**PAKISTAN MULSIM LEAGUE N (PML N)**

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Mushahid Ullah Khan

**Education Manifesto**

Pakistan has finally taken a historic step forward to make the ‘Right to Education’ a fundamental right by adding a new Article 25-A to the Constitution under the 18th Constitutional Amendment passed in April 2010. Pakistan Muslim League (N) is determined to bring about an educational revolution in the country by taking following steps:

 National Education Emergency will be declared to eradicate illiteracy on war footing basis

 A national literacy movement will be launched in which volunteers from all the segments of society will be motivated to participate.

 In consultation with the provinces, initiate legislation to provide a road map for achieving 100% enrollment up to the middle level and 80% universal literacy and strive to meet the target of ‘Education For All (EFA)’ and ‘Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)’ related to education within the given time frame.

 A vision 2025 for Pakistan’s education system shall be formulated. The vision aims at transforming Pakistani education system to be among world’s best. This would be based on the aspirations of the people, the ideology of Pakistan, and new learning methods technologies - recognizing education as a right of every job market needs, citizen providing equal and ample opportunity to all its citizens to make themselves knowledgeable, skilful, productive, creative, confident and committed to moral values.

 A uniform system of education will be introduced step by step to minimize the problems arising from the multiplicity of systems.

 Drop out rate at primary level will be reduced by providing missing facilities in schools and free text books, offering incentives, especially for girls.

 Facilities for teacher training will be expanded at a rapid pace in collaboration with the Provincial Governments to improve the quality of education and ensure a quality teacher in every classroom. At present with only 170 teacher training institutions (including 26 in the private sector) and total enrolment of 650,000, we are training less than 10% of all our teachers.

 Teaching at all levels will be made an attractive profession. Efforts will be made to bring in high caliber teachers by offering better salary, improved service structure and other benefits.

Training and refresher courses will be conducted at all levels and their promotion will be linked with their qualifications and performance. The selection of teachers shall be purely on merit through a transparent selection process.

 There is a need for developing a national strategy for skill-based uniform curriculum to meet the changing requirements of the economy and also to provide harmony among provinces. The Federal government will assist and coordinate efforts of the provincial governments to improve and standardize curricula in different subjects.

 National Curriculum Council shall be established comprising of eminent public and private sectors experts to review national curriculum and bring it to international standards to promote analytical thinking, creativity, team work, curiosity for learning, ethics and values.

 Increased resources will be allocated for education sector ensuring proper and timely utilization of funds to reach the UNESCO target of 4% of GDP by 2018. Fiscal incentives and other support will be provided to encourage private investment in secondary, vocational and higher education in the country. In making, Federal transfers the principle of matching grants will be adopted to ensure that Provincial Governments also earmark adequate resources for education.

 Maximum facilities for science education will be provided in all parts of the country by upgrading and providing liberal grants for science laboratories in all secondary schools. Centers for professional excellence in various scientific disciplines will also be promoted by providing highly qualified teachers and generous scholarships for training abroad. National and provincial level science competitions shall be organized to identify young talent.

 Computer labs shall be established in all the government high schools in the first phase. All merit students in public universities shall be provided laptops to link them with the digital revolution.

 Instruction of foreign languages shall be introduced in national curriculum to meet the challenges of globalization.

 Student career counseling services shall be introduced in schools, colleges and universities.

 Danish Schools shall be set up in all provinces.

 Education Endowment Funds shall be set up in all provinces to award merit scholarships to poor and needy students for higher education.

 The Higher Education Commission will be given greater autonomy and the required financial resources to ensure adequate standards in Higher Education and inter provincial coordination in such matters as curriculum and scientific research.

 Technology Development Fund shall be established for HEC scholars returning after completion of PhD to introduce new technologies application in Pakistan.

 Vice Chancellors of all public sector universities shall be appointed through a transparent merit based process through Search Committees.

 The standards in universities shall be raised to transform them into world class universities. Additional higher educational institutions will be established in public and private sectors, especially in remote areas to increase enrolment in higher education. Linkage of universities will be established with top ranked universities of the world. Incentives will be given to encourage research in higher educational institutions.

 Vocational and technical education will be promoted, especially in rural areas. Efforts will be made to integrate vocational training with mainstream education to meet the needs of our youth interested in following technical careers. At least one world class technology university will also be established in every province, and priority will be given to expand distance learning programmes in public and private sector educational institutions.

 Madrassas will be provided financial assistance and other incentives to bring their syllabus and standards in conformity with the mainstream education to improve the employment prospects of Madrassa students. Also, vocational training will be offered to them to encourage them to become entrepreneurs.

 Education sector monitoring will be strengthened through autonomous monitoring and evaluations authorities and use of modern technology to check the performance of education sector. Examination system will be improved by making it more transparent, reliable and in line with international standards.

National Testing Service will be strengthened.

 ‘Reading culture’ will be promoted by developing libraries at national, provincial and district levels equipped with modern reference tools. Facilities for art, culture and sports will be expanded and competitions shall be introduced at school level as extra curricular activities.

 A detailed action plan will be formulated to upgrade the capacity of provincial governments for the effective handling of additional responsibilities entrusted to them under the 18th Amendment, including institutional restructuring to improve educational administration through a Provincial Commission for Higher Education and Establishment of autonomous District Education Authorities (DEAs).

 Special education institutions shall be expanded to enable special children to attend schools.

 Schools for Overseas Pakistani children to be transformed into top quality education institutions. These shall be strengthened through merit based transparent appointments, management and infrastructure. High quality education can play a significant role in developing world class human capital, only if it is accompanied by opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation and a system which allows merit to prevail in all spheres of national life.