

“Experts Urge Strengthening Tech Policies, Tapping into Critical Mineral Wealth, and Adopting a Pragmatic Approach in Global Tech Rivalry”

Press Release

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The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, hosted a roundtable discussion on the **‘Trump-Tech Nexus: Opportunities and Challenges Ahead,’** analysing the implications of US President Donald Trump’s second term on global technology, Big Tech regulations, Artificial Intelligence, and cybersecurity. The session brought together leading experts to assess how President Trump’s policies, and strategic collaborations with tech leaders could reshape the global technological landscape and its potential impact on Pakistan.



Setting the stage for the discussion, CASS moderator **Mr Mustafa Bilal** opened the discussion by outlining the significance of President Trump’s second presidency for global technology policy, emphasising its geopolitical and economic ramifications.

Ambassador Zamir Akram, Advisor, Strategic Plans Division, GoP, provided a policy-focused assessment of the shifting geopolitical landscape in technology and



underscored the unprecedented nature of the global tech confrontation, warning that generative AI could be as transformative as the industrial revolution or as dangerous as nuclear weapons. He highlighted that Pakistan must strategically navigate this geopolitical divide, which has led to export restrictions on critical technologies and a tightening US-India partnership that indirectly impacts Pakistan's access to investments and tech transfers. He stressed that Pakistan's private sector should lead in digital transformation, as inefficiencies and multi-layered regulatory hurdles stifle growth. He called for streamlined decision-making processes and a regulatory framework that enables, rather than obstructs, technological advancements. On the opportunities ahead, Ambassador Akram pointed to Pakistan's rare earth mineral resources, noting that foreign investment in critical minerals such as lithium and copper must be actively pursued.

Air Vice Marshal Soban Nazir Syed (Retd), DG, National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP), highlighted NASTP's pivotal role in fostering startups in technology, AI, and emerging technologies, underlining its commitment to creating an ecosystem that nurtures innovation and entrepreneurship. He shared NASTP's initiatives in providing infrastructure, mentorship, and funding opportunities to accelerate research and development in critical tech domains. He further stressed the importance of public-private collaboration in ensuring Pakistan remains competitive in the global technology and AI landscape.





Founder & CEO of Algoryte, **Mr Talha Bin Afzal** noted that while support for Big Tech under President Trump seemed likely, hurdles in regulatory and legal battles could delay innovation. Mr Afzal noted that Pakistan faces significant challenges, including slower innovation, geopolitical risks, and limited access to advanced technologies due to export restrictions. Despite these challenges, he was optimistic that Pakistan has considerable opportunities in the global digital economy. With rising compliance costs elsewhere, Pakistan could emerge as an attractive destination for IT outsourcing. Increased access to international markets, coupled with adherence to ethical technology standards, could further strengthen its position. He urged a shift from the freelancer-driven economy to a structured technology sector, fostering a more stable and competitive digital ecosystem.

Thanking the speakers for their insightful presentations, **Air Marshal Javid Ahmed (Retd)**, President CASS, acknowledged the need for Pakistan to strategically engage with the global tech ecosystems while adapting to evolving global regulations. He stressed that Pakistan must adopt a proactive, balanced approach, strengthening its regulatory framework, attracting foreign investment, and fostering local innovation to remain competitive. Concluding, he opined that Pakistan's high-tech future hinges on swift policy adaptation, private sector agility, and removal of administrative hurdles that hinder global tech partnerships.



The roundtable was followed by an interactive question-and-answer session with experts from the academia and researchers. It concluded with a consensus that Pakistan must take proactive steps to secure its place in the global technology race. By addressing regulatory gaps and strengthening trade partnerships, the country can position itself as a key player in the evolving digital economy.