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PM Shehbaz Pushes Major Tourism Infrastructure Upgrade

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Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has outlined a bold plan to enhance Pakistan's tourism sector, emphasizing modern infrastructure and sustainable development to capitalize on the nation's natural beauty and cultural heritage.

On August 8, 2025, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired a high-level meeting at the Prime Minister's House in Islamabad to strategize the promotion of Pakistan's tourism industry. He highlighted the country's unparalleled natural assets, including snow-capped mountains, lush forests, rivers, deserts, and a vibrant coastline, positioning Pakistan as a unique global

tourism destination. Sharif emphasized the need for high-quality infrastructure, seamless connectivity, and modern recreational facilities to attract both domestic and international visitors, particularly to regions like Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). He directed authorities to develop a comprehensive action plan focusing on practical, short-term projects to boost tourism in Islamabad, AJK, and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Sharif stressed that new developments must prioritize environmental sustainability, with climate change considerations integrated into all infrastructure projects. He also called for a revitalization of the National Tourism Coordination Board (NTCB) to streamline efforts. The Prime Minister's Coordinator on Tourism, Sardar Yasir Ilyas, presented proposals to increase foreign tourist numbers, develop 20 new tourist destinations, and expand religious and medical tourism. A National Tourism Expo and Investment Conference is planned in Islamabad to attract investors, following the success of the recent Mango Festival 2025 in Multan, organized with Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University.

The government projects Pakistan's tourism market to generate over \$4 billion in revenue by 2025, with an expected annual growth rate of 6.75%. This ambitious vision aims to elevate tourism's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from its current level of less than 3% to potentially 7-8% with strategic investments. Challenges such as outdated security perceptions and a lack of trained hospitality professionals remain, but recent progress, including e-visas and heritage site restorations, signals a strong commitment to reform.

Sharif's push for rapid, actionable development underscores a practical approach to unlocking Pakistan's tourism potential. By focusing on infrastructure upgrades and sustainable growth, the government aims to position Pakistan as a top-tier destination, leveraging its natural splendor and ancient heritage to drive economic prosperity.