2025

SHAHID LEGAL GROUP

SLD NEWS UPDATES

Monday, May 12, 2025

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US HOUSE BODY UNVEILS PARTIAL TAX PLAN TO ACHIEVE TRUMP AGENDA

Reuters Published May 11, 2025

WASHINGTON: The US House committee in charge of taxes released on Friday evening a partial text of its part of President Donald Trump's proposed tax agenda that would make his 2017 tax cuts permanent, leaving out contentious issues before a planned vote on Tuesday.

The 28-page proposal by the House Ways and Means Committee would increase the child tax credit from $1,000 to $2,500 through 2028 and to $2,000 after, and adds a requirement for recipients to have a Social Security number and reduces some taxes for multinational companies and unincorporated businesses.

But it does not address more hotly contested issues like what to do with the current $10,000 deduction limit for state and local taxes, which is important to states with high taxes like New York, California and New Jersey.

It also does not address the fate of Medicaid, which covered about 35 million people in states Trump won in last year's presidential election and clean energy tax credits that benefit some Republican states.

"Ways and Means Republicans have spent two years preparing for this moment, and we will deliver for the American people," said Ways and Means Committee Chair Jason Smith of Missouri.

US congressional Republicans are struggling over how to pay for what Trump has called his "big, beautiful bill" - a multitrillion-dollar tax-cut and immigration reform agenda, with the fate of the Medicaid healthcare program and the nation's debt ceiling hanging in the balance.

The party is torn between hardliners who want tax cuts to be scaled back to achieve a goal of $2 trillion in spending reductions over the next decade and moderates pushing back against large-scale slashing of the Medicaid healthcare program.

Ways and Means is scheduled to hold a meeting to debate and advance the legislation on Tuesday afternoon.

PAKISTAN MAY INTRODUCE CAPITAL VALUE TAX FOR CRYPTO ASSETS

May 11, 2025

Karachi, May 11, 2025 – Pakistan is likely to introduce a Capital Value Tax (CVT) on crypto assets held by resident citizens, as the government moves toward formalizing regulation for digital currencies.

According to sources within the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the absence of a clear legal framework for cryptocurrencies has so far prevented the taxation of these digital assets, but new legislation is expected soon.

The FBR sources noted that, until specific laws are enacted, the taxation treatment of crypto remains undefined. However, one of the options under consideration is the implementation of CVT, similar to the one already applicable to foreign assets of resident taxpayers. If adopted, this move would mark Pakistan's first direct tax policy specifically targeting crypto assets.

In a significant step toward digital policy reform, the government has already launched the Pakistan Crypto Council, aimed at establishing a direct channel between the government and the public to shape policies around cryptocurrency and blockchain technology. The council seeks to position Pakistan as a forward-thinking nation in digital governance and to foster public trust through transparent engagement.

Meanwhile, the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Pakistan (ICMAP) has urged the government to define tax treatment for crypto transactions. Their recommendations include defining capital gains and income tax rules, mandating the reporting of large crypto transactions to the FBR, and introducing tax incentives for blockchain startups to boost innovation and foreign investment.

The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) has also been vocal in advocating for a comprehensive regulatory and taxation framework. Citing data from Chainalysis, the FPCCI highlighted that Pakistan ranked third in the Global Crypto Adoption Index in 2021, with an estimated $20 billion in crypto assets traded by Pakistani investors during 2020-21.

To integrate these digital assets into the formal economy, the FPCCI proposed a multi-tiered tax structure, including a 1% adjustable tax on crypto transactions and a one-time asset declaration scheme. This would allow for encashment and conversion of cryptocurrencies under various tax brackets, ranging from 0% to 15%, depending on the holding structure and investor status.

The FPCCI emphasized that countries such as India, Thailand, Malaysia, and the UAE have already brought crypto assets under their tax regimes, thereby expanding their revenue base. A similar approach in Pakistan, the FPCCI argues, could help unlock substantial tax revenue while ensuring financial transparency in the evolving digital economy.

MOTOR VEHICLE TAX COLLECTION IN PAKISTAN JUMPS 58% IN 9MFY25

May 11, 2025

Islamabad, May 11, 2025 – Pakistan has witnessed a significant surge in motor vehicle tax collection, which soared by 58% during the first nine months (July–March) of the ongoing fiscal year 2024-25, according to official data released by the Ministry of Finance.

The report indicates that total revenue from motor vehicle tax reached Rs39.55 billion in the July–March period, up from Rs24.98 billion collected during the same period in the previous fiscal year. The increase highlights both improved compliance and a pickup in motor vehicle activity across the country.

Although the collection of motor vehicle tax is constitutionally under the domain of provincial governments, it is still included in the federal fiscal performance reports. The data revealed that Punjab led the provinces in terms of total collection, contributing Rs22.82 billion, compared to Rs14.89 billion in the corresponding months of FY2023-24. This marked a robust growth of 53.26% for the province.

In contrast, Sindh posted the highest growth rate in tax receipts. The province registered a 75% jump in motor vehicle tax revenue, collecting Rs13.73 billion during the nine-month period, up from Rs7.86 billion in the previous year.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan also showed notable performance, albeit on a smaller scale. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa collected Rs2.06 billion, while Balochistan contributed Rs0.93 billion in motor vehicle tax during the review period.

Analysts in the automotive sector link the substantial increase in tax revenue to improved motor vehicle sales, spurred by favorable economic factors such as lower interest rates and increased consumer financing. The availability of financing options and economic recovery has reportedly boosted the demand for motor vehicles, particularly in urban centers.

Moreover, enhanced enforcement measures and digitization of the tax payment system in provinces like Punjab have made it easier for citizens to comply, thereby improving revenue outcomes.

As the fiscal year progresses, provincial governments are expected to further streamline motor vehicle tax collection mechanisms to support long-term revenue generation, infrastructure development, and road maintenance initiatives.

FBR ADVISED TO ENFORCE MANDATORY RETURN FILING FOR PROFESSIONALS

May 11, 2025

Karachi, May 11, 2025 — The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has been strongly urged to implement compulsory income tax return filing for professionals across various sectors, particularly those affiliated with formal associations and professional bodies such as bar councils and trade organizations.

As part of the proposals submitted for the upcoming federal budget 2025–26, the FBR has been advised to expand the tax base by enforcing return filing for all service providers and professionals, including doctors, private hospitals, lawyers, painters, fashion designers, property dealers, interior designers, private teachers, educational institutes, salons, and coaching centers.

The proposals recommend that FBR should make tax compliance a prerequisite for annual license or registration renewals. For example, doctors should be required to submit tax returns to the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA), lawyers through their respective bar councils, and tax consultants via the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP). Hospitals would also be required to restrict non-filer doctors from practicing or providing consultancy services within their premises.

In a bid to improve documentation and revenue collection, the proposals suggest mandatory integration of the Point of Sale (POS) system for professionals offering taxable services. This would ensure all transactions are digitally recorded and invoices are generated in real time, ultimately reducing tax evasion and broadening the tax net. The FBR has also been encouraged to conduct widespread awareness campaigns to educate professionals about the importance and benefits of POS invoicing.

Another key suggestion involves issuing digital identification numbers to small service providers such as plumbers, electricians, and carpenters. These IDs would link them to the tax system and promote financial inclusion, helping bring Pakistan's large informal economy under formal oversight.

Professionals in sectors such as education, healthcare, legal services, salons, and coaching often operate outside the tax system. By ensuring these professionals are identified, regulated, and taxed, the FBR can shift the burden away from salaried individuals who currently make up a large share of the taxpaying population.

Effective enforcement of professional tax return filing and POS integration will enhance transparency, improve policy formulation, and support sustainable economic development. The FBR's role in implementing these measures is crucial for strengthening national revenue and achieving long-term fiscal stability.

FBR CONSIDERS POSSIBLE TAX CUTS ON IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES IN BUDGET

May 11, 2025

Islamabad, May 11, 2025 – The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is actively reviewing a proposal to revise the taxation structure on immovable properties in the upcoming federal budget for the fiscal year 2025-26. This move comes in response to persistent demands from real estate stakeholders and aims to stimulate investment while balancing revenue generation.

According to official sources, the FBR is considering a range of relief measures to rationalize the tax regime on immovable properties. These include a possible exemption from Capital Gains Tax (CGT) and a downward revision in withholding tax rates on the sale and purchase of real estate.

Currently, a 3% withholding tax is imposed on sellers under Section 236C of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001. The reduction of this rate is under serious consideration.

The CGT, which is applicable on profits made from the sale of immovable properties, is also expected to undergo changes starting July 1, 2025. Taking into account inflation and the rising cost of properties, the FBR believes there is a need to adjust the CGT to make it more equitable. As per existing law under Section 37, sellers are liable to pay CGT when filing their income tax returns, but this may be eased for genuine long-term property holders.

