

Scenario 256

100 DAYS OF PM KHAN (PERFORMANCE)-II

ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN PTI ERA:

The PTI, in its manifesto, stated that: '*It will increase FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC SECTOR by establishing significant quotas for women in local government and boards of public bodies*'. However, the PTI was able to put adequate efforts for filling of **quotas for women in public bodies** and substantially increase their participation in the govt departments – but might be missing rosy picture of complete success or their input due to Covid-19 and insufficient tenure of stay in government.

On 19th April 2019: The Khyber PK cabinet approved an amended version of the Local Government Act 2013 wherein, inter-alia, the village and neighbourhood councils were asked to have 33pc quota for women, five per cent for youth, while that of minorities was kept intact in the amended law. Whereas, in media headlines of 30th June 2019 had held that '...the new Punjab Local Government Act of 2019 offers little to women for their political participation and their reserved seats have decreased'. Therefore, the Punjab government was supposed to amend the PLGA of 2019 to enhance ratio of women representation to at least 33pc through reserved seats – **but CM Buzdar was unable to do it.**

In a conference titled '**The new Local Govt Law and Women Representation**', organised by the 'Women in Struggle for Empowerment' (WISE), the councillors held:

"Though women are 49% of the population, the ratio of their representation at different tiers like metropolitan, municipal corporation and tehsil council etc is not more than 16pc. This gradual decrease negated the government commitments under sustainable development goals, national policies and action plans devised for the political empowerment of women."

According to a media report, titled as '**The Punjab Local Govt Act 2019**', launched on 26th July 2020; the representation of women was seen much reduced, from 33pc cent in 2001 to less than 10 per cent in the successive local governments. This was highlighted therein that women, peasants and labourers representation ratio had considerably lowered over the time. The report was issued by the Women in Struggle for Empowerment (Wise) in Lahore – and the PTI govt took it as challenge to move forward.

The PTI govt's commitments were very clear so as the PM's promise, its national policies and its action plans devised for the political empowerment of women. Refusing special representation for peasants / labours in the neighbourhood councils by previous govt had led to further marginalization of the vulnerable sections of society. Irony remained that in the history of local governance in Pakistan, not many genuine efforts were made to protect the political and electoral interests of such sections including women.

On 6th August 2020: In CASE NO. 29-RH-2019 the PUNJAB PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION announced that '*the under mentioned candidates have been recommended to the Provincial Government for appointment to the posts of DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY (BS-18+RS.17,500 - AS SPECIAL ALLOWANCE) IN THE PUNJAB LAW AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT*'. (Thereafter, 8 male names were given as selectees) Then the following NOTE:

Note: - i) Two (02 including 01 post reserved for women quota and 01 post reserved for special persons' quota) posts remained vacant due to non-availability of candidate.
ii) No more Female candidate is available for the above said post. Therefore, as per notification No. SOR-IV(S&GAD)15-1/2012(3) dated 21-05-2012, one (01) post reserved for women quota shall be treated as unreserved and filled on merit. (SECRETARY)

On 24th March 2021: PTI's Federal Minister Shireen Mazari said the crisis emanating from the coronavirus pandemic had created an important opportunity to take stock of the progress made globally in advancing the protection and promotion of the rights of women. In her statement during the 65th Session of ***the Commission on Status of Women*** held from 15-26 March in New York, she said it was a time to reflect on the challenges that continue to stand in the way of women's rights and equal participation in decision making in all facets of public life. She said that '*The protection and promotion of the rights of women are one of the key pillars of Pakistan's development paradigm*' – but practically the process was under progress till then.

The protection of women was one of the key priority areas of PTI's Action Plan on Human Rights. Women Protection Centres were established all over the country to address grievances. A National Helpline (1099) also provided (still it's in place) free legal advice and a robust redressal and referral mechanism. The Ehsaas Program's **Social Protection Program** was designed to provide social assistance to women and improve financial inclusion and economic empowerment of women. In order to encourage women's employment, the PTI Govt had announced a minimum of 10% quota for women in public sector employment. To facilitate working women, women hostels and day-care facilities were being provided at public and private offices.

On 8th March 2022: Radio Pakistan presented an analytical report on Women development and its allied fields. The theme of that year's International Women's Day was: '***Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow***'; the PTI govt asked the people to raise their voices against violation of women rights. The right of women specified a share of inheritance and entitlement to own and possess property, as enshrined in the Quranic edicts and duly regulated by State legislation.

Ehsaas program launched by the PTI government and run under the control of **Dr Sania Nishtar** was aimed to support the women especially. Initially, 50% quota was allocated to the females in the program but after three years of its implementation, ***the quota was increased to almost 98%***. In Ehsaas program, the girls were getting more stipend-amount as compared to the boys. Moreover, as per the policy, the girls were getting 50% of total scholarships provided by the government.

In PTI regime, Pakistan did well regarding women empowerment. The state had first time a 3-star female General in the Pak-Army. Justice Ayesha A. Malik became the first female judge of the Supreme Court in the history of Pakistan. It was good development that the PTI govt ensured representation of women in every field and majority of women parliamentarians from the PTI were also in the congregation to show women empowerment. However, there was a big challenge of increased violence against women not only in Pakistan but across the globe. The Constitution of Pakistan also guaranteed safeguards in that respect.

[However, the fact remained that the real powers were concentrated with the provincial governments instead of local governments, which negated the real spirit of Article 140-A and Article 32 of the Pakistan's Constitution. In Pakistani society it has been the practice since decades but little disappointments cropped up because the populace was expecting cogent results of NAYA Pakistan – forgetting that ROME WAS NOT BUILT IN A DAY.]

The PTI did make much better progress on a core promise for women; the establishment of **WOMEN POLICE STATIONS** in each district of the country. The PTI had high hopes to reform police in Pakistan, an institution the party termed '*ill-equipped, poorly trained, deeply politicised, and chronically corrupt*', in

its manifesto, adding that '*Police reforms have been neglected by successive governments to continue using the force as a political tool*'. One part of the reforms promised was the establishment of women police stations and desks '*at all levels to facilitate female empowerment*'.

