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PM Shehbaz Outlines Initiatives to Spur Economic Growth in KP's Merged Districts

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Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reaffirmed that economic development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's merged districts remains a top priority for his government. Addressing a delegation of National and Provincial Assembly members from the region, he emphasized plans to expand access to quality education through the establishment of Daanish Schools. These institutions aim to serve underprivileged students, particularly in areas historically underserved in terms of education and infrastructure.

The prime minister also highlighted efforts to combat electricity theft and improve energy access, particularly in rural areas. Initiatives include converting agricultural tubewells to solar power and implementing relief programs to reduce electricity costs for low-income households, thereby supporting long-term economic stabilization in the merged districts.

These actions build on directives issued in June 2023 to incorporate special development projects for the merged districts in the national budget. The government's strategy includes addressing critical water shortages, improving road and health infrastructure, and providing targeted support through a dedicated committee chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. This body was established to identify and resolve constituency-specific issues, ensuring that development initiatives are tailored to local needs.

Tribal elders and community leaders have welcomed steps such as the restoration of educational quotas for students from the merged areas. The government views this as part of a broader commitment to inclusivity and regional uplift. By focusing on education, infrastructure, and basic services, the administration aims to create sustainable opportunities and improve quality of life in the post-merger period.

Despite positive momentum, significant challenges persist. The region continues to grapple with security issues and budgetary pressures stemming from the 2018 FATA merger. While the government's intentions are clear, the pace of implementation will be critical to success. Sustained commitment, efficient execution, and community engagement will determine whether the proposed initiatives achieve their intended impact.