2026

SHAHID LEGAL GROUP

SLD NEWS UPDATES

Friday, June 5, 2026

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EXPORTS KEY TO REVIVAL OF ECONOMY: MIAN ZAHID

Published June 5, 2026 Updated 40 minutes ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: Mian Zahid Hussain, President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum (PBIF), President of the All Karachi Industrial Alliance (AKIA), Chairman of the National Business Group Pakistan (NBG) and Chairman of the FPCCI Policy Advisory Board has emphasized that there is no alternative to economic revival other than reducing reliance on imports and providing incentives to the export sector on an emergency basis.

He said that the tax burden on industries had surged to an unbearable level of over 60 percent, demanding that "this burden be reduced to a maximum of 40 percent in the upcoming budget" to enable the local industries to compete effectively in the global market.

The business leader said that the industrialists had informed the prime minister that additional burdens, such as the Super Tax, constituted a major hurdle to industrial growth in the current economic scenario.

He underscored the urgent need to simplify the tax regime in the federal budget to make it business-friendly, thereby restoring investor confidence.

He added that rationalizing energy tariffs and reviewing contracts with the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) were inevitable measures required to bring down the soaring cost of production.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the business community had high expectations from the Federal Budget 2026-27, hoping that the government would take practical steps to protect local industries while simultaneously honoring its agreements with the IMF.

He said he was confident that if the government incorporated into the budget document the demands for the restoration of the Final Tax Regime (FTR) for exporters and a rational reduction in taxes these measures could support export-led recovery and sustainable growth.

He said that this consultation came at a critical juncture when the country urgently required a coordinated strategy to boost exports and stabilize the foreign exchange reserves.

Mian Zahid Hussain said the business community warmly welcomed the prime minister's initiative to engage in a direct consultative process.

He hoped that the economic team under the prime minister's leadership would integrate these proposals into the budget document to accelerate industrialization, generate employment opportunities, and anchor the economy on sustainable foundations.

He referred to the recent meeting between the prime minister and several business leaders as a highly encouraging development towards economic stability and industrial growth.

Mian Zahid Hussain stated that during the meeting, the FPCCI leadership and business representatives candidly discussed the severe macroeconomic challenges facing the country and presented concrete proposals to the prime minister for the promotion of trade and industry.

He said that the trade deficit had reached a staggering USD32 billion during the first 10 months of the current fiscal year, while the ratio of exports to imports had witnessed an alarming decline. Furthermore, Pakistan's economy had been facing immense pressure due to the ongoing US-Iran war.

REDUCTION IN GOVT SECTOR EXPENDITURE SOUGHT

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about an hour ago

By N H Zuberi

KARACHI: The Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has urged the government to reduce government sector expenditure by up to Rs3 trillion in the upcoming federal budget and present a clear economic roadmap focused on sustainable growth, investment, and business revival.

PBF Chief Organiser Ahmad Jawad said the forthcoming budget, which will be the government's third since the general elections, must move beyond traditional revenue-generation measures and instead prioritize economic expansion, industrial competitiveness, and public relief.

Expressing concern over the country's growing debt burden, Jawad noted that Pakistan's national debt has increased from approximately Rs19 trillion to nearly Rs80 trillion over the past decade.

"The success of the upcoming budget will depend on whether the government can generate revenue from under-taxed sectors rather than continuing to place the bulk of the burden on the already documented business community," he said.

The Forum stressed that the budget may reflect ground realities and provide meaningful relief to both businesses and the general public.

"The decision to enter the IMF programme was the government's own choice.However, the IMF does not require government to place an additional burden on businesses and citizens every year. If the economy is to move forward, meaningful relief measures may be introduced," Jawad added.

PBF also proposed abolishing the petroleum levy and replacing it with an 18 percent General Sales Tax (GST) on petroleum products to create a more transparent taxation framework in the Finance Bill scheduled to be presented on June 10.

Highlighting the importance of agriculture, Jawad described cotton as Pakistan's "white gold" and called for targeted incentives and support measures to revive cotton production and strengthen the textile value chain.

He emphasized the need for concrete budgetary initiatives to promote the Blue Economy and modernize the agriculture sector, both of which have significant potential to drive sustainable growth and boost exports.

"The government must decide whether investment capital should flow towards industry and exports or continue to be diverted into real estate and speculative activities," the Forum stated.

PBF also said the essence of the budget on June 10 should be to project Pakistan as an attractive destination for business, investment, and economic opportunity.

Addressing Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Jawad said: "The business community still has high expectations from your leadership.We expect that the upcoming budget will not be merely a paper exercise or an accounting gimmick. It should not be based solely on revenue targets but should serve as a comprehensive framework for economic recovery and sustainable growth."

OVERCOMING FISCAL DEFICIT

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Huzaima BukhariDr Ikramul HaqAbdul Rauf Shakoori

On June 10, 2026, the federal government will unveil budget for fiscal year (FY) 2026-27 amidst familiar warnings about fiscal deficits, rising debt, IMF conditionalities and the alleged necessity of imposing additional taxes.

Once again, citizens are expected to believe that Pakistan suffers from a shortage of revenue. The official narrative suggests that fiscal stability requires higher taxation, stricter enforcement and continued sacrifices by already overtaxed segments of society but facts tell an entirely different story.

For nearly three decades, articles in these pages and elsewhere have highlighted the phenomenon of "foregone taxes in trillions". Shockingly, the issue attracted little policy attention. Of late, official reports of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Economic Surveys of Pakistan and even studies by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) confirm that concerns were neither exaggerated nor misplaced.

Pakistan's fiscal deficit is not merely the result of inadequate taxation. It is substantially a consequence of trillions of rupees voluntarily surrendered through tax expenditures. The following official figures, extracted from annual Economic Surveys and FBR's website, illustrate the magnitude of the issue:

Table: Tax Expenditure (2010-11 to 2024-25)

Fiscal Year	Tax Expenditure (Rs billion)
2010-11	150.3
2011-12	185.5
2012-13	239.5
2013-14	477.1
2014-15	415.8
2015-16	394.6
2016-17	415.8
2017-18	541.0
2018-19	972.4
2019-20	1150
2020-21	1314.3
2021-22	1482.3 GST on POL waived in March 2022
2022-23	2239.6 Excluding GST on POL
2023-24	3879.2 Excluding GST on POL
2024-25	2434.7 Excluding GST on POL

The Table exposes a startling reality. Federal tax expenditure increased almost sixteen-fold between FY2010-11 and FY2024-25. The latest figure of Rs. 2.435 trillion (not including forgone sales tax on petroleum products) exceeds the annual budgets of several provinces and is significantly larger than the revenue shortfalls repeatedly cited by the government to justify new taxation measures. Had even a portion of these concessions been rationalised, Pakistan's fiscal deficit could have been substantially reduced and, in certain years, transformed into a surplus.

Tax expenditure represents revenue forgone through exemptions, concessions, exclusions, tax credits, preferential rates, special regimes and other departures from the normal tax structure. Economically, it is no different from direct budgetary spending. The only difference is that it escapes the scrutiny ordinarily applied to expenditure shown in the budget.

Every rupee of federal tax expenditure granted in divisible-pool taxes affects not only the federal government but also the provinces. The 1973 Constitution guarantees provinces a share in federal tax revenues through the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award.

When federal authorities forego trillions through exemptions and concessions, provinces are simultaneously deprived of resources for education, health, local government, infrastructure and social protection. This raises a fundamental question. By what constitutional logic should selected beneficiaries receive preferential tax treatment while provinces lose resources constitutionally intended for their citizens?

The debate on tax expenditure is not merely fiscal. It concerns the distribution of power, resources and opportunities within the federation itself. PIDE's recent study on tax expenditures reaches an equally troubling conclusion. It notes the absence of rigorous cost-benefit analysis, lack of meaningful evaluation and weak institutional scrutiny regarding the effectiveness of tax concessions.

Exemptions are frequently granted in the name of industrial development, investment promotion or social objectives, yet little evidence is produced to demonstrate whether these objectives are actually achieved. Many concessions survive long after their original rationale has disappeared. Others effectively operate as hidden subsidies benefiting narrow groups at public expense.

In this peculiar milieu, the first and most immediate reform should be a comprehensive review of all tax expenditures. Every concession should be subjected to annual scrutiny, accompanied by a sunset clause and automatic lapse unless justified by measurable economic and social benefits. Even a reduction of one-third of existing tax expenditures could generate hundreds of billions of rupees, substantially reducing dependence on regressive taxation and borrowing.

The second reform concerns one of Pakistan's most protected sources of untaxed wealth: agricultural land rent.

For decades, public debate has conflated the interests of small farmers with those of large landowners. These are entirely different questions. Small cultivators facing climate shocks, rising input costs and declining productivity deserve protection and support. Large agricultural rentiers enjoying substantial income from ownership of land do not.

The original definition of "agricultural income" in the Income-tax Act, 1922 was rooted in agricultural operations and cultivation. It was never intended to create a blanket fiscal immunity for large landowners. The exemption recognised income arising from land used for agricultural purposes and from agricultural operations performed on that land. What emerged over subsequent decades was a political distortion whereby constitutional protection of agriculture gradually evolved into protection of agricultural rent and landed privilege.

The Finance Bill 2026 should distinguish between income from cultivation and income from ownership of agricultural land. Small cultivators deserve support, not taxation. Agricultural rent accruing to absentee owners and large landholders is a different economic category altogether and should be brought within the tax net. Such a distinction is entirely consistent with both classical public finance and the original scheme of the Income-tax Act, 1922.

The third reform concerns the fragmented structure of Pakistan's income tax system. The current regime has abandoned the foundational principle of comprehensive income taxation. Separate tax blocks, final taxation regimes, minimum taxes, presumptive taxes and countless special provisions have created a system characterised by complexity, inequity and litigation.

Every source of income after computation as per respective head of income should be aggregated into a single taxable base ending all kinds of separate treatments. Additionally, artificial distinctions between different categories of income need to be removed.

After computing taxable income as suggested above, under a simplified structure, annual income up to Rs. 1.2 million should remain below taxable threshold. Income exceeding Rs. 1.2 million up to Rs. 3.6 million should be taxed at 5 percent. Income exceeding Rs. 3.6 million up to Rs. 6 million should be taxed at 15 percent. Income exceeding Rs. 6 million should be taxed at 25 percent. The corporate tax rate should simultaneously be reduced to 25 percent.

Excess profit tax or business profit tax, if necessary, for persons earning income beyond Rs. 200 million may be imposed through separate laws, as was done historically.

A broad tax base coupled with moderate rates will always outperform a narrow base burdened by excessive taxation. Pakistan's fiscal challenges also require addressing another long-neglected constitutional anomaly: fragmented sales taxation.

The division between federal sales tax on goods and provincial sales tax on services has generated overlapping jurisdictions, multiple compliance regimes, cascading taxation and substantial administrative inefficiencies.

Trans-provincial services and entities operating across provincial boundaries require harmonised treatment. Their inclusion within a unified federal framework would significantly enhance efficiency and revenue mobilisation. Studies undertaken earlier suggest that comprehensive taxation of trans-provincial services could generate approximately Rs. 3 to 4 trillion in additional revenue over time through integrated administration and elimination of leakages.

Such potential alone is sufficient to alter Pakistan's fiscal landscape fundamentally. At the same time, provincial governments must abandon their excessive dependence on federal transfers.

Pakistan's provinces possess substantial taxation powers over agricultural income, agricultural land, urban immovable property, services and local economic activities. Yet provincial tax collection remains exceptionally low by international standards.

In successful federations, sub-national governments mobilise significant resources independently. Indian states collectively raise revenues approaching 8 percent of GDP through their own taxation powers. Pakistani provinces should be aiming for revenue mobilisation of at least 5 to 8 percent of GDP.

If provinces effectively utilised their constitutional powers while the federation rationalised tax expenditures, taxed agricultural rent, integrated trans-provincial taxation and implemented comprehensive income taxation, Pakistan's chronic fiscal deficit would largely disappear.

The country would no longer require excessive petroleum levies to compensate for weak tax policy. Dependence on borrowing would decline. Corporate taxation could become internationally competitive. Personal taxation could become simpler, fairer and more predictable.

The debate surrounding annual federal budgets, unfortunately, begins on a false premise. Pakistan does not suffer from a shortage of taxable capacity. It suffers from policy choices that favour exemptions over equity, fragmentation over simplicity and privilege over constitutional fiscal justice. The challenge is not only to discover new taxpayers. The real challenge is to stop subsidising powerful interests through the tax system while claiming insufficient resources for governance.

Fiscal sovereignty will remain elusive so long as trillions continue to be surrendered through tax expenditures, large sources of economic rent remain untaxed and constitutional taxing powers remain underutilised.

The choice before policymakers is straightforward. Continue managing deficits through higher taxation of the compliant and greater dependence on debt or dismantle the structural distortions that create those deficits in the first place. The first path perpetuates debtocracy. The second offers a route towards genuine fiscal sustainability and constitutional federalism.

18PC ST TO BE IMPOSED ON STATIONERY ITEMS

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Sohail Sarfraz

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to impose 18 percent sales tax on stationery items through Finance Bill 2026.

Top government officials told BUSINESS RECORDER that the proposal has been finalized and cleared from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The increased rate of 18 percent sales tax would be applicable from July 1, 2026.

The existing rate of sales tax on stationery items would be increased from 10 percent to 18 percent.

PTC TIES STABILITY TO STRONG EXPORT-LED STRATEGY

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Textile Council (PTC) has urged the federal government to use Budget 2026-27 as a decisive opportunity to restore the competitiveness of Pakistan’s export sector, warning that economic stabilization alone will not deliver sustainable growth without a strong export-led strategy.

Sources in the commerce ministry told BUSINESS RECORDER, the Council has also written a letter to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, appreciating the government's engagement with business leaders ahead of the budget but stressed that policy commitments must now translate into concrete relief measures for exporters.

According to PTC, Pakistan's merchandise exports during the first eleven months of FY2025-26 remained USD 1.66 billion below the corresponding period of the previous year, reflecting the cumulative impact of high energy costs, delayed refunds, and an increasingly burdensome tax regime on export-oriented industries.

The government has been apprised that Pakistan today stands before a rare window of opportunity as global supply chains are being restructured, and international buyers are actively seeking alternative sourcing destinations. Pakistan possesses a vertically integrated cotton-to-garment value chain and long-established export relationships, but these advantages can only be leveraged if the policy environment supports competitiveness rather than undermines it.

The Council emphasized that export-led growth remains the most viable pathway for generating foreign exchange, creating employment, and strengthening Pakistan's long-term economic resilience.

The PTC called upon the government to prioritize three immediate measures in the upcoming budget: the reintroduction of the Final Tax Regime (FTR) for exporters, reduction of industrial energy tariffs to regionally competitive levels, and clearance of outstanding export refunds through a transparent and time-bound mechanism.

"Pakistan has worked hard to achieve macroeconomic stability, but stabilization is not growth," said Chairman PTC adding that "the next chapter of Pakistan's economic recovery must be written through exports, investment, and industrial expansion."

The Council reiterated its willingness to work closely with the government by providing technical input, sectoral data and policy support to help achieve the country's export and economic growth objectives.

BUDGET ON 10TH: SCHEHZAD

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Tahir Amin

ISLAMABAD: The government has announced that it will present the federal budget for fiscal year 2026–27 on June 10 to outline its fiscal priorities and policy measures for the upcoming financial year.

Advisor to the Finance Minister, Khurram Schehzad confirmed the development on Thursday, validating a BUSINESS RECORDER news report.

He further added that the Economic Survey 2025-26 (FY26) would be released on Tuesday, June 9, to provide a review of the country's economic performance during the outgoing fiscal year.

The Advisor said, "The federal budget for fiscal year 2027 will be presented before the National Assembly of Pakistan on Wednesday, June 10, by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb.

The upcoming budget will outline the federal government's fiscal priorities and policy measures for the forthcoming financial year. The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue will present the Survey, providing a comprehensive review of the country's economic performance during the outgoing fiscal year".

A crucial meeting of the National Economic Council (NEC), which was scheduled to be held on June 3, has been postponed and is now expected to be held on June 8 to finalize the 2026-27 development plan. The NEC meeting, which will be chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, is particularly significant as the constitutional body is required to approve key macroeconomic targets and endorse the size of the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) before the federal budget is formally unveiled.

KP GOVT AGREES TO REDUCE IDC RATE FROM 2PC TO 0.75PC

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

PESHAWAR: The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has accepted the long-standing demand of the business community and announced to reduce the rate of the provincial Infrastructure Development Cess (IDC) from 2 percent to 0.75 percent.

This important announcement was made by the Advisor to Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Finance, Muzammil Aslam, in a high-level consultative meeting regarding the provincial budget 2026-27, which was attended by the presidents of chambers of commerce from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, business leaders and government officials.

Those who participated in the meeting include president Khyber Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Haji Muhammad Yousuf Afridi, Group Leader Syed Jawad Hussain Kazmi, Senior Vice President Wajid Ali Shinwari, Hazrat Ali Shinwari, Secretary Ali Faisal, President Malakand Chamber Inam Khan, President Kohat Chamber Haji Rashid Ahmed Paracha, President Women Chamber of Commerce (Peshawar) Qurtul Ain, Additional Secretary Industries Muhammad Ishaq, ADG Revenue Excise and Taxation Salahuddin, Additional

Secretary Planning and Development Muhammad Tawfiq, Director Excise and Taxation Syedul Amin, representatives of various chambers and senior government officials in large numbers.

