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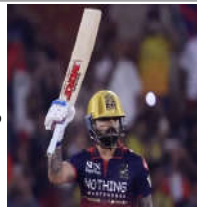


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## Section 144 Imposed in Quetta, Ban on Double Riding and Public Gatherings Announced

**QASEEM SHAH:**

**QUETTA:** The Government of Balochistan has enforced Section 144 across Quetta, imposing a ban on double riding and gatherings of more than four people as security measures have been intensified across the city.

According to Babar Yousafzai, Adviser to the Balochistan Government on Interior Affairs, the decision was taken in view of the prevailing security situation and potential threats from militant elements.

He stated that security institutions are on high alert to counter any possible activities linked to "Fitna al-Khawarij" and "Fitna al-Hindustan".

The provincial government warned that any attempt by banned organizations to create unrest or carry out acts of violence will be responded to firmly and effectively.

Babar Yousafzai further said that all security forces have been placed

on full alert, while comprehensive arrangements have been completed to deal with any untoward incident and maintain law and order in the province.

Authorities have urged citizens to cooperate with law enforcement agencies and follow security directives issued under Section 144.



## Construction of Modern Water Station in Pishukan Accelerates Under PSDP Program

**ALIHAMZA:**

**GWADAR:** Under the public-friendly vision and sustainable development policy of Mir Sarfraz Bugti,

The Public Health Engineering Department Gwadar is rapidly advancing the construction of a modern Water Station Project in Pishukan under the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP).

The project aims to ensure a reliable and sustainable supply of clean drinking water to local residents while providing a long-term solution to water scarcity issues in the region.

The initiative is considered a significant step toward improving water infrastructure, public health, and basic civic facilities in coastal areas of Balochistan.



The development project, being carried out under the directives of Naqeebullah Kakar and supervised by Executive Engineer Momin Baloch, was recently inspected by Engineer Sajid Sakhi along with Jameel Adam.

During the visit, officials reviewed the pace of construction, technical standards, quality of materials, and overall

progress of the project.

Engineer Sajid Sakhi directed the contractor to ensure that all phases of construction are completed within the stipulated timeframe while strictly adhering to government-approved engineering and quality standards.

He emphasized that the Government of Balochistan will not compromise on quality in public welfare projects and that the timely completion of development initiatives remains a top priority.

Chairman Jameel Adam stated that the modern water station project holds great importance for the people of Pishukan and surrounding areas.

He noted that the project will significantly improve access to safe drinking water, reduce public hardships, and contribute to a healthier and improved standard of living.

He also appreciated the efforts of the Government of Balochistan, Gwadar district administration, and the Public Health Engineering Department for actively working toward the development of coastal regions and the provision of essential public services.

Local residents expressed satisfaction over the ongoing development work, saying the project would help address long-standing water shortage problems while promoting healthier living conditions for the community.

Citizens described the initiative as a practical example of the Balochistan government's commitment to public welfare and sustainable infrastructure development.

پرائم منسٹر پاکستان کا  
آئی ٹی سیکٹر سے جڑے  
نوجوانوں کے لیے  
گیم چینجنگ انیشیٹیو

## Blended International IT Trainings [BIIT 2026]

ایگزیکٹس ڈیپورٹ، پرواز ٹیکنالوجی اسکولز مینیجمنٹ اور NAVTTC کی شراکت سے پرائم منسٹر یوتھ پروگرام کے تحت جدید نصاب پر مشتمل آئی ٹی کورسز

<p><b>International Certifications (Meta &amp; IBM)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ IBM OS &amp; Android Mobile App Developer Professional Certificate</li> <li>▶ IBM Data Analyst Professional Certificate</li> <li>▶ Meta Front-End Developer Professional Certificate</li> <li>▶ Meta Back-End Developer Professional Certificate</li> <li>▶ IBM -Full Stack JavaScript Developer Professional Certificate</li> </ul>	<p><b>Courses Offered</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Mobile App Development (iOS &amp; Android)</li> <li>▶ Data Analysis with Python</li> <li>▶ Front-End Web Development</li> <li>▶ Back-End Web Development</li> <li>▶ JavaScript Full Stack Development</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key Features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ International Learning Management System</li> <li>✓ Job Placement Support</li> <li>✓ Job Readiness Program</li> <li>✓ Tech + Soft Skills Development</li> <li>✓ Globally Recognized Curriculum</li> </ul>	<p>انڈسٹری ماہرین کی زیر نگرانی کیریئر میکنگ اور job- leading شعبہ جات میں لرننگ</p>
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آخری تاریخ: 25 مئی 2026

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# HEALTH VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

## Hypertension: The Silent Threat We Continue to Ignore

By Dr Rubaba Khan Buledi

Every year, World Hypertension Day reminds us of a health crisis that continues to grow globally across the globe. Unlike many diseases that arrive with immediate warning signs, hypertension often develops silently. A person may appear healthy, continue daily routines, and feel physically normal while high blood pressure gradually damages the heart, kidneys, brain, and blood vessels. This is why medical experts across the world describe hypertension as the silent killer.

In Pakistan, the burden of hypertension is increasing at an alarming pace. Rapid urbanisation, unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, smoking, stress, and lack of routine medical checkups have created conditions where cardiovascular diseases are becoming more common among both older and younger populations.

Unfortunately, many individuals only discover they have high blood pressure after suffering from serious complications such as stroke, heart disease, or kidney failure.

**Women Neglect Their Own Health, Prioritise Family**  
What makes hypertension particularly dangerous is the lack of

awareness surrounding it. In many households, people still consider blood pressure problems to be temporary conditions caused only by stress or fatigue. Self-medication and delayed medical consultation remain common practices. A large number of patients discontinue medicines once they start feeling better, without understanding that hypertension often requires lifelong management and regular monitoring.

The challenge becomes even more serious in developing regions where access to healthcare facilities remains limited. In rural and remote areas, many people are unable to undergo routine health screenings due to economic difficulties, long travel distances, or lack of awareness.

Women, especially in conservative societies, frequently neglect their own health while prioritising family responsibilities. As a result, hypertension often remains undiagnosed until it reaches dangerous stages.

Another worrying trend is the increasing prevalence of hypertension among younger people. Fast food consumption, excessive use of digital devices, reduced physical activity, and rising mental stress are contributing significantly to this issue. The modern lifestyle has dis-

tanced many people from healthy daily habits that once naturally supported physical wellbeing. Walking has been replaced by prolonged sitting, home-cooked meals by processed food, and social interaction by constant digital engagement.

### Public Awareness Campaigns are Essential

Mental health also plays an important role in blood pressure related illnesses. Economic un-

certainty, unemployment, work related pressure, and social stress contribute heavily to anxiety and chronic tension.

When stress becomes a permanent part of life, it directly affects the cardiovascular system. Unfortunately, mental health awareness remains weak in many societies, where emotional wellbeing is often ignored or misunderstood.

Preventing hypertension does not always require expensive treatment. In many cases,

small but consistent lifestyle changes can significantly reduce health risks.

Balanced diets, reduced salt intake, regular exercise, proper sleep, and avoidance of smoking can greatly improve cardiovascular health. Even simple daily habits such as walking for thirty minutes, drinking enough water, and managing stress levels can make a noticeable difference.

Public awareness campaigns are essential in this regard. Govern-

ments, healthcare institutions, educational organizations, and media platforms must work together to educate people about the dangers of uncontrolled blood pressure.

Schools and colleges should also encourage health education programs that teach young people the importance of nutrition, physical activity, and preventive healthcare.

Technology can also become an effective tool in tackling hypertension. Telemedicine, mobile health applications, and digital aware-

ness campaigns can help reach communities that lack direct access to medical professionals. Regular blood pressure monitoring devices are now more accessible and can help individuals take responsibility for their own health. However, technology alone cannot solve the problem without public willingness to adopt healthier lifestyles.

### A Healthier Society Cannot be Built Through Hospitals Alone

Healthcare systems must shift their focus from treatment alone to prevention and early diagnosis. Preventive healthcare is not only more effective but also more affordable in the long term. Hospitals across Pakistan continue to face increasing pressure from patients suffering from preventable cardiovascular complications. Investing in awareness and early intervention can reduce this burden significantly.

Women's health deserves special attention in discussions surrounding hypertension. Pregnancy related hypertension, hormonal changes, nutritional deficiencies, and limited healthcare access place many women at greater risk. Community level awareness programs targeting mothers and families can play a vital role in early detection

and treatment. The role of family support is equally important. Healthy living becomes easier when families collectively adopt positive habits. Shared meals with balanced nutrition, reduced dependence on unhealthy food, and encouragement for physical activity can create healthier communities from within households themselves.

World Hypertension Day should not remain a symbolic observance marked only through seminars and official statements. It should encourage serious reflection on how modern lifestyles are affecting public health. Hypertension is no longer a disease affecting only the elderly. It is becoming a widespread societal challenge that requires collective responsibility and long term commitment.

A healthier society cannot be built through hospitals alone. It requires awareness, discipline, preventive care, and responsible choices at both individual and community levels. The fight against hypertension begins not in emergency rooms but in our homes, schools, workplaces, and daily routines.

If societies truly wish to reduce the growing burden of cardiovascular disease, they must recognize one simple reality: Prevention is always more powerful than cure.



