**Maryam Makes History**

**Time has proven that educated Pakistani women possess all the skills and competence.**

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It was indeed a momentous occasion for the province of Punjab, when its parliament unanimously elected its 23rd chief minister on February 26, 2024 with thumping majority (220 votes). The incumbent of this prestigious and profoundly important office is none other than Maryam Nawaz Sharif, daughter of three times former prime minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. Maryam Nawaz has created history by becoming the first-ever woman chief minister of Pakistan’s largest province – the province of Punjab -- country’s most populous and politically important region. Election of Maryam Nawaz Sharif, PML-N senior vice president and chief organizer as the first woman chief executive of the province of Punjab is historic indeed. Her appointment to the highest echelon of the government of Punjab, as chief executive, is truly noteworthy but it certainly isn’t something unusual. It is nothing uncommon, because there has been many such firsts in the political and judicial history of the country where women have occupied key positions in political and judicial institutions, in the past, and proved their mettle with unparalleled success.

[Can a coalition govt bring stability to Pakistan](https://www.nation.com.pk/01-Mar-2024/can-a-coalition-govt-bring-stability-to-pakistan)

Time has proven that educated Pakistani women possess all the skills and competence, like men, to play a leadership role in any field for that matter. What they just need is an opportunity. Provide them an opportunity, and they, for sure, will make a mark in their chosen career. Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the first elected female chief minister of the province of Punjab possesses all the potential to head the government in Punjab, and manage its affairs judiciously and skillfully. Her consummate management of the party (PMLN) affairs, at most difficult times, when her illustrious father former prime minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhamad Nawaz Sharif was in self-exile abroad speaks volumes about her political skills and acumen. She not only successfully held the party together but also deftly managed the party affairs in her father’s absence. Her capabilities and her mature understanding of intricate social and political issues confronting the country cannot be overemphasized.

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The detractors of Maryam Nawaz Sharif should now accept the fact that she has become the chief minister of Pakistan’s political hub – Punjab. Disparaging her just for the sake of political pointscoring should, therefore, cease. She is all set to govern the largest province of the country with a huge socio-economically disadvantaged populace. The tasks before her are gargantuan and profoundly onerous. Dealing with the burgeoning economic crisis would particularly be an uphill task for her. Paucity of resources may hinder her efforts to bring progress to the province and prosperity to its poverty-stricken people at the pace at which she perhaps would like to. Despite all these obstacles, since she has the will she would certainly have the way to effectively address these issues through planned and judicious use of the available resources.

Governance of the country’s largest province - Punjab by Ms. Maryam Nawaz may perhaps be cumbersome but certainly not impossible. Because, throughout her challenging journey towards good governance and her endeavors to live up to the ever-burgeoning expectations of the people, she, for sure, would be enjoying continued blessings and mentoring of her illustrious father Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, who has had unparalleled experience of managing the affairs of this country thrice as its prime minister. And, of course, her uncle Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Pakistan’s prime minister-in-waiting, and four times chief minister of Punjab, would also be there to mentor her, if required. One doesn’t see any reason why chief minister Maryam Nawaz shouldn’t benefit from her father’s and her uncle’s unparalleled experience in the realm of political and administrative governance? .

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In conclusion, one expects particularly from the women of Pakistan to rise above all prejudices and political affiliations and take pride in the fact that it is for the first time in the political history of Punjab that a woman has risen to the helm of governance, and she is all set to govern the largest province of the country as its first woman chief minister. One expects from every segment of the Pakistani society, including the Pakistan media – the fourth pillar of the State, to act rationally and responsibly. Give the incumbent chief minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz some breathing space. She has just taken the reigns of the province in her hands. Let her settle down and take stock of things. Once she starts implementing the commitments she had made to the people of Punjab in her manifesto, one could take stock of her performance – criticize her wherever she fails – and praise her wherever she performs outstandingly. Until then, one should hold one’s horses and wish her god speed and success in all her endeavors directed towards tackling the appalling economic predicaments of the province of Punjab, and bringing prosperity particularly to its impecunious people.

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