PROVINCES PROPOSE RS3.138TRN COMBINED DEVELOPMENT OUTLAY

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Naveed Butt

ISLAMABAD: The provinces have proposed a combined development outlay of Rs3.138 trillion for fiscal year 2026-27, reflecting an increase of Rs76 billion over the current year's allocation, with Rs660 billion expected from foreign assistance and Rs2.478 trillion to be financed through domestic resources.

The provinces had budgeted a combined development outlay of Rs3.062 trillion for outgoing fiscal year 2025-26, including Rs658 billion in foreign assistance and Rs2.404 trillion from local resources.

The provinces have raised their combined development budget by Rs76 billion to Rs3.138 trillion for fiscal year 2026-27, up from Rs3.062 trillion in the current fiscal year 2025-26.

According to documents available with BUSINESS RECORDER, Punjab leads with a proposed allocation of Rs1.45 trillion, followed by Sindh with Rs816 billion, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Rs564 billion, and Balochistan with Rs308 billion.

Budget documents show that the Punjab government has proposed a development budget of Rs1.45 trillion for fiscal year 2026-27, including Rs1.306 trillion from local resources and Rs144 billion in foreign assistance. The Sindh government has proposed Rs816 billion, comprising Rs296 billion in foreign assistance and Rs520 billion from local resources.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has proposed Rs564 billion for its development programme, including Rs187 billion in foreign assistance and Rs377 billion from local resources under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2026-27. Balochistan has proposed a development outlay of Rs308 billion, including Rs33 billion in foreign assistance and Rs275 billion from local resources.

Punjab has increased its development budget by Rs95 billion for fiscal year 2026-27 compared to the current fiscal year. Sindh has reduced its development budget by Rs29 billion, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has increased its allocation by Rs63 billion. In contrast, Balochistan has cut its development budget by Rs53 billion compared to fiscal year 2025-26.

The provincial governments have submitted their proposed development budgets to the federal government for incorporation into the budget framework for fiscal year 2026-27.

PSDP 2026-27: RS179BN EARMARKED FOR 44 WATER SCHEMES, HYDROPOWER PROJECTS

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Mushtaq Ghumman

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has reportedly earmarked Rs 179 billion for nearly 44 (43 ongoing and one new) water sector development schemes and hydropower projects under Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) 2026-27 due to financial constraints.

Of total earmarked amount of 179 billion, required local funding will be about Rs 106.620 billion whereas rupee cover requirement of 72.379 billion.

According to the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, for ongoing hydel projects, Rs 42.666 billion have been earmarked, of which Rs 25 billion are proposed for Dasu Hydropower Project(stage-1), Rs 4.284 billion for Warsak Hydroelectric Power Station (2nd rehabilitation) Rs 3.4 billion will be for 1410 MW Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower project, Rs 3.00 billion for Attabad Lake Hydropower project (54 MW), Rs 2.062 billion for rehabilitation of Dargai Hydroelectric power station(PC-1), Rs 2.7 billion 34.5 MW Harpo Hydropower Project, Rs 1.4845 billion for refurbishment and up-gradation of generation units of Mangla power station enhancing the capacity from 1000 MW to 1310 MW and Rs 736 million for capacity enhancement of Chitral Hydropower station from 1 MW to 5 MW.

The proposed allocation for some of the ongoing water sector schemes/projects are as follows: (i) Diamer Basha Dam Project (inclusion of Tangir Hydropower project) Rs 25 billion); (ii) Diamer Basha Dam Project– acquisition of land and resettlement (2nd revised (revised PC-1 is under approval process) Rs 7.00 billion;(iii) Mohamand Dam Hydropower project – Rs39 billion; (iv) raising of Mangla Dam project (2nd revised PC-1) Rs 4.598 billion; (v) revised PC-1 for installation of telemetry system for real time discharge monitoring at 27 key sites on Indus Basin Irrigation System(IBIS)- Rs 5.755 billion (total cost Rs 23.834 billion, Provincial share Rs 500 million of IRSA from its own resources; (vi) Kachhi Canal Project- Rs 4.874 billion; (vii) construction of 100 dams in Balochistan –package–III (20 dams) revised –Rs 1.093 billion; (viii) construction of Awaran Dam (revised) –Rs 5.00 billion (total 23.579 billion - federal share Rs 17.754 billion - provincial share Rs 5.826 billion); (ix) construction of Panjgur dam, district Panjgur (revised) – Rs 5.00 billion (total cost Rs 22.341 billion - federal share Rs 16.506 billion- provincial share Rs 5.835 billion); (x) construction of 100 dams in Balochistan-Package-iv (23 dams) Rs 3.00 billion; (xi) remodelling of Pat Feeder Canal System in Balochistan, District Naseerabad – Rs 5.00 billion (total cost Rs 61.793 billion - federal share Rs 46.996 billion - provincial share 14.797 billion; (x) Garuk Storage Dam District Kharan (2nd revised PC-1) Rs 1.459 billion(total cost Rs 27.753 billion- Federal share Rs 15.650 billion- provincial share Rs 12.103 billion; (xi) Umbrella PC-1 of the Flood Protection sector project–III (FPSP-III) updated Rs 2 billion; and (xii) the project for Flood Management Enhancement in the Indus Basin-JICA grant-Rs 3.00 billion. Other ongoing water schemes will get funding of just millions of rupees. Only one scheme – Diamer Basha Dam Project - power generation facilities (4500 MW) – Rs 500 million.

This shows budget of Rs 135.8335 billion has been proposed for ongoing water sector projects/schemes under PSDP 2026-27.

MAJOR AMENDMENTS TO EFS LIKELY

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Sohail Sarfraz

ISLAMABAD: The government is likely to introduce major amendments to the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS) 2021 in the upcoming 2026-27 budget to curb the misuse of the facility in the future.

A big proposed change in the EFS scheme for exporters is that the financial security in the form of bank guarantee would be replaced with the pos-dated cheque for any excess duty and taxes being deferred or remitted.

Official sources told BUSINESS RECORDER that the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has finalized amendments to the EFS, taking into account recommendations of the stakeholders.

In this regard, the government is reviewing a budget proposal to revise the EFS in the 2026-27 budget to stop commercial importers from massive misuse of flying invoices in local markets.

One of the proposals is to withdraw the exemption available to the commercial importers under EFS that allows the transfer of their sales tax invoice in the local market.

The FBR is making necessary changes in the Customs Rules for the implementation of the revised scheme.

The EFS, introduced in 2021, has seen an increase in licenses from 800 to approximately 2,000. A special drive initiated in May 2024 to curb misuse has led to significant improvements, particularly in the textile industry, which has witnessed notable value addition.

Sources said the existing IPO 2022 does not permit the temporary import of used vehicles and auto parts for refurbishment and re-export. Under Para 5(3), read with Serial Nos. 10 and 11 of Appendix-C, the import of used and second-hand vehicles and auto parts is generally prohibited, except for limited categories such as bulletproof vehicles, firefighting vehicles, ambulances, and certain commercial imports.

The working group held multiple meetings to examine the feasibility of the pilot project under the EFS 2021 framework. The proposal received broad support from stakeholders, who agreed that amendments to both EFS 2021 and IPO 2022 were necessary to operationalise the initiative.

The Ministry of Commerce informed a ministerial forum that a draft summary had been circulated among stakeholders, who endorsed key proposals for submission to the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet. **These include:**

(i) Amendment to Serial No. 10 of Appendix-C of IPO 2022 to allow temporary import of vehicles under PCT heading 8703 by service providers with repair and refurbishment facilities verified by the Engineering Development Board (EDB) and registered with FBR under EFS. Such imports would be strictly for repair, restoration, refurbishment, and re-export.

Importer-cum-exporters would also be required to submit annual reconciliation statements to the relevant Regulatory Collector; (ii) Amendment to Serial No. 11 of Appendix-C to allow temporary import of used auto parts under similar conditions, exclusively for refurbishment and repair purposes, with mandatory reconciliation reporting; (iii) a strict condition that imported vehicles and parts shall not, under any circumstances, be sold, transferred, or disposed of within the domestic tariff area; and (iv) necessary amendments to EFS 2021 by FBR, including a clear disposal mechanism for salvaged or leftover auto parts.

MAJOR CHUNK OF PSDP WILL GO TO INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Naveed Butt

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has allocated the largest share — 65 percent, or Rs729.9 billion — of the proposed development budget for infrastructure sector projects in fiscal year 2026-27.

According to documents available with this correspondent, the government has proposed Rs135.6 billion for the energy sector, Rs408.9 billion for transport and communication, Rs140.4 billion for the water sector, and Rs45 billion for the physical planning and housing sector for the upcoming fiscal year.

A total of Rs187.2 billion has been proposed for the social sectors, including Rs78.5 billion for education (including the Higher Education Commission), Rs24.3 billion for health and nutrition, Rs70 billion for the SDGs Achievement Programme, and Rs14.4 billion for others.

The government has also proposed Rs10.2 billion for governance and Rs43.9 billion for science and information technology for fiscal year 2026-27.

An amount of Rs79.4 billion has been allocated for special areas (AJK and GB), while Rs66.1 billion has been proposed for merged districts for development projects.

In the production sector, the government has proposed Rs9.3 billion, including Rs3.7 billion for food and agriculture and Rs5.6 billion for industries. According to documents, 65 percent of resources have been earmarked for infrastructure sector projects. Within infrastructure, priority has been given to the transport and communication sector with 36 percent, followed by water resources with 12.5 percent, energy with 12 percent, and physical planning and housing with 4 percent of allocations.

The social sector has been allocated 16.6 percent, comprising education/HEC with 7 percent, health with 2.2 percent, the SDGs Achievement Programme with 6.2 percent, and other social sectors with 1.3 percent.

To bring less developed areas at par with other parts of the country, 4.8 percent has been allocated for AJK, GB, and the newly merged districts of KP.

The proposed allocation for the science and technology and IT sector is for 5.9 percent. Funds for the governance sector stand at 7.1 percent and the production sector at 0.8 percent.

Project-wise proposed allocations have been adjusted within the overall PSDP size of Rs1,126 billion in line with national priorities.

The ministries and divisions had demanded Rs4.1 trillion including Rs1.1 trillion as rupee cover under PSDP 2026-27, for 1,254 projects comprising 764 ongoing and 490 new or unbudgeted projects. The demand for ongoing projects stood at Rs3.3 trillion. However, the Finance Division could only manage and conveyed an Indicative Budget Ceiling (IBC) of Rs1,126 billion for PSDP 2026-27.

SOES PROPOSE RS451.316BN INVESTMENT OUTLAY

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Naveed Butt

ISLAMABAD: Federal state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have proposed an investment outlay of Rs 451.316 billion for the upcoming fiscal year 2026-27. According to budget documents available with BUSINESS RECORDER, the Petroleum Division (OGDCL) has proposed an investment of Rs 178.927 billion, followed by Water Resources Division (WAPDA) with Rs 138.574 billion, and the Power Division (NTDC, etc) with Rs 19.167 billion for the fiscal year 2026-27.

The Information Technology and Telecommunication Division (NTC, USF, Ignite, etc) has proposed Rs 36.898 billion, while the Maritime Affairs Division (PNSC) has planned an investment of Rs 60.815 billion for the coming fiscal year.

The Defence Division (PAA) has proposed a total investment of Rs 16.935 billion for development projects during fiscal year 2026-27.

The ministries and divisions have provided details of development interventions being financed through sources other than the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), implemented by state-owned enterprises and their subordinate or attached departments, to assess the overall development impact.

APTMA URGES SWEEPING ST REFORMS IN FY27 BUDGET

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Hassan Abbas

LAHORE: The All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) has submitted 20 detailed budget proposals to the federal government, calling for fundamental changes to the country's sales tax structure as the textile sector battles severe liquidity pressures, regulatory overreach, and declining competitiveness.

A central theme of APTMA's submission is reining in what it describes as unchecked discretionary powers exercised by tax officials against compliant businesses. The association wants the authority to suspend taxpayers, blacklist them, block bank accounts, or cancel registration numbers removed from field-level officers and placed exclusively with the Federal Board of Revenue. It also proposes that any such decisions be made by a committee that includes trade body representatives, introducing a layer of institutional accountability currently absent from the process.

On administrative reforms, the APTMA has called for extending the window for claiming input tax adjustments to 12 months, mandating a seven-day turnaround on registration applications, and enabling taxpayers to file revised returns with any shortfall payment without needing prior commissioner approval, a move the association says would encourage voluntary compliance.

Citing binding rulings from both, Lahore High Court and the Supreme Court, the APTMA is pushing for legislation that formally prevents arrests or detentions before a taxpayer's civil liability has been determined. The association wants these judicial precedents codified into law to stop criminal proceedings from being used as leverage before tax disputes are resolved.

It has also called for the removal, or strict limitation, of provisions under Sections 40B and 40C of the Sales Tax Act that allow officers to be physically stationed at business premises, arguing these powers are routinely exploited for corruption and extortion.

Among the most pressing demands is the immediate clearance of all outstanding sales tax refunds, which the APTMA says have been unlawfully withheld for extended periods. The association is demanding that FASTER refunds be processed within 48 hours and that all pending refunds cleared within the 72-hour window already prescribed by law but widely ignored in practice. The APTMA estimates that resolving the refund backlog alone could unlock an additional USD3–4 billion in annual export capacity.

On rates, the APTMA has called for restoring zero-rating across all manufacturing stages of the textile value chain, with sales tax applied only at the point of final consumer sale. It argues that levying 18 percent tax at multiple production stages fuels invoice fraud, deters investment, and has driven many textile units to partial or full closure.

As an interim step, the association proposes a 1 percent annual reduction in the standard rate until it reaches 15 percent. More ambitiously, it advocates a tiered GST model similar to India's framework: 5 percent on raw materials such as cotton and man-made fiber, 10 percent on intermediary goods, and the standard rate on finished consumer products. The APTMA believes this structure would ease cash flow pressures, lower production costs, and improve compliance, particularly among smaller manufacturers.

The APTMA has called for the complete removal of sales tax on cotton imports, noting that cotton's seasonal nature forces mills to purchase large volumes in a narrow window, locking up working capital for months. It warns that the withdrawal of previously available reduced rates, combined with soaring energy costs, has pushed many mills to the edge.

On man-made fiber, the association sounded a sharp alarm, disclosing that the MMF yarn imports surged to 42 million kilograms in just the first half of fiscal year 2025-26, triggering the closure of more than 140 spinning units. The APTMA is demanding that all MMF yarns and fabrics be excluded from the export facilitation scheme, which it says is being misused to flood the domestic market with cheap imports at the expense of local producers.

The APTMA has also challenged a provision under Section 45B that bars appellants from introducing new documentary evidence before the Commissioner of Appeals if it was not submitted at the initial assessment stage, calling it a denial of basic legal rights.

Finally, the association has requested the withdrawal of STGO No. 08/2025, which places monitoring obligations on spinning units to track undocumented cotton bales. The APTMA argues the problem originates at the ginning stage and that burdening spinning units is both misdirected and ineffective. It has instead proposed a national cotton traceability system focused at the ginning level as the only genuinely workable solution.

BUDGET 2026-27: FABATI URGES GOVT TO ANNOUNCE SPECIAL PACKAGE

Published June 5, 2026 Updated 15 minutes ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: Federal B. Area Association of Trade & Industry (FABATI) has urged the government to announce a special package in the budget 2026-27 to improve industrial activities and increase exports.

In it's budget proposal sent to the finance ministry the association noted that global tensions and rising inflation are continuously increasing the challenges for industry and exports.

The association proposed that the sales tax refund, EFS and advance tax issues will have to be resolved in the budget.

Reforms based on modern technology, energy efficiency and sustainable development will have to be made in the industry.

Easy and stable final tax regime will have to be restored for exporters, President FBATI Sheikh Tahseen suggested.

Ease will have to be created for SMEs and export units, President Sheikh Tahseen Proposed amendments in sales tax laws, income tax laws are urgently needed, Sheikh Tahseen.

GST rate will have to be reduced from 18 percent to 15 percent, Sheikh Tahseen proposed. Pack-hour charges and fixed charges for industries should be reduced, Sheikh Tahseen defended.

Super tax, Adjustable tax should be abolished for the value-added sector.

A uniform contribution of 0.3 percent of the total turnover should be fixed for EOBI and ESSI.

Retail, property and agricultural sectors should be brought into the tax net, President FABATI.

BUDGET MUST PRIORITISE EXPORTS, BROADEN TAX BASE: BMPP

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: Chairman Businessmen Panel Progressive (BMPP) and Senior Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, has urged the government to present an export-led and tax-base broadening budget for 2026-27, saying supportive policies for industry and exporters could significantly boost foreign exchange earnings while expanding the tax net would generate sustainable revenue without imposing additional burdens on existing taxpayers.

Talking to media at the Karachi Press Club here on Thursday, June 4, 2026, BMPP leaders also called for a major shift in the upcoming federal budget towards export-led growth, tax reform and relief for the manufacturing sector, saying the focus should be on reducing the cost of doing business and expanding the tax base rather than overburdening any single sector. On the occasion, FPCCI Vice Presidents Amanullah Paracha and Asif Sakhi, and former Vice President Shabbir Mansha Churra, Shahid Ali, Sheroz Ahmed, Danish Saleem and Abdul Rehman were also present.

