 percent of Pakistani children currently suffer from learning deprivation and inadequate nutrition, a situation described by the Minister as a national emergency requiring urgent policy intervention.

Importantly, the report signals Pakistan's transition toward data-driven governance and AI-supported planning under URAAN Pakistan. For the first time, future national frameworks including Vision 2035, Five-Year Plans, SDGs implementation, and NFC-related planning will increasingly rely upon digital census-based projections and evidence-based policymaking.

The Minister further proposed reforms in the NFC Award mechanism to incentivize provinces demonstrating effective population management and responsible planning. He emphasized that development is not simply about increasing numbers, but about investing in educated, skilled, healthy, and productive citizens capable of driving Pakistan's long-term economic transformation.

CDWP Reviews Strategic Hydropower Projects Amid Concerns Over Delays and Cost Escalation

The Central Development Working Party (CDWP), chaired by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, reviewed major revised hydropower projects including the Diamer-Bhasha Dam Project and the Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project, expressing serious concern over persistent delays, escalating costs, weak project management, and institutional shortcomings affecting strategic national infrastructure initiatives. During discussions on the Diamer-Bhasha Dam project, the Minister observed that despite the project's original approval at approximately Rs480 billion in 2018, the revised PC-I had not been submitted for six years even as costs increased significantly, reflecting serious deficiencies in project planning and management capacity. He directed WAPDA to strengthen professional oversight mechanisms and ensure timely submission of revised project documents. While reviewing the Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project, whose estimated cost has increased substantially beyond its original allocation of Rs82 billion, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal raised concerns regarding transparency, due diligence, consultant selection procedures, and institutional accountability. He directed that all observations related to mismanagement, contractor and consultant performance, and governance weaknesses be formally presented before ECNEC through a detailed inquiry report. Emphasizing the strategic importance of water and energy infrastructure for Pakistan's future development, the Minister stressed the need for robust institutional reforms, professional project governance systems, and improved implementation capacity to ensure efficiency, accountability, and timely completion of mega development projects.



IAPEX 2026: Architecture as Identity, Sustainability and National Memory

"Architecture is not merely an expression of beautiful buildings; it is a force that shapes human experience. A well-lit classroom nurtures the future, a thoughtfully designed hospital brings comfort to the patient, and an efficient commercial space creates ease in everyday life.

Great architecture goes beyond structures; it elevates dignity, improves quality of life, and lays the foundation for true national development."

At the Institute of Architects Pakistan Convention & Exhibition (IAPEX 2026) in Islamabad, the Ministry highlighted architecture as a powerful reflection of civilizational identity, social values, and sustainable development. Addressing architects, designers, and industry professionals, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that architecture shapes how societies are remembered across generations.

"Empires fade, and symbols of power diminish but architecture endures. Landmarks such as the Alhambra, the Mosque of Cordoba, the Taj Mahal, and the Badshahi Mosque continue to keep the identity of civilizations alive for centuries. Architecture is the language that immortalizes history and gives nations a timeless legacy."

The Minister called for integrating Pakistan's historical architectural heritage with modern innovation, climate resilience, and human-centered urban planning. Discussions focused on green building codes, affordable housing, sustainable construction practices, accessibility, and preserving the unique cultural identities of Pakistani cities while adapting to future development challenges.

"In an era of climate challenges, architecture is not just design, it is a national responsibility to promote sustainable and climate-resilient development. By adopting green building codes, we must create spaces that meet today's needs while securing a safer, more resilient future for generations to come."



Honouring the Martyrs of Maarka-e-Haq

During May 2026, the Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives also paid tribute to the martyrs of Maarka-e-Haq, recognizing the sacrifices of Pakistan's Armed Forces in defending the country's sovereignty and security. Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal visited families of martyrs in Pasrur and Mast Pur village to express solidarity and offer condolences.