In addition to reforms in the real estate sector, the FBR is also planning broad-based reductions in withholding tax across multiple sectors. This includes reduced rates on the import of raw materials and inputs, as well as on financial transactions not directly linked to income, such as bank transfers. However, withholding taxes on dividends and other income-based revenues will remain intact.

Meanwhile, the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) has proposed an annual withholding tax of 0.5% on all immovable properties, including agricultural land, based on FBR-assessed values. This would be collected by provincial authorities and adjusted against the owner's overall income tax liability. The proposal recommends exempting small properties to protect low-income segments.

Furthermore, the OICCI has suggested that CGT exemptions should be conditional on proper declaration of properties at the time of acquisition and limited to one transaction every three years per taxpayer. This approach is expected to improve documentation and discourage the hoarding of undeclared wealth in real estate.

SMOKING POSES SERIOUS HEALTH RISKS: FBR MULLS CIGARETTE FED HIKE

May 11, 2025

Islamabad, May 11, 2025 – The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is actively considering a significant increase in the federal excise duty (FED) on cigarettes in the upcoming 2025–26 budget, citing the severe health risks posed by smoking.

The move is aligned with growing pressure from global health bodies, particularly the World Health Organization (WHO), urging Pakistan to adopt stronger fiscal measures to curb tobacco consumption.

Sources within the FBR revealed that the proposal to raise cigarette taxes is part of a broader public health initiative to discourage smoking, which remains one of the leading causes of preventable deaths in the country. "Smoking is injurious to health, and increasing the FED is a globally recognized tool to reduce cigarette consumption," a senior official emphasized.

When asked about the decline in sales and volumes reported by Pakistan's two major cigarette manufacturers due to the nearly 200% FED already in place, FBR officials responded that commercial losses cannot override the undeniable health hazards associated with smoking. They also noted that many countries have established minimum tax benchmarks on tobacco to ensure effective regulation and deterrence.

During a recent session of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Finance, FBR Chairman Rashid Mahmood Langrial acknowledged the agency's challenges in combating the illicit cigarette trade. He disclosed that only one out of every ten trucks carrying smuggled or counterfeit cigarettes is seized, largely due to manpower shortages.

To strengthen enforcement, the FBR is working on a strategy to involve provincial law enforcement agencies in monitoring and cracking down on the sale of illegal cigarettes. Cigarettes without the mandatory tax stamp will be deemed illegal, and an official standard operating procedure (SOP) is being developed to coordinate efforts between federal and provincial authorities.

The proposed increase in FED is not only expected to boost revenue but also serve a critical health function by deterring smoking, particularly among youth and low-income groups. As the FBR prepares the final budget recommendations, public health advocates continue to push for strong fiscal policies that reflect the long-term societal cost of tobacco use.

Business & Finance » Budgets

BUDGET FY26: GOVT FORMULATING TARIFF RATIONALISATION STRATEGY

BR Web Desk Published May 9, 2025

The government is formulating a strategy on tariff rationalisation, it was learnt on Friday.

The development came during a consultative meeting on the preparation of the Federal Budget 2025-2026, read a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

During the meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the attendees were briefed that consultations with the private sector, including representatives from various sectors of the economy, on budget preparation have been ongoing for the past three months.

They were informed that a five-year Trade Policy Framework 2025-2030 will be finalised soon, while the eCommerce 2.0 Framework is also near completion.

It was also disclosed that a strategy is being formulated on tariff rationalisation.

"The government and private sector must work together for the country's development and prosperity," said PM Shehbaz. "Providing relief to the common man is the top priority in the upcoming budget," he added.

The prime minister said that all available resources will be utilised to reduce the financial difficulties of the downtrodden.

He directed relevant authorities to focus on export-led sustainable growth while preparing the federal budget. “Work should be undertaken on projects aimed at promoting industries and increasing production,” he emphasised.

He stressed that special focus should be given to job creation in the upcoming budget.

“Agriculture, IT, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and the housing sector should receive significant attention in the federal budget, as all these sectors possess immense potential,” he said.

Moreover, the promotion of projects under public-private partnership (PPP) will be a key government priority in the next budget, PM Shehbaz shared.

He said that the process of right-sizing to reduce the size of the federal government will continue in the next fiscal year.

The federal budget for fiscal year 2025-26 will be presented on June 2.

Meanwhile, delegates of business personalities and experts expressed confidence in the government’s economic policies and presented their proposals.

The prime minister welcomed the suggestions of the business community and experts and directed that feasible recommendations be incorporated into the upcoming budget.

Markets » Cotton & Textile

WEEKLY COTTON REVIEW: PRICES REMAIN STABLE

Naseem Usman Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: The price of cotton remained generally stable. The conflict between Pakistan and India has affected business, leading to a decline in volume.

All commercial and industrial institutions in the country have declared full solidarity with the Pakistani military in the war between Pakistan and India.

There were earlier indications that a decision on Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS) would be made in the upcoming budget, but during a recent Senate session, it was stated that no decision on EFS would be included in the budget. All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (Aptma) and other relevant industrialists have expressed serious concerns.

Iftikhar Ali Soho, Secretary Agriculture Punjab said that in Punjab, cotton has been cultivated on over 2.2 million acres of land, with a target set at 5.5 million acres.

The Karachi Cotton Association (KCA) has appreciated the efforts of all relevant individuals and institutions in reviving cotton production in the country.

Along with the revival of cotton, there is an urgent need to improve quality.

Chairman Pakistan Cotton Ginners Forum Ehsan-ul-Haq said that the arrival of partially opened cotton from the new season has begun in coastal cities of Sindh. Advance trading of cotton is underway.

Head Transfer of Technology Central Cotton Research Institute Multan said that the Federal Committee on Agriculture (FCA) has set a cotton production target of 10.18 million bales for the current year 2025-26.

Over the past week, needy spinners have been purchasing cotton at rates ranging between Rs 16,500 to Rs 17,500 per maund, depending on quality and payment conditions. Ginners now have limited stock left, and mills are buying based on quality. The trading volume is low, and quality is also limited.

Large textile mill groups are importing cotton, yarn, and fabric due to better quality, with the EFS being the most beneficial. Although there were earlier indications that the upcoming budget might address the EFS, recent Senate meetings clarified that no decision on EFS will be included in the budget

According to reports, the government will not withdraw the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS) in the 2025-26 budget. However, leading export associations, manufacturers, and exporters expressed strong reservations against the EFS during a meeting with the Senate Standing Committee on Finance on Monday.

In response to a question, a senior government official told Business Recorder that there is no possibility of discontinuing the EFS in the upcoming federal budget.

The Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, chaired by Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, held a meeting on Monday to initiate consultations with associations across the country regarding preparations for the upcoming budget. The meeting focused on challenges and recommendations presented by major sectors, including textiles, poultry, dairy, steel, property development, and consumer goods.

In Sindh's coastal cities, the picking of the new cotton crop has started in small quantities, leading to the commencement of advance trading of cotton. For the first time in Pakistan's history, the new cotton ginning season is expected to begin in the first week of May. Meanwhile, advance trading of cotton from the new crop has already started.

Initially, two ginning factories in Punjab's cities of Burewala and Mandi Jahaniyan sold 600 bales of cotton in advance deals at Rs. 17,000 to Rs. 17,300 per maund, with delivery scheduled between 10th and 15th May. These factories purchased cotton from Sindh's coastal cities at Rs 8,300 to Rs 8,500 per 40 kg.

In Sindh and Punjab, cotton prices are currently ranging between Rs. 16,500 to Rs. 17,500 per maund, depending on quality and payment conditions.

The Spot Rate Committee of the Karachi Cotton Association maintained a stable spot rate at Rs. 16,700 per maund.

Karachi Cotton Brokers Forum Chairman Naseem Usma told that after fluctuations in international cotton prices, overall stability was observed. The price of New York cotton futures remained between 66.50 to 69.50 US cents per pound after some volatility.

According to the USDA's weekly export and sales report, 65,800 bales were sold for the 2024-25 season.

Vietnam topped the list by purchasing 30,500 bales. Turkey came in second with 16,200 bales. India ranked third with 9,300 bales.

For the 2025-26 seasons, 37,400 bales were sold. Mexico led with 30,700 bales.

Indonesia secured the second position with 11,500 bales. Pakistan came in third with 2,200 bales.

Meanwhile, a review meeting on cotton cultivation was held in Multan under the chairmanship of Punjab Agriculture Secretary Iftikhar Ali Soho. In Punjab, cotton has already been cultivated on over 22 lakh acres, with a target set for cultivation on 35 lakh acres in the province.