On 27th November 2018: Khyber PK police established 22 model police stations in various parts of the province to provide easy justice and access to the high echelon of power. **Women desks** were also established in these model police stations for redressal of their confronting problems and grievances; ladies' police were deployed on duty in that regard. Besides, two lady doctors were also performing duty on these desks to provide first aid to the injured persons of any incident.

On 30th April 2019: Balochistan's first women police station was seen by media members under construction at a cost of Rs:50 million. *'Due to traditional and tribal taboos women cannot visit common police stations to lodge their complaints. With the opening of the first women police station, most legal and social issues of women will be resolved. The completion of a police station for women will also provide jobs for females.'* The IGP Baluchistan told the media.

On 13th May 2020: City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi constituted women police unit in Rawalpindi police, in accordance of which lady police officers and lady police constables were to be deputed in 12 police stations of Rawalpindi. The said Unit was equipped to address and resolve complaints and issues of women in relating cases of women in police stations. Later, these women police officials were deployed as Additional SHOs in 12 police stations of Rawalpindi. During September till December 2021, many exclusive 'women only' police stations and special desks were opened nearly in all provinces including AJK; some districts were Jhelum, Swabi, Peshawar, Swat and Rawalakot [AJK].

On 5th March 2022: The first police station for women in Baluchistan opened its doors; the facility in Quetta was inaugurated by Inspector General Police (IGP) Baluchistan. The police station dedicated to serve women in Baluchistan came into existence **28 years after the first such facility** was set up else where in the country. Pakistan's first women police station was inaugurated by late PM Benazir Bhutto in Islamabad on 25th January 1994.

PTI PROMISES ON EDUCATION:

PM Khan's other promise: In order to promote gender parity, the PTI, in its manifesto had stated that it 'will prioritise establishment and **UPGRADATION OF GIRLS SCHOOLS**'. Much was done during 3 year's short span; but more work still left to be done.

On 13th April 2019; Gilgit-Baltistan CM Hafiz Hafeez told the media that his Govt would set up ten model schools in the region every year to impart quality education. At the inaugural ceremony of Begum Waqar-un Nisa Higher Secondary School in Kashrote area of Gilgit, he said 282 middle schools were established in Gilgit Baltistan during the previous four years. **On 24th June 2019:** Special Secretary Khyber KP Education Department told that work on construction of 70 girls' schools was in full swing. **On 1st October 2019,** buildings of two new degree colleges for girls in Orakzai and Wana, South Waziristan were okayed for construction.

On 18th August 2021: **ONE Girls high school** was re-opened in newly constructed building after 8 years; around 200 girl students attended the classes on the very first day. The school had been destroyed in a blast eight years ago and since then it was closed. The students were sent to Colony High School then, located at some distance from Miranshah city.

On 15th March 2022: Elementary and Secondary Education Foundation [ESEF] announced to establish 1,000 more girls' community schools in the upcoming academic year to enroll out of school children in the targeted areas of Khyber PK. The said schools were to be set up in those localities where there was no government school at a distance of 500 meters in hilly areas and one km in the plan areas. Though the schools were for girls, yet in many of such schools the foundation had enrolled boys also because of the non-availability of schools for them in the near vicinity. Other ESEF schools were to be upgraded to middle and high levels in two years

The ESEF produced exemplary results during one year on job; a total of 2,219 community schools were operating in 26 districts of the province and the number could cross the figure of 3,000 with the establishment of some more such schools. 500 community schools were set up in year 2021. 154,650 students were enrolled in the community schools where 3,172 teachers were imparting education to them.

Complete digitalization of ESEF was another milestone achievement of the foundation to ensure transparency. Digital profiling of 3,000 teachers and 145,000 students was complete (till then) while online attendance of 130,000 students were ensured on daily basis. **ESEF was set up to enroll out of school children in areas where formal government schools were not available.** The foundation was the brain-child of the PTI govt; more than Rs:2200 million budget was released by the provincial educational admin.

[One can seriously ponder upon the speed and level of interest the PTI govt had been showing during their 3+ years tenure. Target was settled at 100% literacy rate in NAYA PAKISTAN; the PTI govt did their best in Northern Areas & Khyber PK but in Punjab, the CM Buzdar went lethargic in the education field too.]

'On a similar count, the establishment of five universities during the first two years of the PTI government was a matchless achievement while work on three more universities was underway in Punjab'; media news, both print and electronic of 17th December 2020 is referred.

More so, 1500 lecturers were also being recruited through the Punjab Public service Commission (PPSC) to overcome staff shortage in colleges. Academic activities at the University of Mianwali, Women University Rawalpindi, University of Chakwal and Kohsar University Murree, had started while Baba Guru Nanak University in Nankana Saheb was under construction. Work got started on the establishment of Thal University in Bhakar; the foundation of the University of Hafizabad was laid down by PM Khan himself while Sialkot University of Applied Engineering & Technology worth Rs:14 billion had been set on working.

Government College University Faisalabad, Government College Women University Sialkot, Women University Bahawalpur, Nawaz Sharif University of Technology, University of Sahiwal and University of Jhang were being uplifted because those were in poor condition since many years.

Additionally, the statutes of certain universities were not established by the previous governments. The PTI govt managed to organise the statutes of 18 universities and the summaries were (then) moved for approval.

During the PTI regime, the higher education department launched e-transfers of their teaching staff. The e-transfer mechanism not only closed windows of red-tape but also established a corruption-free merit system in the department. Moreover, Rs:28 billion were allocated for the Annual Development Plan of the higher education sector but it had to be cut down after the Covid-19 pandemic.

REVAMPING OF MADRASSAHS:

The PTI, in its manifesto, had stated that 'it will map out and register all seminaries across Pakistan and introduce science and mathematics teaching as formal subjects within the Madrassah curriculum'. Let us take it up under a broad heading: **REGISTRATION OF MADRASSAHS**; while revamping of their curriculum was their main objective.

