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Pakistan PM Pushes \$30 Billion IT Export Goal

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Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has set an ambitious target to transform Pakistan into a global IT powerhouse, directing authorities to develop a comprehensive roadmap to boost technology exports to \$30 billion annually. This bold vision comes as Pakistan's IT sector shows promising growth, with exports increasing by 19% to reach \$3.8 billion in fiscal year 2024-25. The push focuses on expanding digital infrastructure,

enhancing workforce training, and attracting foreign investment to position Pakistan as a competitive player in the global tech market.

The government's strategy includes significant reforms to strengthen the National Information Technology Board (NITB), with plans to recruit top-tier professionals from the private sector to drive innovation and efficiency. Over the past year, Pakistan has made substantial progress in building its tech talent pool, training 315,000 students including 115,000 women through various IT education initiatives. The startup ecosystem is also gaining momentum, with 386 new ventures supported by the National Incubation Center and nearly \$700 million in investment agreements secured. Additionally, the number of freelancers has surged by 91%, demonstrating the sector's growing contribution to the economy.



While these developments are encouraging, Pakistan faces several challenges in achieving its \$30 billion export goal. Infrastructure limitations, particularly in rural areas with poor internet connectivity, could hinder growth if not addressed. Regulatory inconsistencies and bureaucratic hurdles also pose risks to foreign investors and local entrepreneurs alike. However, the government's focus on expanding 4G coverage, establishing e-employment centers, and improving digital services suggests a commitment to overcoming these obstacles. The key will be implementing these policies effectively and maintaining stability to attract sustained international interest in Pakistan's tech sector.

The potential rewards are substantial. If successful, Pakistan's IT expansion could diversify the nation's export base, create high-value jobs, and reduce economic reliance on traditional industries. The prime minister's vision aligns with global digital transformation trends,

positioning Pakistan to capitalize on growing demand for software development, artificial intelligence, and other tech services. While the \$30 billion target is ambitious, the combination of a young, tech-savvy population and increasing global connectivity makes it an achievable goal with the right policies and persistent effort. The coming years will be critical in determining whether Pakistan can establish itself as a major player in the international technology marketplace.