## IRC reaches to 29,000 out of school girls in Balochistan

By Shakoor Khan: International Rescue Committee (IRC) under its Teach & Educate Adolescent Girls with Community Help (TEACH) project, reached out to 29,000 out-of-school girls of 5 districts of Balochistan including Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Nushki, Kharan and Chagai.

"IRC is striving hard to promote girl's education in Balochistan besides imparting vocational trainings on financial literacy and trades to make them financially independent," said Shareef Mengal, Head of IRC Balochistan during a policy dialogue titled "Improving future of girl's education in Balochistan held in collaboration with UK aid at local hotel here.

Balochistan Education Minister Naseebullah Mari was the chief guest while representatives from the Education ministry, Directorate of Special Education,

Literacy, Non-Formal Education & Human Rights Department, Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission, Balochistan Textbook Board, Policy Planning Implementation Unit, Provincial Institute of Teachers Education, Education Support Programme, Global Partnership of Education, German Agency for International Cooperation, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund Society for Community Strengthening and Promotion of Education, Balochistan Institute for Development Studies and Practices, Japan International Cooperation Agency also attended the event.

The event hosted conversations with multiple stakeholders in-



cluding education experts and government functionaries on the barriers faced by girls in the province in pursuing their education and discussed possible solutions to combat those barriers.

### salient feature of the project IRC

While highlighting the salient feature of the project IRC chief in Balochistan Shareef Mengal said under the "Girls Learn" stream of the project, 22,000 girls received classes on Package A, B and C of non-formal curriculum, of them 4,000 enrolled in mainstream formal schooling system.

Under "Girls Earn" stream of the project,

7,000 girls completed Package A of the non-formal curriculum, out of these 7,000 girls, 5,000 received training on financial literacy and business development planning. 2,400 girls received training on 8 vocational trades and toolkits and 250 girls received financial grants to start a business.

Naseebullah Mari, Education Minister Balochistan, on the occasion urged that "We must do our part to remove the barriers faced by girls in the region so that every girl can pursue her education and become a valuable member of society".

The Government is making all out efforts to combat the low literacy rates which has affected girls from all ethnic

groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds."

We are committed to assist and contribute to building economically prosperous, and educated Balochistan, so every child has access to education.

He however welcomed the support extended by the International Rescue Committee for providing educational and vocational training opportunities, saying he is very grateful for the on-ground initiative of community-based schools in Balochistan.

Abdul Rauf Baloch - Secretary Secondary Education on the occasion appreciated the contributions of IRC for girls' education in Balochistan.

He shared that edu-

cation is a complex subject which cannot be discussed without WASH, health and other facilities.

This makes it a responsibility of all relevant departments and stakeholders who should play their role effectively.

Zain Ul Abidin Khan, Deputy Director Girls' Education through adequate resources. Girls' education in Balochistan is one of the biggest challenges faced by the country and to deal with it we must work with innovative methods like Non-Formal Education.

He further added that, "Over the years, we

have realized that if girls are unable to reach school, all stakeholders need to fill the gap and provide access to lifelong learning opportunities like productive skills and life-skills within communities.

### Girl's education is correlated with lower rates of poverty

The panel discussions established an opportunity for the policy makers and practitioners to understand that girl's education is correlated with lower rates of poverty and improved health outcomes. While stimulating dialogue, the stakeholders pledged to work together to eradicate the barriers to girls' education by providing

gender inclusive facilities and quality of education.

The event was a culmination of three sessions where the first was hosted to discuss the barriers faced by girls in pursuing their education. The panelists of the first session classified the barriers into 3 categories: Cultural, Economic and Service Delivery. The panelists recommended Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs) as a viable option while integrated with skill-based trainings and digitalizing education.

### Initiatives to combat the barriers to education

The second ses-

sion was focused on sustainable initiatives to combat the barriers with the help of Non-Formal Education in bridging the gap between primary and secondary schooling.

Chairperson of the session, Mr. Abdul Khaliq - Chief Planning Officer Policy Planning and Implementation Unit welcomed the participants and emphasized the importance of solutions to these barriers.

Mr. Ashraf Gichki - Director Literacy and Non-Formal Education shared contribution of NFE department toward provision of second chance of education to out-of-school children.

### Personal struggles in overcoming the barriers to education

The third and final session gave the TEACH clients an opportunity to express their personalized struggles in overcoming the barriers to education.

Anam - client of TEACH project from Pishin shared that after joining TEACH ALP center, she can read books and newspapers. Simra from the same district shared that her parents don't allow travelling long distances to attend school but after opening of ALP center at doorsteps, she was able to join the classroom for first time in her life.

Haleema from Nushki district shared that her mother is the only breadwinner of home and works at households of others to earn income.

Haleema shared that she is the only child of her family who can read, thanks to joining ALP center.

# Taiwan presses case for US arms after Trump says he is undecided on new sales

**NEWS DESK:** Taiwan's government pressed the case on Saturday for US arms supplies, saying they "are based on US law and serve as a shared deterrent to regional threats, after US President Donald Trump said he had not decided on future sales.

Despite a lack of formal diplomatic ties, the United States is the most important international backer for democratically governed Taiwan, which China claims as its territory.

Washington is bound by the Taiwan Relations Act to provide weapons to the island.

But on Friday, after a summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, Trump said he had not decided whether to proceed with a major weapons sale, adding to uncertainty about US support for Taiwan.

Taiwan relations act In a statement, Taiwan President Lai Ching-te's spokesperson Karen Kuo said China's escalating military threat is the "sole destabilising factor" in the Indo-Pacific region, including the Taiwan Strait.

"Furthermore, military sales between Taiwan and the US are not only a reflection of the US security commitment to Taiwan as stipulated in the Taiwan Relations Act, but also serve as a mutual deterrence against regional threats," she said.



Taiwan thanks Trump for his long-standing and continued support for security in the Taiwan Strait, and Taipei continues to deepen cooperation with Washington, Kuo added.

In December, the Trump administration approved a record \$11 billion arms sale package for Taiwan.

Reuters has reported a second one, worth around \$14bn, still awaits Trump's approval.

Speaking to reporters in Taipei earlier on Saturday, Taiwan Deputy Foreign Minister Chen Ming-chi declined to comment on the second package because it has yet to be made public, saying

Taiwan would continue to communicate with the US to understand the situation from Washington's side.

Taiwan's government has been stymied by the opposition-controlled parliament in trying to pass \$40bn in extra defence spending. Earlier this month it approved two-thirds of what the government

wanted but specified it was for US arms.

US Republican and Democratic lawmakers have strongly urged the Trump administration to continue with weapons sales.

Kuo Yu-ren, vice president of the Institute for Policy Research, a Taiwan think tank, said Trump might delay approving the new pack-

age until after late September when he has invited Xi to visit the US.

In comments to journalists after his summit with Xi,

Trump also appeared to suggest he would speak with President Lai about the proposed sale, saying, "I have to speak to the person... that's running Taiwan."

Asked about that possibility, Deputy Foreign Minister Chen said Taiwan still needed to try to understand "the true intent" of Trump's remarks.

While spokesperson Kuo's statement made no mention of whether Lai and Trump would speak, a senior Taiwan security official said the implication from

Trump was "quite clear."

"The party with whom arms sales are to be discussed is Taiwan, not Beijing."

the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity given the sensitivity of the matter.

Chinese military pressure

China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control and has rebuffed repeated offers of talks from Lai, whom it says is a "separatist".

Lai's spokesperson reiterated the government's long-standing position that the Republic of China, Taiwan's formal name, is a "sovereign, independent democratic country".

"This is self-evident, and Beijing's claims are therefore without merit," Kuo said.

China's military, which operates around Taiwan almost daily, did not let up its pressure while Trump was in Beijing on Thursday and Friday.

Shen Yu-chung, a deputy minister at Taiwan's China-

polymaking Mainland Affairs Council, said China has long sought to use pressure to push for talks and military force to push for "unification".

"That has always been the basic tone of its Taiwan policy," he said, standing next to Chen.

## Brics talks end sans joint statement as divisions over Iran war exposed

**NEWS DESK:** Top diplomats from Brics nations, including rivals Iran and the United Arab Emirates, failed to issue a joint statement on Friday after a two-day meeting in Delhi, leaving host India to release only a chair's statement that posed their differences.

Tehran had wanted the grouping of emerging economies to condemn the US-Israeli war on Iran and accused US ally the UAE of direct involvement in military operations against it.

Iran has struck the UAE with missiles and military installations in the UAE with missiles and drones several times since the joint Israel-US war began on Feb 28.

According to a statement from India's Ministry of External Affairs, Brics members stressed the indivisibility of security and reaffirmed support for resolving international

disputes through dialogue, consultation and diplomacy. The ministers called for stronger international efforts on peace and security.

"They called on the international community to respond to these challenges and associated security threats through politico-diplomatic measures to reduce the potential for conflict. They stressed the need to engage in conflict prevention efforts, including

addressing their root causes. They encouraged the active role of regional organisations in conflict prevention and resolution and supported all efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of crises," it said.

"There were differing views among some members as regards the situation in the West Asia/Middle East region," India said in the statement and outcome document.

Without naming the UAE, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told a news conference that a Brics member blocked some parts of the statement.

"We have no difficulty with that certain country, they have not been our target in the current war. We only hit American military bases and American military installations which are unfortunately on their soil," he said, adding that he hoped things would change when Brics leaders meet later this year.

Putin and Xi will "exchange views on key international and regional issues" and a joint declaration at the conclusion of their talks, it added.