Magoon also called for the abolition of super tax, reduction in taxes on industrial raw materials and measures to prevent the misuse of tax concessions available in the former FATA and PATA regions.

He said the government should focus on expanding the tax net by bringing small traders into the formal economy rather than placing additional burdens on existing taxpayers. “Being a business community representative, we believe that a lower tax rate would encourage a large number of small traders to voluntarily join the tax system, helping broaden the tax base and generate sustainable revenue growth over the long term”.

Chairman BMPP demanded the complete abolition of the super tax, stating that if full withdrawal is not possible, at least the manufacturing sector should be exempted to support industrial activity and investment. He stressed that imposing excessive tax pressure on a single sector is not a viable economic strategy.

He also urged the government to reduce the GST rate to 15 percent, arguing that a lower and more balanced tax structure would help improve compliance and stimulate economic activity.

He also called for the revival of a fixed tax regime and greater facilitation for bringing new taxpayers into the system. He proposed the introduction of a simplified single-form tax return to make filing easier for businesses and individuals, reducing complexity in the existing tax framework.

Magoon further emphasized reducing taxes on industrial raw materials, saying it would help lower production costs and improve Pakistan’s export competitiveness. The tax difference between industrial and commercial raw material imports should be eliminated, as the current gap is contributing to the misuse of flying invoices and causing losses to the national exchequer.

He said the FPCCI’s budget proposals prioritize the export sector, stressing that enhancing exports is essential for addressing Pakistan’s economic challenges. He also called for restoring confidence among exporters by ensuring that tax policies, including the final tax regime, are framed in consultation with stakeholders.

Expressing concern over the proposed tax revenue target of Rs15,200 billion, Magoon said the figure appears unrealistic and detached from ground realities. He noted that similar overambitious targets were set in the previous fiscal year and later revised downward.

He further stated that growth targets for all sectors should be set in consultation with relevant industries, warning that unilateral policy-making leads to uncertainty and weak implementation.

Chairman BMPP said individuals earning up to Rs100,000 per month should be exempted from income tax, while the minimum wage should be increased by up to 15 percent to provide relief to workers amid rising living costs.Calling for sector-specific relief measures, he urged the government to provide substantial tax concessions to the chemical industry to enhance its competitiveness and contribution to exports.

Magoon proposed the introduction of a simplified fixed-tax scheme for small traders. Under the proposal, the minimum annual fixed tax would be set at Rs25,000, while the turnover tax rate would be capped at 1.5 percent with at least five-year exemption from the audit.

Mansha said the budget should not be driven by revenue or tax targets alone; instead, it should be growth-oriented and focused on expanding the economy. “There is little benefit in setting inflated tax targets, adding that revenue goals should be based on economic capacity and developed through consultation with exporters and the business community”, he added.

Asif Sakhi urged the government to engage registered market associations, trade bodies and trader organizations across the country as supporting partners in implementing the initiative.He emphasized that the upcoming budget should prioritize economic growth and export expansion, arguing that supportive policies for industry and exporters could significantly increase foreign exchange earnings and strengthen Pakistan’s economy.

Amanullah Paracha said without broadening the tax net, Pakistan’s economy cannot grow, and the tax system must be simplified so that the business community can comply without fear or undue pressure.

BUSINESSMEN VOICE MISTRUST OVER UPCOMING BUDGET FOR FY27

- Ask govt to present export-led growth budget

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 10 hours ago
KARACHI: Businessmen hold press conference at Karachi Press Club on Thursday, June 4, 2026. Photo: Salman Siddiqui

By Salman Siddiqui

Pakistan’s business community has expressed its mistrust on the upcoming budget, saying the export earnings would continue to decline if the government continued to present the old tax-heavy budget with its primary focus on setting and achieving overambitious tax collection targets.

They demanded the government to take industry representatives on board in preparing the budget to double the export earnings to $60 billion over the next fiscal year 2026-27 (FY27).

“We have submitted export-led growth budget proposals to the government for the upcoming fiscal year [FY27],” said Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) Senior Vice President Saquib Fayyaz Magoon while presenting budget proposals at a press conference in the Karachi Press Club (KPC) on Thursday.

“We can easily increase export earnings to $50-60 billion in FY27 if the budget presentation ensures providing energy (power and gas utilities) to industry at competitive price in the region, and if the cost of doing business is controlled through reducing tax rates and interest rate on bank financing is slashed [into single digit],” added Magoon, who is also chairman of the Businessmen Panel Progressive (BMPP).

Key demands:

- Take industry representatives on board in preparing budget
- Present export-led growth budget
- Avoid heavy tax collection targets
- Incentives for new exporters
- Cut General Sales Tax to 15% from 18% at present
- Remove Super Tax
- Rationalise FATA/PATA incentives
- 10-15% increase in monthly wages of industry workers
- Increase limit of monthly tax exempted income to Rs100,000 per month for salaried class

The export earnings would continue to decline if the government continued to present the old tax-heavy budget with its primary focus on setting and achieving overambitious tax collection targets, he maintained.

“This practice should come to an end. Instead, the government should focus on local production for import substitution and export-led growth through incentivising industries and rationalising tax rates for them.” Magoon said.

Furthermore, FPCCI official said the country’s exports had decreased 5.6% to $27.9 billion in the first 11 months of the fiscal year 2025-26, compared to $29.56 billion in the same period of the previous year.

“The exports may further drop by 20-30% in FY27,” he warned.

He said the government invites the business community to make budget proposals almost every year. “But, it is never known whether the proposals are accepted or rejected. This practice should end.”

“The government should take the business community on board to make the budget. It should set export, economic growth, and tax collection targets in strong consultation with the business community," he said, adding "the current practices show the budget is prepared in consultation with the IMF".

Magoon was of the view that the current economic conditions discourage businessmen from becoming exporters.

"New exporters submit tax-returns manually. Accordingly, they do not get returns and refunds. They should be given incentives in initial years to become successful exporters."

He proposed to cut the rate of General Sales Tax (GST) to 15% from 18% at present, dismissing the IMF recommendation of increasing the tax by one percentage point to 19% in FY27.

FPCCI official said the Super Tax should be removed, at least on industries, to support industry and the country take a growth path, going forward.

Magoon urged the government to rationalise the incentives given to Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)/Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA), saying such incentives were being misused.

"The FATA/PATA region should be given incentives based on quota in ratio of their production and population."

He continued to say that there was a wide difference of 6-7% in tax on import by the industry and by the commercial importers.

"This gap should be rationalised at least for plastic, steel, artificial leather and polyester yarn manufacturing industries," he stressed. "Monthly wages of industry workers should be increased by 10-15% to let them absorb the current waves of inflation."

Businessman Aman Paracha proposed the government to increase the limit of monthly tax exempted income to Rs100,000 per month for salaried class people and cut the maximum tax rate to 25% from 35% on them at present.

Businessman Shabbir Mansha urged the government to maintain consistency in business policies, adding there was no clarity on policy reform targets. "There is mistrust between taxpayers and tax collectors."

"Earlier, the government asked to solarise industries. Now it is considering increasing tax rates on them. The government continued to provide incentives on investment in real estate for the first 70 years of the country. Now, for the last 5 years, it's been saying the investment in real estate is counterproductive. The government provided investment at 2-3% under TERF (Temporary Economic Refinance Facility) during Covid-19. Now it is charging 11% on the financing," Mansha said.

PAKISTAN'S TIGHTROPE WALK: BALANCING IMF DEMANDS AGAINST ECONOMIC SURVIVAL

- Economists, market experts expect fiscally conservative package aimed at meeting ambitious IMF targets

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 12 hours ago
By Ali Ahmed

With Pakistan set to announce the federal budget for FY2026-27 next week, economists and market experts expect a fiscally conservative package aimed at meeting ambitious International Monetary Fund (IMF) targets while offering limited support for growth and inflation-weary households.

The budget comes as the country remains in a $7 billion the International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout programme, which has helped the economy stabilise and recover.

On Tuesday, Senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and Member of the National Assembly (MNA), Tahira Aurangzeb, confirmed to BUSINESS RECORDER that the federal budget, which was earlier scheduled to be announced on June 5 (Friday), would now be presented on June 10 (Wednesday).

Advisor to the Finance Minister Khurram Schehzad also confirmed the date on Thursday.

Speaking to BUSINESS RECORDER, experts said the upcoming budget would largely remain focused on fiscal consolidation, leaving little room for broad-based relief measures despite persistent concerns over the cost of living and weak purchasing power.

“We expect a budget outlay of around Rs17-17.5 trillion for FY27,” said Sana Tawfik, Head of Research at Arif Habib Limited.

She said that the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) might be assigned a tax collection target of around Rs15-15.5 trillion for FY27.

“However, the target seems to be overambitious. We are expecting Pakistan to collect around Rs12.5 trillion by the end of this fiscal year, which implies a shortfall of roughly Rs700-800 billion against the target,” said Tawfik.

“Moving from that base to a collection target exceeding Rs15 trillion will be challenging.”

She noted that while the government had repeatedly emphasised enforcement and documentation measures to improve revenue collection, recent IMF documents suggested that Pakistan might still need to generate around Rs430 billion through new tax measures.

“The key question is whether the government can achieve its revenue objectives through enforcement alone or whether it will eventually have to resort to additional taxation.”

Waqas Ghani, Head of Research at JS Global, described the upcoming budget as a "balancing act" between maintaining fiscal discipline under the IMF programme and supporting economic growth.

"We have a very tall revenue target under the IMF programme and a primary surplus target of around 2% of GDP [gross domestic product]," Ghani said. "At the same time, the government is targeting economic growth of around 4%. Therefore, it cannot afford to present an expansionary budget… but it will be a pro-stability budget."

He said the government might introduce selective growth-supporting measures, but the overall stance was likely to be balanced "as we have seen in the last two years".

Petroleum development levy

A major area of attention in the budget will be the petroleum development levy (PDL), which has emerged as a key source of non-tax revenue in recent years.

Analysts expect the government to target PDL collections of around Rs1.7 trillion to Rs1.75 trillion in FY27, up from approximately Rs1.4 trillion in the outgoing fiscal year.

To achieve this target, Tawfik said the government might need to maintain the levy at current levels of around Rs90 per litre, particularly "if we are not expecting any uptick in overall economic activity".

Ghani also termed the target "achievable" but warned that lower fuel sales could complicate collection efforts.

Beyond tax revenues and petroleum levies, analysts believe the government will continue relying on non-tax revenues, particularly profits transferred by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), to support its fiscal position. However, pressures on the expenditure side are also expected to persist.

"If SBP is able to post another over Rs2 trillion profit this year as well, given the interest rates are already high, we might see some support from that front," said Tawfik.

Tawfik pointed out that interest payments could remain elevated despite the recent monetary easing cycle, while development spending might once again face pressure as authorities sought to contain overall expenditures.

"Historically, development expenditure is often the first area where governments make adjustments to meet fiscal targets," she said, adding that actual allocation under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) could ultimately fall short of announced targets.

General sales tax

Another proposal being discussed ahead of the budget is a one-percentage-point increase in the general sales tax (GST), raising it to 19% as the government aims at generating additional revenue of around Rs300-400 billion.

However, both analysts expressed reservations about such a move.

Tawfik said raising GST would be "extremely inflationary in nature" and argued that the government should instead focus on widening the tax base by bringing untapped sectors into the formal system.

"The focus should be on widening the tax net rather than imposing additional burden on existing taxpayers," she said, identifying retailers, wholesalers and agriculture among sectors with untapped revenue potential.

Ghani echoed those concerns, noting that sales tax was an indirect levy that affected all segments.

"It is not ideal to increase the burden of an indirect tax that impacts the entire society. It would be inflationary at a time when households are already facing economic pressures," he said.

Salaried class

On relief measures, analysts expect the government to provide some support to salaried individuals, particularly lower-income groups, although the scope of any concessions is likely to remain limited due to IMF commitments.

"There are proposals under discussion regarding relief for salaried individuals," Tawfik said. "If that happens, the challenge would be how the government intends to compensate for the revenue collection that it will forego in case of relief."

"Given that we are in an IMF programme, we cannot expect a lot of relief measures, especially when the target set for FBR is pretty high. So we might not see significant relief measures. But considering the overall circumstances, the government might give some relief to the general public," she added.

Ghani argued that some relief for salaried taxpayers would be justified after several years of elevated inflation, terming it positive, though any concessions would need to be balanced against revenue considerations.

"We are hopeful that taxes will be brought down, as the overall effective tax rate for the working class remains very high, hitting 38% in some cases," he said.

JI CHIEF DEMANDS SWEEPING ECONOMIC REFORMS

Published June 4, 2026 Updated a day ago

By Abdul Rasheed Azad

ISLAMABAD: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan Chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, on Wednesday, called for sweeping economic reforms, including income tax relief for salaried individuals, substantial reductions in electricity, gas, and fuel prices, and the termination of costly Independent Power Producer (IPP) and re-gasification agreements.

Hafiz Naeem said this while addressing a seminar titled "Budget, Economy and Energy: From Crisis to Solutions", attended by economists, energy experts, tax specialists, and others.

He urged the government to use the upcoming budget to provide immediate relief to the middle class and fix utility prices for the next several years.

He demanded the abolition of income tax on monthly salaries up to Rs125,000 and a 50 percent reduction in tax rates for higher-income salaried groups. He also urged the government to reduce electricity and gas tariffs and bring petrol prices down to Rs230 per litre.

Slamming Pakistan's tax structure, JI chief termed it oppressive, saying that Rs12 trillion out of the country's annual Rs18 trillion tax revenue was collected through direct and indirect taxes paid by ordinary citizens. He said the salaried class alone contributes Rs605 billion annually in income tax while consumers continue to bear heavy petroleum levies and utility taxes.

"The government is squeezing the common man while paying around Rs2 trillion annually to IPP owners," he said, adding that expensive energy contracts were a major burden on the national economy.

Hafiz Naeem said that a forensic audit of IPP agreements would expose massive irregularities involving both current and former rulers. He further criticised re-gasification contracts, saying that payments continued even during periods when gas supplies remained suspended. Warning against reported plans for additional power purchase agreements, he said his party would oppose any move to sign further contracts for 26,000 megawatts of electricity generation.

The JI chief also called for the immediate commencement of work on the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project, expansion of education spending, strengthening of local governments, taxation of large landowners, and greater support for small farmers.

Hafiz Naeem also criticised widespread corruption in the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), saying that despite years of spending, poverty levels had increased significantly over the past two years. He further said that Pakistan doesn't need BISP-like programmes but skill development, artificial intelligence (AI), quality educational, and health-related programmes, adding that the BISP, instead of reducing poverty, has resulted in increasing the poverty levels in the country over the past two decades.

He further argued that Pakistan's education budget, currently around 1.7 percent of GDP, should be increased to at least 4 to 5 percent of the GDP. Expressing concern over the country's education crisis, he said nearly 27.5 million children remain out of school nationwide, including around 10 million in Punjab alone.

Responding to questions from journalists, Hafiz Naeem criticised the government's privatisation policy and reiterated JI's opposition to the sale of national institutions. He said the party had prepared a comprehensive policy paper proposing alternatives to privatisation.

He also called for reforms to the pension system, saying all state institutions, including the judiciary and military, should be subject to the same standards of accountability. While opposing cuts to defence spending, he suggested reviewing administrative expenditures within the military budget.

Hafiz Naeem said his party's economic agenda includes eliminating interest-based financing, strengthening the zakat system, investing in education, and promoting vocational training for youth. He maintained that only a people-centred economic model could steer Pakistan out of its recurring fiscal and energy crises.

AUDIT AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES: FBR ESTIMATES RS700BN REVENUE GENERATION IN 2026-27

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 22 hours ago

By Sohail Sarfraz

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is set to assign its field formations a tax collection target of Rs92 billion through enhanced audits of taxpayers during the 2026–27 fiscal year, as part of enforcement measures worth Rs700 billion to be announced in the upcoming federal budget.

Official sources told BUSINESS RECORDER that the FBR has finalised estimates from different enforcement measures to be taken during 2026-27.

The FBR will also collect Rs46 billion through better monitoring and calculation of sales tax liability and Rs48 billion additional revenue through production monitoring in the next fiscal year.

The auction of non-duty-paid vehicles is estimated to generate approximately Rs50 million.

The Prime Minister has directed the FBR to double revenue collection from Rs389 billion in 2025–26 to Rs778 billion in 2026–27 through stricter enforcement measures to boost additional revenue.

The FBR has collected Rs389 billion through enforcement measures during the current fiscal year. This figure includes over Rs50 billion collected from the tobacco sector through ongoing operations against illicit and smuggled cigarettes.

The FBR has recovered Rs874 billion through enforcement measures during 2024-25. The FBR has achieved the target of Rs389 billion under the enforcement measures head during 2025-26.

AURANGZEB TO PRESENT PAKISTAN ECONOMIC SURVEY 2025-26 ON JUNE 9

Budget 2026-27 Pakistan Top stories

June 5, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

Economic Survey to be released on June 9 ahead of federal budget presentation in National Assembly on June 10

Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb will present the Pakistan Economic Survey 2025-26 on June 9, a day before unveiling the federal budget for fiscal year 2026-27, according to an announcement made on Thursday.

The confirmation was provided by Khurram Schehzad, adviser to the finance minister, who also stated that the federal budget for FY2026-27 will be presented before the National Assembly on June 10.

The Ministry of Finance and Revenue will release the Pakistan Economic Survey 2025-26 on June 9, offering a comprehensive review of the country’s economic performance during the outgoing fiscal year.

Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb is scheduled to present the survey, which is regarded as one of the government’s most important annual economic documents.

The Economic Survey serves as a detailed assessment of major economic indicators and sectoral performance, providing insights into growth trends and policy outcomes ahead of the federal budget announcement.

According to officials, the survey is expected to cover key areas including economic growth, fiscal developments, agriculture, industry, services, external trade, inflation, investment, employment and social sector performance during FY2025-26.

The report will also present data and analysis on macroeconomic developments, highlighting achievements and challenges faced by the economy over the past year.

A day after the survey's release, Finance Minister Aurangzeb will present the federal budget for FY2026-27 in the National Assembly on June 10.

The budget is expected to outline the government's fiscal strategy, revenue measures, taxation proposals, expenditure priorities and development plans for the upcoming financial year.

Economists, investors, businesses and policymakers are expected to closely examine both the Economic Survey and the federal budget for signals regarding economic trends, growth prospects and the government's policy direction as Pakistan enters the new fiscal year.

Business & Finance / Taxes

GST: GRADUAL TRANSITION TO SINGLE-DIGIT TAXATION ENVISAGED

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about an hour ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: In its pre-budget proposals, the Pakistan Chemicals & Dyes Association (PCDMA)has urged the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to ease the compliance burden on businesses, cut the General Sales Tax (GST) rate, and restore protection for importers.

PCDMA Chairman Salim Valimuhammad said that mounting compliance requirements and aggressive audits had been steadily driving taxpayers into the informal economy.

"People generally want to pay taxes, but due to limited awareness and tech-savviness they make honest mistakes – and FBR takes advantage of that," he said, stressing that officers should guide the taxpayers instead of issuing "harsh notices".

"Taxpayers generally want to comply with tax laws, but complicated procedures and lack of guidance often result in genuine mistakes," Valimuhammad said, adding that the FBR should adopt a facilitative and educational approach instead of relying on notices and enforcement measures.

Among the association's key recommendations is a reduction in the GST rate from 18 percent to 16percent, followed by a gradual transition to single-digit taxation.

Valimuhammad argued that lower tax rates would improve compliance, broaden the tax base and ultimately increase government revenue.

The PCDMA chairman also called for the restoration of the Final Tax Regime (FTR) for commercial importers and the return of audit exemptions that were previously linked to the payment of additional sales tax. He said the withdrawal of these protections had increased uncertainty and compliance costs for importers.

To ease liquidity constraints faced by traders and wholesalers, PCDMA proposed restoring Section 8B facilities for commercial importers. As an interim measure, he suggested allowing businesses to adjust up to 95 percent of output tax against input tax, with only 5 percent payable in cash.

Highlighting concerns over fake invoicing, the PCDMA chief recommended reducing the tax rate from 4 percent to 1 percent, arguing that a lower rate would encourage compliance and reduce fraudulent practices.

On the matter of income tax, the PCDMA proposed lowering of the withholding tax on local supplies of raw materials from the current rate of 5 percent and 5.5 percent to 2 percent and 2.5 percent respectively. He said that lower withholding taxes would encourage businesses to operate within the documented economy.

The association also objected to what it described as unequal tax treatment between commercial and industrial importers under Section 148 of the Income Tax Ordinance. Valimuhammad said identical imports should be taxed uniformly, regardless of whether they were imported by traders or manufacturers.

Among customs-related proposals, the PCDMA chairman called for the abolition of the Rs500 WeBOC token fee on goods declarations, arguing that importers were effectively paying duplicate charges after the introduction of the Pakistan Single Window (PSW) system.

He sought the restoration of the NTN-based self-clearance facilities for commercial importers, saying that the withdrawal of the facility had increased delays and administrative bottlenecks at customs offices.

The PCDMA also recommended discontinuing the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), claiming it was liable to misuse and revenue leakage. Instead, he urged the government to strengthen and expedite the tax refund system to support genuine exporters.

The proposals have been submitted to the FBR and are expected to be discussed during pre-budget consultations with trade and industry stakeholders.

ONE-PAGE TAX RETURN SOUGHT

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Press Release

FAISALABAD: Former President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Rehan Naseem Bharara has demanded from the government that the simple tax return should be one page.

While the tax should be maximum 14 percent. The energy prices of electricity and gas for the industry should be fixed at 9 cents per US dollar. He further said that it is necessary to hold a long-term policy for 10 years. In the last few years, billions of dollars have gone to Dubai. The government should also immediately announce tax incentives for property so that Pakistanis can bring back investment from there.

According to the statistics, in the last 3 years, we have flown more than 20 billion in property investment in Pakistan. We have been hearing about the restructuring of the FBR for the last 20 years. But it has not been restructured yet.

The government should introduce a 10-year industrial and commercial policy. A law should be made on this that no government can change it. The government should give the people a tax-free budget this year.

PM SHEHBAZ DIRECTS PILOT LAUNCH OF AI-DRIVEN TAX SYSTEM IN ISLAMABAD

Taxation Top stories

June 5, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

Pilot project aims to create a faceless, AI-powered tax administration system to enhance transparency, compliance and revenue collection

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed authorities to launch a pilot phase of an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven automated tax system in Islamabad as part of the government's efforts to modernise tax administration, improve compliance and strengthen revenue collection.

The directive was issued during a high-level meeting reviewing reforms within the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), where officials briefed the prime minister on plans to make Inland Revenue operations more efficient, transparent and largely faceless through the use of advanced technologies.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has ordered the launch of a pilot phase of an AI-powered automated tax management system in Islamabad, describing the initiative as a major step towards reforming Pakistan's tax administration.

Chairing a review meeting on Federal Board of Revenue reforms, the prime minister emphasized that reducing human intervention and discretionary powers in tax collection is essential for improving transparency, fairness and public trust in the taxation system.

"The implementation of this system will not only enhance tax revenues but will also promote transparency, fairness and confidence in the tax regime," he said.

Officials informed the meeting that the proposed automated framework will integrate data from multiple sources, including property records, vehicle ownership databases and banking transactions, enabling authorities to identify under-reported income and concealed assets more effectively.

The system is expected to employ Artificial Intelligence and advanced analytics to automate tax administration processes, improve compliance monitoring and reduce opportunities for tax evasion.

As part of the proposed structure, authorities plan to establish a National Faceless Audit Wing, a National Assessment Wing and a Field Operations Wing to strengthen oversight and operational efficiency.

The prime minister directed officials to begin implementation in Islamabad before considering expansion of the system across the country.

During the meeting, officials also briefed participants on enforcement efforts against the illegal cigarette trade. The government was informed that ongoing actions in the tobacco sector are expected to generate an additional Rs40 billion in tax revenues during the current fiscal year.

Prime Minister Shehbaz praised provincial governments for supporting anti-smuggling and enforcement initiatives, reiterating the government's commitment to broadening the tax base, documenting the economy and modernising revenue administration.

The meeting was attended by senior federal ministers, government officials and representatives involved in tax reform and economic policy.

EXPECTED TAX REGIME FOR CRYPTOCURRENCY IN FY2026–27 BUDGET

Budget 2026-27 Taxation

June 4, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

Government weighs capital gains, transaction and holdings-based taxation as digital assets move toward formal regulatory framework

ISLAMABAD, June 4, 2026 — Pakistan is preparing to introduce a formal tax and regulatory framework for cryptocurrency transactions as part of the federal budget 2026–27, in what would mark one of the country's first structured attempts to bring digital assets into the tax net.

Preparations for the upcoming budget have entered their final phase, with authorities reportedly considering measures to broaden the tax base by covering emerging digital financial instruments alongside traditional sectors.

According to official sources, policymakers are evaluating multiple taxation models for cryptocurrency, including levies on transaction values, capital gains or profits, and overall holdings of digital assets.

The proposed framework aims to document the rapidly expanding crypto ecosystem while improving transparency and encouraging safer investment practices within the sector.

Officials acknowledge, however, that tracking and repatriating cryptocurrency assets held abroad by Pakistani users remains a major challenge due to the decentralised and cross-border nature of digital currencies.

A recent report by the Federal Tax Ombudsman highlighted a sharp rise in global and domestic adoption of digital currencies, estimating around 560 million users worldwide and approximately 9 million users in Pakistan, placing the country among significant adopters.

The growing user base has strengthened the government's case for formal taxation, as authorities seek to integrate the largely undocumented sector into the broader fiscal system to support revenue mobilisation efforts.

Economic experts say that while regulating cryptocurrencies presents technical and administrative challenges, a well-designed framework could potentially generate meaningful tax revenue and reduce risks associated with unregulated digital finance.

Officials said consultations are ongoing, and final proposals are expected to be included in the budget 2026–27 as part of broader fiscal reforms aimed at expanding the tax base and modernising financial regulation.

FBR CLEARS LAHORE CUSTOMS INSPECTOR IN CORRUPTION CASE

Taxation

June 4, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

FBR converts proposed major penalty into minor disciplinary action, reinstates officer with conditions

ISLAMABAD, June 4, 2026 — The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has cleared a Pakistan Customs inspector posted in Lahore in a corruption-related disciplinary case, converting a previously recommended major penalty into a minor punishment after departmental review.

The action was taken under the Government Servants (Efficiency & Discipline) Rules, 2020, in the case of Umar Mahboob, Inspector Customs (BS-16), posted at the Collectorate of Customs Appraisement-West, Lahore.

According to official proceedings, disciplinary action was initiated against the officer on charges of inefficiency, misconduct and alleged corruption. He was suspended on May 8, 2025, pending inquiry.

An inquiry officer initially found charges of inefficiency and misconduct established and recommended a major penalty, including reduction to a lower post and a lower pay scale for three years.

A show-cause notice was issued on July 10, 2025, followed by the officer's written reply on August 16, in which he denied all allegations and requested a personal hearing, which was held on September 12, 2025.

Subsequently, a de novo inquiry was ordered on October 8, 2025, to re-examine key aspects of the case. The second inquiry report, submitted on January 6, 2026, reiterated earlier findings and again recommended a major penalty.

A further show-cause notice was issued on January 19, 2026, and another hearing was conducted on April 16, 2026.

After reviewing both inquiry reports and the case record, the competent authority noted that although the goods declaration was not properly examined or marked through the system, the officer had been verbally directed by a supervising officer to oversee the examination under Section 79 of the Customs Act, 1969.

The department also observed that CCTV footage confirmed the officer's presence near the blocked container to prevent pilferage.

It further found that allegations of tampering or alteration of imported goods were not substantiated at any stage of the proceedings.

However, inefficiency was established to the extent that the officer failed to ensure proper supervision during the initial examination process, which led to a duty and tax discrepancy of Rs2.5 million. The amount was later recovered after re-examination.

In view of these findings, the FBR, through its Member (Administration/HR), ruled that the recommended major penalty was excessive and instead imposed a minor penalty of withholding increments for three years without cumulative effect.

The officer has been reinstated into service with immediate effect, and his suspension period from May 8, 2025, will be treated as leave in accordance with applicable rules.

Additionally, his performance allowance has been suspended for six months, after which restoration will be subject to re-qualification under FBR policy.

The officer retains the right to appeal before the competent appellate authority within 30 days.

ICAP URGES REVIEW OF EXTRA TAX COLLECTION THROUGH ELECTRICITY AND GAS BILLS

Budget 2026-27 Taxation

June 4, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

Chartered accountants call for reforms in utility tax collection system, citing misclassification and compliance issues in FY2026-27 proposals

ISLAMABAD, June 4, 2026 — The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) has urged the government to review the mechanism for collecting additional sales tax through electricity and gas bills, arguing that the current system is creating undue tax burdens for registered and exempt entities.

In its budget proposals for fiscal year 2026-27, ICAP called for amendments to S.R.O. 1222(I)/2021, which requires utility companies to collect extra sales tax from unregistered commercial and industrial consumers.

According to the notification, electricity and gas distribution companies currently impose an additional 17% sales tax on industrial consumers who are not registered with the tax authorities. Unregistered commercial consumers are also charged extra tax ranging from 5% to 17%, depending on billing thresholds.

ICAP said the existing framework needs targeted revisions to address practical issues that are leading to unintended tax liabilities for legitimate taxpayers.

The institute highlighted that many electricity and gas connections are registered in the name of property owners rather than actual business operators, resulting in mismatches with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) database and causing registered taxpayers to be incorrectly treated as unregistered entities.

ICAP noted that large organisations — including banks, insurance companies, telecom operators, multinational corporations and industrial groups — often operate multiple branches, warehouses and offices that may not be individually reflected in the FBR's registration system. As a result, these entities may be incorrectly subjected to additional tax despite being compliant taxpayers.

The institute further pointed out that updating business location data in the FBR database is often a time-consuming process. During this period, registered businesses may continue to face extra tax charges simply due to incomplete or outdated records.

ICAP also raised concerns regarding government institutions, defence organisations, social sector entities and service providers that are either exempt from sales tax registration or registered under provincial tax regimes. Despite this, they may still be classified as commercial consumers and charged additional tax under the current mechanism.

In addition, cottage industries, retailers, hospitals, diplomatic missions and organisations exempt under the Sixth Schedule of the Sales Tax Act are also being affected, according to ICAP, despite not being required to obtain sales tax registration.

The institute argued that revising the notification would help ensure that only genuinely unregistered taxable persons are subject to the additional levy, while reducing compliance burdens and administrative complications.

ICAP said the proposed changes would improve fairness in the tax system and prevent unintended taxation of compliant or exempt entities.

ICAP PROPOSES NEW TAX REGIME TO ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN PAKISTAN

Budget 2026-27 Taxation

June 4, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

Chartered accountants propose 10-year tax stability and incentives for export-oriented foreign investors in FY2026-27 budget

The institute recommended the creation of a separate tax schedule specifically designed for foreign direct investment in export-led manufacturing sectors. Under the proposed framework, qualifying investors would receive a package of tax incentives, legal protections and clearly defined eligibility criteria aimed at encouraging long-term investment commitments.

ICAP suggested that the new regime should guarantee consistency in the income tax framework for at least 10 years from the commencement of operations of eligible industries. The institute argued that policy predictability and tax stability are among the most important factors considered by foreign investors when making long-term investment decisions.

The proposed scheme would also establish conditions to ensure that foreign investments generate broader economic benefits for Pakistan. These include a minimum investment threshold, the creation of a specified number or percentage of jobs for Pakistani nationals and mandatory transfer of technology within a defined timeframe.

ICAP further recommended incorporating supporting provisions into other relevant laws and statutes to provide comprehensive legal protection and regulatory certainty for investors.

Explaining the rationale behind the proposal, the institute noted that Pakistan's economy requires stronger measures to attract foreign capital, particularly into sectors capable of generating exports, employment and industrial growth.

According to ICAP, increased foreign direct investment in export-oriented manufacturing industries could help boost exports, create jobs, encourage technology transfer and strengthen Pakistan's long-term economic prospects.

The recommendations come as the government prepares to unveil the federal budget for FY2026-27 amid efforts to increase investment inflows, broaden the tax base and accelerate economic recovery.

Analysts say a stable and predictable tax framework could improve investor confidence, enhance Pakistan's competitiveness as an investment destination and support the development of the country's manufacturing sector.

FBR DECLARES ICTPL KARACHI AS NEW OFF-DOCK CUSTOMS TERMINAL

Taxation

June 4, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

New 20-acre facility in Karachi to enhance cargo handling and customs clearance capacity for imports and exports

ISLAMABAD, June 4, 2026 — The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has declared M/s International Cargo Terminal Pakistan (Pvt) Ltd. (ICTPL), Karachi, as an off-dock customs terminal for the clearance of import and export consignments, a move aimed at strengthening logistics infrastructure and facilitating trade operations.

The notification was issued through S.R.O. 914(I)/2026 under Sections 9 and 10 of the Customs Act, 1969.

According to the notification, the newly designated facility covers 20 acres and is situated at Phase II, Block A, From K-28, Trans Lyari, Hawks Bay, Karachi. The terminal has been declared a customs port for the handling and clearance of both less-than-container load (LCL) and full container load (FCL) consignments imported through or exported via Karachi Port and Port Muhammad Bin Qasim.

The FBR said the terminal's designated boundaries extend from a dual carriage median road in the north to a 200-foot road adjacent to Hawks Bay Road in the south. The site is bordered by

Pak Millat Custom Bonded Warehouse to the east and a dual carriage main road alongside a storm-water drain to the west.

The designation is expected to provide additional cargo handling and customs clearance capacity at a time when trade volumes and logistics requirements continue to expand.

Officials said the facility will support more efficient cargo movement and help strengthen Pakistan's trade facilitation framework by providing an alternative location for customs-related operations.

However, the FBR clarified that commercial cargo operations at the terminal will begin only after all regulatory requirements under Rule 554 of the Customs Rules, 2001, have been fulfilled.

The commencement of operations will also remain subject to standing orders issued by the Collectorate of Customs Appraisement (West), Karachi, in consultation with the Collectorate of Customs (Exports), Karachi.

Trade and logistics stakeholders welcomed the development, saying the additional off-dock capacity could help reduce congestion at major seaports and improve the efficiency of customs clearance procedures.

Industry experts noted that enhanced logistics infrastructure remains critical for supporting Pakistan's import and export sectors, reducing cargo dwell times and lowering trade-related costs.