The Ministry emphasized that the sacrifices of Pakistan's martyrs remain a source of national strength and unity. Messages issued during the first commemoration of Marka-e-Haq reaffirmed that resilience, collective spirit, and national cohesion remain essential foundations for safeguarding peace and enabling long-term development. The success of Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos reflects the strength of a nation that stands resilient, united, and victorious in the face of aggression and values peace through preparedness and sacrifice.

One Nation. One Spirit. One Pakistan.



Iqra University Convocation: Youth as Architects of Pakistan's Future

Addressing the Convocation Ceremony at Iqra University, Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal urged graduates to become architects of Pakistan's next era of development by embracing innovation, discipline, research, and lifelong learning.

The Minister emphasized that Pakistan's future competitiveness depends upon investing in human capital, technological advancement, and enlightened youth leadership. Prof. Ahsan Iqbal highlighted that after successfully defending the Pakistan's sovereignty, Pakistan must now focus on winning the "Maarka-e-Taraqqi", encouraging graduates to align their ambitions with Vision 2047 and contribute toward building a peaceful, inclusive, economically strong, and knowledge-driven Pakistan capable of competing globally.

"We have won the battle for truth... Now we have to win the battle of development and make Pakistan an economic powerhouse."



One Year of the Monthly Development Update (MDU)

The Ministry completed one full year of publishing the Monthly Development Update (MDU), which has evolved into a credible national platform for tracking Pakistan's economic performance and development indicators.

The May 2026 MDU highlighted continued economic recovery despite global uncertainties and Middle East tensions. Key indicators included lower inflation, exchange rate stability, record stock market performance, improved PSDP utilization, recovery in large-scale manufacturing, and rising workers' remittances. The Minister observed that without the external shocks caused by regional tensions and rising global oil prices linked to the Iran-US-Israel conflict, Pakistan's economic growth could have approached nearly 4 percent.

The briefing highlighted that Pakistan's economic growth for FY 2025-26 is estimated at 3.7 percent, while the country's economic size reached \$452.1 billion with per capita income recorded at \$1,901. Large-Scale Manufacturing (LSM) showed encouraging

recovery, with 15 out of 22 sectors recording positive growth and overall LSM output increasing by 6.5 percent. Automobile production registered a remarkable 61.66 percent increase, while other major industrial sectors including electrical equipment, tobacco, food, beverages, non-metallic mineral products, and wearing apparel also posted significant gains. The construction sector grew by 5.73 percent, reflecting renewed momentum in infrastructure and development activity.

Fiscal and external sector indicators also reflected improving economic confidence and stability. Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) tax revenues reached Rs. 10.3 trillion during July-April FY 2025-26, compared to Rs. 9.3 trillion during the same period last year, registering a 10.3 percent increase. Workers' remittances rose by 8.5 percent to reach \$33.9 billion, driven by overseas Pakistanis' confidence in the improving economic environment. Services exports recorded a strong 17 percent increase, reaching \$7.3 billion and substantially outpacing import growth. Meanwhile, agriculture maintained steady performance, with wheat production increasing from 28.3 million tonnes to 29.6 million tonnes, rice production rising by 2.8 percent, and sugarcane output increasing by 6.2 percent.

The Minister emphasized that while global economic risks remain significant, Pakistan's improving macroeconomic indicators, industrial recovery, infrastructure investment, and development-focused reforms demonstrate the Government's commitment to building a resilient, stable, and future-ready economy under the broader vision of URAAN Pakistan and Vision 2047.



PIDE Training Programme: Economists as Architects of National Transformation

At the Certificate Awarding Ceremony organized by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, the Ministry emphasized the growing importance of evidence-based policymaking and interdisciplinary economic planning in an era shaped by AI, climate change, and technological disruption.