As part of the visit, Putin is also scheduled to discuss economic and trade cooperation with Chinese Premier Li Qiang.

The announcement of Putin's trip comes just after Trump wrapped up on Friday the first visit to China by a US president in nearly a decade, with the grand reception be-

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Beijing also denies providing Moscow with weapons and military components for its defence industry, blaming Western countries for prolonging Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II by arming Ukraine instead.

As the world's top buyer of Russian fossil fuels, China has become Moscow's key economic partner, especially since Western countries imposed economic sanctions on Russian oil and gas over the conflict.

Negotiations to end the fighting in Ukraine, brokered by the United States, have appeared stalled since the beginning of the US-Israeli war with Iran, which broke out on February 28.

Moscow has ruled out a ceasefire or comprehensive negotiations with Ukraine unless Kyiv caves to the Kremlin's maximalist demands.

Putin will travel to China on May 19 for a two-day visit, hot on the heels of United States President Donald Trump's trip to Beijing, the Kremlin said on Saturday.

During the trip, the Russian leader will discuss with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping how to "further strengthen the comprehensive partnership and strategic cooperation" between Moscow and Beijing, according to a Kremlin statement.

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## Putin to visit China on May 19-20 to further strengthen 'comprehensive partnership'

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## On Nakba, Israel claims control over most of Gaza Strip

**NEWS DESK:** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israeli forces now control 60 per cent of the Gaza Strip, suggesting troops have expanded into more of the Palestinian territory than set out in an October ceasefire plan.

His comments came on Nakba Day, which commemorates 77 years of Palestinian displacement and Israeli occupation. "Nakba," meaning "catastrophe" in Arabic, refers to the flight and expulsion of an estimated 700,000 Palestinians during the creation of the State of Israel in 1948.

Gaza remains gripped by daily violence, while efforts to advance a fragile truce and bring a permanent end to the war appear to have stalled.

"In the past two years we have shown the entire world what mighty forces are embedded in our people, in our state, in our army, in our heritage," Netanyahu said on Thursday at an event. He said that they had brought back all their prisoners, up to the last one. "There were



those who said, get out, get out! We did not get out. Today we control 60 per cent, tomorrow we shall see."

Hamas leader targeted Meanwhile, Israeli defence minister's office said it carried out a strike in Gaza targeting senior Hamas leader Ezzedine Al-Haddad, who it described as one of the principal architects of the October 7 attack.

It did not say whether he had been killed.

Haddad was the target of the strike, an BDA (battle damage assessment) confirmation is still pending, a military official said, in a separate statement.

Israeli television aired footage of a building on fire in Gaza, saying it was the site where Haddad had been targeted.

Earlier, the Palestinian Authority said Israeli forces shot dead a 15-year-old Palestinian boy in the occupied West Bank, while the military said he had been thrown

stones at Israeli cars on a road.

The health ministry said it had been informed that Fahd Zidan Oweis was shot dead by the Israeli forces in the town of Al-Lubban of Sharqyya in the Nablus governorate.

Separately, in the village of Jibya, north of Ramallah, Palestinians said illegal Israeli settlers set fire to a room inside a mosque and several vehicles. Graffiti in Hebron was also sprayed on the mosque's outer walls.

## South Korea opposes Iran's reported plan to charge Hormuz transit fees

**NEWS DESK:** South Korea's oceans minister is opposed to Iran's reported move to impose fees on ships passing through the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz, calling the action a violation of international law, media reports said Friday.

Speaking at a news conference in the southeastern port city of Busan, Hwang Jong-woo said the waterway is an international shipping route where free navigation must be guaranteed, according to Yonhap News.

"Charging shipping tolls in the strait is practically equivalent to blocking the waterway," said Hwang, adding that, unlike the man-made Suez Canal, the Strait of Hormuz consists of international waters protected under international agreements.

On Wednesday, Iran's parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Commission head Ebrahim Azizi said



a strategic proposal on the "smart management" of the strait has reached its final stage, which has been uploaded to parliament's system for review and approval.

He added that the proposal aims to use Iran's geographic position in the strategic waterway as a "power-generating leverage."

Hwang said South Korea is temporarily rerouting some oil tankers

through the Red Sea as uncertainty continues about the reopening of the Hormuz route.

The ministry said four South Korean vessels have successfully returned via the Red Sea, while 26 Korean ships carrying 158 sailors remain stranded in the Strait of Hormuz.

Regional tensions have escalated since the US and Israel launched strikes against Iran on

Feb 28, triggering retaliation from Tehran against Israel, as well as US allies in the Gulf, along with the closure of the shipping channel.

A ceasefire took effect on April 8 through Pakistani mediation, but talks in Islamabad failed to produce a lasting agreement.

US President Donald Trump later extended the truce indefinitely.

## Punjab Chief Minister (CM) departs on three-day official visit to Azerbaijan

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has departed on a three-day official visit to the Republic of Azerbaijan to represent Pakistan at the World Urban Forum being held in Baku from

May 17 to 20.

During the visit, the Chief Minister is scheduled to hold an important meeting with the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev on May 17, where matters of mutual interest, including urban

development cooperation and investment opportunities, are expected to be discussed. A CM Maryam Nawaz will attend the forum as a special state guest, reflecting Pakistan's active participation in international dialogue on sustainable cities and housing solutions. At the forum, the Chief Minister will deliver a keynote address at the World Leaders Summit at the Baku Olympic Stadium, where she will highlight

Punjab's policy direction in urban planning, infrastructure development, and affordable housing. She will particularly present the provincial government's flagship housing initiative "Apni Chhat, Apna

Ghar" as a model for affordable housing, showcasing it as a scalable and inclusive framework for addressing housing shortages. The project will be introduced before the international community

as Punjab's innovative approach to expanding home ownership opportunities for low and middle-income groups. The CM is accompanied by Senior Minister Ali Dar, the Chief Secretary Punjab and other senior officials.



LAHORE: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani Awarding Degrees to the Students at the Graduation Ceremony of the University of Lahore.

## Pakistan confers Sitara-i-Quaid-i-Azam to Cui Jun, President CEN

BEIJING (INP): The Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing hosted a special investiture ceremony to confer Pakistan Civil Awards on five Chinese nationals in recognition of their outstanding contributions to Pakistan and to the development of China-Pakistan relations, China Economic Net (CEN) reported.

Mr. Cui Jun, President of China Economic Net, was honored with the Sitara-i-Quaid-i-Azam. He has played an instrumental role in strengthening bilateral ties through extensive investment project using visco-elastic damping technology, driving the development of disaster prevention and mitigation in Pakistan.

Mr. Wang Yongge, Chairman and Party Secretary of China Zhongyuan Engineering Corporation, was awarded the Hilti-i-Quaid-i-Azam. Since 1996, he has played a key role in advancing China-Pakistan cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, an important pillar of the longstanding friendship between the two countries.

## Modern technologies bringing revolutionary changes to healthcare systems: PA Speaker

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan has said that modern technologies such as artificial intelligence, telemedicine, genomic research, and robotic surgery are bringing revolutionary changes to healthcare systems. He was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Pakistan Medical Association's International Medical Conference held on Saturday.

He said that alongside medical advancements, it is equally important to ensure compassion, medical ethics, and equal access to healthcare facilities for all patients.

He also highlighted the role of doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers during global pandemics, including COVID-19, saying they set remarkable examples of service to humanity. The Speaker stated that under the leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, historic reforms have been introduced in the

## Pakistan open to dialogue with India, no compromise on Kashmir, IWT: Sardar Masood

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Masood Khan speaking in a televised interview said any future process must remain firmly anchored in the core disputes of Jammu and Kashmir and the Indus Waters Treaty.

He said that both countries are destined to coexist as neighbours for centuries and therefore structured dialogue and confidence-building measures should continue. However, he cautioned that people-to-people contacts and cultural exchanges must not become a substitute for addressing the central political disputes between the two countries.

He observed that recent statements emerging from Indian political and strategic circles, including voices linked to the RSS and former military leadership, indicate that India may be reconsidering limited engagement with Pakistan under growing international pressure. According to him, countries, including the United

## First elderly caregivers certificate launched at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU)

ISLAMABAD (INP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Islamabad, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), has initiated Pakistan's first Elderly Caregivers Certificate Course to train skilled professionals for the rapidly growing national and international caregiving sector.

With the increasing elderly population worldwide, professional caregiving has become a major social and economic need. Pakistan currently faces a shortage of trained caregivers, while countries such as Japan, European nations, Canada, the USA, the UK, Australia, and the Middle East have a high demand for certified professionals in this field.

The six-month certificate course will focus on professional caregiving skills, including elderly health care, medication support, communication skills, social care, professional

ethics, and psychosocial support. The course will initially be offered in Urdu and English, with the possibility of translation into other languages according to market demand.

A unique feature of the initiative is AIOU's recently established international language centers, including Japanese, Turkish, Russian, and Chinese language centers, with a French language center planned in the near future. Language and cultural orientation components related to different countries will also be integrated into the program to improve overseas employment opportunities for graduates.

The inaugural ceremony was held at AIOU Islamabad and attended by prominent academicians, professionals, and development partners.

The Dean Faculty of Sciences, Prof. Dr. Sher Muhammad, appreciated the Department of Nutritional Sciences and

Secretary and cultural tensions pose a challenge to social harmony and must be addressed through unity, understanding and mutual respect. She added that the elimination of ideological and practical extremism was essential for achieving a peaceful society.

