

Vice Chancellor's Message



Economic growth should be our single most important priority. Governments and people should dream of nothing else. This is the way followed by countries like China, Korea, and Vietnam when they wanted to grow. China even gave up ideology to seek practical solutions to growth including opening up their economy.

Pakistan lacks that single-minded determination for growth. Our leaders and their policies lack the fervor and depth of the policies that countries like China and Korea have shown. Besides we want the easy way out, looking for funding and easy policy suggestions from donors. Begging has never created success.

All countries that wanted sustained growth adopted a pragmatic approach allowing their populations to seize opportunity. Their policies were fine-tuned consistently, their markets nurtured, and even foreign and security policies adapted to the needs of economic growth. Such countries paid attention to research and development and monitoring and evaluation to erase barriers to investment and learning.

Growth is in human DNA. And growth is basically human learning and knowledge. Humanity yearns for knowledge and growth. Experience has shown that some societies preclude this learning because some extractive elite captures the state to benefit from the status quo. The extractive elite would like to suggest that knowledge is formal education which they will prescribe and serve within the extractive framework.

The knowledge that humanity requires is far broader than that which can be prescribed in hallowed halls. It is the knowledge that creators and innovators (e.g. Bill Gates, Steve Jobs) create regardless of their credentials. Such knowledge is created in a combination of a thoughtful government, efficient competitive markets and great dense commercial and youthful cities. The process has to be underpinned by a thoughtful government!

PIDE's major research theme is unlocking ideas for realizing Pakistan's growth potential. We offer you some food for thought from this research. We would love your feedback.