Addressing newly inducted economists and research officers, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal stressed that economists must move beyond statistics and spreadsheets toward practical and implementable solutions capable of improving citizens' lives through a deeper understanding of governance realities, implementation challenges, and the human impact of economic decisions. Highlighting the transformative impact of AI and digitalization, he urged professionals to continuously "learn, unlearn, and relearn" in order to remain relevant in a rapidly evolving techno-economic era. The Minister stressed that future economic planning must be data-driven, climate-sensitive, and aligned with Pakistan's long-term development goals under Vision 2047, while policy success should ultimately be measured through tangible improvements in citizens' lives, including better education, healthcare, employment, and quality of living.



Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Economic Empowerment under URAAN Pakistan

Reaffirming the Government’s commitment to inclusive and equitable development, the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), organized a National Consultation on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Economic Empowerment under URAAN Pakistan. Addressing the consultation, Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary emphasized that women’s empowerment is not merely a social obligation but a strategic economic necessity for Pakistan’s long-term growth and national transformation. He observed that while female workforce participation in developed economies exceeds 50 percent, Pakistan’s participation rate remains around 22 percent, underscoring the urgent need to integrate more women into the country’s economic and development framework. The Minister highlighted that women are increasingly excelling in education and professional sectors, noting that nearly 70 percent of medical college enrolments in Pakistan now comprise female students, reflecting the country’s untapped human capital potential.



The consultation also focused on expanding women’s access to higher education, entrepreneurship, and economic opportunity, particularly in underserved and remote areas. Prof. Ahsan Iqbal highlighted the Government’s efforts to establish university campuses across districts to ensure that talented young women are not deprived of education due to social or geographical barriers. Stressing the importance of removing structural and cultural obstacles, the Minister stated that discrimination and violence against women have no justification in religion or culture, emphasizing that Islam grants women the rights to education, business, and economic participation. Referring to the example of Hazrat Khadija (RA) as a symbol of women’s leadership and entrepreneurship in Islamic history, he reaffirmed that women’s empowerment, mainstreaming, and equal participation would remain integral to every development strategy under URAAN Pakistan, as sustainable national progress cannot be achieved without fully empowering half of the country’s population.

Research-Driven National Transformation at the 6th RASTA–PIDE Conference

“This disconnect between knowledge and governance has been one of the silent structural weaknesses of our development journey”

Addressing the 6th RASTA-PIDE Conference in Islamabad, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the urgent need to bridge the long-standing disconnect between research and policymaking in Pakistan, stating that the country’s future competitiveness depends on its ability to convert knowledge into national capability, innovation into productivity, and research into practical reforms. Highlighting the rapidly changing global landscape shaped by artificial intelligence, climate change, technological disruption, and geopolitical shifts, the Minister observed that the twenty-first century would increasingly be defined by an “intellectual divide” between nations capable of learning, innovating, and making evidence-based decisions and those unable to adapt. He noted that for decades, researchers and policymakers in Pakistan had largely operated on parallel tracks, resulting in valuable research remaining confined to academic circles while governance continued to face implementation and institutional challenges.



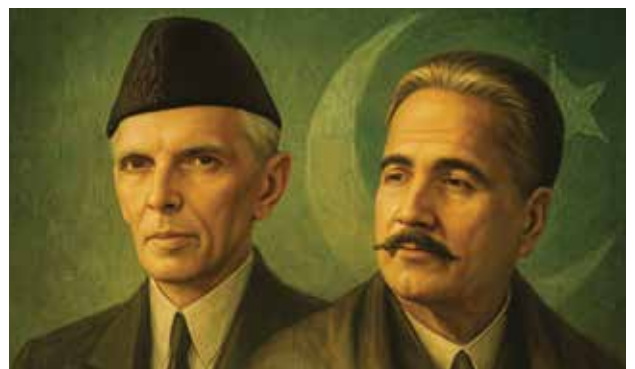
Referring to URAAN Pakistan and its 5Es framework, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal stressed that Pakistan’s ambition of becoming a one-trillion-dollar economy by 2035 and progressing toward a three-trillion-dollar economy by 2047 can only be achieved through evidence-based policymaking, institutional reform, and innovation-led development. He urged researchers to move beyond academic comfort zones and engage directly with communities, businesses, exporters, farmers, and youth to better understand ground realities and produce more relevant, interdisciplinary, and implementable research. Emphasizing that the true value of research lies not merely in diagnosing problems but in providing actionable solutions, the Minister highlighted the importance of the RASTA Competitive Grants Programme in building a national ecosystem connecting academia, think tanks, ministries, provincial governments, and development partners around solving real national challenges.

