

## **Mineral Sector in Pakistan: National Policy, Sways and Challenges**

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Pakistan is bestowed with numerous varieties of mineral resources spread across the country, providing a pier for a mineral-based economy. Currently, 92 minerals have been found among these 52 are mined commercially with a collective 68.52 million tones production capacity yearly and are, therefore, playing a vital role in the economy of the country. It is expected that there will be approximately 2 to 3% annual increase in the production. In Pakistan, for mineral exploration, the legal and regulatory framework at federal, provincial and tribal levels is governed by several laws, regulations, and government agencies. The exploitation and trade of minerals contribute significantly to government revenue through taxes, royalties, and foreign exchange earnings which certainly provide support in stabilizing the country's balance of payments and sustainable economic growth. It creates employment and provides assistance to improve the living standard of habitants and ultimately the GDP of the country. The progress of the mineral sector enthralls domestic and foreign investment, leading to the transfer of technology, expertise, and best practices. Likewise, the construction of infrastructure such as roads, railways, ports, and power plants are also strengthening the growth of the mineral sector in the country. Mineral-based industries including cement, steel, ceramics, chemicals, fertilizers, etc. rely mainly on the raw materials for their manufacturing processes. Thus, a robust mining sector supports the industrial base to expand and become more diverse. Beyond all of these sways, Pakistan still faces a lot of challenges, such as regulatory reforms, political unrest, infrastructural development, environmental sustainability, workforce shortages, and lack of community involvement creating hurdles in the growth of the mineral sector. To acquire the full benefit of the mineral-based economy, these issues must be addressed and resolved. To tackle these issues, the government, business community, and civil society must work together to implement comprehensive reforms that will improve the investment scenario, provide incentives to miners, upgrade

infrastructure, simplify regulations, encourage sustainable mining practices, and fund R&D organizations. The involvement of academia and other research organizations will cater problems associated with the identification, exploration and exploitation of new mineral horizons in more convenient way.