

BUSINESS RECORDER

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PIDE hosts 'Opportunities to Excel: Now & the Future' moot in Peshawar

RECORDER REPORT
PESHAWAR: The four day 35th AGM and Conference of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE), on "Opportunities to Excel: Now & the Future", hosted by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), in collaboration with the Institute of Management Sciences held in Peshawar.

The Conference is being sponsored by the World Bank Group, CPEC Centre of Excellence, the Bank of Punjab, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Gul Ahmed Textile Mills Limited, National Productivity

Organization (NPO) Pakistan, HBL, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), Saif Group of Companies, Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company (PMIC), Engro, and the Bank of Khyber.

The conference second day agenda included the prestigious Quaid-i-Azam lecture, delivered by Dr Arshad Ahmed, VC LUMS, the Sir Syed Ahmed Khan Lecture, delivered by Mahboob Mahmood, CEO, Knowledge Platform, a panel discussion on "Opportunities to Excel", Special Invited Lecture delivered by Hans Timmer, Regional Chief Economist,

the World Bank, and the Mahbub Ul Haq Lecture, delivered virtually by Prof Dani Rodrik of the Harvard University.

Besides these lectures and the panel discussion, the agenda also included technical sessions in which research papers on the topics of productivity, entrepreneurship, and sludge; political economy; and aspirations, opportunities, and labour market were presented.

The agenda of third day of the four-day, included the prestigious Allama Iqbal lecture, delivered by Taimur Saleem Khan Jhagra, Finance Minister, KP, panel discussions on "Opportunities: The

Role of the State", "Opportunities for Firms to Grow" and "Shaping Success in the Creative Arts & Media". The agenda also included M. L. Qureshi Lecture, delivered by Prof Cass Sunstein, a professor at Harvard University. Besides these lectures and panel discussions, research papers on the topics of climate change, themes in development, urbanisation, and financial institutions were presented in technical sessions.

Taimur Khan Jhagra, the Minister for Finance, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, started by stressing on the youth of the day that ambition, hope, and

perseverance are the three key words they need to grab hold of, or create opportunities for themselves. There will be disappointments along the way, but one must never lose hope. Never compromise on principles. This is how individuals, communities and nations succeed. Moreover, change is inevitable, and we have to crack open the doors that resist any positive change.

The concluding session of the 35th AGM and Conference of the PSDE was graced by the honourable President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr Arif Alvi.

Speaking on the occasion he

said that we only have one life in this world, satisfaction is the key and we should recognise that opportunity and excellence can be separate as well. The President said that data is the new oil, and a great opportunity for Pakistan to utilise.

However, if we do not use it to our advantage, a big opportunity would be wasted. Pakistan handled the pandemic well, which shows we can handle other challenges and opportunities if we recognise them.

The pandemic brought about a paradigm shift, so we can adapt to emerging opportunities when needed. Our youth needs to find opportuni-

ties that are all around us and institutions need to help them find the door. Venture capital is everywhere and our youth needs to tap it and make smart decisions.

The agenda for the last day included two panel sessions on Opportunities Now, and Disruptions: The Future of Work, the closing ceremony for the occasion, and the concluding session. The agenda also included a series of technical sessions where research papers on the topics of inclusive development, place and people, inclusive growth and development, financial inclusion and the enablers and constraints for start-up ecosystems

were presented.

Moderating an earlier panel discussion on 'Opportunities Now', Dr Durre Nayab, Director Research, PIDE, expressed the view that the youth of today has lost their sense of patience and are eager to reap any benefits without putting in hard work and sweat. Pervez Hoodbhoy expressed the view that the domain of opportunity is limited for our youth. And the reason it is limited is that the process of industrialisation has not really bloomed in Pakistan. Other countries have refined thought processes, and easily translate ideas and notions into actions.