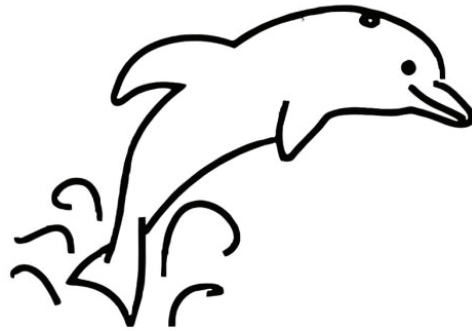


# Pak Sarzameen Party Manifesto for 2018 Elections



PSP is contesting elections for the first time but already looks to pose a serious challenge to MQM's hegemony within Karachi. The election manifesto tackles numerous issues but lays the strongest emphasis on empowering local bodies to build a participatory form of democracy.

**Governance:** PSP's governance ideas revolve around greater decentralization and strengthening local governments. This will be ensured through a comprehensive legislative framework which would also guarantee sufficient financial allocation to the local bodies. The party promises a stricter enforcement of laws against corruption and land grabbing. It recognizes the dearth of strong political leadership within the country for which it recommends a revival of student unions. To ensure fairness in the allocation of resources, development projects and electoral seats, PSP advocates for a more robust census which would be more transparent.

**Economy:** To deal with Pakistan's economic woes, PSP promises to weed out all corruption elements from all government projects and policies. It sees privatization as Pakistan's best shot at a panacea for the debt-ridden and inefficient energy sector. It further recommends making the State Bank a fully independent body to improve its performance and reducing government spending considerably. These market liberalizing forces will be coupled with an expanded tax base. Tax revenue will be increased by removing all tax exemptions and privileges and identifying potential tax payers and evaders by building a mass E-database of national economic activities. A healthy productive entrepreneurship culture and infrastructure will be promoted under a Ba Ikhteyar Entrepreneur Program for Business, Innovation and Skills. To reduce burden of rural to urban migration, rural economies will be fortified by the creation of industries which would increase rural employment as well as standard of living. New cities will be created all over Pakistan, instead of the continuing expansion of existing ones.

**Energy:** PSP recommends a number of remedies to solve Pakistan's energy crisis. These include: cutting down considerably on the present 25% losses due to transmission and theft, reducing the reliance on expensive furnace oil imports by utilizing indigenous resources and ultimately privatizing the sector which would lead to more competition, high quality standards, lower corruption and better customer service. It promises very limited form of targeted energy subsidy which would be only for the poorest groups. Lastly, it pledges to form a framework for Public-Private Partnerships to allow for private capital to flow into the energy infrastructure.

**Agriculture and Food:** PSP promises targeted policies for landless farmers which would ensure tenancy rights, promote women's ownership of land, and the provision of a minimum wage. It would also oversee implementation of corporate farming which would be adjusted to the Pakistani context. Furthermore, the party vows greater seed development, food quality, and health surveillance for pests and animals. PSP will establish Village Grain Banks, with the technical assistance of World Food Program, for the rural poor to alleviate food shortages during the 'lean' season as they would ensure at least two square meals a day. Lastly, PSP proposes a Kissan Dost Card which would allow small farmers and landowners (having less than 25 acres of land) to i. Take interest free loans from the banks, ii. Buy fertilizer, pesticides and seeds at discounted prices, iii. Receive a discount on Electricity and Diesel for tube wells, iv. Buy a tractor interest free through the 'Kissan Dost Tractor Scheme', and v. in the event of any natural disaster, receive special discounts on their medical care through medical insurance.

**Water:** In the face of a debilitating water crisis, PSP proposes that a new National Water Policy be drawn which would ensure that water security must be made part of the country's foreign, domestic and economic policies. It promises to prioritize floodwater and rain water harvesting whilst upgrading or forming large, medium and small-scale dams/reservoirs, link canals, and inter-basin transfers all over the country. It recommends that all future water projects must be subjected to ecological standards to ensure no damage to local populations and environment.