Highlighting global initiatives, she said efforts to ensure women's safety and empowerment were a key pillar of building a peaceful society, while legal reforms are also being introduced to curb violence and strengthen rule of law.

The Chief Minister

## Promotion of peace, prosperity requires sustained, collective efforts from all segments of society: Maryam Nawaz

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif stressed the need for building a peaceful, united and cohesive society saying that the promotion of peace and prosperity requires sustained and collective efforts from all segments of society.

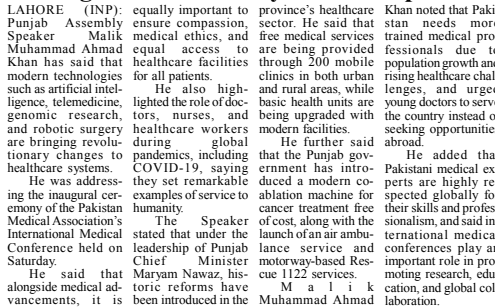
In her message on the International Day of Living Together in Peace, the CM said that the great symbols of global aspiration for a peaceful, dignified and harmonious world.

She said that in the wake of recent global crises, Pakistan has further strengthened its identity as a peace-loving country, adding that this recognition was a

matter of pride for every Pakistani. Maryam Nawaz Sharif stressed the need for building a peaceful, united and cohesive society saying that the promotion of peace and prosperity requires sustained and collective efforts from all segments of society.

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HYDERABAD: Election officials carrying and loading polling materials by poll of local at AC city office.



HYDERABAD: Prof. Santosh Kumar addressing a press conference during World Hypertension Day.

## Special "Darbar" at Dera Police Club for lady constables focusing on field challenges, welfare

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, May 16 (INP): Regional Police Officer (RPO) Dera Range Ghulam Mubashir Meikan on Saturday chaired a special "Darbar" at the Police Club Dera Ismail Khan exclusively for lady constables, focusing on their field challenges, welfare, and professional support.

Lady police personnel from across Dera Ismail Khan district attended the session and shared their concerns regarding duty-related difficulties, working conditions, and welfare issues.

Addressing the participants, the RPO

praised the services of female police officers, saying they are performing their duties with courage, dedication, and commitment in challenging environments. He emphasized that protecting vulnerable and oppressed women and ensuring justice for them is a core responsibility of police women in the field.

He stated that even a single sincere step taken to support a victimized woman could change a life and strengthen public trust in law enforcement.

The RPO also announced key institutional reforms for women and child protection, saying that

male police personnel remain a top priority of the police administration. During the interactive session, lady constables briefed the RPO about multiple operational and welfare-related challenges they face in the field.

The RPO listened to their concerns attentively and issued on-the-spot instructions for immediate resolution of legitimate grievances.

The session concluded with assurances of improved facilitation mechanisms and stronger institutional support for women in policing across the region.

# Balochistan Announces Lockdown Relaxation Ahead of Eid-ul-Adha

**Staff Reporter:**  
**QUETTA:** The Government of Balochistan's Home Department has officially announced a relaxation in the ongoing lockdown across the province in anticipation of the upcoming Eid-ul-Adha holidays.

"According to a notification issued by the Home Department on Saturday, the ease in restrictions is aimed at facilitating citizens and business communities ahead of the festive season.

**Key Highlights of the Notification:**

**Duration:** The relaxation in lockdown measures will remain in effect until June 1.

**Business Operations:** All shops, business centers, shopping malls, and markets



across Balochistan are permitted to remain open. Scope: The order applies provincial-wide, including the capital city of Quetta.

"Previously, the federal government had implemented a nationwide lockdown as part of a broader energy conservation policy.

However, keeping the public interest and Eid preparations in mind, the provincial authorities have opted to temporarily ease the restrictions.

## GOC 33 Division Visits BRC Khuzdar and Shaheed Ashiq Public Library to Review Educational Development Projects



**KHUZDAR:** Major General Shehryar Munir Hafeez visited Balochistan Residential College Khuzdar and Captain (R) Shaheed Muhammad Ashiq Usman Public Library in Khuzdar, where he interacted with teachers, students, and staff members and addressed them during the visit.

Both projects were restored and made functional for the public under the BSDI Phase-I development initiative. During the visit, Abdul Razaq Sasoli, Commandant FC Qalat Scouts Colonel Ifan Bangash, XEN

Communications and Works Department Engineer Saleem Razaq Umrani, staff officers, and officials from relevant departments accompanied the GOC.

At Balochistan Residential College Khuzdar, Major General Shehryar Munir Hafeez met with the principal and discussed academic and administrative matters, student facilities, and challenges faced by the institution.

During a meeting with faculty members, teachers shared their views regarding academic activities and resource requirements.

The GOC also held an interactive session with students, where he learned about their educational goals, career planning, and challenges.

Appreciating the dedication and determination of the students, he stated that the future of lies in the hands of its youth and that the Pakistan Army would continue supporting educational development at every level.

In the second phase of the visit, the GOC inspected the restored Captain (R) Shaheed Muhammad Ashiq Usman Public Library.

He toured the study hall, digital section, and library facilities to review the available resources and services.

On this occasion, local students and citizens also met with the GOC and shared suggestions for improving and maximizing the use of the library.

Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razaq Sasoli and Engineer Saleem Razaq Umrani briefed the delegation regarding the completion of the projects and public accessibility measures.

The GOC expressed his desire to see

the library developed into an active center of knowledge and research for youth while maintaining all facilities at a high standard.

Speaking on the occasion, Major General Shehryar Munir Hafeez said that projects related to education, health, and social welfare are essential for the development and for strengthening public trust.

He added that the Pakistan Army, in collaboration with the civil administration, would continue playing its role in ensuring the completion and sustainability of such welfare projects.

## Deputy Commissioner Farida Tareen Facilitates Ambulance Service for Remote

### Goth Dargi Area in Sohbatpur

**SOHBATPUR:** Under the special efforts and public welfare vision of Farida Tareen, effective measures are being taken to improve healthcare facilities for the residents of the remote area of Goth Dargi in Sohbatpur district.

Emergency healthcare services in the region.

The newly provided ambulance services are officially handed over by Deputy Commissioner Farida Tareen to PPHI Sohbatpur to ensure timely and quality medical and

fare initiatives play a vital role in improving the healthcare sector and ensuring immediate medical assistance in remote and underserved areas.

The Sohbatpur district administration re-affirmed its commitment to continuing



In this regard, a formal request was submitted to Free Kisan Free Pakistan Organization for the provision of an ambulance.

Responding promptly and positively, the organization provided an ambulance

emergency services for the people of Goth Dargi and surrounding areas. On the occasion, the district administration of Sohbatpur appreciated the support and cooperation of Free Kisan Free Pakistan Organization, stating that such wel-

practical measures without interruption for the provision of healthcare, education, and other basic facilities to the public, with the aim of ensuring public welfare and improving the overall quality of life in the district.

## Shahid Rind: Lady Constable, Brahui Writer Martyred in Balochistan Attacks

### NEWS DESK:

A lady police constable was killed while her husband and son sustained injuries in a terrorist attack in Turbat, triggering strong condemnation from the Government of Balochistan, the provincial government's spokesperson Shahid Rind stated.

In a separate incident, renowned Brahui writer and intellectual Professor Ghamkhiwar Hayaq Noshki, an attack described as a blow to the literary and intellectual values of Balochistan.

Terrorists were attempting to spread fear by targeting women, teachers, and innocent civilians.

Shahid Rind said. He termed the attacks acts of open brutality and vowed that those responsible would be brought to justice.

He added that the provincial government and security institutions

remained fully committed to eliminating terrorism and restoring peace across the province.



## Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ramzan Palal Chairs DDC Meeting to Review BSDI Development Projects in Usta Muhammad

**USTA MUHAMMAD:** Muhammad Ramzan Palal chaired an important meeting of the District Development Committee (DDC) to review the progress, quality, and completion status of ongoing development projects under the Special Development Initiative (SDI) in the district.

The meeting was attended by officers from various departments and relevant representatives, including Principal of Government Boys Degree College Usta Muhammad Ubadullah Zehri, Executive Engineer Buildings Muhammad Yaseen Chandio, Assistant Director Local Government Yaseen Jamali, Executive Engineer Public Health Engineering Shukrullah



Baloch, SDO Irrigation Abid Ali Syah, and Assistant District Education Officer Abdul Karim Maston representing the Education Department.

During the session, a detailed review was conducted of both ongoing and completed development projects under BSDI. Concerned of-

ficials briefed the committee regarding the current status, progress, challenges, and quality standards of the projects.

Following physical verification of completed schemes, approval was granted for their billing, and it was decided that the cases

would be forwarded to the PMTS portal for further processing and final approval by the ACS Development Department.

The meeting also sought new development proposals under BSDI that include more effective and sustainable projects aligned with the public needs

and priorities of Usta Muhammad district. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ramzan Palal directed all concerned departments to ensure quality workmanship, transparency, and timely completion of ongoing projects.

He emphasized that the primary objective of development projects is to provide immediate and effective relief to the public; therefore, any negligence or delay would not be tolerated.

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants reaffirmed their commitment to completing all projects with transparency and high standards so that the public could benefit from their outcomes as soon as possible.