On 3rd October 2018: A delegation comprising five heads of major *madrassah* boards held a meeting with PM Imran Khan and discussed the government's agenda on *madrassah reforms*; the delegation was headed by Mufti Muneebur Rehman. Accompanied with Education Minister Shafqat Mehmood, the premier informed the delegation that ***mainstreaming education standards of religious seminaries was among the top priorities of the government***. PM Khan wanted to eradicate the class-based education system and introduce uniform syllabi and curriculum in the education sector, which included the seminaries.

On 7th December 2018: PM Khan reiterated his resolve through a joint communique (*Usman Dar's meeting with Minister for Religious Affairs is referred*) to include all young students who study in seminaries into the framework of his ***Naya Pakistan Youth Program***. **On 6th May 2019:** Education Minister Shafqat Mahmood told the nation through a media conference that education ministry ***had completed its initial work to register all seminaries*** and none would be allowed to promote hatred and sectarianism. The heads of religious boards / seminaries – had also agreed and finalised with consensus an agreement for ***registration of all 30,000 seminaries operating in the country***, subsequently the number raised to 35,000.

The education ministry was ready to set up 10 regional centres in various parts of the country for registration of seminaries; *those seminaries which would not acquire registration were to be closed*. All registered seminaries were instructed to have an account in schedule banks. Registered seminaries were allowed to enrol foreign students (*which practice has already been there in most madrassahs BUT without permission or even knowledge of the respective governments*). The foreign students, mostly from Afghanistan, were to continue for NINE years and the education ministry could help those students in their visa and settling down processes.

For *Technical and Vocational Education*, the seminaries were to be facilitated in getting registered with vocational training institutions. After holding discussion, ***all decisions were made with consensus, and the religious scholars signed the document***, detailing all decisions made that day. PTI government was to provide all necessary patronage to seminaries so that their students could also get maximum chances to excel. They were promised for chances to get contemporary education besides religious education.

Next day, the federal cabinet approved a uniform curriculum for all education institutions in the country, including 30,000 madrassahs.

However, just after about 3 months, *on 10th August 2019*; in a very odd move, ***Ittehad Tanzeemat-i-Madaris Pakistan [ITMP] declined to share data of religious seminaries*** with personnel of any law enforcement agency and warned to announce a protest movement in case the process of data collection was not stopped forthwith. Sharing details of the agreement signed between the ITMP and PTI government dated *6th May 2019*, they accused the federal government of failing to set up regional centres for registration of the religious seminaries with ministry of federal education and professional training.

The fact remained that *Shafqat Mahmood's federal ministry had done nothing for registration of 30,000 madrassahs* nor any centre was established as per agreement, nor any arrangement to facilitate the seminaries in getting registered with vocational training institutions was done.

Instead, various law enforcement agencies had started collecting details regarding the students and teachers; also, that govt personnel had started visiting the female

seminaries and that too at night – (might be an allegation or exaggeration BUT the matter could have been investigated in detail and seriously) - **intolerable for ITMP – NO investigation done into those odd events whatsoever.**

On 19th December 2019: A Directorate established in Religious Affairs ministry for registration of over 35,000 seminaries, operating across the country. The seminaries had, in principle, agreed with the govt's initiative for bringing their students in the mainstream in order to ensure a uniform education system in the country. " *The religious seminaries had affirmed that their students would appear in middle, secondary and intermediate (O & A level) examination of Federal Board like other public or private schools.*"

IN FACT, IT WAS AN UPHILL TASK WHICH THE PTI GOVT DARED TO START AND HANDLE – BECAUSE THE RELIGIOUS MADRASSAHS HAD ALLEGEDLY EARNED THE REPUTATION OF BEING CENTRES OF HATRED & SECTARIAL VOILENCE. MOSTLY, THEIR SOURCES OF INCOME ARE UNKNOWN AND NO ACCOUNT-BOOKS OF THEIR EXPENDITURES ARE ON PUBLIC-RECORD.

The PTI government had established **National Curriculum Council** [NCC] under which the new curriculum from class one to five was being prepared AND to be introduced by March 2020. All stakeholders including public and private sector schools, *Madrasas*, concerned departments were taken on board while preparing new curriculum. The public, private schools and religious seminaries were made bound to adopt **One National Curriculum**.

Then the news appeared in media on 31st December 2019 that the federal government had planned the registration of the country's all religious schools by the end of its five-year constitutional term in 2023 - **PTI was doing the right job BUT the process was going slow because of federal education ministry's lethargic and sluggish attitude; it was not taken as MISSION.** New govt directive was:

"We've around 35,000 seminaries across the country, which all will be registered in the next four years as part of our efforts to bring them into the mainstream. Our registration exercise will target 2,000-3,000 religious' schools in the first year and the rest in the next three years."

Federal Education ministry had established a directorate and 16 countrywide offices for seminary registration. Every seminary had to appoint two teachers of its own choice to impart contemporary formal education to students with the federal government paying each of them Rs:17,000 stipend a month. It was a serious effort for mainstreaming of seminary-class and to ensure their contribution of seminaries in the national development. However, statistics about achievements in this regard were not placed before media.

Education continued to be a provincial subject as guaranteed in the 18th Constitutional Amendment. Federation and provinces were jointly working on education reforms, especially uniform curriculum, so decisions and moves in that respect were acceptable to all – it was an indication of national spirit. Look the apathy of Imran Khan's chosen team here:

"Under an initiative of the education ministry, **0.2 million (only?) children are being provided with technical education.** We're also going to launch a comprehensive programme with the \$450 million assistance of the World Bank to improve the quality of education in schools;" – progress either remained NIL or it was blatant lie by the rogue management members of the PTI; Imran Khan was helpless, many had the opinion.

Till 20th February 2020 at least, the registration process had not taken shape; however, by 9th May 2021, 5,000 seminaries were got registered across the country. On 25th March 2022, 9000 plus religious seminaries were existing on the federal ministry's roll – PTI had given a guideline at least.