Additionally, during the meeting, the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) proposed that yarn and fabric be excluded from the EFS. They suggested that cloth and cotton yarn should be included in the negative list of EFS, as the scheme currently restricts the domestic supply chain.

APTMA further proposed that cotton yarn and cloth be brought under the normal tax regime to prevent the collapse of the domestic industry.

The association also recommended reducing the advance tax in the budget from the current 2.25% to 1%.

Moreover, APTMA Chairman Kamran Arshad warned that textile exports have been stagnant for the past two years. He criticized the EFS scheme for pushing the industry toward ruin, highlighting issues such as the imposition of an 18% sales tax on local cotton and duty-free imports of foreign cotton. APTMA recommended keeping cotton yarn and cloth on the negative list, setting electricity rates at 9 cents per unit, and reducing the advance tax rate from 2.5% to

1%. The association revealed that 120 spinning mills and 800 ginning factories have already shut down, while textile exports have stagnated at 16.5% and 16.7% over the past two years.

Furthermore, based on reports in the electronic media, the Karachi Cotton Association understands that APTMA and the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) are jointly working on drafting a national cotton policy, finalizing the format for raw cotton sales/purchase agreements, and making efforts to revive cotton production in the country.

The Karachi Cotton Association (KCA) appreciates the efforts of all stakeholders in reviving cotton production in the country. It is important to note that KCA is inviting all stakeholders in the cotton economy, as significant time is approaching for joint efforts to formulate a unified strategy by the government to increase cotton production in the country. This will help meet the growing demand of the local textile industry, leave a surplus for exports to earn valuable foreign exchange, and enable KCA to avoid cotton imports to conserve foreign exchange received from abroad. However, other stakeholders in the cotton trade have not responded positively for unknown reasons.

KCA has repeatedly urged the government to take necessary measures for the benefit of the entire cotton trade and industry, including improving cotton quality, ensuring proper bale packaging, and maintaining the standard weight of 170 kg per cotton bale.

The Karachi Cotton Association (KCA) believes that cotton exporters, being secondary buyers, play a crucial role in stabilizing the cotton market and protecting the interests of cotton growers. KCA also believes that any national cotton policy introduced by the government should be approved after consultation with all stakeholders in the cotton economy, including the Karachi Cotton Association—the premier body of the cotton trade in Pakistan.

Here, it is noteworthy that a few years ago, the KCA drafted an agreement for the local sale/purchase of raw cotton under the bylaws of the Karachi Cotton Association, which provides the authority for arbitration in case of any dispute between the buyer and seller. This draft was sent to APTMA and PCGA for approval. The PCGA granted its approval in this regard, but approval from APTMA for the draft agreement on the local sale/purchase of raw cotton has still not been received.

The KCA believes that the draft agreement for the local sale/purchase of raw cotton was prepared after extensive efforts and with the approval of both the KCA and PCGA. In such a situation, APTMA should also consider/approve the draft agreement for the local sale/purchase of raw cotton prepared by the KCA and avoid the time-consuming exercise of preparing a new draft agreement for the local sale/purchase of raw cotton.

The KCA urges the government to finalize/approve any national cotton policy in consultation with all stakeholders of the cotton trade, including the Karachi Cotton Association.

The KCA should ensure that government must take necessary measures to increase cotton production, improve cotton quality, ensure proper bale packaging, and produce standard 170 kg cotton bales for the benefit of the entire cotton trade and industry.

The role of quality in cotton marketing is extremely important, as it directly affects the price, demand, and competitiveness of cotton in both domestic and international markets.

High-quality cotton has open access to premium markets, while poor-quality cotton limits buyers or leads to discounts. Cotton with superior fibre length, strength, fineness, and cleanliness is always in high demand. Spinners and textile mills prefer high-quality cotton because it reduces processing issues, minimizes waste, and yields better final products. Quality parameters are often linked to traceability systems and certifications, which are becoming increasingly important in the global market.

Unfortunately, in Pakistan, along with the decline in cotton production, the quality of cotton has also deteriorated over the past three decades. Poor quality, unfair government policies, and high cultivation costs have made local cotton uncompetitive. As a result, the textile industry has preferred sourcing cotton from other countries such as the U.S. and Brazil, leading to a gradual decline in demand for local cotton despite lower production.

The new cotton season 2025/26 is about to begin, with ginning operations starting soon. However, around 0.3 million bales remain unsold with ginners, while spinners are covering their positions with imported cotton.

Our ginning season begins with excessive moisture, and even in the later stages, cotton not only becomes expensive but also faces yarn quality issues.

During a telephonic conversation with renowned cotton analyst Naseem Usman, Sajid Mahmood, Head of the Technology Transfer Department at the Central Cotton Research Institute (CCRI) Multan, provided insights into the current status of cotton cultivation across Punjab and Sindh. He stated that for the 2025–26 season, the Government of Punjab has set a cotton cultivation target of 3.5 million acres. As of May 1, approximately 1.488 million acres have been sown, representing 43% of the targeted area. The performance across South Punjab has been mixed, with key cotton-growing districts such as Multan, Khanewal, Vehari, Lodhran, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Rahim Yar Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Layyah, and Muzaffargarh showing varying results. Multan Division has achieved 63% of its target, Dera Ghazi Khan 50%, while Bahawalpur lags at 29%.

In contrast, North Punjab has shown relatively better progress, achieving 51% of its cultivation target, with Faisalabad emerging as the top performer.

Commenting on the situation in Sindh, Sajid Mahmood reported that by April 30, only 415,761 acres had been cultivated against the provincial target of 1.556 million acres—just 26.71% of the goal. In Upper Sindh, where major cotton-producing districts include Sukkur, Ghotki, Khairpur, Naushero Feroze, and Qambar Shahdadkot, there has been a 16% decline in cultivated area compared to last year. Central Sindh districts such as Hyderabad, Matiari, Tando Muhammad Khan, and Tando Allahyar have recorded an alarming 81% decline, while in Lower Sindh—comprising Umerkot, Mirpurkhas, Badin, and Thatta—the decrease stands at 67%.

Sajid Mahmood highlighted that the Federal Committee on Agriculture has set a national cotton production target of 10.18 million bales for the 2025–26 season. However, he cautioned that the revival and sustainable growth of the cotton sector face a complex set of challenges requiring urgent policy-level intervention.

'COTTON HAS BEEN CULTIVATED OVER 2.2M ACRES SO FAR'

Recorder Report Published May 11, 2025

LAHORE: Growers in Punjab have so far cultivated cotton on over 2.2 million acres of land against the target of 3.5 million acres.

Secretary Agriculture Punjab Iftikhar Ali Sahoo said this while chairing a review meeting on cotton cultivation at Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture, Multan.

The meeting was attended by Special Secretary Agriculture South Punjab Sarfraz Hussain Magasi, Chairman National Seed Authority Dr Asif Ali, Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Ishtiaq Ahmed Rajwana, Additional Secretary Agriculture Task Force Punjab Muhammad Shabbir Ahmed Khan, Director Generals of Agriculture Chaudhry Abdul Hameed, Naveed Asmat Kahloon, Dr. Sajid-ur-Rehman, Dr Abdul Qayyum, Aamir Rasool, Consultant to the Agriculture Department Punjab Dr. Muhammad Anjum Ali, progressive farmer Khalid Mahmood Khokhar, Syed Hassan Raza, agricultural scientist Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Bandesha, Chief Engineers from the Irrigation Department, and Directors of Agriculture from Multan, DG Khan, and Bahawalpur. Other divisional directors (extension) joined online.

The secretary further stated that the final phase of cotton sowing will continue until May 25. Additionally, a special incentive package is being provided to transform Bahawalpur Division into a true cotton valley. The selection process of model farms for cotton is ongoing, and adequate canal water supply is being ensured in cotton-growing areas. Moreover, guidance for the proper care of early-sown cotton is underway. Specific tasks have been assigned to relevant formations to guide cotton growers.

Stock & Commodity

STOCKS, DOLLAR UP ON US-CHINA TRADE HOPE, DETAILS AWAITED

Reuters Published 17 minutes ago

SYDNEY: Wall Street stock futures climbed and the dollar firmed against safe haven peers on Monday as signs of progress in U.S.-China trade talks boosted hopes a global recession might be avoided, though details of any deal were still to come.

Geopolitical tensions also looked to be easing as a fragile ceasefire held between India and Pakistan, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiyy said he was ready to meet Vladimir Putin in Turkey on Thursday for talks.

Over in Geneva, U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent touted "substantial progress" in trade discussions, while Chinese officials said the sides had reached "important consensus" and agreed to launch another new economic dialogue forum.