## Deputy Commissioner Mir Khalid Khan Conducts Surprise Inspection of Development Projects in Jaffarabad

**JAFFARABAD:** On a public holiday, Mir Khalid Khan carried out a surprise visit to various ongoing development projects across the district, reviewing the progress, quality, and transparency of multiple public welfare schemes. During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner received detailed briefings from concerned officials regarding the pace of work and the implementation standards.



The visit focused on key public projects being executed under the Special Development Initiative (SDI) Phase-I program. These included watercourse schemes under the Public Health Engineering Department, installation of gates at Temple Drain

and development work underway at District Headquarters Hospital Dera Allah Yar and Government Girls College Dera Allah Yar.

During the inspection, Sub-Divisional Officer Muhammad Siddique Zehri briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the nature, progress, and challenges of the projects. Mir Khalid Khan Khoso and Mir Nobat Khan

top priority is to ensure that every project is completed as per specifications so that the public can benefit from improved facilities in a meaningful way.

He further instructed engineers and relevant officers to maintain continuous monitoring of the projects and ensure their regular presence in the field.

He warned that negligence, carelessness, or poor supervision would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

The Deputy Commissioner highlighted that the irrigation and drainage projects currently underway were initiated in view of prevailing seasonal and geographical conditions, making strict over-

sight essential to protect the public from future difficulties. He cautioned that officers showing negligence or dereliction of duty would face strict action and reports would be forwarded to higher authorities.

Mir Khalid Khan added that rigorous monitoring of construction projects is aimed solely at improving quality, ensuring the proper utilization of government resources, and safeguarding public interest.

He reaffirmed the district administration's commitment to continuing surprise inspections of development projects to ensure transparency, quality, and completion in line with public expectations.

## Quetta Hosts Major Thalassemia Awareness Seminar Under Halimi Foundation

**QUETTA:** A wide range of social, medical, legal, and civil society representatives gathered in Quetta at an important awareness seminar organized under the auspices of the Mir Heibat Khan Halimi Foundation in collaboration with the Kashif Iqbal Thalassemia Care Centre, aimed at raising awareness about thalassemia and health care support systems in Balochistan.

The event was attended by prominent figures including Chairman Mir Heibat Khan Halimi, Chairman Muhammad Iqbal, Federal Secretary Balochistan Region Ghulam Sarwar Brohi, Regional Director of Aurat Foundation, Alauddin Khilji (Board Member Halimi Foundation), Dr. Hamid Mengal (Former Director RBC), Thalassemia Centre Incharge Govt of Balochistan Sardar Aslam Naseer, Secretary Halimi Foundation Saima Musa,

founder board member Muhammad Saleem, Alpalah Bank Regional Head Afzalh Bank, eye specialist Dr. Iram, legal experts including Amanullah Karrani and Ali Ahmed Kurd, media representatives, students, doctors, and social activists.

During the briefing, Alauddin Khilji highlighted that the Halimi Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving healthcare services in Balochistan, especially for underprivileged communities. He said the foundation focuses on addressing major healthcare challenges and ensuring access to quality medical services for marginalized populations.

He further stated that the foundation has completed several welfare projects, including over 60 free corneal transplant surgeries in collaboration with the Government of Sri Lanka, Yasin Joya (Honorary Consul

General of Sri Lanka for Punjab), and Mughal Eye Hospital. In addition, regular blood donation drives are organized in collaboration with the Regional Blood Centre Balochistan to ensure blood availability for thalassemia patients.

A modern eye hospital and thalassemia treatment center have also been established at Cantonment General Hospital, Quetta Cantt, providing diagnostic, OPD, and blood bank services.

The foundation aims to develop these facilities into a "Centre of Excellence" offering advanced treatment for eye diseases, blood disorders, diagnostics, and preventive healthcare, with continued expansion through national and international partnerships.

A one-day awareness seminar on thalassemia was also held at Nori Naseer Khan Hall, focusing on educating youth about the disease.

## Inflation-hit Karachiites reel from further rise in flour prices

**NEWS DESK:** While inflation-hit Karachiites are already paying the highest price of flour in the country, the city administration's decision to further increase the prices of various flour varieties by Rs4 to Rs15 has compounded their problems.

As usual, the new price list of various essential items issued by the Commissioner of Karachi has provided no relief to the masses as retailers continue to defy the official rates.

Retailers also maintained an old habit of not displaying the price list of commodities at their shops.

The rate increase, compared with the last rates fixed in March, was made without citing any reason. Rates of various flour varieties rise by Rs4 to Rs15 per kg, retailers continue to defy official price list.

The new retail rates of flour No. 2.5, fine flour and chakkli flour have been fixed at Rs113, Rs121 and Rs145 per kg respectively, versus Rs99, Rs117 and Rs130 fixed on March 31, 2026.

Before the fixation of prices, consumers were already paying Rs130 for flour No. 2.5 followed by Rs140 for fine flour and Rs160 per kg for chakkli flour.



Despite the arrival of the new Sindh crop, wheat prices continued to crawl up in the open market, forcing the miller to raise prices of various varieties of flour.

Flour millers on May 13 issued the rate

of flour No. 2.5 at 5,940 to 6,000 (cash and credit) per 50kg bag, followed by 10kg flour bag at Rs1,198 to 1,210, Rs6,140 to 6,200 for super fine flour (maida) per 50kg bag and Rs6,340 to 6,400 per 50kg bag for fine

flour. On March 25, 2026, the prices of a 50 kg bag of flour No. 2.5, a 10kg flour bag, a 50 kg bag of maida and a 50kg fine flour were Rs4,740 to 4,800, Rs 958 to 970, Rs 5,540 to 5,600 and 5,640 to 5,700, respectively.

Higher flour rates have already led to an increase in various varieties of Roti and bread.

Chairman Karachi Wholesalers Grocers Association (KWGA) Rauf Ibrahim said that flour prices have been

creeping up owing to rising wheat prices in the open market followed by reports of low wheat crop this year. Currently, wheat is available at Rs108-110 per kg as compared to Rs93 two months ago.

He said hoarding of wheat is also rampant while Punjab has banned inter-provincial wheat movement.

On May 12, 2026 the city government also came out with new rates of grocery items. For ex-

ample, the new retail rates of Mash (washed), Moong (washed), Masoor No. 1 quality and Gram Pulse No. 1 quality have been fixed at Rs400, Rs365, Rs205 and Rs215 per kg while consumers are paying Rs440-500, Rs360-420, Rs220-300 and Rs230-280 for these items, respectively.

The new official retail rates of Kabuli Channa (8mm plus), Black Gram and Basmati are Rs365, Rs190 and Rs235 per kg while in the retail markets, they are tagged at Rs390, Rs280 and Rs350 per kg.

Kernal Basmati Export quality rice is sold at Rs400 to 420 per kg while its official rate is fixed at Rs385 per kg. Kernal Basmati No. 1, quality is available at Rs380 against its official rate of Rs365 per kg. Iri 6 and Iri 9 prices have been fixed at Rs120 to 125 per kg while retailers are demanding Rs150-190 per kg.

The official grocery items' prices issued on May 12, 2026 compared with the last price of February 16, 2026 show fluctuations in pulses, Kabuli Channa, Black Gram and Besan of Rupees five to Rupees five followed by Rupees five to Rs55 per kg in prices of rice varieties.

## Energy leaders warn against expanding fossil fuels amid Hormuz shock

**NEWS DESK:** As energy disruptions caused by the Strait of Hormuz's closure create a worldwide crisis, a new study by the Energy Transitions Commission (ETC) warned against expanding fossil fuel infrastructure and called for accelerating renewable energy deployment not only a 'climate imperative', but also strategic response to fuel price volatility.

The ETC noted that expanding fossil fuel infrastructure risked locking in future shocks, while clean technologies, such as solar, electric vehicles and heat pumps, could reduce oil

demand by almost a quarter by 2035. "EV deployment alone could displace around five million barrels per day by 2030 and 9-10 million barrels a day by 2035 — roughly half of pre-crisis Hormuz oil flows," it said.

However, elevated fossil fuel prices could cost \$1-2 trillion in annual global oil and gas expenditure, not for more energy, but for the same energy at a higher cost.

"That is comparable to the annual clean

energy investment gap of roughly \$1.5tr, the difference between today's investment levels of around \$2tr and the \$3.5tr needed annually to build a net-zero, more resilient energy system through to 2050."

Accelerating clean energy deployment is therefore not only a climate imperative, but also an economic and strategic response to fossil fuel volatility, it said, adding that renewables strengthened resilience to geopolitical disruption.

A two-judge bench of Justice Jawad Hassan and Justice Sardar Akbar Ali announced the judgement in an income tax reference filed by Khairul Khan against the Appellate Tribunal Inland Revenue and other tax authorities.

The court set aside an Rs114.7 million super tax demand raised over the sale of ancestral property held since 1980. The judges observed that where no income tax is payable on capital gains, no super tax can be levied either.

According to the judgement, Mr Khan declared an income of over 1.14 billion rupees for the 2024 tax year from the sale of ancestral property. The return was deemed finalised under the Income Tax Ordinance.

However, the assessing officer initiated proceedings under Section 4C and imposed the super tax through an order dated Feb 28, 2025. Mr Khan challenged the demand before the tribunal, which upheld the levy, prompting his high

court appeal.