The Single National Curriculum (SNC) and model textbooks were to be adopted across the Punjab province for grade pre-1 to 5 in the academic session beginning August 2021, according to a notification issued on 1st January 2021 by the provincial curriculum and textbook board - public, private and religious seminaries all were adopting it – but no statistics on record.

The Punjab government on 25th March 2022 distributed Single National Curriculum (SNC) textbooks for primary grades to students and administrations of 500 *madaris* at a ceremony. National Curriculum Council (NCC) told the media that: "...36,500 seminary children would benefit from these books. For the first time in the history of the country, children in madaris will be taught science, mathematics and English like other school children."

PTI ON TECHNICAL EDUCATION:

Imran Khan's PTI, in its manifesto, stated that 'PTI will establish at least 10 technical universities in Pakistan to provide skills to our youth' – but **couldn't find time to establish the first NEW one even.**

On 23rd November 2018: Punjab cabinet validated establishment of Punjab University of Technology campus in Mandi Bahauddin. On 7th March 2019: The Punjab Assembly passed a Bill for the establishment of first state of the art university of technology in Dera Ghazi Khan division. The Rs:2.3 billion project was meant to promote research for producing quality technical human resource. The PC-1 of the project had been prepared in advance.

The said technology university was spread over 288 kanal land. 14 colleges of technology were imparting technical education to students in DG Khan division. The project of Mir Chakar Rind University of Technology was included in the annual development programme of 2019-20. Four technology subjects were to be taught in the university at the initial stage, including electrical, mechanical & civil engineering [**manifestly the old beaten subjects – producing another junk-lot of useless engineers**] and computer technology. Since DG Khan was situated on the western route of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), it was beneficial project for youth.

On 6th December 2019: Peshawar's Technical Education and Training Authority [TEVTA] approved the execution of an Annual Development Programme (ADP) scheme regarding the establishment of a **Government Polytechnic Institute** (GPI) in the Mathra neighbourhood of Peshawar through a budgetary allocation of Rs:17.24 million.

The TEVTA board approved a revised budget for the fiscal years 2018-19 & 2019-20 worth Rs:3.99 billion also. The board also approved the Project Concept-I (PC-I) for the establishment of GTVC at Bakhshali with a sub-campus in the Sawal Dher Industrial estate in Mardan at a cost of Rs:120.04 million, purchasing 10 kanals of land for setting up the GPI and the GTVC in Matta, approving the PC-I for the establishment of GTVC at Pind Cargo Khan in Abbottabad at a cost of Rs:159.88m and six months mandatory training curricula for TEVTA teaching staff. The board also provisionally approved a PC-I for establishing a GTVC for boys in Bannu for Rs:146.998 million.

On 16th December 2019: Baluchistan's Finance Minister Mir Buledi laid the foundation stone of a 150-bed hospital and a Pak-China Friendship Technical and Vocational Training Institute at Gwadar. China provided a grant of 240 million RMB (Chinese currency) for the construction of the hospital and 87 million RMB for the construction of the institute. The two projects were to be completed within two years. Till ending PTI govt in April 2022, Technical & Vocational institute was nearly ready to welcome students.

On 8th March 2020: The Technical and Vocational Training Authority [Tevta] started handing over assets of four of its colleges to three newly-established technology universities including Punjab Tianjin University of Technology (PTUT) Lahore, Punjab University of Technology Rasul (PUTR) Mandi Bahauddin and The Mir Chakar Khan Rind University of Technology Dera Ghazi Khan. The said 3-universities were established by the Punjab Industries, Commerce, Investment and Skills Development Department (PICISD). Under the relevant Act of 2018, the Punjab government had to transfer all the assets & liabilities to the pertinent specified universities. Mostly the employees, regular or contractual, serving these colleges were transferred to the universities concerned.

Tevta started upgrading the colleges to universities under the quota of 80pc students of DAE *{Each polytechnic runs its own Direct Admissions Exercise (DAE) for students with local or international qualifications who are not eligible to apply for courses under other admissions exercises.}* to get admission there; earlier there was only 2pc quota for DAE students in technology universities of the country. The said colleges were constituent colleges of the university and all their courses could continue as such. Tevta was having 44 technology colleges in the province and four of them were upgraded. Tevta adjusted those employees because the department was facing shortage of around 6,000 teachers then – ***a remarkable contribution of Imran Khan*** towards the national cause.

On 17th January 2021: The Khyber PK govt approved a plan for ***establishment of Swat University of Engineering and Technology*** [SUET] within three years at a cost of Rs:8 billion. The varsity was being set up to produce market-oriented graduates. The state-run universities in Khyber PK province were financially dependent on the govt but the new university in Swat was planned to be self-sustainable, being the 1st of its kind in Khyber PK. A ***triple helix model*** was worked out for this university by connecting government, industry and academic with each other. Dr Najeebulah, the project manager of the proposed Swat University, told the media:

"The new university would offer degree programs that were benchmarked against international standards and by implementing international practices for curricula design and teaching. From day one the university would explore all auxiliary enterprises for its self-sustainability. We will focus on building technical, management and outreach capacity of SUET and strengthening its coordination with Higher Education Commission, industry and government stakeholders besides international partners.

Market-driven curricular programmes are planned for all the disciplines to be taught in the university; curricula and extra-curricular programs would be developed with the support of international partners and public and private sector stakeholders. The university would also develop teaching and research laboratories as per national and international needs."

In this regard, SUET had planned to enter into technical cooperation ***partnership with the University of Utah USA***, which was expected to facilitate building its connections with other reputable international engineering universities, research institutions and policy think tanks; also, to pursue efforts to introduce dual / joint degree programmes with such universities.

Initially six disciplines including electrical and civil engineering, institute of materials, mining and metallurgy, computer engineering, bio-medical engineering and institute of manufacturing were to be introduced in the university. The loud thinking was that *'...it will not be another engineering university - rather focused has been made on international linkages and students exchange with the best universities of the world'*.