A joint statement is expected later on Monday, though it was notable that neither side mentioned tariff rates specifically.

"What we seem to have here, then, is a broad framework under which the two nations can conduct further talks, with the aim of reaching a broader trade agreement," said Michael Brown, a senior research strategist at Pepperstone.

"Not the worst case outcome that was possible from this weekend's talks, far from it, but not a concrete deal either," he added. "Does this progress allow for any tariffs to be paused, reduced, or rolled back, and if so for how long?"

Investors are hoping the White House will soon scale back the 145% tariff on Chinese goods, even if only back to the 60% first flagged by President Donald Trump.

Trump still seems wedded to keeping broad tariffs in place no matter what, which will drag on economic growth and push up prices, but any trade progress could help dodge a sharp downturn.

Markets reacted by pushing S&P 500 futures up 1.2%, while Nasdaq futures rose 1.4%. EUROSTOXX 50 futures firmed 0.9%, while FTSE futures added 0.4% and DAX futures 0.7%.

Japan's Nikkei edged up 0.3%, while South Korea gained 0.4%.

The dollar added 0.4% on the safe haven yen to reach 145.90 , though it was off an early five-week peak of 146.31.

The euro dipped 0.2% to $1.1224 and the dollar index edged up 0.2% to 100.60.

The dollar also dipped 0.2% on the offshore Chinese yuan to 7.2278 , and back toward last week's low of 7.1846.

Japanese stocks jump, dollar firms on trade hopes; bitcoin soars

Trump's erratic trade policies have put the dollar under pressure in recent weeks, though it gained some support last week when the Federal Reserve signalled it was in no rush to cut interest rates again.

Index

Data on U.S. consumer prices for April due this week could offer an early hint of the impact of import levies on inflation, while retail sales are seen flatlining in April after a pre-tariff surge the month before.

Earnings from retail giant Walmart on Thursday should provide colour on demand and how soon shelves might start to empty of Chinese goods.

“We expect it will not be until the May CPI data are out before we see broad evidence of tariffs showing up in inflation data,” analysts at ANZ wrote in a note.

“In this regard, we think June is too early for the Fed to cut rates and maintain our view that Q3, and most probably September, is a more realistic time frame,” they added.

“That would give the opportunity to observe the impact of higher tariffs on both the price level and inflation persistence.”

Markets further trimmed the outlook for easing on Monday, with Fed fund futures down between 3 and 7 ticks. The chance of a rate cut in June is now only 17%, down from more than 60% a month ago, while a July move is seen as a 59% chance.

A host of Fed officials speak this week, led by Chair Jerome Powell on Thursday.

The general increase in risk appetite hurt gold, which has been on a tear in recent weeks as investors sought the safety in the physical metal. Gold was off 1.7% at $3,268 an ounce , short of the April all-time peak of $3,500.

Oil prices went the other way on hopes progress in trade talks would lessen the risk of a major economic downturn, though plans for increased supply by OPEC+ remain a headwind.

Brent rose 23 cents to $64.14 a barrel, while U.S. crude added 25 cents to $61.27 per barrel.

AUSTRALIAN SHARES RISE ON TRADE OPTIMISM

Reuters Published about 2 hours ago

SYDNEY: Australian shares rose on Friday as global trade talks boosted investor sentiment, while Macquarie Group’s better-than-expected profit lifted heavyweight banking stocks.

The S&P/ASX 200 index was up 0.5% at 8,231.2 points. The benchmark fell 0.1% this week, its first weekly loss since early April.

US President Donald Trump announced a trade deal with the UK on Thursday, the first in a month in since Trump started a 90-day pause on tariffs to allow room for negotiations.

This fuelled hopes of progress in tariff talks with other countries, including China, Australia's biggest trading partner, with negotiations set for Saturday.

"Whether or not the ASX200 can carry Friday's momentum into next week could well hinge on how productive or otherwise the upcoming trade talks between the US and China will be," Tim Waterer, chief market analyst at KCM Trade, said.

WALL STREET WEEK AHEAD: US STOCK MARKET LEADERSHIP EYED WITH CRUCIAL ECONOMIC DATA ON TAP

Reuters Published about 2 hours ago

NEW YORK: Investors head into a busy week for economic data watching if leadership in the US stock market could be moving away from defensive equity areas that indicates greater appetite for risk.

While the benchmark S&P 500 index is down 3.7% in 2025, with stocks jolted by concerns about economic damage from President Donald Trump's tariffs, the consumer staples and utilities sectors, typically seen as more safe-haven areas of the market, are up this year 5% and 5.6%, respectively.

Investors often seek shelter in those groups because their businesses are considered relatively immune to economic slowdowns while the stocks tend to offer strong dividends.

"If the market is in a risk-off mode, those sectors will continue to lead," said Chuck Carlson, chief executive officer at Horizon Investment Services.

More recently, however, as the US market has rebounded from its lows over the past month, groups like technology, industrials and consumer discretionary that are more associated with upbeat economic sentiment, or "risk on" investor behavior, have been outperforming.

Leadership moving from defensive sectors to those areas or groups tied to the economy such as financials or energy could be "a sign perhaps that investors are regaining some animal spirits with regard to the prospects for the economy," said Mark Luschini, chief investment strategist at Janney Montgomery Scott.

"That would be a tell of less caution being insinuated by investors," Luschini said.

While data so far this year has indicated resilience in the economy, sentiment surveys and other "soft data" have been weak.

"What all macro investors are grappling with is, is this just a sentiment slowdown that's being reflected in a defensive tilt within equities, or is this something more fundamental?" said Matthew Miskin, co-chief investment strategist at Manulife John Hancock Investments.

Economic data in the coming week provides a critical view. Tuesday's April consumer price index will give a fresh read on inflation trends, while April retail sales on Thursday offers the latest window into consumer spending.

While economic fallout from the tariffs remains unclear, concerns abound that the import levies are poised to drive up prices and slow growth.

If CPI is hotter than expected and retail sales miss estimates, it could raise concerns about "stagflation," Miskin said - a mix of sluggish growth and relentless inflation that could pressure stocks.

Some investors said the Federal Reserve appeared to nod to such worries at its meeting this week. The central bank held interest rates steady and said the risks of both higher inflation and unemployment had risen.

Aside from data, the coming week will see more US companies posting quarterly results, including retailing giant Walmart, whose report stands to offer insight into consumer behavior and the cost of imported goods.

Stocks gained on Thursday after Trump and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced a trade agreement, the first since Trump triggered a global trade war with a barrage of levies on trading partners.

Investors will continue to be fixated on the Trump administration's negotiations with other countries in hopes of more agreements after the president last month paused many of the heftiest tariffs for 90 days.

"Talks are starting to take place globally, and there is increased optimism that deals can be made before" the pause expires, CFRA strategists said in a note on Wednesday.

MOST GULF BOURSES GAIN ON US-CHINA TRADE TALKS

Reuters Published about 2 hours ago

DUBAI: Most stock markets in the Gulf edged higher on Sunday as US-China resumed talks in Geneva aimed at cooling the trade war that threatens to seriously damage the global economy.

Senior US and Chinese officials met again on Sunday in Geneva, Reuters reported citing two sources familiar with the situation.

On Friday, comments by President Donald Trump that an 80% tariff on Chinese goods "seems right" - making his first suggestion of a specific alternative to the 145% levies - created some hope of progress toward resolving the dispute.

In Qatar, the index edged 0.1% higher, helped by a 0.9% rise in Qatar Islamic Bank.

Saudi Arabia's benchmark index fell 0.2%, hit by a 3.8% slide in ACWA Power Company.

However, Saudi Aramco finished 0.6% higher. The world's top oil exporter reported a net profit of 97.54 billion riyals ($26.01 billion) for the first quarter, which beat a company-provided median estimate from 16 analysts of $25.36 billion.

Outside the Gulf, Egypt's blue-chip index dropped 1.1% as most of its constituents were in negative territory including Commercial International Bank, which retreated 1.6%.

UK STOCKS RISE ON US-CHINA TRADE TALK HOPES

Reuters Published about 2 hours ago

LONDON: British equities closed higher on Friday, as investors assessed fresh comments from US President Donald Trump regarding tariffs on China ahead of a key weekend meeting between the two countries, with energy and mining stock providing further boost.

The blue-chip FTSE 100 rose 0.3%. The index completed 16 straight days of gains on Tuesday, its longest winning streak on record, powered by strong first-quarter earnings and optimism over easing global trade tensions.

However, the index posted a slight loss for the week.

Meanwhile, the midcap index gained 0.2%, posting its fifth consecutive week in green.

