

For Contact

Date: 11th June 2019
Media Contact: Farhan Khalid
Email: f.khalid@yeforum.com.pk
Contact No. +923335356462

Ref. No.: 05/YEF /PR-24072019
Webs: www.yeforum.com.pk
Twitter: @yeforumpak
Facebook: Youth Economic Forum

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Islamabad, 24th July, 2019: Youth Economic Forum conducted an interactive session on “Rapid Urbanization and the Future of Cities”. This session allowed the youth in understanding the emerging issue of urbanization which is faced by and effects both the developing and developed nations. It is vital for our youth to understand urbanization, rapid growth, city decay, urban sprawl and study these topics so that they are better able to brighten and save the future of our cities. YEF provided the youth to sit with policy makers such as Deputy Commissioner ICT Hamza Shafqaat, Public Policy Advisor Naveed Iftikhaar, Chief Operating Officer at Punjab Safe Cities Authority Akbar Nasir Khan, and the moderator Mr. Tahir Dindhisa to discuss these matters. The target audience for this event was the youth; university students and young professionals also participated. The discussion was followed by an interactive question and answer session.

Mr. Naveed Iftikhaar commenced the session with a thought-provoking presentation was set the tone for the event. He began by discussing the history of civilization, explained the importance of understanding rapid urbanization and clarified the strong link between urbanization and development. Mr. Iftikhaar stated that about 70%-80% of our world’s population will be living in cities by 2060 and that this is the climax of urbanization. Moreover, he thoroughly explained how the cities in Pakistan can become the engines of growth if the issues and problems of each city are faced one at a time. To further clarify this statement, he gave examples of Medellin, Columbia, which started as the Most Dangerous city of the world during the 90’s and became the Most Innovative City in the

world by 2013, and of the Rise of Anatolian Tigers in Turkey. Last, but not the least, Mr. Iftikhar talked about the key issues in Islamabad such as poor architecture, underutilization of areas, lack of parking spaces and pedestrian paths. He ended his dialogue by discussing civic capacities as a vital aspect of city growth and planning, and the importance of being a responsible citizen.

Our next speaker, Mr. Akbar Nasir Khan, focused on the issues in Lahore and the new digitized process which is part of the Punjab Safe City Project. He talked about the importance of policy continuity and how this is an important factor in reviving and implementing policies. E-ticketing, another aspect of the Punjab Safe City Project, and how its implementation had a massive positive impact on traffic congestion, a problem that cost Lahore PKR 94 Billion per year, pollution and carbon emissions and in the reduction of accidents.

The final, and chief guest for the day, Hamza Shafqaat, Deputy Commissioner ICT, began his talk with the history of Islamabad and gave a critique on the Master Plan of the Capital City which was designed by a Greek company. In this, he discussed how some aspects of the Master Plan were directly in conflict with Articles 23 and 24 of the Constitution of Pakistan. Not only issues related to design, but Mr. Shafqaat also talked about acquisition and building control regulations, legal controls and other issues that Islamabad faces, despite being one of the well-planned cities of the country. He ended his discussion on a positive note and told the audience of a new commission that is being set up to revise the Master Plan, along with the transportation issues which the Capital City faces today.

This event provided the participants with the opportunity to have an exposure on the problems being experienced by our cities and our citizens, and how these issues have become hindrances for our cities to become the engines of growth for our country. The

panelists also emphasized on the different ways by which participants can become responsible citizens and help towards creating a better future.

Youth economic forum is the Pakistan's first youth-run policy think tank which strives to bridge the gap between the youth and the policy makers. Its mission is to make policies that are more youth inclusive. This session was in alignment with its vision and presented the youth of the country to connect with the policy makers on a much deeper level.