On 12th March 2021: PM Khan himself inaugurated ***AL-QADIR UNIVERSITY*** at Sohawa near Jhelum. He had plans to transform the system of Al Qadir University similar to that of Egypt's Al Azhar University, a prestigious institution of the world. Besides taking inspiration from the West in technological development,

the Prime Minister held, '*...there are several aspects of their culture such as truth and honesty that merited replication*'. Al Qadir University was scheduled to be completed by September 2021.

On 5th July 2021: The federal and Punjab govts pledged to jointly provide funds for establishment of the ***University of Applied Engineering and Emerging Technologies (UAEET) in Sialkot***. The Punjab govt provided a free-of-cost 500 acres piece of land near Sambrial for the project whose total estimated cost was Rs:16.8bn. The federal and Punjab govts planned to provide half of the amount each for the project scheduled to be completed by 2027. The university was being established in collaboration with Austrian and Chinese technology universities and Dr Attaur Rehman, vice chairman of PM's taskforce on knowledge-economy, was already working on it.

As per the project's plan, at least five major bachelor's and master's degree programmes would be launched at the university, such as industrial engineering, manufacturing and mechatronics, chemical and materials engineering, information technology, artificial intelligence, agricultural engineering, industrial biotechnology and business management & entrepreneurship. The UAEET would also offer dual degrees of the foreign partner institutions to its graduates. Ultimately, the university would become a knowledge city, having a technology park, which will have the incubators for start-ups and shell units for small and medium size companies.

At least five academic blocks and one admin block with central library and three hostels (one for girls and two for boys), housing colony for faculty, furnished family suites for foreign faculty, activity centre, guesthouse, mosque, school, sport complex and other related facilities would be a part of project.

On 1st October 2021: The first Pakistan-China technical vocational institute, launched under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), was inaugurated in Gwadar. Nong Rong, China's Ambassador to Pakistan, attended the inauguration ceremony through video link and told that the institute, which ***had been completed at a cost of \$10 million in only 20 months***, was a sign of 70 years of Pak-China friendship.

The institute had been equipped with the state-of-the-art machinery for imparting the best technical education and skills to the youths of Baluchistan, especially of Gwadar. The students would be not only provided free accommodation but also scholarships during training in the institute. Zhang Baosheng, Chairman of the China Overseas Port Holding Company, said that:

'Technical institutes play an important role in industrial development and the trained youths would have golden opportunities to get employment in Gwadar Port, Free Zone Industry and other projects of the CPEC'.

The PTI, in its manifesto, had stated that '*it will launch a **nationwide literacy programme to engage its 50,000 youth volunteers** to teach literacy in exchange for university credits*'.

PTI PROMISES ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:

On 21st November 2018: The National Health Services [NHS] decided to start work on the ***FIRST NURSING UNIVERSITY IN PAKISTAN***; a longstanding issue of the unavailability of land was addressed by National Health Institute [NIH] Executive Director because the project was facing delays on account of possession of their lands so he decided to hand over NIH's 237 *kana*/land to the university.

[King Hamad of Bahrain had in 2014 announced that he would provide funding for the university as a gift for the people of Pakistan. It was decided that the Pakistani government would arrange the land and utility services for the university while Bahrain would fund the construction work.]

The King Hamad University of Nursing and Associated Medical Sciences was to be established on Park Road, Chak Shahzad. The university had to cater to 2,000 students with 500 annual admissions. Residences were also to be provided to 1,000 female students at the campus as well.]

In July 2016, a delegation from Bahrain led by Dr Sheikha Rana bint Isa bin Daij Al-Khalifa visited Islamabad to finalise the project. On 6th January 2017; the then PM Nawaz Sharif laid the foundation stone of the university on the site. However, possession of the land could not be secured as 700 people had filed applications with the Capital Development Authority [CDA] that they didn't want to give their lands despite they were paid their price. In mid-November 2018, PTI decided to construct the university; the project was promised to be built on turn-key basis.

On 19th September 2018: During its first 100-days of PTI's rule, the NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT [NCHD] formulated the **NATIONAL ACTION PLAN** under the Federal Ministry of Education and Technical Training **to ensure 90pc literacy rate in the country**. The said NAP envisaged that the provincial authorities would use the plans to transform policy decisions into action at the ground level.

A National Training Institute was also established to ensure quality education in its feeder schools and **ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM** along with other projects. That institute was to build capacity of professionals working in the field of literacy and non-formal education. It would also prepare Accelerated Learning Modules and condensed syllabus to provide a second chance to the interested ones to take part in educational activities. The core theme remained that education was the best remedy to all problems prevailing in the form of extremism, poverty, inequality and social injustice in the society.

In Pakistan, ironically, one fourth or 22.6 million children of 5-9 age groups were still out of school and 40pc of adult population were illiterate and thus, hampering national development and progress. It was held that providing an equal education opportunity in the remote areas was the basic right of all the citizens of the country.

[The NCHD adopted a two-pronged approach to address the issues of illiteracy in the country, adult literacy for age group 14 and above and primary education both formal education for age group 5-9 and non-Formal education for age group 10-14 to achieve 90pc literacy rate in the country.]

The NCHD made 3.96 million people literates since its inception and providing education to 335,164 children in 5,949 feeder schools in the remote areas to the marginalised group. The organization had exercised a number of innovative approaches to reach the marginalized group. Its chair-person told the media that:

"We are working in jails with the aim to provide education to the convicts and make them useful citizens. We've approached learners in seminaries with reforms and introduced primary education along with religious education in order to bring them in the mainstream of higher education."

During those days, the NCHD was successfully working in 100 Seminaries of former Federally Administered Tribal Areas [FATA], Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan and Islamabad Capital Territory. In collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency [JICA], the commission had launched a model of non-formal school system where 20 schools were functional for children of age 10-14 who could be admitted neither to the primary school nor to adult literacy centres.