FBR LAUNCHES ELECTRONIC MONITORING OF BEVERAGE PRODUCTION ACROSS PAKISTAN

Taxation

June 4, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

Beverage manufacturers directed to install real-time production monitoring systems by June 30, 2026

ISLAMABAD, June 4, 2026 — The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has launched an electronic production monitoring regime for manufacturers of aerated waters and beverages across Pakistan, requiring all registered producers to install the prescribed monitoring infrastructure by June 30, 2026.

The tax authority issued Sales Tax General Order (STGO) 07/2026, making it mandatory for beverage manufacturers, including toll manufacturers, to implement an electronic production monitoring system with immediate effect.

The initiative has been introduced under Section 40C of the Sales Tax Act, 1990, and the relevant provisions of Chapter XIV-BA of the Sales Tax Rules, 2006. The move is aimed at improving transparency, strengthening tax compliance and enhancing revenue collection through real-time monitoring of production activities.

According to the order, manufacturers must install a comprehensive monitoring framework comprising specialised hardware and software capable of recording and transmitting production data directly to the FBR.

The required infrastructure includes industrial barcode scanners, counting sensors, industrial computers, IP cameras, network video recorders, programmable logic controllers (PLCs), human-machine interfaces (HMIs), LED displays, uninterrupted power supply (UPS) systems and weatherproof electrical cabinets.

In addition, manufacturers will be required to deploy production monitoring software and compatible operating systems capable of transmitting production information to the FBR's central monitoring platform in real time.

The FBR said all monitoring equipment must be supplied, installed and maintained by vendors authorised by the Board. Chief Commissioners Inland Revenue have also been directed to appoint dedicated focal persons to coordinate implementation with manufacturers and approved vendors.

Under the new regime, the electronic monitoring system will capture production activity in real time, count products moving through production lines, detect unexpected production stoppages and generate quantitative production analyses.

The framework will also support advanced data analytics, enabling the tax authority to identify irregularities and undertake legal or enforcement actions where necessary.

Tax experts said the initiative forms part of the FBR's broader digitisation strategy aimed at reducing under-reporting, improving documentation of economic activity and minimizing revenue leakages in key sectors.

They noted that real-time monitoring of production volumes could significantly improve tax administration by providing greater visibility into manufacturing operations and strengthening compliance mechanisms.

The order has taken effect immediately, while all registered beverage manufacturers have been instructed to complete installation of the required monitoring systems before the end of June 2026.

Business & Finance / Money & Banking

APNA GHAR PROGRAMME: MEEZAN BANK SURPASSES RS1BN DISBURSEMENTS

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about an hour ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: Meezan Bank's easy home finance has achieved a significant milestone under the Prime Minister's Apna Ghar Housing Finance Programme "Ghar Ho Tu Apna," surpassing PKR 1 billion in housing finance disbursements since the launch of the initiative.

According to bank, this achievement reflects Meezan Bank's strong commitment to supporting the Government of Pakistan's vision of promoting affordable homeownership and expanding access to housing finance for underserved segments of society.

As Pakistan's leading Islamic bank, Meezan Bank remains dedicated to making homeownership more accessible through Shariah-compliant financing solutions that address the needs of salaried individuals and low-to-middle-income households.

The Bank is actively offering housing finance facilities under the program through its network of over 350 designated branches across Pakistan, with a particular focus on enabling lower-income and salaried customers to realize their dream of owning a home. Through its customer-centric and Shariah-compliant financing approach, Meezan Bank continues to play a key role in advancing financial inclusion and supporting the development of the housing sector in the country.

The milestone also contributes to the State Bank of Pakistan's broader objective of promoting affordable housing and expanding access to formal housing finance, supporting national efforts aimed at financial inclusion, economic development, and improved living standards.

INDIAN CENTRAL BANK'S HEAVY FX SWAPS DRAG PREMIUMS TO 2-MONTH LOW AHEAD OF POLICY

- One-year hedging costs have dropped from the mid-May peak of 3.50% to 2.92%

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 11 hours ago
By Reuters

MUMBAI: Aggressive buy-sell dollar/rupee swaps by the Reserve Bank of India over the last ten days have compressed FX hedging costs to two-month lows in the run-up to a crucial monetary policy decision.

One-year hedging costs have dropped from the mid-May peak of 3.50% to 2.92%. In parallel, the rupee has strengthened from a record low of 96.96 per U.S. dollar to 94.7275, before dipping to 95.6875.

The recovery in the rupee and fall in forward premiums have been largely spurred by RBI's spot dollar sales alongside simultaneous buy-sell swaps that counter the impact FX interventions have on domestic rupee liquidity.

The plunge in premiums comes in the lead-up to Friday's RBI policy decision, where the central bank is expected to hold rates despite the rupee's 6.5% decline this year amid an Iran war-driven oil shock and equity outflows.

The policy decision comes at a time when markets expect steps to bolster dollar inflows and support the rupee.

A treasury official at a large private bank said it was possible the "engineered fall" in premiums was linked to measures the RBI may announce, without elaborating further.

Foreign investors pivot to short India debt ahead of policy turn

Shifting sands

There has been a notable shift in the RBI's FX swap operations, triggering a significant repricing in forwards, a currency trader at a mid-sized private-sector bank said, pointing out that the central bank had previously been largely absent from this market.

Market estimates of the RBI's swap activity vary widely, with lower-bound estimates putting it at roughly $2 billion over the past 10 days.

The swap operations have been concentrated in the 12-to-18-month segment, a change from the typical reliance on swaps of less than one year.

This has pushed down two-year forward points by more than one rupee from recent peaks.

The longer-tenor swaps provide the central bank flexibility in managing its ballooning forward book, an economist at a private-sector bank said.

All the bankers spoke on condition of anonymity as they are not authorised to speak publicly.

Liquidity management

RBI's buy-sell swaps have not fully neutralised the liquidity impact of its spot FX intervention, bankers said, prompting it to inject funds into the banking system through variable rate repos.

The central bank has conducted 10 such auctions over the last 20 trading sessions.

Markets / Stocks

INDIAN SHARES SET FOR FIRMER OPEN AHEAD OF HIGH-STAKES RBI STANCE

- GIFT Nifty futures were at 23,533.50

Published June 5, 2026 Updated 3 minutes ago
By Reuters

Indian shares are set to open higher on Friday ahead of a key central bank policy decision, with investors awaiting signals on how it intends to tackle weakness in the rupee and inflationary pressures from elevated energy prices.

The Reserve Bank of India is likely to keep its key interest rate unchanged at 5.25%, according to a Reuters poll, but markets will watch for any shift in policy stance or measures to support the rupee after a persistent slide made it Asia's worst-performing currency in 2026.

GIFT Nifty futures were at 23,533.50, as of 6:47 a.m. IST, indicating the benchmark Nifty 50 would open above its previous close of 23,416.55.

The central bank's decision is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. IST.

Governor Sanjay Malhotra's commentary will be monitored for clues on future rate actions amid mounting inflationary pressures triggered by the Middle East war.

While higher interest rates could support the rupee and ease inflation, they may also raise borrowing costs and pressure stock market valuations, making domestic equities less attractive to some foreign investors.

Rate-sensitive sectors such as financials, automobilesand real estate will be in focus.

"The surprise rate hikes in EM economies such as Indonesia, Philippines and Sri Lanka have raised hopes among a section of the market for rate hikes to defend the (rupee)… However, considering inflation will not decisively breach the 6% mark, it will not compel the RBI to hike policy rates," said Hitesh Suvarna, macro economist at JM Financial Institutional Securities.

Brent crude futures are up 33% since the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran began in late February, while Indian stocks are set for their first annual decline in more than a decade, a Reuters poll of equity analysts found.

Higher oil prices increase the import bill and fuel inflation in India, the world's third-largest crude importer.

These concerns have already triggered a record $28.2 billion in foreign outflows from Indian stocks so far this year.

STOCKS DROP AS AI RALLY PAUSES, US-IRAN PEACE TALKS STALL

- All that left MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan down 1.6% in early Asia trade

Published June 5, 2026 Updated 6 minutes ago
By Reuters

SINGAPORE: Asian share markets slid on Friday as investors took profits on technology stocks and turned defensive ahead of the weekend, wary of the flare-up in Middle East hostilities as U.S.-Iran peace talks remain in limbo.

The Iran-backed Hezbollah rejected a new ceasefire in Lebanon on Thursday and Israel said it would not withdraw troops from the country, undermining U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts to halt fighting there and reach a peace deal with Tehran.

Meanwhile, an AI-driven rally that boosted stocks earlier in the week fizzled out as chipmaker Broadcom reported underwhelming results.

All that left MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan down 1.6% in early Asia trade. South Korea's tech-heavy Kospi slid more than 6% and Japan's Nikkei fell 1.3%.

"(It) seems like quite a risk-off today," said Charu Chanana, chief investment strategist at Saxo.

"Korea has been one of the biggest beneficiaries of the AI memory supercycle, so when Broadcom disappointed on AI expectations, investors quickly de-risked the whole semiconductor chain.

"The issue is not that AI demand has disappeared - it is that expectations had become extremely high, and even good numbers are no longer enough unless guidance keeps moving higher."

Nasdaq futures fell 1% and S&P 500 futures eased 0.5%, after a mixed session on Wall Street overnight. EUROSTOXX 50 futures dipped 0.2%, while DAX futures lost 0.5% and FTSE futures were flat.

Oil set for weekly gain

Oil prices were little changed on Friday as traders awaited more clarity on U.S.-Iran negotiations, though were set for a weekly gain as hostilities earlier in the week raised concerns of a prolonged energy shock.

Brent crude futures were steady at $95 a barrel and on track to rise more than 3% for the week, while U.S. crude dipped 0.3% to $92.73 per barrel, and was similarly set to advance more than 6% this week.

Kristian Kerr, head of macro strategy at LPL Financial, said markets were underestimating the complexities involved in restoring shipping through the Strait of Hormuz to pre-war levels, even if Washington and Tehran reach a memorandum of understanding.

“Any early increase in barrels is likely to come from already produced crude, including crude sitting on stranded or floating vessels and Iranian cargoes in storage, rather than a sustained restart in production or exports,” he said.

“In other words, this is more about clearing existing bottlenecks than reflating the supply base.”

Eyes on us nonfarm payrolls

In currencies, the dollar was on track for a 0.5% weekly rise supported by the Middle East conflict.

The yen languished near the 160 per dollar level and was last at 159.96, as Japanese officials ramped up warnings on the ailing currency, keeping traders on alert for further intervention from Tokyo.

Data on Friday showed Japan’s foreign reserves fell by $77 billion in May.

In other currencies, the euro last bought $1.1611, while sterling was little changed at $1.3421.

Focus now turns to the closely watched U.S. nonfarm payrolls data due later in the day.

Market forecasts are for a solid rise of 85,000 in employment, keeping the jobless rate steady at 4.3%. Anything stronger would likely see the odds of a Federal Reserve rate hike narrow further.

Elsewhere, spot gold was down 0.2% to $4,465.23 an ounce.

NIKKEI PULLS BACK FROM RECORD HIGH

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Reuters

TOKYO: Japan’s Nikkei share average slid the most in three weeks on Thursday, pulling back from a record high as investors sold AI-related stocks after Broadcom missed second-quarter revenue expectations, while renewed fighting between the US and Iran also soured risk sentiment.

The Nikkei fell 1.36 percent to close at 67,470.69, the steepest drop since May 15. The broader Topix dropped 1.11 percent to 3,951.85. The drop comes a day after the Nikkei closed above the 68,000 level for the first time.

However, Wall Street tumbled overnight, with the S&P 500 falling 0.7 percent and oil prices rising around 2 percent as hostilities in the Middle East erupted anew, and talks between Tehran and Washington showed little progress. Broadcom shares fell more than 13 percent in extended trading following its disappointing results.

On the Nikkei on Thursday, technology investor SoftBank Group tanked 11.3 percent and was the top drag for the index. The investor was also the index's biggest percentage loser.

CHINA, HK STOCKS FALL AFTER ME TENSIONS FLARE

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Reuters

SHANGHAI: China and Hong Kong stocks fell with Asian markets on Thursday, as Middle East tensions intensified, but Chinese chipmakers jumped on bets of domestic breakthroughs.

In China, the large-cap CSI300 Index fell 0.7 percent while the Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.6 percent.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index declined 1.5 percent.

Israel and Lebanon agreed to implement a ceasefire to end hostilities, boosting hopes for a broader deal to end the US-Israeli war on Iran.

However, hostility continued to simmer in the region, with Tehran striking Kuwait, damaging its airport and injuring dozens, and the US military carrying out strikes near the Strait of Hormuz.

The uncertainty drove investors into risk-off mode, with Asian markets falling 2 percent, following overnight weakness on Wall Street.

Chinese chipmakers stood out amid hopes domestic players will sidestep Washington's sanctions and export controls.

The optimism was fed by news that DeepSeek, China's best-known AI startup, is set to raise about 50 billion yuan (USD7.4 billion) in its first funding round from investors including Tencent Holdings and CATL.

Earlier this month, China's AI champion Huawei said it can make industry-leading semiconductors within five years.

"The hopes for China's AI expansion are increasingly pinned to progress in domestic chipmaking," said Tilly Zhang, analyst at Gavekal Dragonomics.

The STAR Semiconductor Material & Equipment Index jumped 5 percent. The CSI Semiconductor Industry Index gained 2.7 percent.

Meanwhile, China coal stocks rose sharply on bets that coal miners will benefit from a prolonged oil shock.

Most sectors fell, with metal and materials stocks leading the declines.

EUROPEAN SHARES RISE AS INVESTORS WATCH MIDDLE EAST

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Reuters

FRANKFURT: European shares rose on Thursday as oil prices eased, although investors remained cautious on whether the latest developments in the Middle East would lead to a durable peace deal. Brent crude futures fell 2.8 percent to USD95.06 a barrel after Israel and Lebanon agreed on Wednesday to implement a ceasefire.

However, hopes for a broader de-escalation were tempered after Hezbollah rejected the deal and Israel said it would not withdraw troops from Lebanon, complicating US President Donald Trump's efforts to forge a peace deal with Iran.

Investors were looking for firmer evidence that a breakthrough was possible after several failed rounds of talks. The pan-European STOXX 600 finished 0.5 percent higher at 624.45 points, led by gains in healthcare with French biotech Abivax jumping 17.8 percent and rebounding from losses earlier in the week.

The STOXX 600 remained on track for a marginal weekly decline, with the Strait of Hormuz, a key global oil-shipping route, still mostly shut.

Persistent price pressures have led markets to price in a 25-basis-point rate hike by the European Central Bank at next week's meeting, according to LSEG data.

"The well telegraphed policy hike coming next week reveals a preference for curbing upside inflationary risks rather than addressing downside growth risks," said a group of macro analysts led by Rune Thyge Johansen at Danske Bank.

"We expect (Christine) Lagarde to keep full optionality on the future policy rate path, including a potential second summer hike," Danske Bank's analysts added. Chip stocks eased, with Infineon Technologies and STMicroelectronics down 3.4 percent and 2.6 percent, respectively, after US chipmaker Broadcom reported lower-than-expected second-quarter revenue.

"Europe's lack of heavy exposure to technology has hurt it in the past, but today it is helping, because investors are rotating away from tech and toward defensive, value-oriented parts of the market," said Steve Sosnick, chief market analyst at Interactive Brokers.

DOW HITS RECORD HIGH; BROADCOM WEIGHS ON NASDAQ

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Reuters

NEW YORK: The Dow scaled an all-time high and the S&P 500 rose on Thursday, lifted by UnitedHealth and financials shares, while Broadcom's results fell short of high investor expectations, dragging down chip stocks and the Nasdaq.

Broadcom shares slumped 14 percent after the chipmaker also maintained its long-range forecast of USD100 billion in sales from its AI chips.

The stock has climbed nearly 55 percent this quarter and could shed nearly USD320 billion in market value if losses hold through the session.

The S&P 500 tech index dropped the most, down 1.8 percent, while the Philadelphia SE Semiconductor index tumbled 2.8 percent. "Broadcom earnings (were) good news other than the fact that their guidance wasn't what the market may have been expecting," said Dustin Thackeray, chief investment officer at Crewe Advisors.

"The chips are due for a bit of a breather. Obviously, they've had a tremendous run-up from end of March lows." After a weak start to the session, the S&P 500 turned higher as a rotation out of tech shares boosted other areas of the market, with nine out of 11 major S&P 500 sectors in the green. Healthcare shares added 3.1 percent, aided by a 5.7 percent advance in UnitedHealth after Bank of America raised its rating on the healthcare conglomerate's shares to "buy."

The financial index rose 1.8 percent after a sharp fall in the previous session on renewed concerns over private credit.

Blackstone became the latest asset manager to cap withdrawals from its flagship private credit fund following a rise in redemption requests.

The rally on Wall Street has stalled this week as investors weigh a renewed flare-up in hostilities between the United States and Iran.

Although the two sides agreed to a ceasefire in early April, talks to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz have made little progress, threatening to keep oil prices elevated and stoke inflation. At 11:29 a.m. ET, the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 862.27 points, or 1.70 percent, to 51,549.34, the S&P 500 gained 19.32 points, or 0.26 percent, to 7,573.00 and the Nasdaq Composite lost 51.21 points, or 0.19 percent, to 26,802.76.

INDONESIAN STOCKS HIT 2020 LOWS; RUPIAH BREACHES 18,000 PER DOLLAR

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Reuters

BENGALURU: Indonesian stocks plunged 5 percent to their lowest in more than five years on Thursday and the rupiah breached the 18,000 level, prompting central bank intervention to halt its accelerating free-fall.

