

Government of Pakistan
Prime Minister's Office
Youth Affairs Wing
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Employment and economic empowerment of the youth is our top priority:

Shaza Fatima Khawaja

The closing ceremony of the Prime Minister's National Innovation Award 5-Day Idea Pitching Bootcamp was held at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) and Technology Park (NSTP) Islamabad. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja attended as Chief Guest. Speaking at the closing ceremony at NUST on Friday, she said, "I would like to thank the NUST team for their efforts in organising this boot camp and I hope that our young innovators have gained vital skills and learned during these 5 days of training".

She further stated that youth is our country's biggest asset as 68% of Pakistan's total population is under 30 years old. Employment and economic empowerment of the youth is our top priority and we have put in a lot of effort to promote and encourage them at every level.

Our younger population is more adaptive toward technology and innovation. To encourage them and turn their innovative ideas into viable businesses, the Prime Minister has launched this National Innovation Award which will provide technical and financial handholding to these youngsters, so they can realise this goal.

Initiatives like the Innovation Award can motivate the youth to use their innovative and novel skills and in turn, help society and the country's economy at a national level.

This will also help resolve the local challenges Pakistan faces through their creative ideas.

Speaking on another initiative of PM's Youth Programme, the SAPM stated, "We are fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, for which we started the Youth Business Loan Scheme. Through this, we are providing subsidized business loans to transform our youth into job creators rather than job seekers".

Ms. Shaza also spoke about the necessity of creating an enabling environment for youth. So far, the Youth Programme has distributed laptops to youth and given scholarships to support youth in rural areas.

In her concluding remarks SAPM congratulated the Innovation Award selected candidates and said, "I congratulate you all for coming this far and becoming a part of this boot camp and urge you to continue working with the same passion and zeal to win this Prime Minister's National Innovation Award and many more accomplishments in future".

SAPM ended his dialogue by showing high hopes towards youth and advised the youth to work hard and learn by themselves. She said if only 5 young people's ideas are commercialized, I will consider that we have succeeded in our goal.

After the completion of this boot camp, 256 students from all over the country will now take part in the National Pitching Competition scheduled to be held **in March.**