

Empowered Youth will shape a Stronger Pakistan by 2047: Experts

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Pakistan must empower its youth through education, practical skills, economic opportunity and a strong sense of national purpose to build a stronger, more cohesive and prosperous country by 2047. This assessment emerged at a seminar titled “National Unity and Strength: The Future of Youth in the Next 20 Years,” organised by the Centre for Law and Security (CLAS).

Ambassador Sardar Masood Khan, President, CLAS, delivered the opening and concluding remarks. The session was moderated by Mr. Rehman Azhar, Executive Director, CLAS.

Representatives from the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR) and TMUC Pakistan, together with students from diverse regional and academic backgrounds from all over Pakistan including AJK and Gilgit Baltistan, collectively assessed how young Pakistanis could contribute to economic strength, national unity, strategic resilience and international engagement over the next 20 years.

A key theme was preparing young Pakistanis for the next two decades through education, skills development and entrepreneurship. Participants highlighted disparities in access to education and training and stressed that academic qualifications should be complemented by practical and vocational skills. Digital learning and emerging technologies were identified as important means of widening access, while closer public-private cooperation was encouraged.

Speakers also highlighted national cohesion, regional and provincial identities, representation and the need for a shared national purpose. It was observed that unity did not require unanimity and that differences of opinion could coexist with national cohesion. Greater interaction among students from different regions and recognition of the contributions of all parts of the country were considered important to strengthening unity.

The discussion further reflected on governance and institutional effectiveness. Participants emphasised stronger local governments, decentralisation, improved public-service delivery and transparent e-governance. Greater accountability, clearer institutional responsibility and a shift towards service-oriented governance were considered important to strengthening public institutions.

Meaningful youth participation was also identified as a significant requirement. Participants emphasised greater inclusion of young people in decision-making and highlighted the importance of representation, mentorship and confidence, particularly for young women and students from rural and underrepresented backgrounds.

Participants underscored the importance of employment, entrepreneurship and domestic enterprise. Energy costs, taxation and constraints on local and household industries were discussed, while greater technological capability and market-relevant skills were considered necessary to turn Pakistan's large youth population into productive human capital. Greater support for Pakistani businesses and brands was considered important for employment, innovation and economic growth.

It was also noted that the information environment could reinforce existing biases and deepen polarisation. Participants stressed the importance of verifying information, recognising confirmation bias, considering opposing viewpoints and exercising independent judgement. Young people were encouraged to listen to differing perspectives rather than seek only validation of existing positions.

The seminar also considered youth migration, the search for education and employment abroad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and the wider Kashmir issue, and climate change. Speakers observed that seeking opportunities overseas was not unique to Pakistan, while emphasising the importance of creating greater opportunities at home. The interaction also stressed responsibility and dialogue in approaching complex political questions. Climate change was identified as a long-term economic and policy concern whose costs should be incorporated into planning for the next 20 years.

Contributions to the discussion were made by Mr. Altaf Hussain Wani, Chairman of the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR); Ms. Syeda Maureen Zaidi, Head of Laws at TMUC Pakistan; and participating students, who raised questions and recommendations concerning education, skills, governance, economic opportunity, national identity, youth representation, migration, information literacy, climate change and practical approaches to strengthening national cohesion.

In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Sardar Masood Khan urged participants not only to identify problems but also to consider how they could be improved. He emphasised that the purpose of the session was not to provide ready-made answers, but to enable young people to express their views, develop independent judgement and consider how Pakistan should move forward over the next 20 years.