Trump said in a Truth Social post that Beijing should open up its market to the US and that 80% tariffs on Chinese goods "seems right". The levies are currently at 145%.

The comment comes ahead of this weekend's US and China meetings in Switzerland, with investors hoping the talks will ease the trade war that has spurred worries over global economic growth.

Meanwhile, on Thursday, investors cheered a trade deal struck between Britain and the US - the first of its kind since Trump paused his initial tariffs last month.

"With the UK having basked in trade deal glory yesterday, the spotlight has now turned to China," said Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

"China is America's biggest rival in the trade war and any sign of a compromise in their tit-for-tat tariff spat could be taken positively by markets ... something that could easily put investors back in risk-on mode."

Heavyweight BP rose 4.7%, the top gainer in the FTSE 100 index, on reports of additional takeover interest from rivals. The energy subindex gained nearly 2%.

Precious metal miners led the sectoral gains with 2.1% rise after gold rose over 1%.

British Airways owner IAG gained 2.4%, after the British Airways owner reported a better-than-expected first-quarter profit and maintained its outlook for 2025. Travis Perkins jumped 6.9% to the top of the midcap index after the building materials supplier appointed Gavin Slark as its new CEO.

Business & Finance » Money & Banking

CHINA'S YUAN SLIPS AGAINST DOLLAR

Reuters Published about 2 hours ago

SHANGHAI: China's yuan slipped against the dollar on Friday, as investors cautiously looked towards key tariff talks with the United States over the weekend for signs of a de-escalation of the trade dispute between the world's two largest economies.

Officials from Beijing and Washington prepare to meet in Switzerland on Saturday for negotiations that markets hope could be the first step toward resolving the trade war disrupting the global economy. "The talk is likely to centre on de-escalation rather than a big trade deal, with Bessent stating that current tariff rates aren't sustainable and are equivalent to a trade embargo," said Ju Wang, head of Greater China FX & rates strategy at BNP Paribas, referring to US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent.

"The key question for the market is whether tariffs will eventually be reduced to 50–60% or 20–30%. In our base case, where US tariffs on China are scaled back to 50%, the yuan is likely to remain around the current level."

As of 0330 GMT, the onshore yuan was 0.06% lower at 7.2492 per dollar, while its offshore counterpart was down 0.08% at 7.2492.

Prior to the market opening, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) set the midpoint rate, around which the yuan is allowed to trade in a 2% band, at 7.2095 per dollar, its weakest since April 24.

STERLING CLAWS HIGHER AFTER US/UK TRADE DEAL

Reuters Published about 2 hours ago

LONDON: The pound rose on Friday, following the announcement of a "breakthrough" trade deal between Britain and the United States the previous day.

US President Donald Trump and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Thursday announced a limited bilateral trade agreement that leaves in place Trump's 10% tariffs on British exports, modestly expands agricultural access for both countries and lowers prohibitive US duties on British car exports.

The deal, while light on substance and unlikely to serve as a blueprint for other countries, analysts said, was enough to offer investors some hope that trade agreements with the Trump administration were possible.

Britain will hold talks on trade with the European Union later this month and the US deal has helped shore up sentiment around that, ING strategist Francesco Pesole said.

"The deal had already been largely priced in, and the implications for the UK economy are not significant," he said. "That said, the UK has now signed two trade deals in quick succession, and that is keeping markets hopeful on trade talks with the EU," Pesole said, referring to UK's trade agreements with the United States and India.

Sterling was last up 0.3% against the dollar at $1.3278, having touched its lowest since mid-April earlier in the day.

Meanwhile, the Bank of England on Thursday cut interest rates by a quarter point to 4.25%, as expected. Voting by policymakers was split three ways, with two members of the rate-setting committee opting for no cut at all, which traders took as a sign to buy sterling, at least initially.

BoE Governor Andrew Bailey on Friday said the trade deal was a good thing but still left tariffs on most British exports to the US higher than they were before last month.

"It's good news in a world where it will leave the effective tariff rate higher than it was before all of this started," he said in a question and answer session at an economics conference in Reykjavik.

The derivatives market shows traders have ditched their bets on another cut from the BoE in June and still only see a little more than a 50% chance of a cut in July.

CANADIAN DOLLAR FALLS AGAINST THE GREENBACK

Reuters Published about 2 hours ago

TORONTO: The Canadian dollar weakened to a three-week low against its US counterpart on Friday as signs that trade tensions are hurting employment bolstered expectations for additional interest rate cuts from the Bank of Canada.

The loonie was trading 0.1% lower at 1.3935 per US dollar, or 71.74 US cents, after touching its weakest intraday level since April 16 at 1.3944.

For the week, the loonie was down 0.8%, with the currency pulling back from a near seven-month high on Tuesday at 1.3748.

Canada's unemployment rate rose to 6.9% in April, the highest level since November and above the 6.8% rate economists had expected, as the economy added just 7,400 jobs.

"Tariff uncertainty is now weighing on employment, and we see little chance these worries will fade in the near future," said Nick Rees, senior FX market analyst at Monex Europe Ltd.

"We see little reason that this jobs data should stand in the way of further BoC policy easing in June, and that leaves loonie risks skewed to the downside as traders price this in."

STABLE RUPEE EXPECTED AMID IMF SUPPORT, CEASEFIRE OPTIMISM

May 11, 2025

Karachi, May 11, 2025 – The Pakistani rupee is projected to remain stable in the coming week, beginning May 12, following the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) approval of a fresh loan tranche exceeding $1 billion.

The inflow is seen as a critical factor in stabilizing the local currency and boosting investor confidence.

Financial analysts believe that the recent ceasefire agreement between Pakistan and India has also played a vital role in calming regional tensions, thereby contributing to a more stable outlook for the rupee. The easing of geopolitical pressure, combined with robust IMF backing, is expected to restore market sentiment and support the rupee in the near term.

Despite minor fluctuations, the rupee-dollar parity remained relatively stable over the past week. The rupee began the week at 281.22 against the US dollar and depreciated slightly, ending at 281.70 by Friday, a decline of just 48 paisas. Currency traders observed a modest uptick in dollar demand, but banks reported adequate liquidity levels, suggesting that any pressure on the rupee remains contained.

A report by Tresmark noted, "The dollar has been inching up by 10–15 paisas daily over the past few sessions, causing a temporary slowdown in export receipts. Exporters are holding off on orders, anticipating a better exchange rate. However, if market calm persists, normal flows should resume within two weeks."

The IMF's recent disbursement is part of a $7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) agreed upon last year, bringing total inflows under the program to $2.1 billion. This financial support will strengthen Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves and help maintain a stable rupee in the face of external challenges. Additionally, the IMF has approved an extra $1.4 billion under its climate resilience fund, further easing fiscal pressure.

The IMF praised Pakistan's recent macroeconomic performance, highlighting a primary surplus of 2.0% of GDP in the first half of FY2025 and a reduction in inflation to 0.3% in April. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has responded by cutting interest rates by 1,100 basis points since June, signaling a move toward more stable financial conditions.

Gross foreign exchange reserves stood at $10.3 billion by end-April and are expected to climb to $13.9 billion by end-June 2025, creating a more resilient and stable environment for the rupee moving forward.

Business & Finance » Industry

PPA ISSUES REBUTTAL TO NA BODY STATEMENT

Press Release Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: Pakistan Poultry Association (PPA) has issued a rebuttal to a statement given to National Assembly's Finance Committee about the cost of day old chicks.

The rebuttal issued by PTA general secretary said that it is mind boggling as to how the cost of production of Day Old Chicks has been worked out.

It said first of all, every producer has a different cost of production, depending upon their management efficiency, disease, etc. In the year 2012, the Animal Husbandry Commissioner worked out Day Old Chick cost of production of Rs 31.27 and had provided to Chief Justice Peshawar High Court. After a lapse of over 12 years, it is unimaginable that the cost would only double whereas the fuel, electricity and all raw material prices have increased substantially and almost every imported ingredients of poultry feed has been subject to sales tax. It said there are many poultry farms in the public sector, who could have given the correct cost. "Further, we are also surprised to see that the Finance Committee has been given a daily production of 800,000 ~ 900,000 day old chicks, which is absolutely incorrect. These figures are far from reality. The contention that prices came down because of FBR's actions are also contested.

"The fact is every year broiler growers are reluctant to place chicks because of the very low demand during Eid-ul-Adha. During May 2021, average monthly DOC prices were Rs 80 which came down to Rs 15 during Eid-ul-Adha and likewise in 2022 from Rs 59 to Rs 51 and in 2024 from Rs 210 to Rs 76.