**Education:** To combat low enrolment and learning outcomes, PSP pledges Universal Education (up till grade 10) and increased spending on education to a minimum of 4.0 % of GDP. It also proposes a Universal Nutritional Program for school going children which will be heavily subsidized and also used as incentive to draw children to school. To improve teacher quality, it will establish Institutes of Excellence in Teaching and introduce Teacher Capacity Building programs from this platform. It also promises to take effective measures against ghost teachers and ghost schools. Furthermore, the party will introduce a 'Ba Hunar Community College Initiative' (BHCCI) Program in all provinces through the elected Local Governments which will provide quality vocational education and training programs through community colleges intended to build technical skills, enhance leadership capabilities, and strengthen proficiency in English, Chinese etc. Lastly, it proposes to create innovative adult education programs for women who have not been able to attend school in their childhood.

**Health:** PSP briefly mentions its health policies. It promises a substantial increase in health spending to bring it up to 2.5% of the GDP and to introduce universal healthcare. The party will also make all tertiary care hospitals autonomous while making it necessary for experienced and trained doctors and nurses to be posted in hospitals along with basic health units especially in rural areas. Lastly, it plans to provide public insurance schemes.

**Social Protection:** PSP will maximize food security for the very poor by providing food assistance free of cost or at a nominal cost through a Hunger Eradication Program which will provide masses below the poverty line with free monthly rations. It promises special discounts on Electricity, Gas and Petrol for the poor and to improve current income support programs. Employment and self-employment opportunities will be guaranteed for the poor through micro-credit. On the other hand, labour laws will be revised to safeguard labour rights, safe work conditions, fair wages, holidays and paid maternity/paternity leaves. The party will also regularly review and set minimum wage and workers benefits comparable to cost of living and inflation rates. Lastly, it reaffirms minority rights and hopes to solve the issue on community levels through dialogue.

**Terrorism:** The party promises to implement the National Action Plan fully and empower the National Counter Terrorism Authority. It plans to introduce a General Amnesty and Rehabilitation scheme for alienated elements (militant wings) of urban groups who were maliciously led astray by political party leadership. It plans to do this through the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and rehabilitation and assimilation of these people in the society as productive members.

**Research and Transport:** PSP pledges to adequately increase allocations for research in high priority fields. It will further provide attractive incentives, offer scholarships, expand funding schemes, improve laboratory facilities and introduce venture capital and incubators to encourage start-ups. To improve the transport sector, PSP plans to build farm-to-market roads to improve the transportation of agricultural goods nationally and improve railways while working on cheap domestic air travel.

**Overseas Pakistanis and Foreign Policy:** PSP proposes to establish a 'National Overseas Pakistanis Development Fund' through which Pakistanis all over the world will be able to support financing for development projects. It further promises to make overseas voting easy. Its foreign policy involves the Kashmir issue being resolved with due regards to Kashmir's 'Right to Self Determination' through a fair plebiscite. It vehemently condemns Pakistan acting as a client state on the global stage. It emphasizes dynamically expanding Pakistan's relationship with China at an economic and people to people level.

**Police and Justice:** The party proposes a complete de-politicization of police along with a National Deweaponization Program (NDWP) with community policing to be encouraged. Furthermore, PSP will work on legislating a law that would bind judges not to adjourn the case for more than 14 days while making sure that free legal advisors are provided to deserving and poor people through a Legal Aid Committee. It vows to introduce an e-justice system to enable easy access to courts record, updates on courts proceedings through internet and cell phones through a Case Tracking System (CTS).

**Environment and Culture:** The concept of pro-active 'Carbon Credit' will be promoted. In addition to protecting the existing forests and wildlife reserves, the wastelands of the country will be used for social forestry. The party will carry out an ecological audit of projects and pollution indexing of cities and townships will be done on a scientific basis. It will further include the Humanities, Arts and Ethics as part of school curriculum and at secondary and post-secondary education levels. Spiritual (all beliefs and sects) and historical sites will be restored through satellite mapping and sustaining it with domestic and international tourism. The party will promote folklore and indigenous languages through establishment of Arts Councils and Community Cultural Councils. Lastly, to revive sports, PSP will establish sports complexes at district level.