“Because at the end of the day, the true purpose of research is not merely to understand society, it is to improve it,” he concluded.

Commemorating the 150th birth anniversaries of Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal at the Global Level

The Ministry reviewed preparations for commemorating the 150th birth anniversaries of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal in 2026 through international outreach initiatives.

The meeting emphasized the use of films, documentaries, digital storytelling, and modern media platforms to project Pakistan’s intellectual, ideological, and civilizational heritage before global audiences. The Ministry stressed the importance of historically authentic and world-class creative productions capable of engaging younger generations.



Balochistan Investment Conference 2026: Positioning Balochistan as Pakistan’s Economic Frontier

“Balochistan is not merely a province rich in natural resources; it is Pakistan’s future gateway for regional connectivity, investment, trade and sustainable economic growth.”

At the Balochistan Investment Conference 2026, the Ministry highlighted the province’s strategic importance in regional connectivity, trade, logistics, renewable energy, mining, fisheries, and agriculture under CPEC Phase-II, positioning the province as a future gateway for regional trade and sustainable economic growth.

The Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives emphasized that investments in Gwadar, transport infrastructure, educational institutions, and connectivity corridors are transforming Balochistan into a future gateway for sustainable economic growth and regional integration. What once was a rough, unpaved track connecting Gwadar to Quetta has today become a symbol of connectivity, resilience and national development. Addressing the Balochistan Investment Conference 2026, Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal reflected on the transformation of a route that once took two days to travel into a 650-kilometre highway completed within nearly three years. He paid tribute to the 43 FWO soldiers who embraced martyrdom during the construction process, acknowledging their sacrifice as part of Balochistan’s journey towards connectivity and progress. The conference also invited international investors to partner in unlocking the province’s vast development potential.



METSFAB 2026: Strengthening “Made in Pakistan”

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of METSFAB 2026 at Expo Centre Lahore, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that industrial growth, technological advancement, and export expansion are essential for achieving sustainable economic stability and transforming Pakistan into a globally competitive economy. Highlighting the country’s vast potential in engineering and manufacturing, he stated that the Government is taking practical steps to establish “Made in Pakistan” as a trusted symbol of quality, innovation, and reliability in international markets. The Minister noted that strong manufacturing sectors form the backbone of developed economies and stressed that Pakistan’s youth possess the talent and capability to excel in industrial innovation and modern technology. Referring to the Government’s broader economic agenda, he highlighted the target of increasing Pakistan’s exports to \$100 billion over the next decade through industrial modernization, productivity enhancement, and investment promotion. He further emphasized that reforms aimed at reducing bureaucratic hurdles and creating a business-friendly environment are being implemented to attract domestic and foreign investment, while exhibitions such as METSFAB provide an important platform for showcasing Pakistan’s industrial capabilities before the global community.



Pakistan-China Cooperation Enhances Climate Resilience and Disaster Preparedness

Addressing the 2nd Pakistan-China Symposium on Hydrological and Geological Disaster Risk Reduction, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that climate change has become a major development and economic challenge for Pakistan, which remains among the countries most vulnerable to climate-induced disasters despite contributing less than one percent to global greenhouse gas emissions. Highlighting increasing risks from floods, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), droughts, earthquakes, landslides, and extreme weather events, the Minister noted that nearly 80 percent of Pakistan’s annual rainfall occurs during the monsoon season, while 60-70 percent of Indus River flows depend on snow and glacial melt across more than 13,000 glaciers nationwide.