Equities in most emerging Asian markets slid from record highs on renewed fighting between the US and Iran, although a ceasefire deal between Israel and Lebanon helped bring oil prices lower.

The MSCI gauge of EM Asia stocks fell about 2 percent from record highs, dragged lower by South Korea and Taiwan equities that make up over half the index.

The Indonesian rupiah tumbled to a record low of 18,045 per dollar on the day and held near the level despite the central bank's intervention in the foreign exchange markets.

The currency has lost more than 7.5 percent against the dollar this year, overtaking the Indian rupee as the region's worst performer.

The Jakarta Composite Index sank 5 percent to its lowest since December 2020, extending its year-to-date decline to more than 33 percent, the steepest fall in emerging markets.

Confidence has been dented by fiscal concerns, equity market governance issues highlighted by an MSCI review, risks to central bank autonomy and shifting commodity export policy.

Data released on Tuesday showed Indonesia's trade surplus had shrunk to a six-year low in April and inflation in May moved toward the top of the target range, underscoring the country's exposure to the fallout from the Middle East conflict.

Yield on Indonesia's 10-year bond jumped to 6.780 percent, while the 1-year bond yield stood at 7.019 percent.

Asian assets continued to take the heat as renewed fighting in the Middle East and elevated energy prices strain energy-import dependent economies' current accounts and drive up inflation.

GULF MARKETS END MIXED

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Reuters

DUBAI: Gulf stock markets ended mixed on Thursday after Israel and Lebanon agreed to implement a ceasefire, fueling optimism about a broader deal to end the US-Iran conflict, although regional tensions persisted.

The Israel-Lebanon ceasefire is contingent on a complete cessation of fire from the Iran-aligned Hezbollah militia and the evacuation of all its operatives from the South Litani Sector, a joint statement released by the US State Department said following negotiations in Washington.

Saudi Arabia's benchmark index eased 0.1 percent, hit by a 0.5 percent fall in Saudi National Bank, the country's biggest lender by assets, and a 0.4 percent decrease in oil major Saudi Aramco.

Brent futures were down USD3.05, or 3.1 percent, at USD94.76 a barrel at 1224 GMT.

Dubai's main share index gained 0.6 percent, with blue-chip developer Emaar Properties.

In Abu Dhabi, the index finished flat.

The Qatari index fell 0.6 percent, with the Gulf's biggest lender Qatar National Bank losing 1.1 percent.

Outside the Gulf, Egypt's blue-chip index was up 0.2 percent.

SRI LANKAN SHARES FALL FOR FOURTH STRAIGHT SESSION ON BROAD-BASED SELLING

- CSE All-Share index settled down 1.14% at 21,760.31

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 14 hours ago
By Reuters

Sri Lankan shares closed lower on Thursday, dragged by losses across sectors.

The CSE All-Share index settled down 1.14% at 21,760.31, extending losses to a fourth straight session and bringing its decline over the period to about 2.5%.

Nuwara Eliya Hotels Co PLC and Lanka Ventures PLC were the top percentage losers on the CSE All-Share index, falling 6.9% and 3.5%, respectively.

Trading volume on the index rose to 123.2 million shares from 109.9 million in the previous session.

The equity market's turnover rose to 2.79 billion Sri Lankan rupees ($6.15 million) from 2.05 billion rupees in the previous session, according to exchange data.

Foreign investors were net sellers, offloading stocks worth 197.5 million rupees, while domestic investors were net buyers, purchasing shares worth 2.68 billion rupees, the data showed.

KSE-100 CLIMBS 985 POINTS AS BUYERS ACTIVE AT PSX

Stock & Commodity

June 4, 2026Hamza Shahnawaz

Market gains 0.58% as buying interest returns across key sectors, led by oil, fertiliser and cement stocks

KARACHI, June 4, 2026 — The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) saw a strong rebound on Thursday as the benchmark KSE-100 Index gained 984.86 points amid broad-based buying interest and improved investor sentiment.

The index closed at 171,175.50 points, up 0.58% from the previous close of 170,190.64 points.

During intraday trading, the market remained volatile, touching a high of 171,455.76 points and a low of 170,563.40 points before settling firmly in positive territory.

Market participation improved compared to the previous session, with trading volume rising to 216.2 million shares and total value reaching Rs18.80 billion.

Analysts said the market initially experienced a mild pullback but regained momentum in the latter half of the session as buying interest strengthened across key sectors.

According to analysts at Topline Securities Limited, the benchmark index briefly surged by as much as 1,265 points intraday before closing higher by 984 points.

They noted that the recovery was driven by broad-based buying activity in heavyweight sectors, particularly oil, fertiliser and cement stocks.

Market sentiment was supported by easing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, with the absence of further escalation in US–Iran relations helping stabilise global oil prices and improve investor confidence.

On the index contribution side, major stocks including Fauji Fertiliser Company Limited, Pakistan Petroleum Limited, Oil & Gas Development Company Limited, Lucky Cement Limited and Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited collectively added around 458 points to the benchmark.

Beco Steel Limited led the volume chart with 113 million shares traded during the session.

Overall, analysts said the session reflected renewed bullish sentiment at the PSX, supported by improved macroeconomic signals and easing external pressures.

GOLD PRICE RISES ABOVE RS469,000 PER TOLA IN PAKISTAN ON JUNE 4, 2026

Stock & Commodity

June 4, 2026Hamza Shahnawaz

Local bullion market gains track international price increases as investors continue to favor safe-haven assets

KARACHI, June 4, 2026 — Gold prices in Pakistan moved higher on Thursday, supported by gains in international bullion markets as investors continued to seek safe-haven assets amid global economic uncertainty.

According to the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association, the price of 24-karat gold per tola increased by Rs1,525 to Rs469,285, compared with the previous day's closing rate of Rs467,760.

The price of 24-karat gold per 10 grams also rose by Rs1,305, reaching Rs402,335 against Rs401,030 recorded a day earlier.

Updated Gold Rates in Pakistan

Gold Category	Price	Change
24-Karat Gold (Per Tola)	Rs469,285	+ Rs1,525
24-Karat Gold (Per 10 Grams)	Rs402,335	+ Rs1,305

Market participants attributed the increase in local gold prices to a positive trend in international bullion markets, which remain the primary driver of domestic gold rates.

In the global market, gold prices rose by $14 per ounce to $4,668, compared with the previous session's closing level of $4,654 per ounce.

Analysts said demand for safe-haven investments has remained strong as investors assess economic uncertainty, inflation concerns and volatility across global financial markets.

The increase follows a sharp decline in local gold prices a day earlier, highlighting the continued volatility in both domestic and international bullion markets.

Jewellers and bullion traders said future price movements will largely depend on international market trends, investor sentiment and fluctuations in the Pakistani rupee's exchange rate against major foreign currencies.

Gold continues to be one of the most preferred investment and wealth-preservation assets in Pakistan, particularly during periods of economic uncertainty and financial market instability.

Investors, traders and consumers are closely monitoring bullion market developments as global economic conditions continue to influence precious metal prices.

Business & Finance / Industry

FPCCI CALLS FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC INCLUSION IN DECISIONS

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about an hour ago

By Recorder Report

LAHORE: President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Atif Ikram Sheikh, and Vice President Qurrat-ul-Ain, have said that Pakistan's nearly 130 million women constituting 52 percent of the country's population cannot be excluded from the national economic decision-making process.

Addressing a press conference at the launch of the Pakistan 'Women Economic Charter 2035' at the FPCCI regional office on Thursday, they stated that women in Pakistan are the nation's largest economic force and an indispensable pillar of its human resource base. However, despite their critical contribution to the economy, meaningful consultation with women business leaders, women chambers of commerce, women industrialists, exporters, and representative organizations of businesswomen was largely absent during the formulation of the national budget. "We are not seeking special privileges or concessions, but demanding rightful representation," they remarked.

Qurrat-ul-Ain highlighted the absence of an effective institutional mechanism to systematically incorporate women's economic priorities into the budget-making process and broader economic policymaking framework.

She urged the Prime Minister and the federal finance minister to ensure the formal inclusion of women's representative leadership in all future budget consultations, economic policy formulation, development planning, and economic reform initiatives.

Qurat-ul-Ain stressed that the principle of "no decision about women without the participation of women" must be adopted as a cornerstone of national policy. She maintained that economic decisions affecting women cannot be made effectively or equitably without their direct involvement and representation.

She further stated that the Pakistan Women Economic Charter 2035 is not merely a policy document but a comprehensive roadmap for Pakistan's economic growth, competitiveness, export expansion, investment promotion, and long-term prosperity.

The FPCCI Vice President also proposed the establishment of a 'National Women Economic Council' under the patronage of the Prime Minister and comprising representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission, State Bank of Pakistan, FPCCI, Women Chambers, and the private sector.

WIDE SCOPE IN MEDICAL DEVICES MANUFACTURING SEEN

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about an hour ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: Atif Farooqi, Advisor and Chief Operating Officer of the Pakistan Romania Business Council (PRBC), and Sohail Shamim Firpo, Chairman of the Pakistan Romania Business Council, led a PRBC delegation at the Vision 2030 Pakistan Medical Devices Manufacturing Summit held at Salim Habib University.

The event was organized by Dr. Shahid Noor, Chairman of the Saman-e-Shifa Foundation, under the International Conference on Emerging Trends in Biomedical Engineering, Science, and Technology.

The summit brought together academic, industry, and policy leaders from Pakistan and abroad to promote collaboration in the fields of biomedical engineering, medical devices, and innovation-driven manufacturing.

The forum also featured participation from the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

The participation of the PRBC delegation reflected the Council's commitment to strengthening academic, industrial, and trade relations between Pakistan and Romania, particularly in the areas of technology transfer, research collaboration, and medical device development.

Speaking on the occasion, Atif Farooqi and Sohail Shamim Firpo emphasized that Pakistan has a significant opportunity to strengthen its medical technology and manufacturing base through international partnerships, applied research, and industrial collaboration.

They stated that forums of this nature serve as a vital bridge between academia and industry and are essential for transforming innovation into practical impact.

They further noted that the Pakistan Romania Business Council takes pride in supporting such initiatives and will continue to play its role in promoting long-term cooperation between Pakistan and Romania.

Technology

SPACEX SEEKS RECORD USD75BN IN STOCK MARKET DEBUT

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By AFP

WASHINGTON: SpaceX, the rockets-to-AI behemoth led by Elon Musk, aims to raise USD75 billion in the biggest initial share sale ever, as the world's richest person pursues data centers in space and a trip to Mars.

SpaceX said in a regulatory filing Wednesday that it would offer exactly 555,555,555 shares — Musk has shown a penchant for idiosyncratic numbers in his businesses — at USD135 each.

That would value the company at a whopping USD1.8 trillion.

Analysts say Musk is aiming to capitalize on investor enthusiasm for his satellite internet plans as well as artificial intelligence, after he folded his xAI and its Grok chatbot into SpaceX earlier this year.

His plan is to use SpaceX's rockets to launch solar-powered, satellite-based data centers to develop and run future AI models.

And last month, SpaceX announced plans to invest USD55 billion to build a "Terafab" semiconductor factory in Texas, producing chips for artificial intelligence as well as robotics.

"The AI trade continues to roar, just in time for SpaceX's IPO next week," said Kathleen Brooks, research director at the brokerage firm XTB in London.

The sale could also make Musk, already the world's richest man, the world's first trillionaire.

Analysts expect further consolidation of Musk's business empire in 2027, when SpaceX, already the owner of X (formerly Twitter), is likely to merge with his electric car company Tesla, which is increasingly focused on robotics, energy and autonomous transportation.

In 2020, SpaceX activated its StarLink broadband operations, shaking up the satellite internet business with fast and relatively affordable access. It now has around 10.3 million subscribers across 164 markets, the company says.

Among the many users have been Ukrainian troops battling against Russia's invasion, and Iranian anti-government protesters.

That business has proven to be a key source of cash for the capital-intensive company, which reported a loss USD4.9 billion on revenues of nearly USD19 billion last year.

"On any normal metric the numbers defy belief" for justifying the potential valuation set by Musk, noted Michael Hewson, senior market analyst at iForex.

"Any investor will be basically betting on the success or otherwise of not only its Starship launch program, but also Elon Musk's ability to deliver on the orbital data centre part of the business, as a stepping stone to the Moon and Mars," he said in a research note.

JANUARY TO MAY 2026: KASPERSKY DETECTS OVER 92,000 MALWARE ATTACKS DISGUISED AS AI SERVICES

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

ISLAMABAD: A global cybersecurity company on Thursday revealed that the company has detected over 92,000 attacks of malware and potentially unwanted applications disguised as popular Artificial Intelligence (AI) agents and AI services during January to May 2026.

According to a report of the company released on Thursday, the cybercriminals exploited trusted brands to lure victims into downloading malicious files, with fake ChatGPT applications accounting for 49 percent of all detected attacks, while Claude and Gemini each represented 18 percent.

Since the beginning of the year, Kaspersky researchers have identified more than 15,000 samples of malware masquerading as agentic AI software, including fake versions of rapidly growing tools such as OpenClaw. Among these samples were banking trojans, spyware, exploits, and malware downloaders capable of deploying additional malicious payloads.

In May 2026 Kaspersky Global Research and Analysis Team also uncovered a new campaign linked to the Silver Fox advanced persistent threat (APT) group. In this operation, attackers distributed fake Claude AI applications for Windows, macOS, and Linux, targeting users seeking access to AI tools. Once launched, the malicious installers silently deployed malware onto victims' devices, enabling long-term access to compromised systems and sensitive information.

Kaspersky recommended organisations to protect corporate infrastructure against a wide range of threats by using solutions such as from the Kaspersky Next product line that provide real-time protection, threat visibility, investigation and advanced response capabilities.

PTA MOVES TO DECLARE CORPORATE SMS A SEPARATE MARKET

- Authority eyes tighter oversight of mobile operators

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 9 hours ago
By Tahir Amin

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has proposed declaring 'Corporate SMS' a distinct telecommunications market and signaled that all cellular mobile operators (CMOs) may be designated as operators with significant market power (SMP) in the segment.

The proposal, unveiled, comes amid mounting complaints from banks, enterprises and service providers over what they describe as excessive corporate SMS tariffs charged by mobile operators despite the use of the same underlying network infrastructure that carries ordinary text messages.

According to the PTA, corporate SMS services have evolved into a specialised business segment used extensively by banks, fintechs, government departments and commercial enterprises for one-time passwords (OTPs), transaction alerts, promotional campaigns and public service notifications.

"Corporate SMS has emerged as a distinct product and service market with unique characteristics," the consultation paper stated, adding that concerns regarding pricing, affordability, and potential anti-competitive conduct necessitated a fresh regulatory assessment.

Industry sources say the issue has become particularly sensitive for banks and digital financial service providers, many of whom depend heavily on SMS for customer authentication and security notifications. Rising messaging costs have translated into higher operational expenses across the financial sector.

The PTA's preliminary assessment argues that corporate SMS cannot be easily substituted by over-the-top (OTT) platforms such as WhatsApp Business, email or push notifications. While such alternatives exist, they require internet access, smartphone usage and application installation, unlike SMS, which reaches virtually every mobile subscriber regardless of device type or connectivity status.

For sectors subject to regulatory compliance requirements, particularly banking and financial services, SMS continues to be viewed as a critical communication channel because of its reliability, ubiquity and security-related functions.

The regulator noted that enterprises also face significant switching costs due to the integration of SMS gateways into their operational and authentication systems, reducing the likelihood that customers would migrate to alternative communication channels in response to price increases.

On the supply side, PTA found competition to be similarly constrained.

Although licensed Class Value Added Service (CVAS) providers and SMS aggregators offer enterprise messaging solutions, they remain dependent on commercial arrangements with mobile operators for final message delivery. Since CMOs control access to their own subscribers, aggregators cannot independently terminate SMS traffic without operator connectivity agreements.

"Any unilateral changes in pricing or access conditions by CMOs can directly impact competition in both direct and indirect Corporate SMS segments," the consultation paper observed.

Perhaps the most consequential aspect of the proposal is PTA's preliminary view regarding market power.

Under existing telecom regulations, an operator is generally presumed to possess SMP if it controls more than 25% of a relevant market. However, PTA argues that corporate SMS termination presents a unique scenario because each mobile operator exercises exclusive control over message delivery to its own subscribers.

As a result, no competing operator or service provider can reach a mobile subscriber without obtaining access to the relevant operator's network.

The regulator therefore considers each CMO to effectively enjoy a "termination monopoly" for corporate SMS delivery on its own network, giving it a 100% market share within that specific segment regardless of its broader market position.

"Each CMO holds SMP in the market for termination of corporate SMS on its own network," PTA concluded in its preliminary findings.

To support its assessment, the authority has directed all mobile operators to submit audit-certified data covering the period from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025. Operators will be required to provide average SMS rates and revenue figures for banking transactional messages, banking marketing messages and messaging services supplied to other sectors, both through direct enterprise contracts and SMS aggregators.

The outcome of the consultation could have far-reaching implications for pricing regulation, competition policy and enterprise communications in Pakistan. Market participants believe a formal SMP declaration could pave the way for PTA intervention in tariff structures and wholesale access arrangements, potentially reducing costs for banks, fintechs and other major corporate SMS users.

