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## From \$200 to Millions: Anis Khan's Global SME Vision



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*By Haroon Rashid Qureshi*

At the recently held Pak-Qatar Business Expo 2025 in Doha, I had the pleasure of meeting a distinguished guest, Mr. Anis Khan, the Founder and President of Global SME Business Hub (GSBH), Switzerland. Despite his busy schedule, Mr. Khan kindly took some time to speak with me

about his work, experiences, and thoughts on Pakistan and Qatar's business landscapes.

**Haroon:** *Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim.* Mr. Anis Khan, welcome and thank you for joining us.

**Anis Khan:** *Walaikum Assalam,* thank you for having me.

**Haroon:** Please tell us a bit about yourself.

**Anis Khan:** I've been living in Zurich, Switzerland, for over 50 years, working primarily with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). My focus has always been on helping these businesses grow internationally by offering support in areas like financing, corporate structure, and long-term sustainability.

**Haroon:** Is your organization private or government-run?

**Anis Khan:** Our organization, GSBH, is a private non-profit. While we do collaborate with government-affiliated institutions and are members of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce, Swiss-Arab Chamber, and Swiss-Asian Chamber, we operate independently.

**Haroon:** What inspired you to start this initiative?

**Anis Khan:** After retiring, I wasn't sure what to do next. During a conversation with a friend at Harvard, I expressed my desire to start something meaningful, not just another business, but something that makes a difference. That's when the idea of supporting SMEs came up. They're

often overlooked, yet they form the backbone of most economies. My friend encouraged me, and that's how GSBH was born.

**Haroon:** How important are SMEs in today's economy?

**Anis Khan:** They're critical. Globally, SMEs contribute around 70% to economic growth. In Switzerland, that figure is about 95%. Even in Pakistan, I was amazed to learn that SMEs account for nearly 90% of the economy. It just shows how vital they are.

**Haroon:** You recently visited Pakistan. How was your experience?

**Anis Khan:** Truly heartwarming. Pakistan is a beautiful country with warm, welcoming people. Wherever I went, I was received with open arms. There's so much potential there, natural, economic, and human.

**Haroon:** You visited my hometown, Sialkot. What stood out to you?

**Anis Khan:** Sialkot is extraordinary. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong. The city even built its own airport and airline, something very few places can claim. I met Mr. Khawaja Masood, the man behind the footballs used in FIFA and UEFA tournaments. He personally showed me around his factory. His humility and dedication were truly inspiring.

**Haroon:** What brought you to the property expo in Doha?

**Anis Khan:** I was invited by Mr. GD Bagash Khan, who told me about the exhibition. I came to connect with people, explore new collaborations, and build networks. Relationships take time, and every meeting lays the groundwork for something lasting.

**Haroon:** How would you describe Mr. GD Bagash Khan?

**Anis Khan:** He's an outstanding individual, highly respected in the logistics industry. People admire him not just for his achievements, but for his character. He's generous, humble, and a true professional.

**Haroon:** How long are you staying in Qatar?

**Anis Khan:** I just arrived yesterday and will be here for three days.

**Haroon:** What's your impression of Qatar in terms of business opportunities?

**Anis Khan:** Qatar is full of promise. It's fast becoming a central hub in the region. I recently met someone from Qatar Financial Center, and we discussed how rapidly things are evolving here. There's serious investment going into various sectors. It's a land of opportunity for SMEs and entrepreneurs.

**Haroon:** Finally, what message would you like to share with the business community in Qatar?

**Anis Khan:** Never give up. When I started in Switzerland, I had only \$200. That's all. But through hard work, patience, and consistency, I built something meaningful. Life is full of chances, you just have to be ready to take them.

**Haroon:** Thank you so much for your time, Mr. Anis Khan.

**Anis Khan:** Thank you. It's been a pleasure.