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal stated that under URAAN Pakistan, the Government is prioritizing climate resilience, risk-informed infrastructure, and anticipatory governance by strengthening early warning systems, AI-enabled forecasting, satellite monitoring, hazard mapping, and real-time emergency coordination through NDMA and Pakistan Meteorological Department initiatives. Prof. Ahsan Iqbal further highlighted that under CPEC cooperation with China, Pakistan is operationalizing intelligent meteorological observation stations and integrated cloud-based early warning systems to improve disaster preparedness and institutional resilience, while expanding bilateral cooperation in climate science, geospatial technologies, disaster forecasting, and resilient infrastructure planning.



Pakistan-Bangladesh Knowledge Corridor Revives Institutional and Regional Engagement

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary hosted a historic 12-member delegation of senior Bangladeshi civil servants visiting Pakistan under the Pakistan-Bangladesh Knowledge Corridor initiative and the Executive Development Programme jointly organized by the Pakistan Civil Services Academy and the Bangladesh Civil Services Academy.

Describing the visit as the first high-level institutional exchange of its kind in 53 years, the Minister termed it a significant step toward rebuilding people-to-people connections, strengthening institutional partnerships, and opening a new chapter of cooperation between the two countries. He emphasized that Pakistan and Bangladesh share deep historical, cultural, and emotional ties, and highlighted the importance of educational exchanges, mutual learning, and stronger regional collaboration in governance and development.

Addressing the delegation, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal stressed that rapidly changing global realities shaped by artificial intelligence, climate change, technological disruption, and rising citizen expectations require governance systems that are citizen-centric, transparent, responsive, and technology-driven. He outlined Pakistan's ongoing civil service reforms under the SMART Framework focused on building Specialized, Merit-based, Accountable, Responsive, and Technology-driven institutions capable of meeting modern governance challenges.

The Minister also briefed the delegation on URAAN Pakistan and its 5Es framework for long-term national transformation, emphasizing the need to strengthen exports, digital governance, climate resilience, infrastructure, and human development to achieve Pakistan's goal of becoming a one-trillion-dollar economy by 2035.

The 21-day Executive Development Programme, which began in Karachi on May 4, provided the delegation opportunities to engage with senior federal and provincial leadership to better understand governance systems, policy innovation, and executive leadership models in Pakistan.



Celebrating 75 Years of Pakistan-China Diplomatic Relations

Commemorating 75 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary described the Pakistan-China partnership as one of the world's most enduring examples of mutual trust, sovereign equality, and shared development. Addressing the ceremony at the Pakistan-China Friendship Centre in Islamabad, the Minister emphasized that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) represents far more than infrastructure and connectivity projects, describing it as a transformative vision linking economies, cultures, people, and futures through regional integration and sustainable development. He noted that over the decades, bilateral relations have evolved into a comprehensive strategic partnership contributing significantly to Pakistan's economic revival, energy security, industrial development, and regional connectivity. Paying tribute to the thousands of Chinese engineers and workers who contributed to Pakistan's development journey, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal termed their dedication a reflection of the enduring "iron brotherhood" between the two nations. Highlighting the future direction of bilateral cooperation, he stated that the next phase of Pakistan-China partnership under CPEC 2.0 would increasingly focus on innovation, youth development, digital connectivity, education, culture, and technology-driven growth. The Minister also holds the unique distinction of representing Pakistan in the signing of agreements for both CPEC Phase-I and CPEC 2.0, reflecting continuity of vision and commitment in advancing the strategic partnership between the two countries.



NEWS IN PICTURES



A high-level meeting on "Export Roadmap" chaired by the Planning Minister.



Federal Minister Prof Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary, in discussions with the Chairman Fashion group China



Prof Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary in the meeting with the delegation from Nestle Pak Dairy



The Minister, in discussions with Surveyor General of Pakistan (SG)



Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal in a meeting with Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti



The Planning Minister, Prof Ahsan Iqbal chairing a high level meeting on "Climate Flood Emergencies"





Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives

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