

PRESS RELEASE

Islamabad, January 8, 2020: “How far are we from achieving Quaid-e-Azam’s Pakistan” organized by Youth Economic Forum was an interactive session designed to enlighten the youth on their role in achieving Quaid’s vision of Pakistan. The main agenda of this discussion was to discuss Quaid’s vision in diversified dimension and considering this the panel included key speakers from different circles of life. The focus target audience for the session was young minds from different universities. Mr. Shabih Zaidi, Program Manager at Youth Economic Forum, moderated the session. Lt. General (R) Naeem Khalid Lodhi, Dr Nadeem Haque (Former Deputy Chairman Planning Commission), Mr Hamza Shafqaat (Deputy Commissioner Islamabad), Mr Ali Pervaiz Malik (Member of National Assembly), Mr Jamal Nasir (Executive Director RSIL), Ms. Alishah (Youth Program, UNDP) and Mr Ovais Mangalwala (Senior Journalist) were the guest speakers for the event.

Mr. Shabih welcomed the guest speakers and gave a brief introduction on the topic. Mr Hamza Shafqaat continued the discussion where he drove the attention of the audience towards Quaid’s speech on 11 August 1947. Where he quoted with three basic issues, Nepotism in civil services. Rule of law and equality and lastly, sectarian violence. He shared the view that Quaid addressed these issues as the major issues of Pakistan to function and if not addressed than there might be consequences that the nation will have to face.

Lt Gen (rtd) Naeem Lodhi expressed that Quaid had a vision of one Pakistan where we have to progress as one nation. But sadly we are divided on different grounds. He shared that in order to progress, we need to act as one. And be optimistic towards what we are achieving. We are the third strongest Islamic country and this is something we should be proud at rather than letting outer forces drive out our moral and vision towards negativity.

Mr Ali Pervaiz Malik said in order to progress, we need to identify the key issues and also, set a roadmap in order to overcome these issues. Till said date he mentioned government has failed to address economic issues and to set a roadmap. He drove attention towards our tax base and economic system which is not performing to its true potential. He mentioned that the agriculture is ignored which could be a key component alongwith with Industrialization for independent strong economy for Pakistan to be Islamic Welfare State as envisioned by Jinnah.

Ms Alishah expressed her point of view as Quaid-e-Azam wanted a separate homeland for all to live in peace and harmony. She stated Quaid wanted to build a homeland with equal opportunities and rights for all. Either if they follow any other religion than Islam or if they come from any gender. The psychology of our society is being driven in a way where we portray transgender as emotionless and try to cut our ties with them. Where Quaid wanted to build a homeland inclusive for all.

Mr Jamal Aziz shared what we need to change in today’s society is the norm culture of the way to function all respectable institutions in Pakistan. He said the thana culture of Pakistan is what needs to be changed. Quaid didn’t vision any of the said norms we have adopted in our society. He shared that Quaid had a vision where all Pakistanis would be treated alike with justice. He shared that the current situation of our parliament is that there is no vision or research based on solutions but only to create more illusions.

Mr Ovais Mangalwala said Quaid wanted to build a Pakistan with fair and equal grounds for all. But we failed him on many things. The role of media has vital role in image building of Pakistan. Media only portrays false and negative image of Pakistan where there is so many things that we can be optimistic about. He said we have always lived as one and we can if we want. All we need to be patient towards critics and acceptable to diversification.

Dr Nadeem Haque expressed that we need to be more realistic and we are not near Quaid's vision. He shared that he just interviewed 750 students for a said designation and none of them qualified. He shared that the sole reason was no knowledge. He shared in order to grow we need to adopt activities and dialogues that are constructive towards problem solving. It could be in the shape of book reading or newspaper. We need to study more, research more, work hard and be more realistic. We need to accept our mistakes and try to overcome in order to grow as a nation.

The guests admired the efforts done by Youth Economic Forum in bridging a gap between youth and policymakers to create a sense of awareness among the young minds. The esteemed guests extended their full support to YEF and advised the young minds from different circles of life to contribute in building a progressive Pakistan.

Mr. Shabih concluded the event by giving the summary of all the guest speakers and gave an insight of a way forward. Then at the end of the event, Question-Answer session proceeded for about 30 minutes. Students and youth activists enthusiastically participated and asked questions from the guest speakers.

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.