To bring the disliked and **hated transgender people** at par with the rest of the society, the PTI government got set up two literacy centres in Rawalpindi; they had started operations on 3rd December 2018.

On 7th December 2018: The Punjab govt unveiled its five-year program, titled '**THE NEW DEAL 2023**', to transform school education with a focus on learning, access and equity and governance. A comprehensive plan was finalized to achieve the goals set by the leadership. Under the 2023 plan, they would introduce short-, mid- and long-term strategies to reform state schools; especially, that reforms in public schools were required in learning, access, equity and governance. To re-educate more than 70pc students who left schools after their primary education and didn't enter middle classes: '*We are working towards starting afternoon classes in 20 districts in March (2019) to provide access to children to middle and high-level classes*'.

The Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) was launched to foster data-driven decision making and devising data-based performance management system; its PC-1 was ready. The IMIS could connect 450,000 teachers with the department for getting promotions online. Education in primary schools could be imparted in Urdu and English taught as additional subject. Compulsory sports could be introduced and the program to provide bicycles to students in 20 districts were extended to other districts too.

Besides, construction of girls-friendly toilets was to be completed on priority. Similarly, a compulsory health-check program was launched in 1,700 selected schools. Weak school structures were also being restored in flood-affected areas of the province.

Drafts of **Punjab Educational Professionals Standards Council Bill 2018**, **Punjab Private Education Reform Bill 2018** and **Punjab School Truancy and Compulsory Admission Bill 2018** were prepared with the objective to regulate and improve the schooling system. Work was also being done on a performance management framework for education managers at tehsil, district and provincial levels. The govt was adopting rationalization to address the shortage of teachers also.

PTI's educationist and some professionals Punjab had opined that **Daanish School System was not a viable project** as Rs:18,000 per month (then) was being spent on one child, while millions of other students had no access to even basic facilities in public schools. Good schooling, of whatever kind, is the basic need of the country to improve literacy rate – thus PTI govt did nice that Daanish Schools were allowed to continue as such.

On 22nd February 2022: CM Khyber PK announced **FREE TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR 4000 MEN & WOMEN** of the newly merged tribal districts of the province. The announcement was made during a ceremony held in collaboration between Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority and Germany's Patrip Foundation developing a centre of renewable energy at Hayatabad, Peshawar. The Tevta also signed an MOU with Skilled Women Service Centre and KP EZDMC. The CM asked traders and industrialists to contact Tevta for skilled manpower – a commendable job in fact.

Germany's Patrip Foundation okayed to provide funding and technical assistance for the initiative, while the **Wish International** played a key role in the promotion of training. It was rightly held that CPEC and Rashakai Economic Zone necessitated the production of skilled manpower to guide the future of the province. Also, the PTI government had a vision for the poverty reduction and economic stability, and opening new avenues of employment to the skilled manpower; 4000 youths were to begin getting training then. The Women Vocational Training Centre was expanded enabling youths to get a place in the market matching their skills.

LITERACY CENTRES IN MOSQUES:

On 3rd October 2019: PTI planned to launch **LITERACY CENTRES IN MOSQUES** under the administrative control of provincial *Auqaf* Department across Punjab. *Auqaf* Department was taken on board and educated *Imams* of the mosques were engaged for teaching; to teach Mathematics, English and Urdu besides the religious teachings in vogue; *Auqaf* Department started preparing the lists of their Imams.

For such programs, the **Japan International Cooperation Agency** [JICA] had agreed to provide support and grant for the literacy and non-formal basic education after three years break; it pledged to provide support for teachers training and curriculum development as well. Japan govt's confidence was reviving after the PTI govt's transparent policy on projects while 220 institutes of the departments were revamped with the support of UNICEF during the one year.

238 new literacy centres were set up in jails since the PTI govt came to power. Also, that first time in the history of Punjab province, three centres were made for the transgender and 15 institutes for gypsies while 22,000 new students were enrolled. 1300 literacy centres in total were set up by the literacy department in various backward areas of the province; over 400,000 deserving male and female children (till then) were getting primary as well as technical education in those centres.

As per media reports dated 28th December 2019, The National Commission for Human Development [NCHD] had established 2,000 literacy centres in all provinces including Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir [AJK] to increase literacy rate in the country. To mainstream seminaries in line with the modern curriculum, 100 schools were also established with 100 teachers which enrolled 3,142 students, recognizing the fact that adult literacy was the key to improve standard of living.

The NCHD had set up these adult literacy centres in local communities providing basic literacy skills to the individuals (especially women) between the age group of 11-45, who were either never enrolled before or dropped out. The syllabus and textbooks of those centres were designed for easy learning and functionality, while communities were mobilised to provide space and appointed educated youth of the area particularly women to join those centres.

On 31st December 2019: A new model of **non-formal education** that combines literacy & labour and market skills for illiterate children and youth was developed and launched as pilot project in selected districts of Punjab and Sindh provinces with the World Bank [WB] assistance. WB had agreed to provide \$2.73 million for the pilot project, which was expected to be implemented in partnership with the Sanjh Preet Organisation [SPO] — a Lahore-based non-governmental organisation [NGO] — which had, till then, implemented 34 different projects nationwide in partnership with public, non-public, academic and international agencies and organisations, including Japan International Cooperation Agency [JICA], UNICEF and USAID.

*[The project was designed to deliver two core services to the beneficiaries: **accelerated learning programs for out-of-school children of primary and secondary school age, and integrated literacy and skills program for illiterate adolescents and young adults.***

*These programs were to be delivered through **Community Learning Centres** [CLCs] with direct involvement of communities; offering various programs to beneficiaries in different age groups based on the community's needs and decisions – to provide support functions to the beneficiaries, including counselling and moral support to them and day-care services for beneficiaries with young children.]*

However, such facilities were open to the risks of kidnapping, abuse and accidents, thus additional security requirements of a requisite standard were required: advised the WB.