"It's not in distant past, day old chick prices were even sold at Rs 1 and were even left in fields as there was no demand. There are wild month-to-month fluctuations in day old chick prices. Prices fluctuate due to a number of factors including Islamic calendars and climatic conditions. For instance, during the month of Muharram, chicken meat demand goes down, as such, prices also go down."

PRICE DEREGULATION IMPROVES ACCESS TO MEDICINES, HELPS STABILISE INDUSTRY

Salman Siddiqui Published May 12, 2025 Updated about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: The price deregulation of non-essential medicines in early 2024 has improved access to medicines and brought much-needed stability to the pharmaceutical sector, creating space for sustainable and long-term industry growth.

The policy shift, aimed to create a market-driven approach while addressing longstanding challenges in the sector, provided flexibility to pharmaceutical firms, allowing them to adjust prices in line with market conditions.

By aligning prices with inflation and currency fluctuations, companies have managed to stabilise production of medicines that were previously at risk of becoming unavailable due to pricing constraints, according to experts.

Pharma sector: SIFC backs deregulation as exports surge

Contrary to the skepticism surrounding price deregulation, the past year has proven it to be a correction rather than a market free-for-all.

Essential medicines—listed under the National Essential Medicines List (NEML)—remain under strict government's price controls, ensuring continued affordability for vulnerable populations. However, by removing artificial price ceilings on non-essential medicines, the government restored confidence among manufacturers and revived production lines.

"This (deregulation) was not about letting prices run wild, but it was about saving healthcare industry on the verge of collapse and increasing access of patients to genuine medicines at market price," said a former Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association (PPMA) chairman. "Deregulation has balanced sustainability with patient access."

With production becoming financially viable, many life-saving but previously discontinued drugs are now back on shelves. The volume of medicines sold rose by 3.79% year-over-year, according to IQVIA data dated February 2025, countering claims that higher prices have reduced access.

Stable supply chains have also curtailed the rise of unregulated and counterfeit substitutes that had filled the void during previous shortages.

Deregulation brings innovation, investment

The economic impact of deregulation has been supportive. In the first quarter of FY25, the sector recorded a 5.6-fold increase in profitability, jumping to Rs5.6 billion from Rs1 billion in the same quarter of FY24, according to Topline Research.

The growth was driven by improved margins, reduced financing costs, and greater production efficiency.

The profitability has translated into increased investment. PPMA member companies are rapidly upgrading their manufacturing facilities to meet WHO PQ and PIC/S standards. The improvements can position Pakistan to significantly expand exports to regulated markets across Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

PPMA officials estimate that Pakistan's pharmaceutical exports significantly surged to $500 million in the first half of FY25, suggesting having potential to reach $1 billion in full-year FY25 and $5 billion in the next five years, provided deregulation and policy stability remain in place.

"Global buyers are now viewing Pakistan as a reliable, high-quality supplier," a PPMA spokesperson said. "This is a major shift from just two years ago."

According to industry sources, Pakistan and Afghanistan are to reach an understanding in the healthcare sector, enabling Islamabad tap around $500 million export potential in the neighbouring country.

Stock performance soars

Market sentiment has surged in response to these developments. The pharmaceutical sector's value climbed 194% year-to-date, far outpacing the KSE-100 Index (which rose 84%), it was learnt. For the first time in years, pharma stocks are among the top-performing equities at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX).

Haleon posted a staggering 436% gain year to date, Glaxo rose by 362%, Macter gained 315%, while AGP is expected to continued performing well this year; 2025.

PPMA continues to advocate for a rule-based, transparent pricing mechanism for the sector, while ensuring that essential drugs remain affordable and accessible. The association is also calling for strengthened collaboration with the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) and the Ministry of Health to prevent market abuse, reinforce public trust, and build a more innovation-driven ecosystem.

"This is not just a recovery story—it's a growth story," said the former PPMA chairman. "The reforms have given Pakistan's pharmaceutical industry a new identity: competitive, credible, and caring."

PKBC FOR LONG-TERM DIALOGUE BETWEEN PAKISTAN, INDIA

Recorder Report Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: The Pakistan-Kenya Business Council (PKBC) has expressed deep concern over the recent tensions and Indian aggression against Pakistan.

General Secretary of the Council, Rafiq Suleman, has called for the immediate resumption of long-term dialogue between the two countries, emphasizing the urgent need to completely end Indo-Pak tensions.

The Council firmly stated its strong condemnation of all forms of violence and aggression, highlighting that in a sensitive region like South Asia, peace, political stability, and the protection of citizens' lives and property should be the top priority.

Rafiq Suleman stated that wars devastate economies and push nations backward—countries that had achieved significant progress can find themselves lost in history.

Supporting economic cooperation, international trade, and regional unity, the General Secretary said, "We want India and Pakistan to eliminate tensions through mutually respectful dialogue so that the South Asian region can move toward progress. Wars can only cause destruction—they cannot bring economic development."

NESPAK TEAM VISITS FCCI

Recorder Report Published May 11, 2025

FAISALABAD: A team of NESPAK visited Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) to discuss the issues relating to the establishment of Expo Centre in Faisalabad.

They also participated in a special session of FCCI Standing Committee on Council of Textile and Expo. The meeting was chaired by Qaisar Shams Gucha Senior Vice President FCCI while it was participated by former President Mian Javed Iqbal, Convenor Standing Committee Engineer Bilal Jamil, Mian Naveed Gulzar, Mian Muhammad Latif and Muhammad Amir General Manager NESPAK and Structure Engineer Dilawar Khan.

Business & Finance » Companies

CEO APPRECIATES PERFORMANCE OF ‘WAR ROOM’ AT LESCO

LAHORE: LESCO CEO appreciates performance of war room at Lahore Electric Supply Company. LESCO Chief Executive...

Hamid Waleed Published May 11, 2025

LAHORE: LESCO CEO appreciates performance of war room at Lahore Electric Supply Company.

LESCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Muhammad Ramzan Butt has appreciated the performance of the war room set up at LESCO headquarters during the tense situation. He said that the war room functioned professionally, ensuring uninterrupted electricity supply to the citizens. The LESCO officials and employees have proven their commitment to duty, even in the most challenging circumstances.

He also expressed satisfaction over the ceasefire declaration between Pakistan and India. In a statement, Engineer Ramzan Butt praised the country's armed forces for defending the motherland with honour and dignity. He said that the Pakistani forces have proven that no power in the world can harm Pakistan.

Technology

CHINESE PASSENGER CAR SALES RISE FOR A THIRD MONTH IN APRIL

Reuters Published May 11, 2025

SHENZHEN: China's car sales in April rose for a third month, up 14.8% from a year earlier, as government-subsidised auto trade-ins mitigated the impact of US tariffs on consumer sentiment.

Passenger vehicle sales totalled 1.78 million units last month and for the first four months of 2025 were up 8.2% from the same period a year earlier at 6.97 million units, data from the China Passenger Car Association (CPCA) showed on Sunday.

Sales of electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids, known collectively as new energy vehicles, increased 33.9% year-on-year to make up 50.8% of total car sales last month.

A government scheme that hands out larger subsides to trade-ins of old cars for NEVs than for gasoline vehicles had covered 2.71 million cars as of April 24, official data showed, cushioning the impact on Chinese consumer confidence as the increase in US tariffs on Chinese exports disrupt trade between the world's two largest economies.

Car exports slid 2.2% in April from a year earlier, extending an 8% decline in March, CPCA data showed.

For domestic buyers, however, automated-driving systems are fading as a catalyst for sales, according to the association.

The focus of a years-long price war in the world's largest auto market shifted toward next-generation automated-driving features after BYD announced in February to offer its "God's Eye" driver-assistance system as free standard equipment across its lineup.

Porsche's 2024 China sales fall by 28%

But the fervour to tout driver-assistance systems is cooling following a government crackdown on marketing terms using "smart" or "autonomous" to describe their technology after a fatal crash involving a Xiaomi SU7 sedan in March.

The EV caught fire after hitting a cement pole, seconds after the driver tried to assume control from the car's assisted-driving system

Markets » Energy

OIL PRICES RISE AS US-CHINA TRADE TALKS SOOTHE MARKET JITTERS

Reuters Published 34 minutes ago

TOKYO: Oil prices rose on Monday after both sides in U.S.-China trade talks over the weekend touted their progress, which lifted market sentiment that the world's two largest crude users may be moving toward a resolution of their trade dispute.

Brent crude futures climbed 27 cents, or 0.4%, to $64.18 a barrel at 0001 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were trading at $61.30 a barrel, up 28 cents, or 0.5%, from Friday's close.

Both benchmarks increased more than $1 on Friday and gained over 4% last week, notching their first weekly gains since mid-April, after a U.S. trade deal with the United Kingdom made investors optimistic that economic dislocations from U.S. tariffs on its trading partners may be avoided.