Counsel for the applicant argued that Mr Khan, a private individual not engaged in property dealing, profited solely from disposing of inherited immovable property. Under Section 37(1A), this carried a zero percent tax rate because the property was held for more than six years.

The counsel maintained that without taxable income, the basis for imposing a super tax ceased to exist, and taxing income already subjected to a nil rate amounted to indirectly taxing income that the legislature had expressly exempted.

FBR defended the levy, arguing that Section 4C is an independent provision applicable to all high-income individuals, regardless of income source. It contended zero-percent capital gains still formed part of taxable income, thus attracting the super tax.

The bench disagreed, holding that fiscal statutes must be interpreted strictly. "No tax could be imposed through implication or administrative interpretation," the court observed.

The court noted Section 37(1A) created a special, overriding statutory regime governing immovable property sales. When the legislature consciously prescribes a zero percent tax rate, no tax liability arises despite a gain existing.

## LHC quashes super tax on sale of inherited land

**NEWS DESK:** The Lahore High Court has ruled that a super tax under Section 4C of the Income Tax Ordinance of 2001 cannot be imposed on capital gains arising from the sale of inherited immovable property where the gain itself carries a zero percent tax rate.

The court set aside an Rs114.7 million super tax demand raised over the sale of ancestral property held since 1980. The judges observed that where no income tax is payable on capital gains, no super tax can be levied either.

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The judgement stated that a charging provision and the applicable rate together constituted the machinery of a tax, and once the prescribed rate was zero percent, the charging mechanism stood exhausted at nil liability.

Referring to a judgement by the Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan in the DG Khan Cement case, the bench noted the apex court had already clarified this issue.

The high court emphasised the constitutional court's ruling where no tax is payable on capital gains from immovable property due to the holding period or inheritance, no super tax is payable.

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## Engineering drives Punjab growth

**NEWS DESK:** Punjab's manufacturing sector has undergone a significant structural shift over the past 50 years, moving away from traditional labour-intensive industries towards more mechanised, engineering-led and electrical manufacturing activities. Analysis of long-term industrial data from 1971/72 to 2020/21 shows a clear divergence in performance. While several older industries have stagnated or declined, sectors linked to mechanisation, electrification, infrastructure and technology have recorded sustained and steady expansion, reshaping the province's industrial base.

The data from the Gallup Pakistan analysis and accompanying industry charts, attributed to the Bureau of Statistics and the Planning and Development Board, Punjab, highlights how changing technology, industrial organisation, urbanisation and consumer demand have reshaped the province's manufacturing landscape.

The textile sector continues to remain one of Punjab's most important industries and demonstrates substantial expansion in industrial



scale over the last five decades. Cotton yarn production increased sharply from 150,705 tonnes in 1971/72 to 976,627 tonnes in 2020/21, reflecting the continued importance of cotton textiles within Punjab's industrial economy. The number of textile units expanded significantly from 43 to 299 during the same period, while employment increased from 361 workers to 1,519 workers. It also illustrates this large rise in production capacity through a sharp upward trend in yarn output over time. However, despite long-term expansion, growth patterns across textile segments remained uneven. Certain textile industries such as knit and woven manufacturing remained rela-

tively small and showed weaker momentum. This indicates that although textiles continue to dominate manufacturing activity, growth has become less dynamic compared to emerging engineering and electrical industries.

The tractor industry reflects Punjab's agricultural mechanisation and industrial modernisation. Tractor production increased from 18,714 units in 1984/85 to 55,387 units in 2007/08 before declining to 23,653 units in 2020/21. The trend indicates strong earlier growth driven by farm mechanisation, followed by recent contraction linked to changing market and economic conditions. However, the later decline suggests pos-

sible market saturation, reduced purchasing power, changing agricultural practices or demand patterns, or broader economic pressures affecting industrial demand. Despite the recent slowdown, the tractor sector remains an important indicator of Punjab's transition towards mechanised manufacturing and capital-intensive production systems.

Electrical manufacturing industries showed the most stable long-term growth in Punjab's manufacturing sector. Electric fan production increased from 174 thousand units in 1971/72 to 2,499 thousand units in 2020/21, while the number of industrial units expanded from 39 to 126.

## New banknote designs await cabinet nod

**NEWS DESK:** State Bank Governor Jameel Ahmad on Friday revealed that the designs of new currency notes have been finalised and forwarded to the federal cabinet for approval.

The SBP governor disclosed this while responding to a question about the delay in the introduction of new currency notes during his meeting with members of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) on Friday.

In January 2024, SBP had invited the general public to submit designs for new banknotes, which it initiated the process of replacing the existing banknotes.

According to the central bank, the new notes would have advanced security features and address the issue of counterfeit notes.

The SBP had said that it was an "established practice" to introduce new banknotes every 15 to 20 years for

security purposes. At the KCCI meeting, Jameel Ahmad clarified that exchange company rates are fully determined by market forces, and the State Bank has no direct role in setting exchange rates.

He said progress was underway on the licensing and regulatory framework for virtual assets in Pakistan.

Warning of temporary inflationary pressures, Mr Ahmad said inflation could exceed seven per cent in the last quarter of FY26, but the State Bank remained committed to keeping inflation within the medium-term target range of 5-7pc.

According to a KCCI press release, the SBP governor said the country's current account remained in surplus during the first nine months of FY26, and the overall deficit was expected to remain between zero and one per

cent. The external account was now in a much stronger and healthier position, he added.

He acknowledged that global uncertainties and oil price fluctuations could impact growth in the final quarter of FY26.

He said SBP reforms, along with strict action against hundi and hawala, had played a key role in stabilising the economy and strengthening foreign exchange reserves.

He said remittances, which stood at \$38bn last fiscal year, were expected to exceed an unprecedented \$41bn this fiscal year. In reply to a question about the alleged "Pinky Cocaine Queen" case and whether the banking system has mechanisms to detect suspicious financial transactions, the SBP governor said banks and financial

institutions are required to monitor suspicious transactions under strict regulatory frameworks.

He added that any unusual or suspicious activity identified through the banking system is referred to relevant law enforcement and investigating agencies for further action in accordance with the law.

On the SBP's renewed focus on small and medium enterprises, he said regulations had been simplified, procedural hurdles reduced, and banks directed to prepare dedicated SME growth plans.

He said SME financing had surged from Rs491bn in June 2024 to Rs887bn in December 2025, with a target of Rs1.5 trillion by June 2028. Mr Ahmad said that global economic conditions and declining commodity prices had adversely affected export performance.

# Fatima Sana to lead women's side as PCB announces squad for T20 World Cup, Ireland tri-series

**NEWS DESK:** Fatima Sana will lead Pakistan in the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 as the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Saturday announced a 15-member squad for the tournament, as well as a tri-series featuring Ireland and the West Indies.

According to a press release by the PCB, Pakistan will feature in a tri-series in Dublin from May 28 to June 4.

where hosts Ireland and the West Indies are the other two participating teams. Pakistan is set to play four matches in the event.

"The tournament will help Pakistan and the other two sides gear up for the 12-team ICC Women's T20 World Cup, scheduled to take place from June 12 to July 5," the cricket board said.

Among the 15 players selected by the Women's National Selection Committee, Eymen Fatima, Natalia Pervaiz,



Rameen Shamim, Saira Jabeen and Tasmia Rubab will feature in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup for the first time.

It said 24-year-old Fatima, who will feature in her third ICC Women's T20 World Cup, would captain the side for the

second successive T20 World Cup after having led the team in the previous edition held in the UAE in 2024.

Ahead of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in England and Wales, the Pakistan women's team will play two warm-up fixtures — against Sri Lanka on June 6 and against Scotland on June 9.

Both matches will take place in Derby. "Pakistan will begin their campaign against India at Edgbaston in Birmingham on June 14, before facing South Af-

rica at the same venue on June 17," the PCB said, adding that the team will then travel to Southampton to face Bangladesh at the Hampshire Bowl on June 20.

Their fourth fixture will be against Australia at Headingley in Leeds

on June 23, while their final group-stage match will be against the Netherlands at the Bristol County Ground in Bristol on June 27.

The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semi-finals, scheduled for June 30 and

July 2, respectively. The final will be staged at Lord's Cricket Ground in London on July 5.

1 5 - m e m b e r squad: Fatima Sana (captain), Aya Riaz, Ayesha Zafar, Diana Baig, Eymen Fatima, Gull Feroza, Iram

Javed, Muneeba Ali Siddiqui (wk), Nashra Sundhu, Natalia Pervaiz, Rameen Shamim, Sadia Iqbal, Saira Jabeen, Tasmia Rubab and Tuba Hassan.

Non-travelling reserves: Amber Kainat, Momna Riazat, Sadaf Shamas, Sidra Amin, Syeda Aroob Shah and Umm-e-Hani. Player support personnel:

Ayesha Ashhar (manager), Wahab Riaz (mentor/head coach), Abdur Rehman (spin bowling coach), Umaid Asif (fast bowling coach), Abdul Majeed (fielding coach), Imran Farhat (batting coach), Muhammad Arslan (media manager for tri-series only), Raza Kitchlew (media manager for World Cup), Waleed Ahmed (analyst), Moeen (strength and conditioning coach), Alveena Awan (team doctor), Theerem Sumbal (physiotherapist) and Kiran Shahzadi (massage).

## Indian cricketer Kohli to play 2027 World Cup only if he can add value

**NEWS DESK:** Indian veteran Virat Kohli said he has nothing left to prove and would consider playing the 2027 One-Day International (ODI) World Cup only if he can still contribute meaningfully.