Punjab had lower rate of poverty and the highest human development index (HDI) in Pakistan. Social and economic deprivation, as reflected in the health and education outcomes and household income, was highest in the southern Punjab districts. Sindh was the second-largest province in terms of population and the second-largest economy due to Karachi, it had the second-highest HDI in Pakistan. In Sindh the social and economic deprivation in terms of health and education outcomes and household income was quite high; mostly because the PPP in power there since 15 years had given zero attention towards the RURAL Sindh, even LARKANA couldn't get face.

On 6th March 2020: The media reports divulged that the PTI govt could ensure free education and health for the people of the province in 10 years if subsidy being given to Metro Bus and amount spent on Orange Line Train projects were withdrawn. Without subsidy the Orange Line Train ticket would be of Rs:287 as per its calculations. The said media reports were based on launching of the **Punjab Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education (NFBE) policy 2019** in Lahore.

The new policy aimed to provide access to education in remote and far-flung areas; the PTI govt was determined to achieve 100pc literacy rate in the province by 2030 to fulfil the constitutional commitments under articles 37B and 25A. The main purpose of the policy was to ensure the alignment and integration with provincial and national constitutional and legal obligations and international commitments for better service. PTI was proud to launch the first-ever literacy and non-formal education policy 2019.

TELE-SCHOOL — A DEDICATED TV CHANNEL:

On 14th April 2020: PM Imran Khan inaugurated a national broadcast education channel to mitigate the loss faced by the students due to the closure of educational institutions (till 31st May then) in the wake of Covid-19.

Tele-school — the dedicated TV channel — was aired through a beam provided by Pakistan Television [PTV] the next day across the country from 8am to 6pm for online education from class one to 12. The tele-school was able to help students learn during the closure of schools; including students of far-flung and remote areas, which didn't have access to education facilities and infrastructure otherwise. Pakistan had a large number of out-of-school children (OOSC), the initiative helped the govt to help them. The project was highly productive in the given circumstances because no one could predict when Covid-19 would be eliminated; it could take many months to go.

PM Khan was of the opinion that this project should continue even after the pandemic was over and reopening of schools; it would help promote education in remote areas of the country. Adult literacy could also be promoted through this project. The education ministry was also mulling to develop an app to benefit over 20 million out-of-school children and promote adult literacy. Pakistan had just 60pc literacy rate then thus the education ministry was trying to link education with technology so that adults who wanted to learn had access to education through mobile phones.

*"The literacy rate is higher in urban areas (74pc) than in rural areas (51pc). Province-wise analysis suggests that Punjab has the highest literacy rate with 64pc followed by Sindh and Khyber PK (minus ex-FATA areas) with 57pc, Khyber PK (including merged areas) with 55pc and Baluchistan with 40pc" – **Pakistan govt's Social Survey for 2018-19** at daily **DAWN** dated 14th June 2020 is referred.*

The dedicated TV channel, **Tele-school**, was available on satellite, terrestrial and cable networks so that it would be accessible to most parts of the country, including hard-to-reach remote areas, ensuring equity

in learning; the ministry initially inked an agreement with PTV for three months, but the PM expressed his desire for the project's continuation beyond that.

During that process, online content was developed in accordance with country's curriculum and it was made attractive for students. *The credit of making that project possible in less than a month goes to unsung heroes: content developers, teachers and staff of Federal Directorate of Education, editors, technicians and producers of Allama Iqbal Open University and PTV* - HATS OFF TO ALL OF THEM FOR THEIR NATIONALIST APPROACH.'

On 9th January 2021: The Punjab Literacy Department launched '**ADOPT A SCHOOL PROGRAM**' under its initiative of 'Friends of Literacy and Non-Formal Schools' in 36 districts of the province. As the initiative had been planned keeping in view the Covid-19 scenario, it also included provision of face masks, hand sanitizers, soaps, besides free stationary to the students, mainly belonging to the poor segments of society. It was designed to make up the funds-shortage being faced by the literacy department that didn't have additional financial resources for provision of such facilities to the students and teachers of non-formal schools across the province.

[Till then, as per official figures, 428,000 students had been enrolled in around 13,519 non-formal schools in Punjab, with each school having one teacher, functioning under the literacy department. The Punjab government had allocated around Rs:515 million annual budget for the department to be mainly spent on the teacher's (then) monthly Rs:7,000 stipend, and the school's utility bills.]

As per approved plan of the initiative's implementation, sponsors were to be engaged for adoption of those schools. A sponsor / donor, approved by the District Education Officer (DEO-literacy), could adopt a school in his / her native district by contributing at least Rs:2,500 to 3,000 per month for stationary and Covid protection items, besides a one-time donation of Rs:33,000 to Rs:35,000 for the provision of bags, clothes and stationery for the students to a school; under a written agreement for a year at least.

Directions were issued to all the DEOs across the province to launch a campaign for the plan, whereas the Deputy Commissioners concerned were asked to patronise it by engaging local philanthropists for the initiative; International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs) or local NGOs were also allowed to adopt such non-formal schools after getting a no-objection certificate (NOC) from the home department.

On 23rd January 2021: The Punjab's Ministry for literacy confirmed that:

'...the govt has provided all necessary resources to achieve 100pc literacy rate in the province. In addition, transgender individuals have also been provided facilities for education for the first time as part of the adult literacy program. Purposeful efforts to increase literacy rates are being made with education as well as remedial training being imparted to citizens serving sentences for various crimes in prisons.'

The PTI govt seemed to be committed to play a practical role in the process of national reconstruction by giving the ***first-ever literacy policy***. The literacy department was made fully functional while reviewing the progress on adult education facilities and other projects in informal schools, jails and social welfare centres in various cities of Punjab province.

On 14th June 2021: The ***Punjab govt allocated Rs:442 billion for education*** in the financial year 2021-22 with an increase of 13pc from the previous year; while proposing Rs:54.22bn for development expenditure and Rs:388bn for current expenses making spending on education - 17pc of the total Punjab budget. Out of Rs:54.22bn development outlay, Rs:33bn were set aside for school education, Rs:15.065bn for higher education, Rs:755 million for special education; Rs:2.9bn for literacy & non-formal education.