The U.S. and China ended trade talks on a positive note on Sunday, with U.S. officials touting a "deal" to reduce the U.S. trade deficit, while Chinese officials said the sides had reached "important consensus". However, neither side released any details of the talks with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng saying a joint statement would be released on Monday.

Positive talks between the world's two largest economies could help boost crude demand as trade, currently disrupted by massive tariffs from both countries, is restored between them.

"Optimism over constructive U.S.-China talks supported sentiment, but limited details and OPEC's plan to raise output capped gains," said Toshitaka Tazawa, an analyst at Fujitomi Securities.

Tazawa was referring to plans by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies, known collectively as OPEC+, to accelerate output hikes in May and June that will add more crude to the market.

However, a Reuters survey found that OPEC oil output edged lower in April.

Oil prices rise on optimism

Additionally, talks between Iranian and U.S. negotiators to resolve disputes over Tehran's nuclear programme ended in Oman on Sunday with further negotiations planned, officials said, as Tehran publicly insisted on continuing its uranium enrichment.

A U.S.-Iran nuclear deal could alleviate concerns about lower global oil supply, which could also pressure oil prices.

U.S. energy firms last week cut the number of oil and natural gas rigs operating to their lowest since January, energy services firm Baker Hughes said on Friday.

CHINA APRIL CRUDE OIL IMPORTS UP

Reuters Published May 11, 2025

BEIJING: China's April crude oil imports slowed from the previous month but rose 7.5% from a year earlier due to abundant deliveries of sanctioned shipments and as state refiners built stocks during maintenance shutdowns.

April imports into the world's largest buyer totalled 48.06 million metric tons, according to the General Administration of Customs, equivalent to 11.69 million barrels per day (bpd).

This is lower versus 12.1 million bpd in March but higher compared with 10.88 million bpd in April of 2024.

Following record imports of Iranian oil in March, Iranian shipments including crude oil and condensate - mostly passed off as Malaysian - stayed resilient at near 1.5 million bpd, Vortexa Analytics estimated.

OIL PRICES RISE ON OPTIMISM

Reuters Published May 11, 2025

NEW YORK: Oil prices settled nearly 2% higher on Friday and notched their first weekly gains since mid-April as a US trade deal with the United Kingdom turned investors optimistic ahead of talks between top officials from Washington and Beijing.

Brent crude futures rose $1.07, or 1.7%, to settle at $63.91 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate crude futures advanced $1.11, or about 1.9%, to settle at $61.02. Week-over-week, both benchmarks gained over 4%. US President Donald Trump on Friday said China should open its market to the US, and that an 80% tariff on Chinese goods "seems right," a day after he announced a deal lowering tariffs on British car and steel exports, among other agreements with the United Kingdom.

"Energy markets - as bearish as they've been - are finally shaking off some of the pessimism and catching the broader market optimism that's showing back up as progress on trade relationships has begun," said Alex Hodes, oil analyst at brokerage StoneX.

The UK agreement and Trump's comments on China have raised hopes for similar deals between Washington and Beijing. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent was to meet with China's top economic official Vice Premier He Lifeng in Switzerland on May 10. Current US tariffs on Chinese imports stand at 145%.

"While prohibitively high, you can't knock the math ... 80% is substantially less than 145%," Hodes wrote to clients. Chinese exports rose faster than expected in April while imports narrowed their decline, customs data showed on Friday, giving Beijing some relief ahead of the talks.

Rising hostilities in the Middle East also boosted oil prices this week, Nikos Tzabouras, senior market analyst at trading platform Tradu, said. Israel's military said it had intercepted a missile launched from Yemen towards its territory, days after Oman mediated a ceasefire between the US and Yemen's Houthis, who claimed responsibility for Friday's attack.

US NATGAS PRICES JUMP ON LOWER OUTPUT, RISING LNG EXPORT FLOWS

Reuters Published May 11, 2025

NEW YORK: US natural gas futures jumped about 6% to a one-month high on Friday on a drop in output in recent weeks and forecasts for more demand next week than previously expected as gas flows to liquefied natural gas (LNG) export plants increase.

Gas futures for June delivery on the New York Mercantile Exchange rose 20.3 cents, or 5.7%, to settle at $3.795 per million British thermal units, their highest close since April 9.

For the week, the front-month gained about 5% after jumping about 24% last week.

Analysts said mild weather expected to last through late May should keep heating and cooling demand low, allowing utilities to continue injecting more gas into storage than normal for this time of year.

Gas stockpiles are currently around 3% above the five-year (2020-2024) normal.

Some analysts said mild weather could allow energy firms to add record amounts of gas into storage in May. The current all-time monthly injection high of 494 billion cubic feet was set in May 2015.

Utilities had pulled a monthly record of 1.013 bcf of gas from storage in January to keep homes and businesses warm during extreme cold weather this winter.

Financial firm LSEG said average gas output in the Lower 48 US states fell to 103.4 billion cubic feet per day so far in May, down from a monthly record of 105.8 bcfd in April.

Since gas output hit a daily record high of 107.4 bcfd on April 18, production was on track to drop about 4.8 bcfd to a preliminary 11-week low of 102.6 bcfd on Friday. Analysts have noted that preliminary data is often revised later in the day.

Looking ahead, analysts said the roughly 15% drop in US crude futures so far in 2025 would likely prompt drillers to cut back on oil production. Any decline in oil production would ultimately reduce the amount of gas pulled out of the ground that is associated with that oil output. About 37% of US gas production comes from associated gas, according to federal energy data.

Over time, analysts said that reduction in gas output should increase gas prices.

Meteorologists projected temperatures in the Lower 48 states would remain mostly warmer than normal through May 23.

LSEG forecast average gas demand in the Lower 48, including exports, will slide from 97.1 bcfd this week to 95.5 bcfd next week before rising to 98.2 bcfd. The forecast for next week was higher than LSEG's outlook on Thursday.

The average amount of gas flowing to the eight big LNG export plants operating in the US fell to 14.9 bcfd so far in May, down from a monthly record of 16.0 bcfd in April.

Markets – Rates

FUTURES SPREAD DOWN 648 BPS

Recorder Review Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: The futures spread declined by 648 basis points, closing at 0.78 percent on the final trading day of the week ending May 9, 2025, compared to 7.26 percent in the previous week.

Trading activity on the futures counter increased, with average daily volumes surged by 37 percent to 154.55 million shares, up from 113 million shares a week earlier. Similarly, the average daily traded value on the futures counter rose by 25 percent, reaching Rs 10.77 billion compared to Rs 8.62 billion in the preceding week.

PSX CLOSES IN THE RED

Recorder Review Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) closed the week ending May 9, 2025, in the red, as mounting geopolitical tensions between Pakistan and India weighed heavily on investor sentiment.

Persistent uncertainty surrounding regional stability prompted widespread caution, dragging market performance down throughout the trading week except Friday, in which the market showed strong recovery.

The benchmark KSE-100 Index shed 6,939 points, or 6.1 percent, on a week-on-week basis, closing at 107,175 points compared to 114,114 points in the previous week. Average trading volumes rose by 20 percent week-on-week, reaching 508 million shares from 424 million shares.

Meanwhile, the average daily traded value on the ready counter stable at Rs 27.6 billion. Total market capitalization also declined by Rs 915 billion, settling at Rs 12.893 trillion versus Rs 13.808 trillion a week earlier.

BRIndex100 also lost 877 points during the last week to close at 11,268 points compared to 12,145 points a week earlier. Average daily turnover at BRIndex100 was 439 million shares. BRIndex30 also declined by 3,105 points on a week-on-week basis to settle at 32,236 points with average daily trading volumes of 303 million shares.

Analysts at AHL said that the market participants are actively monitoring geopolitical situation, with de-escalation in tension to revive the positive sentiment. Moreover, disbursement from IMF post executive board meeting is expected in the upcoming week, which is expected to lift up the sentiment, they added.

According to JS Global, KSE-100 Index dropped 6.1 percent WoW mainly due to negative sentiments prevalent during the week owing to geopolitical tensions between Pakistan and India. Average daily trading volumes increased by 20 percent WoW.

The week began on a volatile note as markets in Pakistan reacted to heightened geopolitical concerns. By Thursday, sentiment had weakened sharply following reports of Indian drone strikes on multiple cities including Karachi and Lahore, after Pak forces downed their planes.

KSE-100 experienced its second-largest intraday decline on Thursday, plunging 7.6 percent and triggering a trading halt. Tensions briefly escalated before Pakistan forces responded by eventually shooting down 77 Indian drones.

With fears of further escalation easing by the end of the week, sentiment in the stock market improved. The market staged a strong comeback on Friday, with the benchmark index rising 3,648 points to close at 107,174.