The 37-year-old, who retired from Twenty20 Internationals after India's 2024 World Cup triumph and ended his 123-test career last year, is now active only in the ODI format.

Kohli played 13 ODIs last year, scoring 651 runs, and returned to the Indian Premier League after last represent-

ing India in January. He has already struck one century in the current IPL season.

Asked about his prospects for the 2027 World Cup, Kohli said he remains ready to represent India but would not pursue selection unless he is convinced he could add value.

"If I can add value to the environment that I'm a part of and the environment feels like I can add value I'll be seen," Kohli said on a podcast of his IPL team Royal Challengers Bangalore.

"When I arrive to play, I put my head

down, I work as hard, if not harder, than anyone else. And I play the way I prepare for the fact that I will field 50

overs every ball like it's the last ball I'm going to play in my career, and I will run between the wickets that way, and I will do everything possible for the team.

"After operating like this, if I have to be in a place where I have to prove my worth and value, that place is not meant to be for me. And I am very clear in my head that from this perspective,

Kohli, a former India captain, has featured in 311 ODIs, amassing 14,797 runs at an average of 58.71. Only Sachin Tendulkar, with 18,426 runs, has scored more in the format.

Now in his 17th year of international cricket, Kohli has faced scrutiny over consistency, particularly after back-to-back ducks against Australia last year, but responded with strong performances against South Africa and New Zealand.

"Look, if you go to your workplace, and if people say we believe in your abilities, and then a week later they start questioning the way you operate, it's like, why?" Kohli said.

"Either tell me on day one I'm not good enough or I'm not needed. Or if you've said I'm good enough and you say we're not even thinking otherwise, then be quiet."

The 2027 ODI World Cup is scheduled to be held in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia in October and November next year.



## Rome derby chaos and Milan unrest

**NEWS DESK:** Chaos reigns in Serie A once again as a row with security authorities in Rome left Champions League chasers Roma wondering when they would play their derby clash with Lazio, while crisis-club AC Milan desperately try to avoid dropping out of the top four.

Roma, in fifth, will face their local rivals at midday (1000GMT) on Sunday but the kick-off time of one of Italy's most emotionally fraught matches has dragged on all week, hampering the capital club's bid to return to Europe's top club competition.

On Tuesday Rome's Prefect, the head of public safety, ordered that the derby be moved from 12.30pm Sunday to Monday night in order to stop the volatile fixture from clashing with the men's final at the Italian Open.

The Stadio Olimpico is situated on the same Foro Italico site as the tennis tournament, one of the ATP's top-ranked Masters 1000 events, and the decision was made in order to avoid any fan disorder

taking place near a more genteel sporting public. That ruling sparked institutional bedlam in Italy as all five matches involving clubs trying to secure Champions League football — also including Como, Juventus, Milan and Napoli — have to kick off at the same time.

Just five points separate second-placed Napoli and Como in sixth, making Sunday's fixtures some of the most important of the season due to the financial impact of reaching.

or not, the Champions League. Serie A fans reacted with fury at the ruling, setting the course for two days of appeals and back and forth between the league and Rome's security apparatus.

The issue became such a hot potato that the administrative tribunal dealing with Serie A's appeal against the ruling simply threw it back at the bickering parties and asked them to sort it out among themselves.

In the meantime Roma's hardcore fans said they wouldn't attend one of their team's biggest matches in years in protest at a farcical coda to an embarrassing season for Italian football.

while Lazio coach Maurizio Sarri threatened to abandon the fixture if it wasn't played on Monday night. In the end, two days of angry statements and wall-to-wall media coverage ended with the five matches crucial to Champions League qualification being moved forward by just half an hour.



## Vingegaard powers to maiden Giro stage victory

**NEWS DESK:** Jonas Vingegaard ignited his Giro d'Italia title bid on Friday with a brilliant stage seven victory on the formidable Blockhaus climb in the Apennines.

The two-time Tour de France champion, who is bidding to complete a career sweep of the three Grand Tours after winning last year's Vuelta a Espana, finished 13 seconds clear of Felix Gall to complete his set of stage wins on all three of the 21-day races.

Former Giro winner "Jai Hindley of Australia was a further 49 seconds back in third place.

"Today we just wanted to go for the win and I'm extremely happy that I was able to finish it off," said Vismar Vingegaard. "My teammates did an amazing job today."

Vingegaard's first Giro stage win laid down a serious marker to the field in his race debut.

He was over six minutes behind overall leader Alfonso Eualalo heading into the day, but took almost three

minutes out of that advantage. The Dane is now second in the general classification, 3min and 17sec behind Eualalo and 17sec clear of third-placed Gall.

"I'm definitely happy that I could take back some time," added Vingegaard. "It was a good day for me, a good day for us. To take back some time on my opponents, it's a good day for us."

Portuguese rider Eualalo took the pink jersey by winning a rain-

lashed fifth stage earlier this week. Friday's race developed on the brutal final Blockhaus climb with winds buffeting the riders, a 13.6km ascent with an average 8.4-percent gradient.

Former Tour de France winner Egan Bernal and Movistar's Enric Mas were both dropped by an ever-shrinking peloton.

Vingegaard attacked with six kilometres remaining, dropping Eualalo, with only Giulio Pellizzari able

to follow the Visma team leader.

The Dane attacked again on the steepest part of the climb, though, and this time Pellizzari was unable to keep pace.

The 29-year-old managed to stay ahead of a fast-finishing Gall, although the Austrian dug deep to limit the time lost.

"At first I was a bit annoyed that I couldn't follow the Italian and Jonas, but in the end it was the right choice and it was good that I did my own pace," said Gall.



## Pakistan seek revival as Babar returns for Sylhet Test

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan head into the second and final Test against Bangladesh in Sylhet under pressure, wounded by criticism at home and staring at another damaging series defeat, but buoyed by the return of former captain Babar Azam for the must-win contest starting on Saturday.

Bangladesh's 104-run victory in the opening Test in Dhaka handed them a 1-0 lead in the two-match series and further underlined the shifting balance between the two sides in red-ball cricket.

The hosts now stand on the brink of another landmark achievement after already beating Pakistan 2-0 on home soil two years ago.

Pakistan head coach Sarfraz Ahmed admitted the defeat had hurt but insisted his side remained focused on producing a response in Sylhet.

"Definitely, we as a team are disappointed after the first Test match, but the past is the past," Sarfraz said on Friday. "We are hopeful that we will bounce back as a team."

The visitors have at least been boosted by the return of Babar, who was sidelined because of a knee injury. Pakistan badly lacked authority and composure in the batting order, with skipper Shan Masood likely to move up to open alongside debutant Azeem Butt.

Babar's inclusion is expected to trigger a reshuffle in the batting order, with skipper Shan Masood likely to move up to open alongside debutant Azeem Butt.

But while Babar's presence offers reassurance,

Pakistan's problems appear deeper than the absence of one player.

The tourists have struggled for consistency in Test cricket over the past two years, with their senior players coming under increasing scrutiny after another meek surrender in Dhaka.

Sarfraz, however, brushed aside the criticism directed at the side on social media.

"It is not new for us," the former Pakistan captain said. "If we are not playing good cricket, the criticism is there. We are not worrying

about social media things. Our focus is to play the next match."

Pakistan's coach also identified discipline as the area demanding urgent improvement after his side lost control of the first Test across two damaging sessions.

The concern for Pakistan is that Bangladesh currently appear the more balanced and confident Test side. In Dhaka, the hosts once again demonstrated a growing resilience under pressure, responding to difficult situations with aggression rather than caution.



# Beleaguered opposition's political dilemma

**NEWS DESK:** "We should be informed within three days first, when a meeting with Imran Khan will take place and second, when he will be allowed, with his family's consent, to seek medical treatment of his choice."

Otherwise, if this Assembly does not function on Monday onward, we will not be responsible."

These were the remarks of Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Mahmood Khan Achakzai, who on Friday issued a three-day ultimatum to the federal government over the situation of the jailed former prime minister.

"As Mahmood Khan Achakzai, and in view of the position I hold, I request you in the softest possible words," he said while presenting the opposition's demands.

The statement is the latest in a series of demands by the opposition, particularly the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), seeking relief for its founder, who has been in Adiala Jail since August 2023.



being debated is whether such an ultimatum can translate into actual political pressure on the government or remain largely symbolic. Despite ongoing economic pressures and political friction, observers suggest the govern-

ment currently faces limited immediate compulsion to alter its position. Political analyst Ehtisham-ul-Haq argues that such warnings are not new, but in the past they have not produced any meaningful political impact.

Even directives to the core issue is the absence of real mobilisation, as repeated calls for large gatherings and political pressure have not materialised on the ground.

party workers and parliamentarians have seen limited response, while a degree of public fatigue is also visible, with parts of the electorate appearing disengaged from mobilisation politics.

As a result, he suggests these warnings remain largely symbolic, with their main function being to keep political leadership active in the public space while allowing them to claim they attempted resistance or negotiation.

He also notes that efforts to open channels of dialogue with the establishment continue, but no substantive breakthrough has emerged.

Senior political analyst Hassan Askari Rizvi takes a different view, arguing that parliamentary disruption may create visible political noise, but it does not translate into executive-level pressure, particularly when major parties like the PPP remain engaged within the governing system.