To achieve maximum literacy rate, **INSAF SCHOOL-UPGRADE PROGRAM** was also launched and during the year 25pc of primary schools (8,360) were being given the status of elementary schools and around 40pc of those schools were situated in south Punjab.

On 10th November 2021: In Punjab, Minister for Literacy and Non-formal Basic Education Raja Rashid Hafeez inaugurated ***NFE Curriculum Punjab 2021 Accelerated Learning Program – Primary-scale;*** the primary literacy program was to be conducted in formal schools in two and a half years only. The said accelerated program was especially designed for the education and training of the youth who had been deprived of education for any reason and they had not been admitted to a school due to their overage. The program was formulated on a very comprehensive, complete and concise pattern under single national curriculum so that they could complete it in less time. Skills such as citizenship, tolerance, peace and harmony were included in syllabus; and new textbooks, training system, examination and certification system was to be developed according to the accelerated curriculum.

On 25th January 2022: In Khyber PK, the **EARLY AGE PROGRAM** was kicked off to impart digital literacy education to students in the province. In the first phase - 336 schools, in the second phase - 510, and in the third phase - 324 schools were selected to start the **DIGITAL LITERACY PROGRAM**. Class 6 were to be taught subjects like basic digital literacy, problem solving and algorithms and class 7 were to be taught: MS office, web literacy, MIT scratch & Mobirise, while class 8 were to be taught app inverter, social media ethics, monetization & land commercialization – what a wonderfull change it was launched – highly appreciable move it was.

The Minister for Literacy said that it was the vision of KP government to provide maximum IT training to students and the project was initiated at school level. Khyber PK's Information Technology Board and Elementary & Secondary Education Department extended the project to maximum schools across the province. The said programming was to prepare students for coming times; it was fascinating to see the children of public sector schools learning how to invent apps and code from an early age.

PTI ON HEALTH & HOSPITALS:

PM Imran Khan and its PTI, in its manifesto, had stated that '...it will build state-of-the-art hospitals in major urban centres to ensure the best healthcare facilities for the poor.'

On 28th October 2018: while following the above pursuit, Federal Health Minister reiterated that PTI govt was taking revolutionary steps for promoting health sector; FOUR new hospitals being established in Islamabad. On 22nd November 2018: A new hospital was to be established in Rawalpindi. On 26th November 2018, PTI's Dr Yasmeen Rashid announcer to open three childcare hospitals in south Punjab; next day, PTI announced to build and open Rehab hospital in Peshawar for ice addicts. On 12th December 2018, the PTI government decided to establish the first state-of-the-art cancer hospital in Islamabad. On 29th December 2018, a free kidney dialysis unit was inaugurated in Islamabad. On 12th January, 2019: the federal minister announced that the Federal Government Hospital in Chak Shahzad would be upgraded into a modern facility with the cutting-edge equipment.

In an expansion mode of **HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME** first launched by the KP government, PM Khan's government expanded the **Sehat Sahulat Program** at the national level and on 4th February 2019, Prime Minister himself launched the nationwide **Sehat Insaf Card**, which was to provide free medical treatment to approximately 80 million people.

The project was successfully launched in Punjab province; Khyber KP province was already enjoying it but Sindh provincial govt didn't consider it suitable for its populace. Perhaps the biggest highlight of the project came when the prime minister, on 28th October 2020, said UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE would be offered to everyone in Punjab and KP within a year. Khyber KP, meanwhile, had already offered health cards to every citizen; within three months Punjab followed the suit; in Dec 2020, the health card facility was also launched for 1.2m families in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

On 11th May 2019: Construction of Mother and Child Hospital in Rawalpindi resumed; this 400 beds Child Hospital had been under construction on the Asghar Mall Road since last decade. Work on the hospital worth Rs:2.5 billion was inaugurated by former PM Shaukat Aziz in 2006 but the project was halted after the PMLN formed the government in Punjab in 2008. A nursing school was also to be established as well as a Chest Disease Centre for TB and breast cancer patients under that scheme.

On 9th July 2019: Work started on an eye hospital in Gujrat; on 20th July 2019, foundation stone was laid for a hospital in Nowshera, Khyber PK; on 21st July 2019, announcement was made to set up a cardiology hospital in Quetta with the help of UAE government for which negotiations were on at state level. On 25th July 2019: Khyber PK govt announced to spend Rs100 million on the Oghi Tehsil HQ Hospital in Mansehra. On 17th October 2019, the CM Punjab announced that 200-bed Jinnah Institute of Cardiology would be established in Lahore; on 30th October 2019, Punjab Health Minister Dr Yasmin Rashid said that a 500-bed teaching hospital would be constructed in Sialkot.

[On 27th May 2022: The Cardiology Hospital, later titled as *Sheikh Muhammad Bin Zayed Al Nehan Institute of Cardiology* at Quetta became operational with the support of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). **Work on this Cardiac hospital had started in 2019 during PM Imran Khan's regime. In a short span of two years, the construction of this state-of-the-art hospital was completed. This 132-bed hospital provides the people of Balochistan with the best treatment facilities for all heart diseases at their doorstep.]**

On 1st February 2021, the premier Mr Khan congratulated Khyber KP province for becoming the first province to provide universal health coverage to all its residents. The **Sehat Insaf Card** was also announced in Islamabad, Gilgit Baltistan, tribal districts of KP and Sindh's Tharparkar district. The Tharparkar centres of the facility, however, were closed due to financial constraints of the Sindh government.

Over the PTI's three years+ tenure, the government awarded extension of coverage of the health card to journalists, Islamabad police, the transgender community, overseas labourers and persons with disabilities. Initially some part of Punjab and the whole of Balochistan couldn't be covered by this scheme. Despite PTI govt's best and perpetual efforts, that **promise of Imran Khan remained in progress till his departure in April 2022 because of the project's enormous volume – BUT it was definitely a positive step towards the perfect socio-economic system for a poor country like Pakistan.**