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## Why Sunak made the shock call for election

DUBAI  
BY ALEX ABRAHAM  
Senior Associate Editor

Trailing in opinion polls and with six months left to complete the government's term, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has caught many Conservative party members off guard by calling elections on July 4.

The decision has left many fearing that six weeks would not be enough to convince sceptical voters. They are also wondering why the polls were called now.

Sunak has taken a calculated risk with the election dates and has hedged his bets on the performance of his government. With last year's mild recession over, gross domestic product growing and inflation roughly at the central bank's 2 per cent target, Sunak believes that this offers his party its best chance in the polls.

Also, unemployment is at a low and workers are feeling the benefit of the 20 billion pound tax cuts.

But not all party members are happy.

Those Conservatives who are planning to run have begun to realise how much of an uphill battle they face to retain their parliamentary seats.

SEE ALSO P12

# UAE commits \$10 billion to boost Pakistan's economy

MOHAMMAD BIN ZAYED, SHARIF EXPLORE WAYS TO ENHANCE COOPERATION

ABU DHABI  
BY ASHFAQ AHMED  
Senior Assistant Editor

The UAE has pledged \$10 billion (Dh36.7 billion) to invest in promising economic sectors in Pakistan, according to the UAE Ministry of Investment.

The announcement was made yesterday after a meeting between President His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Shehbaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Pakistan. The purpose of the meeting was to enhance support for the Pakistani economy and boost cooperation between the two nations.

### Common interests

During the meeting at Qasr Al Shati, Shaikh Mohammad and Sharif discussed opportunities to develop cooperation in various sectors, particularly economy, trade, and development, to serve common interests and enhance both countries' vision of sustainable economic development.

Sharif affirmed his country's commitment to bolstering its ties with the UAE and expanding cooperation in economy, trade and investment, as well as benefiting from the UAE's development journey.

Earlier, Sharif, who arrived in the UAE on a working visit, was



WAM

■ Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed with Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif in Abu Dhabi yesterday. Also seen are Shaikh Khalid Bin Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, and Shaikh Hamdan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler's Representative in Al Dhafra Region.

received by Shaikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Presidential Court, and a number of officials at Al Bateen Executive Airport in Abu Dhabi, reported WAM.

This is Sharif's first visit to the UAE since his election early this year. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising key ministers of the cabinet including Deputy

Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar.

### Tech collaboration

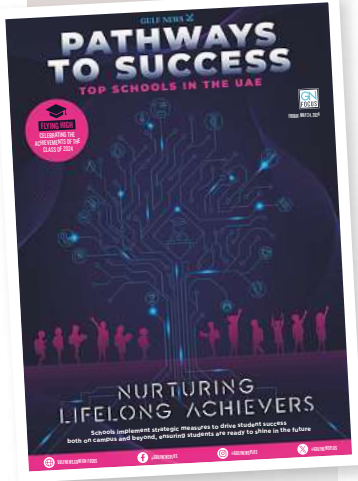
Sharif also participated in a round-table session titled 'Innovate together: UAE-Pakistan Tech Collaboration' in Abu Dhabi. The event was organised by Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) and Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) in coordination with Ministry of

Information Technology and Telecommunication.

Sharif praised tech entrepreneurs, IT professionals and firms from Pakistan and the UAE for converging and exploring avenues of enhanced collaboration in information technology and telecommunication.

He also witnessed the signing of three MOUs, between Pakistani and UAE IT firms to implement digital transformation.

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DUBAI TEL: +971 4 2651 313

SHARJAH TEL: +971 6 5353 123

ABU DHABI TEL: +971 2 5502 390

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