He adds that the broader political structure tends to absorb such tensions through bargaining and adjustment rather than breaking under pressure. However, he warns that repeated confrontational tactics may still have long-term consequences, potentially normalising cycles of political retaliation when power shifts in the future.

On the question of growing anti-government sentiment, the government's coalition partner the PPP is also at odds with it over differences on the proposed 28th Amendment and broader constitutional and fiscal issues with the PTI and the wider opposition.

However, analysts suggest this does not translate into unified opposition challenge. Ehtisham-ul-Haq maintains that the PPP is not going to support the PTI.

## Punjab relaxes market timing curbs till June 1

**NEWS DESK:** Responding to traders' protests and appeals by the shopping malls association and general public to revise 8pm business closure timings, the Punjab government has granted partial relief and lifted the restriction on market timings until June 1. The Punjab Services and General Administration Department's (S & G A D) Implementation and Coordination Wing on Friday notified that "all the shops, markets, shopping malls, hotels, restaurants and food outlets are exempted from the prescribed closure timings till June 1, 2026."

On April 6, the federal government announced that all markets across the country, including Sindh, would close by 8pm throughout the week as part of energy conservation measures amid a global fuel crisis triggered by the US-Israeli war on Iran.

Complying with the federal government's decision, Punjab announced that all shops, markets, and shopping

by 10pm, the latest notification did not explain the status of their closure timings. The decision had drawn a strong reaction from the traders and public alike as they found that 8pm closure timings for markets were highly detrimental.

Considering the ongoing hot weather and the prevalent shopping and dining culture, the traders and public believed that the 8pm and 10pm timings for markets and food outlets, respectively, were too short.

People also contended that those reaching home from their offices by 6pm could not then shop at any market that was closing by 8pm. Traders and other stakeholders also argued that the government should explain how much energy was being saved through these measures.

The traders had also been complaining about the alleged high-handedness of the Punjab Enforcement and Regulatory Authority (Pera) officials, who were

to facilitate the public and support economic activities. During a telephonic conversation, Mr Kundli proposed lifting business hours for shops, markets, and food outlets, along with the proposed and both leaders discussed measures aimed at balancing public convenience with economic stability.

Governor Kundli said the relaxation in business hours for shops, markets, and shopping malls would help reduce the financial losses being faced by the trader community. Both leaders agreed to adopt a joint strategy to promote economic activities and ensure maximum public facilitation.

## Sindh Assembly reverberates with heated discussion over 'drug menace'

**NEWS DESK:** The Sindh Assembly session was on Friday dominated by heated debate over the open sale of drugs in parts of the city.

Responding to a call for attention notice forwarded by the Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf member Bilal Khan Jadoon, Senior Minister Sharif Inam Memon said that the provincial government had launched a strict campaign against drugs and urged all members of the house to consider themselves as ministers for anti-drug efforts.

"Drugs are not just a problem for one institution or the government, but an issue affecting the entire nation and the younger generation," he said. "It is essential to make Sindh drug-free," he said, citing the arrest of suspected drug dealer Amool, alias Pinky, as proof of the government's seriousness.

He also criticised Opposition Leader Ali Khurshidi for raising the matter outside the assembly instead of on the floor, saying it could have been addressed with evidence.

The senior minister said that while drug testing for members was a good proposal and should be carried out, using the issue for political point-scoring was inappropriate.

Naming individuals publicly, could implicate many people from different walks of life, including some well-known figures and celebrities," he warned.

Mr Memon stressed that action would be taken against anyone involved in drug trafficking as the government aimed to uproot the menace. He also said that PPP leader Faraz Talpur had directed police in a strict action against drug dealers.

Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar said Pinky had been arrested. "Officers who facilitated protocol for Pinky have been suspended. If an arrest is needed, I will make it, he said.

He said a full investigation in the Pinky case was underway. "Once the investigation is complete, I will

share the findings myself. If the Speaker allows, I will name those involved," Lanjar said.

During the proceeding, lawmakers also expressed concerns over prolonged power outages across the province, including Karachi, calling on the provincial government to take control of the power utilities.

Jamaat-i-Islami's lone MPA Muhammad Farooq raised a point of order, stating that K-Electric had crossed all limits of cruelty by imposing up to 18 hours of unannounced loadshedding in Karachi.

Speaking on the issue, Pakistan Peoples Party member and former energy minister, Intiaz Shaikh said the province's severe loadshedding had stripped people of their basic right to life.

"The residents across Sindh, including Karachi, are enduring extreme hardship due to both scheduled and un-scheduled outages, which has led to deaths during intense heat bringing daily life to a standstill," he added.

He demanded registration of an FIR against the KE officials for imposing long hours of unannounced loadshedding in Karachi.

Speaking on the issue, Pakistan Peoples Party member and former energy minister, Intiaz Shaikh said the province's severe loadshedding had stripped people of their basic right to life.

"The residents across Sindh, including Karachi, are enduring extreme hardship due to both scheduled and un-scheduled outages, which has led to deaths during intense heat bringing daily life to a standstill," he added.

He said three groups were being used for these markets, causing severe traffic problems. Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government Qasim Siraj Soomro replied that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation had taken action against the local organiser, who then moved court. "Until the court decides the matter, no action can be taken," he added.

In the Question Hour, Shaheena Sher Ali said that Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur had skill centres for women where 650 women had been trained.

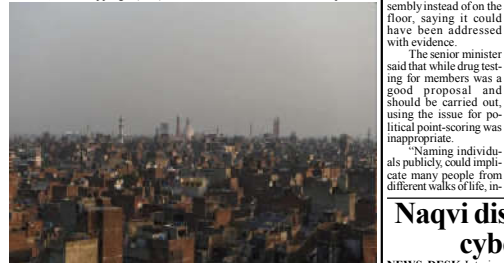
The former energy minister said the provincial government had previously proposed to the federal government that HESCO and SEPCO be handed over to provincial control, so more effective strategies could be adopted to give people relief from loadshedding and high electricity costs.

He called for the immediate implementation of the agreement reached in the past. Mr Shaikh said that Sindh had no representation on K-Electric's Board of Directors, which was why the city's problems were being ignored.

PTI member Sajid Hussain, through an attention notice, said that Bachat bazars were being set up in playgrounds in his constituency PS-93.

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malls would close at 8pm while hotels, restaurants, and food outlets would shut at 10pm, including on Saturdays and Sundays.

However, the government had exempted pharmacies, medical stores, medical supply stores, medical laboratories and hospitals from the order of early closure. Similarly, petrol pumps, CNG stations, as well as tandoors, bakeries and milk/dairy shops were exempt from the closure order.

Even though restaurants and food outlets were required to shut by 10pm, there were no restrictions on takeaway and home delivery services.

While the Punjab government ordered that all marriage halls and wedding functions, including those of commercial activities, at residences and farmhouses, shall be closed

sealing shops that remained open even a minute after 8pm and imposing fines on their owners.

LCCI welcomes relief. Due to the continuous and effective efforts and strong demands of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Punjab government has taken an "important business-friendly" decision to ease lockdown restrictions and grant exemptions to markets, shopping malls, restaurants, and food outlets, according to a statement issued by the LCCI.

"This decision is being widely welcomed by the business community as a major relief and a positive step towards economic recovery," it added.

It is expected to ensure the continuity of commercial activities, protect jobs, and contribute to overall economic stability."

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Governor Kundli said the relaxation in business hours for shops, markets, and shopping malls would help reduce the financial losses being faced by the trader community. Both leaders agreed to adopt a joint strategy to promote economic activities and ensure maximum public facilitation.

The chief minister agreed with the proposal and both leaders discussed measures aimed at balancing public convenience with economic stability.

Governor Kundli said the relaxation in business hours for shops, markets, and shopping malls would help reduce the financial losses being faced by the trader community. Both leaders agreed to adopt a joint strategy to promote economic activities and ensure maximum public facilitation.

**NEWS DESK:** Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Saturday met a delegation from Egypt during which the two countries discussed promoting cooperation in the fields of security, counter-terrorism, combating narcotics, cybercrime, and safe city initiatives, the interior ministry said.

Both sides agreed to enhance cooperation between the interior ministries of the two countries, it said in a social media post on X.

The delegation from Egypt's interior ministry was led by Major General Magdy Helal and included Brigadier Essam Abu Al-Khair, Brigadier Engineer Mohamed Rady and Brigadier Dr Mohamed Mounir.

The ministry said it was decided that cooperation would be enhanced between the National Police Academy and Egypt's police academy for joint training of officers.

## Naqvi discusses cooperation in counter-terrorism, cybercrime with delegation from Egypt



practical steps would be taken to further strengthen the relations between the two countries, while a Pakistani delegation will visit Egypt soon to explore new opportunities for cooperation in the areas of mutual interest.

Enhanced cooperation between the interior ministries of the two countries will strengthen bilateral relations," the ministry quoted Naqvi.

State Minister for Interior Talal Chaudhry, who also attended the meeting, said that vast opportunities for cooperation prevailed between the two countries in the fields of counter-terrorism, combating narcotics, and internal security.

According to the ministry, the Egyptian delegation said that their visits to various institutions, including the Anti-Narcotics Force and the National Police Academy, proved immensely beneficial.

Further, the delegation said the two countries could benefit from each other's experiences in various fields.

Last month, the two countries conducted two-week long joint exercise, "Pakistan-Egypt Joint Exercise Thunder II", focused on counter-terrorism.