On the economic front, SBP reduced the Policy Rate this week by 100bp to 11 percent mainly influenced by declining inflation. This marks the seventh rate cut in the ongoing monetary easing cycle bringing cumulative reduction to 1,100bps from its peak of 22 percent. As per SBP data, remittances recorded an inflow of $3.2bn during Apr-2025, up 13 percent YoY. SBP forex reserves rose $118mn to reach $10.3bn.

Analysts at Topline Securities said that the KSE 100 Index declined on WoW basis, this decline was largely on account of escalation of tension between India and Pakistan, where during the week cross border hostilities kept the investors on the edge.

During the week individuals and Mutual Funds (on redemption) largely sold in the market this selling was largely absorbed by local institutions - banks, companies, other organizations and insurance sector.

Other developments during the week were fixed bond PIB auction in which government raised Rs299bn (Competitive & Non-Competitive) against target of Rs350 billion whereas cut-off yields down by 15-20bps, Foreign reserves held by SBP increased by $118 million to $10.33 billion for the week ending May 02, 2025 and remittance number for the month of March came in today at $3.2 billion (up 13 percent YoY).

MORE DEPRECIATION

Recorder Review Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee depreciated further against the US dollar in the inter-bank market as it lost Re0.65 or 0.23% during the previous week.

The local unit closed at Rs281.71, against Rs281.06 it had closed at during the week earlier, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

In a key development, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board approved $1 billion in the first review of the 37-month, $7-billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for Pakistan. The Board also approved $1.4 billion under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF).

Meanwhile, the inflow of overseas workers’ remittances into Pakistan stood at $3.2 billion in April 2025, the SBP data showed. Remittances increased by 13.1% year over year, compared to $2.81 billion recorded in the same month last year. On a monthly basis, remittances were down 22%, compared to $4.1 billion in March.

Foreign exchange reserves held by the SBP increased by $118 million on a weekly basis, clocking in at $10.33 billion as of May 2. Total liquid foreign reserves held by the country stood at $15.48 billion. Net foreign reserves held by commercial banks stood at $5.15 billion.

Open-market rates

In the open market, the PKR lost 35 paise for buying and 47 paise for selling against USD, closing at 281.78 and 283.36, respectively.

Against Euro, the PKR gained 2.07 rupees for buying and 1.48 rupee for selling, closing at 316.38 and 319.88, respectively.

Against UAE Dirham, the PKR lost 22 paise for buying and 34 paise for selling, closing at 76.73 and 77.43, respectively.

Against Saudi Riyal, the PKR gained 19 paise for buying and 4 paise for selling, closing at 74.95 and 75.66, respectively.

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THE RUPEE

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Weekly inter-bank market rates for dollar

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Bid Close Rs. 281.70

Offer Close Rs. 281.90

Bid Open Rs. 281.05

Offer Open Rs. 281.25

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Weekly open-market rates for dollar

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Bid Close Rs. 281.78

Offer Close Rs. 283.36

Bid Open Rs. 281.43

Offer Open Rs. 282.89

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FUTURES SPREAD DOWN 648 BPS

Recorder Review Published about 3 hours ago

KARACHI: The futures spread declined by 648 basis points, closing at 0.78 percent on the final trading day of the week ending May 9, 2025, compared to 7.26 percent in the previous week.

Trading activity on the futures counter increased, with average daily volumes surged by 37 percent to 154.55 million shares, up from 113 million shares a week earlier. Similarly, the average daily traded value on the futures counter rose by 25 percent, reaching Rs 10.77 billion compared to Rs 8.62 billion in the preceding week.

PSX CLOSES IN THE RED

Recorder Review Published about 3 hours ago

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) closed the week ending May 9, 2025, in the red, as mounting geopolitical tensions between Pakistan and India weighed heavily on investor sentiment.

Persistent uncertainty surrounding regional stabilit prompted widespread caution, dragging market performance down throughout the trading week except Friday, in which the market showed strong recovery.

The benchmark KSE-100 Index shed 6,939 points, or 6.1 percent, on a week-on-week basis, closing at 107,175 points compared to 114,114 points in the previous week. Average trading volumes rose by 20 percent week-on-week, reaching 508 million shares from 424 million shares.

Meanwhile, the average daily traded value on the ready counter stable at Rs 27.6 billion. Total market capitalization also declined by Rs 915 billion, settling at Rs 12.893 trillion versus Rs 13.808 trillion a week earlier.

BRIndex100 also lost 877 points during the last week to close at 11,268 points compared to 12,145 points a week earlier. Average daily turnover at BRIndex100 was 439 million shares. BRIndex30 also declined by 3,105 points on a week-on-week basis to settle at 32,236 points with average daily trading volumes of 303 million shares.

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OPEN MARKET FOREX RATES

Updated at: 12/5/2025 7:29 AM (PST)

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.75	185.00
Bahrain Dinar	737.40	745.4
Canadian Dollar	202.60	205.00
China Yuan	37.59	37.99
Danish Krone	42.25	42.65
Euro	318.75	321.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.94	36.29
Indian Rupee	3.23	3.32
Japanese Yen	1.97	2.03
Kuwaiti Dinar	898.90	908.40
Malaysian Ringgit	66.37	66.97
NewZealand $	165.96	167.96
Norwegians Krone	26.76	27.06
Omani Riyal	728.85	737.35
Qatari Riyal	76.58	77.28
Saudi Riyal	74.75	75.30
Singapore Dollar	216	218
Swedish Korona	28.8	29.10
Swiss Franc	338.61	341.41
Thai Bhat	8.4	8.55
U.A.E Dirham	76.45	77.10
UK Pound Sterling	375.50	379
US Dollar	281.75	283.25

INTER BANK RATES

Updated at: 12/5/2025 7:29 AM (PST)

Currency	Bank Buying TT Clean	Bank Selling TT & OD
Australian Dollar	180.21	180.53
Canadian Dollar	202.15	202.51
China Yuan	38.99	39.06
Danish Krone	42.34	42.42
Euro	315.90	316.46
Hong Kong Dollar	36.21	36.27
Japanese Yen	1.9322	1.9356
Saudi Riyal	75.04	75.17
Singapore Dollar	216.50	216.88
Swedish Korona	29.04	29.09
Swiss Franc	338.48	339.09
Thai Bhat	8.5	8.52
UK Pound Sterling	372.47	373.13
US Dollar	281.45	281.95

GOLD RATE

Bullion / Gold Price Today

As on Mon, May 12 2025, 02:58 GMT

Metal	Symbol	PKR for 10 Gm	PKR for 1 Tola	PKR for 1 Ounce	
Gold	XAU	301,121	350,854	936,606	
Palladium	XPD	88,611	103,246	275,615	
Platinum	XPT	90,464	105,406	281,380	
Silver	XAG	2,962	3,451	9,211	

for local market Gold Rates in Pakistan

Gold Price in Pakistan

As on Mon, May 12 2025, 02:58 GMT

Gold Rate	24K Gold	22K Gold	21K Gold	18K Gold
per Tola Gold	Rs. 350900	Rs. 321656	Rs. 307038	Rs. 263175
per 10 Gram	Rs. 300800	Rs. 275731	Rs. 263200	Rs. 225600
per Gram Gold	Rs. 30080	Rs. 27573	Rs. 26320	Rs. 22560
per Ounce	Rs. 852800	Rs. 781728	Rs. 746200	Rs. 639600

Gold Rate

FOREX.pk offered latest and upto date Gold Rate in Pakistan as per International market for today gold rates in Pakistan you can visit GOLD.pk, We update international market gold rate in every fifteen minutes from authentic sources, Gold rates may be different in every city of Pakistan. Karachi is the main hub of gold market, in Pakistan, Karachi is leading for gold rate, every city follow Karachi Sarafa Bazar Association for gold price, Today gold prices for different cities including Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and Quetta are also available on Gold.pk. FOREX.pk is not liable or responsible to any transactions made on the basis of above mentioned gold rate.

* Above Gold rate are taken from International Market so there may be some fluctuation from Local Market you can visit GOLD.pk for uptodate today gold price in Pakistan.

Gold Rates in other Major Currencies

Currency	Symbol	10 Gm	1 Tola	1 Ounce	
China Yuan	CNY	7,744	9,023	24,087	
Euro	EUR	951	1,108	2,959	
Japanese Yen	JPY	155,602	181,301	483,983	
Saudi Riyal	SAR	4,013	4,676	12,482	
U.A.E Dirham	AED	3,930	4,579	12,224	
UK Pound Sterling	GBP	804	937	2,502	
US Dollar	USD	1,070	1,247	3,329	