SUPERNET TECHNOLOGIES SECURES RS1BN CONTRACT

- The execution of the project is expected to take place during FY 2026–27

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 19 hours ago

Supernet Technologies Limited (STL) was declared on Thursday the successful bidder for a project valued at approximately Rs1 billion.

The project, awarded by a leading organization in Pakistan, involved the provision of hardware and related services aimed at enhancing and modernizing critical communications infrastructure, as per a press release.

The execution of the project is expected to take place during FY 2026–27 and is expected to contribute meaningfully to Supernet's revenue growth and profitability over the execution period.

Supernet Technologies Limited has more than three decades of experience in delivering communications infrastructure, connectivity, cybersecurity, managed services and digital transformation solutions.

The company serves a wide range of clients across defense, telecommunications, enterprise, government and international markets.

APPLE APP STORE ECOSYSTEM REACHES RECORD $1.4 TRILLION IN DEVELOPER BILLINGS AND SALES

IT & Telecom

June 4, 2026Hamza Shahnawaz

Apple has announced that its App Store ecosystem facilitated more than $1.4 trillion in developer billings and sales during 2025, marking a new milestone for the company's digital marketplace. According to a study conducted by Analysis Group economists, the App Store ecosystem has nearly tripled in size since 2019, highlighting its growing importance for developers and businesses worldwide.

The company also revealed that more than 90% of the billings and sales generated through the App Store ecosystem involved no commission paid to Apple, allowing developers to retain a larger share of their earnings.

AI-Powered Apps Lead Growth in 2025

Artificial intelligence emerged as a major growth driver across the App Store in 2025. Apple reported that more than 40 of the top 100 apps featured consumer-facing AI capabilities, with these applications recording four times faster billing growth than other leading apps.

From personalized fitness recommendations and advanced photo editing tools to AI-enhanced productivity software, developers are increasingly integrating intelligent features to improve user experiences. Apple's Foundation Models framework and Apple Intelligence technologies are helping developers build privacy-focused AI tools that can work both online and offline.

Physical Goods and Services Dominate Revenue

The largest share of App Store-related transactions came from physical goods and services, which generated approximately $1.1 trillion in sales during 2025. Categories such as grocery delivery, food services, retail shopping, and travel contributed significantly to this growth.

Meanwhile, digital goods and services generated $149 billion, driven by gaming, enterprise software, and video streaming applications. In-app advertising also remained a major revenue source, accounting for $151 billion in developer earnings.

Global User Base Continues to Expand

Apple said the App Store attracted more than 850 million average weekly users across 175 countries and regions. Consumers increasingly relied on apps for shopping, productivity, health management, entertainment, and communication.

Regional growth remained strong, with App Store billings and sales more than doubling in China and more than tripling in both the United States and Europe over the past six years.

Apple Expands Support for Developers

Apple continues to invest heavily in developer tools, educational programs, and infrastructure. The company hosted thousands of developers through its centers in the United States, China, India, and Singapore, while a new developer center is scheduled to open in Berlin later this year.

Looking ahead, Apple is expected to unveil new developer tools, APIs, and technologies at its annual Worldwide Developers Conference (WWDC), further strengthening opportunities for app creators worldwide.

SAMSUNG GALAXY Z FOLD8 ULTRA CONFIRMED THROUGH CERTIFICATION LISTING

IT & Telecom

June 4, 2026Hamza Shahnawaz

Samsung's upcoming foldable smartphone lineup has taken a significant step toward launch, as the Samsung Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra has been officially confirmed through a recent Bluetooth SIG certification listing. The development validates earlier rumors suggesting that Samsung will introduce two book-style foldable smartphones this year: the Galaxy Z Fold8 and the premium Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra.

The certification confirms that the "Ultra" branding is genuine, ending speculation surrounding Samsung's naming strategy for its next-generation foldables.

Samsung's Fold8 Naming Strategy Caused Confusion

Recent reports indicated that Samsung revised the naming convention for its upcoming foldable devices. The smartphone previously referred to as the Galaxy Z Fold8 Wide is now expected to launch as the Galaxy Z Fold8, while the device earlier rumored as the standard Fold8 has reportedly been renamed the Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra.

Although Samsung has not officially commented on the changes, the Bluetooth SIG database listing strongly supports the revised branding.

Certification Reveals Multiple Model Numbers

While the Bluetooth SIG certification does not disclose detailed specifications, it identifies several model numbers associated with the Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra. These include:

SC-56G

SCG39

SM-F976C

SM-F976Q

SM-F976Z

The appearance of multiple variants suggests Samsung is preparing the foldable smartphone for several international markets.

Rumored Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra Specifications

According to industry leaks, the Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra will feature a 5,000mAh battery and support 45W wired fast charging. The foldable device is also expected to weigh approximately 215 grams.

Another notable upgrade could be its slim profile. Reports claim the Fold8 Ultra will measure just 4.1mm when unfolded, making it slightly thinner than the previous-generation Galaxy Z Fold7.

Galaxy Z Fold8 Expected to Feature Camera Improvements

The standard Galaxy Z Fold8 is rumored to arrive with a 4,800mAh battery while retaining the same 45W charging capability as the Ultra model. The device could weigh around 201 grams and may introduce a new 50MP camera sensor with native 24MP photo support.

Both foldable smartphones are expected to feature significantly reduced display creases, reportedly comparable to those found on Oppo’s latest foldable devices.

Launch Expected Alongside Galaxy Z Flip8

Samsung is widely expected to unveil the Galaxy Z Fold8, Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra, and Galaxy Z Flip8 during a launch event in London on July 22. The event could showcase Samsung's latest advancements in foldable smartphone technology and further strengthen its position in the premium foldable market.

Business & Finance / Companies

RELIANCE HIRING SLUMP IS CALM BEFORE AI STORM

- The energy-to-retail giant's over 419,000 headcount as of March 2026 represents 4% year-on-year growth

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 11 hours ago
By Reuters

MUMBAI: Finding a good job in India is going to get a lot harder. Headcount growth at its biggest private company, $190 billion Reliance Industries, is slowing sharply as an investment binge fades. But a chronic skills shortage also gives businesses a strong incentive to rapidly adopt artificial intelligence. That will turn today's hiring squeeze into a deeper, structural slump.

The energy-to-retail giant's over 419,000 headcount as of March 2026 represents 4% year-on-year growth, just one quarter of its expansion rate the previous year. Its disclosures have turned hazier too: last year Reliance discontinued a table in its annual report offering a detailed breakdown of employees across business divisions.

The hiring slowdown is partly explained by the end of a phase of higher recruitment for its fledgling renewable energy business. But the growth remains well below India's 7%-plus GDP growth—and the squeeze could soon become entrenched: Reliance says it is "building talent fluent in leveraging AI to enhance decision-making, productivity and purpose-driven work", implying that the impact of AI on hiring will become clearer next year.

Ambani's Reliance Jio hires 17 banks for IPO, will raise no new funds, sources say

The problem is pronounced at IT outsourcers like $85 billion Tata Consultancy Services, the country's second-largest company by market capitalisation, and Infosys , where the number of employees is now up to 5%, below their respective March 2023 peaks, thanks to a slowdown in revenue growth and rise of new coding tools.

Indeed, future job growth is a bigger worry than headline-grabbing layoffs, as the government's Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran warned in February. His call on the private sector to hire more and balance capital-intensive growth with labor-intensive growth has gone unanswered by industry titans. Urban youth unemployment is as high as 13.6% and it's common for college graduates to queue up for janitorial roles in the public sector.

Reliance denies purchase of Iranian-origin oil

The danger is employers – who have long complained that India's 600 million-strong workforce does not have the modern skills required for the service-oriented economy – will turn to AI as a quick fix and adopt new technologies faster. Some 65% of respondents to a World Economic Forum survey, saw a skills gap in India as a challenge to business transformation, and more than one-third of them expected talent availability to worsen over the five years to 2030. Indian employers plan to outpace global adoption in computing technologies, quantum and encryption to transform their businesses, according to the WEF's Future of Jobs report for 2025.

It all threatens to tip India Inc's hiring slump into a depression.

ENGRO AND BAIDU ENTER INTO AN MOU TO EXPLORE AI CAPABILITIES AND ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE REGION

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 10 hours ago

By Press Release

Engro, a diversified conglomerate with a growing focus on digital infrastructure and technology-enabled solutions, has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Baidu Inc. to explore opportunities for collaboration in advancing AI capabilities across the region. The parties will explore areas spanning AI infrastructure, research, talent development, and industry applications, drawing on Baidu's full-stack AI capabilities to support the practical adoption of AI across industries.

Emphasizing the importance of building future-ready capabilities, Mr. Hussain Dawood, Chairman of Engro, stated: "Technology is rapidly becoming a defining source of industrial competitiveness. Organizations and economies that build the right capabilities today will be better positioned to create value, adapt to change and compete globally. Through this collaboration, we hope to explore opportunities to strengthen AI capabilities, develop talent and support the adoption of practical solutions that can contribute to long-term economic growth and industrial advancement across the region."

Over the past two decades, Baidu has evolved into a global AI-first organization, driven by its mission to make the complex world simpler through technology. Baidu's significant scale of over 655 million monthly active users is now transitioning into a leading AI ecosystem provider. Commenting on this momentum, Baidu's representative stated: "Our AI applications continued to gain traction across enterprises and individuals alike, further validating the commercial potential of our AI innovations."

The collaboration will be advanced through PaddlePaddle, Baidu's deep learning framework. Initial areas of exploration include capability development, industrial applications, talent creation and operational integration through four core areas:

· **Industrial Research Centres**: Housing a full AI stack for localized and regional research and development.

· **Intelligent Industry Workshops**: Exploring practical AI applications across industrial and manufacturing value chains.

· **Talent & Innovation Training**: Offering licensed AI education and certifications approved by China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT).

· **Operations and Service Centres**: Supporting the integration of AI into financial, industrial and operational processes.

Together, these initiatives are intended to bring together skill development, industrial applications and research capabilities to support practical AI adoption and regional advancement.

About Engro

Engro is a diversified conglomerate with businesses across telecommunications infrastructure, food and agriculture, energy and allied infrastructure, petrochemicals, and international trading across multiple geographies. Its parent company, Engro Holdings, trades on the Pakistan Stock Exchange under "ENGROH."

About Baidu

Founded in 2000, Baidu's mission is to make the complicatedworld simpler through technology. Baidu is a leading AI company with strong internet foundation, trading on the NASDAQ under "BIDU" and HKEX under "9888."

INDIA'S RAJESH EXPORTS CHAIR ASSERTS ACCURACY OF FINANCIALS AFTER SEBI ALLEGATIONS

- SEBI says that 97–99% of Rajesh Exports' revenue comes from its overseas subsidiaries

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 16 hours ago
Photo: Reuters

By Reuters

Financial disclosures of India's Rajesh Exports over the years were correct, its chairman told Reuters on Thursday, a day after the country's markets regulator alleged the jeweller inflated the scale of its revenue through unverified overseas entities.

The regulator's observations stemmed from differences in revenue calculations and did not consider the company's consolidated revenue, Chairman Rajesh Mehta said.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) said on Wednesday 97–99% of Rajesh Exports' revenue came from overseas subsidiaries, mainly Switzerland-based Valcambi SA, but the jeweller did not disclose their financials.

The Switzerland unit, one of the leading gold refiners in the world, was presented as the key operating entity but reported negligible standalone revenue. As a result, Rajesh Exports misrepresented about 15.15 trillion rupees ($158.17 billion), or 99.8% of subsidiary revenues, between fiscal 2021 and 2025, according to SEBI.

India markets regulator dismisses case of inadequate disclosures against NDTV

Mehta said that as the world's largest gold refiner, Valcambi refined 3,000 ton of gold over fiscal 2021-2025, "so naturally" its revenue would be over 15 trillion rupees.

"The biggest SEBI observation is on difference in revenue which is large because SEBI did not consider consolidated revenue but only standalone," Mehta said.

Markets / Financial

FOREIGN INVESTORS PIVOT TO SHORT INDIA DEBT AHEAD OF POLICY TURN

- Indian government bond yields have risen over the last three months

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 14 hours ago
By Reuters

MUMBAI: Overseas investors are opting for short-term Indian government bonds as they find attractive entry points amid expectations of the interest rates cycle turning, with the Iran war driving inflation higher.

Bonds with maturities of less than five years made up over two-thirds of the top 10 notes foreign investors bought during March-May, higher than less than half of similar purchases in January-February, clearing house data showed.

Overseas investors overall bought bonds worth 221 billion rupees in January-February, while in March, they sold a record 177 billion rupees, before turning buyers in April-May.

Indian government bond yields have risen over the last three months, with shorter duration yields - most sensitive to rates - spiking on inflation concerns due to the Iran war-linked energy shock.

The 10-year benchmark bond yield rose 34 basis points from March to May, while the five-year yield rose 55 bps, with the spread dropping to an eight-month low of 15 bps.

India tightens checks on overseas flows as currency pressure mounts, sources say

Investors are increasingly factoring a shift toward tighter policy, said Krishna Bhimavarapu, APAC economist at State Street Investment Management. While the Reserve Bank of India is widely expected to hold rates at the June meeting, the policy direction is clearly shifting, he said.

"In such an environment, the front end (of the yield curve) offers more attractive risk-adjusted carry with lower duration risk, while the long end remains vulnerable to further repricing if the tightening cycle materialises."

The RBI rate decision is due on Friday, with most economists expecting status quo, while Standard Chartered Bank has called for a 25-bp hike.

"The curve has bear flattened with short-end yields rising more than the long-end yields. This has created a valuations-driven opportunity for foreign investors to buy short-end bonds, Nagaraj Kulkarni, chief rates strategist - South Asia & Indonesia and head - flows strategy at the foreign bank, said.

GOLD PER TOLA GAINS RS1,523 IN PAKISTAN

- Reaches Rs469,285

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 18 hours ago
By BR Web Desk

Gold prices in Pakistan increased on Thursday in line with their gain in the international market. In the local market, gold price per tola reached Rs469,285 after a gain of Rs1,523 during the day.

Similarly, 10-gram gold was sold at Rs402,335 after it increased by Rs1,305, according to rates shared by the All-Pakistan Gems and Jewellers Sarafa Association (APGJSA).

On Wednesday, gold price per tola reached Rs467,762 after a decline of Rs8,600 during the day.

The international rate of gold was up by $14 to reach $4,468 per ounce (with a premium of $20).

Meanwhile, the price of silver decreased by Rs97 to reach Rs7,797 per tola.

PM SHEHBAZ REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO EXPANDING PAKISTAN-SAUDI ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Finance Pakistan

June 5, 2026Mrs. Anjum Shahnawaz

Saudi investors express interest in ports, energy, IT and infrastructure projects during high-level meeting in Islamabad

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening economic cooperation with Saudi Arabia, saying the government was focused on transforming longstanding bilateral ties into a broad-based and mutually beneficial economic partnership.

The remarks came during a meeting with a high-level Saudi business delegation at the Prime Minister's House in Islamabad, where both sides discussed investment opportunities and avenues for strengthening business-to-business engagement.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the delegation and recalled the visit of Prince Mansour and a Saudi business delegation to Pakistan in October 2025. He expressed optimism that the current visit would advance ongoing discussions and pave the way for the signing of memorandums of understanding and agreements across multiple sectors.

The prime minister also conveyed his greetings to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Mohammed bin Salman, underscoring the importance Pakistan attaches to its relationship with the Kingdom.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Communications Aleem Khan, Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik, Minister for Information Technology Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kiyani, and other senior government officials.

Prince Mansour thanked the prime minister for the warm welcome and reiterated Saudi Arabia's desire to strengthen commercial and investment ties with Pakistan. He said the Saudi business community was keen to explore opportunities across a wide range of sectors and expand its presence in the Pakistani market.

Members of the delegation highlighted their interest in investment opportunities related to ports, highways, airport outsourcing, energy, power distribution and information technology. The discussions reflected growing interest among Saudi investors in Pakistan's infrastructure and development sectors.

Prime Minister Shehbaz welcomed the interest and noted that agriculture and food security could also emerge as important areas of future cooperation. He said both countries could benefit from greater collaboration in sectors that support sustainable economic growth and long-term investment.

The Saudi delegation is scheduled to hold meetings with government officials and private-sector representatives during its visit to identify new investment opportunities and strengthen economic cooperation in line with the vision of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

The visit underscores increasing momentum in economic engagement between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia as Islamabad seeks to attract foreign investment, expand strategic partnerships and support economic development.

SBP FOREX RESERVES RISE BY $43 MILLION IN A WEEK

Finance

June 5, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

Central bank reserves edge higher to $17.19 billion, while overall liquid reserves decline slightly due to lower commercial bank holdings

KARACHI, June 4, 2026 — Pakistan's official foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) increased by $43 million during the week ended May 29, 2026, according to data released by the central bank on Thursday.

The increase lifted the SBP's reserves to $17.19 billion from $17.147 billion a week earlier, reflecting a modest improvement in the country's official external liquidity position.

According to the latest figures, the State Bank of Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves rose by $43 million during the reporting week ended May 29, 2026.

The central bank's reserves stood at $17.190 billion, compared with $17.147 billion recorded on May 22, 2026.

In contrast, foreign exchange reserves held by commercial banks declined by $54 million during the same period, falling to $5.446 billion from $5.500 billion a week earlier.

As a result, Pakistan's total liquid foreign exchange reserves registered a marginal decline of $11 million on a weekly basis. The country's overall reserves stood at $22.636 billion as of May 29, compared with $22.647 billion in the previous week.

Forex Reserves Position

Category	Week Ended May 29, 2026	Week Ended May 22, 2026	Change
SBP Reserves	$17.190 billion	$17.147 billion	+$43 million
Commercial Banks	$5.446 billion	$5.500 billion	-$54 million
Total Reserves	$22.636 billion	$22.647 billion	-$11 million

Despite the increase in official reserves, analysts say Pakistan continues to face external sector challenges, including rising import requirements and upcoming external debt repayments.

Economists note that maintaining reserve adequacy will depend largely on sustained export growth, strong workers' remittances, foreign direct investment inflows and effective management of external financing needs.

The latest figures nevertheless indicate that the country's official reserves remain above the $17 billion mark, providing a measure of support for external sector stability.

Fuel & Energy

OIL LITTLE CHANGED ON UNCERTAINTY OVER US-IRAN PEACE DEAL

- Brent crude futures fell 21 cents, or 0.22%, to $95.24 a barrel

Published June 5, 2026 Updated 40 minutes ago
By Reuters

SINGAPORE: Oil prices were little changed on Friday following sharp declines in the previous session, with prospects dimming for a near-term end to the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran after the Hezbollah militia rejected a new ceasefire in Lebanon.

Brent crude futures fell 21 cents, or 0.22%, to $95.24 a barrel by 0003 GMT after settling down 2.84% in the previous session.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude was at $92.94 a barrel, down 10 cents, or 0.11%, following a 3.1% loss on Thursday.

Both contracts are set to post their first weekly gain in three weeks, with WTI up more than 6%, after fighting flared up in the Middle East as U.S.-Iran war peace talks dragged on while traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, where a fifth of the world's oil passes, remained limited.

Analysts have flagged concerns of falling oil inventories globally that could cause a price spike in the third quarter.

Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem rejected on Thursday a U.S.-brokered agreement between Israel and the Lebanese government to halt the fighting. Iran has made a ceasefire in Lebanon a condition for any peace deal with Washington.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday he believed progress was being made between Israel and Lebanon and that Lebanon deserved to have peace.

"Any optimism remains heavily clouded by a tangled web of headlines and counter-headlines," IG market analyst Tony Sycamore said in a note.

"From a technical perspective, as long as (WTI) crude oil remains above trendline support in the low $80s, the risks remain skewed to the upside."

OPEC is sticking to its oil demand growth forecast of 1.2 million barrels per day for this year, Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais said on Thursday, despite the Middle East conflict and closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Iranian oil exports have fallen to their lowest level in six years mainly due to the U.S. naval blockade, according to shipping data, although weak demand in China has depressed prices for the oil.

IRANIAN OIL LEAVES GULF DESPITE US BLOCKADE

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By AFP

PARIS: Four Iranian-flagged oil tankers passed through the Strait of Hormuz on Monday, a first since April 15 and the US blockade of Iranian ports, according to maritime tracking firm Kpler.

In data published on Thursday, the firm detected the passage of the Hilda I, the Amber, the Silvia 1, and the Happiness I, which were carrying a total of seven million barrels of oil.

They all loaded their cargo in mid-April on Kharg Island, the country's main oil terminal, through which 90 percent of the Islamic Republic's crude oil normally transits.

The ships crossed the strait on Monday with their AIS transponders turned off.

Kpler relies primarily on satellite imagery to track ships transporting raw materials.

The four oil tankers typically transport Iranian crude to an offshore area off the coasts of Malaysia and Singapore, where they transfer the cargo at sea to other tankers (ship-to-ship) tasked with delivering it to the final customer, often in China.

Tehran adopted this practice to circumvent international sanctions.

The four tankers had initially continued their operations despite the conflict with Israel and the United States but had paused operations since April 13, when Washington imposed a blockade on Iranian ports in response to Tehran's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.

Three other oil tankers linked to Iran had already defied the blockade on April 15, according to Kpler.

None had attempted to do so since then.

The US military regularly announces actions against oil tankers attempting to violate the blockade.

The US announced on Tuesday that it had disabled an oil tanker by firing on its engine room to prevent it from reaching Kharg Island.

This was the sixth vessel damaged by US military forces as part of the blockade.

OIL FALLS AS TRADERS EYE IRAN DEAL FOLLOWING LEBANON-ISRAEL CEASEFIRE

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Reuters

HOUSTON: Oil prices slipped around 3 percent on Thursday on investor hopes for an end to the US-Israeli war with Iran that could lead to a reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, following a ceasefire deal between Israel and Lebanon.

Israel and Lebanon said late on Wednesday they had agreed to implement a ceasefire, raising hopes for a deal between Washington and Tehran. Iran has made any agreement conditional in part on an end to fighting between Israel and Hezbollah, an Iran-aligned group in Lebanon.

Brent futures were down USD2.82, or 2.88 percent, at USD94.99 a barrel at 11:21 a.m. EDT (1521 GMT), while US West Texas Intermediate crude was down USD3.19, or 3.32percent, at USD92.83. The two contracts rose about 2percent on Wednesday after renewed Middle East hostilities, including Iranian attacks on Kuwait and US military strikes near the Strait of Hormuz. “Crude futures are reversing yesterday’s gains and then some on news that Israel and Lebanon have entered a peace deal, which should allow US and Iran peace talks to continue,” said Dennis Kissler, senior vice president of trading at BOK Financial. “Shipping traffic in the Strait of Hormuz remains at a near standstill, however, some ship re-positioning shows them moving closer to the Persian Gulf which could be a sign of an expected opening sooner than later,” Kissler added.

Meanwhile, Lebanon’s Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem said on Thursday that as long as Lebanese villages were being bombed and people were being killed, northern Israel will not be safe, adding that negotiations with Israel were “shameless”.

US President Donald Trump suggested on Wednesday there could be progress in negotiations with Iran as soon as this weekend. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said on Wednesday Tehran’s contacts with Washington had not been cut off, but no progress had been made in the negotiations, adding both sides were studying texts that were exchanged.

In the US, the Republican-led House of Representatives approved a resolution on Wednesday to block Trump from continuing the war against Iran. To take effect, the resolution would need Senate approval and two-thirds majorities in both chambers to override an almost certain Trump veto. "In our view, the path of least resistance for prices remains to the upside as long as flows remain restricted," UBS analyst Giovanni Staunovo said.

Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said on Thursday that Russian oil production has fallen since the start of the year due to unplanned refinery maintenance, marking the first time a Russian official has acknowledged the decline. US crude stockpiles fell by 8 million barrels to 433.7 million barrels in the week ended May 29, the Energy Information Administration said on Wednesday.

That was a much bigger drop than the 4-million-barrel draw analysts had expected in a Reuters poll. Iranian oil prices slipped into discounts for the first time since April, while Russian crude premiums eased as traders cut prices to entice Chinese buyers amid sluggish demand, trade sources said. Elsewhere, OPEC expects robust oil demand growth and is not changing its estimates, Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais said on Thursday at the St Petersburg International Economic Forum, despite the Middle East conflict and closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

OCAC CONCERNED OVER INVENTORY GAINS REVIEW, CROSS-SUBSIDY PLANS

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

ISLAMABAD: The Oil Companies Advisory Council (OCAC) has raised serious concerns over reported government plans to review inventory gains and introduce a cross-subsidy mechanism in the petroleum sector, cautioning that such measures could undermine energy security and disrupt market stability.

In a letter addressed to the Federal Secretary, Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division), OCAC said recent media reports about the constitution of a high-level committee to examine recovery of inventory gains have created uncertainty within the industry, despite the absence of any formal communication.

The council emphasised that any policy intervention must be guided by principles of fairness, regulatory consistency, and long-term energy security, while factoring in the operational realities of Pakistan's oil sector.

Highlighting recent global developments, OCAC noted that the March–April 2026 period witnessed exceptional geopolitical volatility, which significantly impacted international oil markets. It argued that inventory gains arising during such periods are temporary and often reversed when prices correct, making them part of a broader "inventory risk cycle" rather than standalone windfall profits.

"The industry remains equally exposed to inventory losses when prices decline," the letter stated, warning that recovering gains without compensating losses would create an imbalance detrimental to the sector.

The council underscored that Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are legally required to maintain a mandatory 20-day stock cover to ensure uninterrupted fuel supply. These inventories, it said, are not speculative holdings but a statutory obligation aimed at safeguarding national energy security.

Pakistan's heavy reliance on imports—around 80 percent of crude oil, 70 percent of motor gasoline, and 30 percent of high-speed diesel—further exposes the sector to global price volatility, making inventory fluctuations an inherent feature of the business. OCAC also pointed to emerging international market trends, noting that forecasts for July–September 2026 suggest weakening global demand and easing geopolitical pressures, which could lead to price corrections and offset recent gains.

The industry body warned that setting a precedent of recovering inventory gains during upward price cycles, while leaving losses to be borne solely by companies, could discourage adequate stockholding and weaken supply resilience during crises.

In addition, OCAC highlighted mounting financial pressures on the sector, including outstanding Price Differential Claims (PDC) of approximately Rs66.7 billion, stagnant margins, rising operational costs, and increasing compliance requirements.

US NATURAL GAS PRICES HIT 16-WEEK HIGH AS HEAT AND DEMAND RISE

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Reuters

NEW YORK: US natural gas futures climbed about 3.0 percent to a 16-week high on Thursday on forecasts for warmer weather and higher demand than previously expected next week and a continued drop in output in recent days.

Front-month gas futures for July delivery on the New York Mercantile Exchange rose 9.7 cents, or 3.0percent, to USD3.311 per million British thermal units (mmBtu), putting the contract on track for its highest close since February 6.

That price increase came ahead of a federal report expected to show energy firms added a near-normal 101 billion cubic feet (bcf) of gas to storage during the week ended May 29.

That compares with an increase of 119 bcf during the same week last year and a five-year (2021-2025) average increase of 101 bcf for the period.

Financial group LSEG said average gas output in the US Lower 48 states dropped to 108.5 billion cubic feet per day (bcfd) so far in June, down from 109.7 bcfd in May and a monthly record high of 110.6 bcfd in December 2025.

On a daily basis, output fell by 3.1 bcfd over the past six days to a preliminary four-month low of 107.4 bcfd on Thursday due mostly to declines in Texas and Arkansas. Analysts noted preliminary data is often revised later in the day.

Meteorologists forecast the weather will remain mostly warmer than normal through June 19, which should boost the amount of gas power generators burn to keep air conditioners humming. About 40percent of US power generation comes from gas-fired plants.

INDIA'S TOUGHER GRID RULES UNSETTLE INVESTORS, TEST CLEAN ENERGY AMBITIONS

- Industry groups estimate the tougher regime could cut revenue by about 11% for solar projects

Published June 4, 2026 Updated about 11 hours ago
Photo: Reuters

By Reuters

NEW DELHI: India's push to tighten power grid discipline is colliding with its clean energy ambitions as tougher rules for solar and wind projects alarm investors, who warn the requirements could slash returns and impede investment needed for the energy transition.

The most-feared regulations, due to take effect in April 2027, sharply increase penalties when renewable power producers fail to deliver electricity matching their commitments to the grid, according to industry executives, investor presentations and documents reviewed by Reuters.

Industry groups estimate the tougher regime could cut revenue by about 11% for solar projects and as much as 48% for wind farms, fuelling concerns that India could make renewable investments less attractive just as it seeks billions of dollars to expand clean energy capacity.

India's federal power regulator has said the tougher framework is needed to protect grid stability as renewable capacity expands rapidly.

The dispute over the new rules underscores the challenge of integrating growing volumes of renewable power into India's grid while preserving investor confidence as the country seeks to meet its clean energy target of installing 500 gigawatts of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030.

As of March, India had 288 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity, with wind and solar accounting for 73% of the total.

Under the revised rules, penalties rise according to the gap between scheduled and actual power supplied to the grid.

"Developers will face very high penalties even when deviations are small. This tightens margins, revenues will shrink and project viability will be affected," said Debabrat Ghosh, India head at energy consultancy Aurora Energy Research.

Investors and developers generally eye at least a 10% internal rate of return (IRR) for solar projects, and at least 12% to 13% for hybrid projects combining solar and wind, analysts and industry executives said.

Aurora expects the new rules will reduce IRRs by 1.5 percentage points for wind projects and by 1.2 percentage points for hybrid projects.

Wanted: real-time weather forecasts

The penalties expose companies to financial risks they cannot fully control because renewable energy generation depends on weather conditions that remain difficult to forecast accurately in India, developers said.

"Renewable energy operates within the limits of weather and forecasting uncertainty," said Raghavendra Upadhya, chief executive of the Wind Independent Power Producers Association, which represents more than 50 clean energy producers.

"While grid discipline is essential, the current approach places additional risk on projects built under earlier frameworks," he said.

Smaller developers whose projects are most at risk from the tougher rules referred Reuters to their industry associations for comments.

The National Solar Energy Federation of India, which represents more than 100 clean energy companies, has challenged the regulation in court.

Officials have told industry representatives there can be no compromise on grid discipline, according to people familiar with the discussions.

Stricter rules unsettle foreign investors

Industry executives said the policy shift has caught developers off guard because many existing projects were bid and financed under a more lenient regime, leaving them exposed to costs that were not factored into their original economics.

"The market has not yet developed for generators to be that accurate," said Pratyush Thakur, India country head at Blueleaf Energy, a clean energy producer and investor, owned by Australia's Macquarie Asset Management.

The concerns have also unsettled other major foreign investors that have poured billions of dollars into India’s clean energy sector.

Investors including KKR, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board and Actis raised concerns with Indian officials during a meeting in April, according to five industry sources familiar with the discussions.

The investors warned about the impact of lower returns, policy unpredictability and financial stress from tighter grid rules, while arguing that regulatory tightening was advancing faster than improvements in transmission infrastructure and battery storage capacity, the sources said.

Because of these challenges, investment in the sector would slow, Thakur said, although he added that Blueleaf remained committed to India because of its long-term renewable energy potential.

Blueleaf plans to deploy about $3 billion in India, including around $1 billion in equity over the next three years, but expects grid-related constraints to delay the equity deployment by a further two to three years.

Actis said India continued to be one of its preferred investment destinations. KKR and Canada Pension Plan Investment Board did not respond to Reuters requests for comment.

Industry groups have also appealed to the prime minister’s office for relief, two sources said.

The clean energy ministry has held discussions with industry groups and appears open to easing implementation of the rules, according to the sources and documents reviewed by Reuters.

But the power ministry, its technical adviser the Central Electricity Authority, and Grid India, the country’s grid operator, have maintained that stricter enforcement is necessary to prevent grid instability.

The prime minister’s office, power ministry, clean energy ministry, Central Electricity Authority and Grid India did not respond to Reuters’ requests for comment.

Costly upgrades to meet tougher regulations

Developers say India still lacks several tools needed to meet the tighter standards.

Industry executives say weather forecasts in India are typically updated only a few times daily, compared with near real-time forecasting in some European power markets.

To adapt, renewable energy companies are investing in upgraded forecasting systems, automated weather stations and data science teams to improve power scheduling accuracy.

The industry will need to take other steps, such as adding batteries, said Kartikeya Sharma, co-founder of Sunsure Energy.

Sunsure is installing advanced automated weather stations on site and subscribing to real-time, high-resolution satellite weather data from European providers, he said.

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Senate approval and two-thirds majorities in both chambers to override an almost certain Trump veto.

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NEPRA CUTS POWER TARIFFS, JUNE BILLS OFFER NET RELIEF TO CONSUMERS

Energy National

June 5, 2026Mrs. Anjum Shahnawaz

Regulatory adjustment provides Rs67 billion relief, though fuel charges limit immediate benefit in June bills

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has approved a reduction of Rs1.98 per unit in electricity tariffs under the first quarterly adjustment of 2026, offering relief of more than Rs67 billion to power consumers across Pakistan.

The tariff reduction will remain effective for three months and will be reflected in electricity bills for June, July and August 2026, according to the regulator’s decision.

However, the immediate relief for consumers in June will be partially offset by a separate fuel charge adjustment (FCA) increase, resulting in a net reduction of only Rs0.80 per unit in this month’s bills.

Mixed impact on electricity bills

Under the latest decision, NEPRA also approved an increase of Rs1.19 per unit under the April 2026 fuel price adjustment mechanism. This adjustment will be incorporated into June electricity bills for both national consumers and K-Electric users.

The regulator said the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) had originally requested a higher FCA of Rs1.73 per unit. After review, NEPRA reduced the adjustment to Rs1.19 per unit.

While the FCA increase adds pressure to monthly bills, the larger quarterly adjustment still results in a net downward impact on electricity charges over the adjustment period.

Nationwide application

The tariff reduction applies uniformly across Pakistan, including consumers of K-Electric. Lifeline consumers, however, have been excluded from the revised adjustment.

NEPRA said the fuel charge adjustment mechanism reflects changes in generation costs and ensures periodic pass-through of fuel price variations to end users.

Consumer relief amid energy cost concerns

The latest adjustment comes at a time when households and businesses continue to face inflationary pressure and high energy costs. Analysts say the net relief, though modest in June bills, may help ease some financial strain on consumers in the coming months.

The regulator added that the quarterly adjustment will remain in effect for the next three billing cycles, providing a more sustained reduction in electricity tariffs despite monthly fluctuations caused by fuel costs.

OGDCL ADDS 11 NEW WELLS, BOOSTS OIL AND GAS OUTPUT IN FY2025–26

Energy

June 4, 2026Faisal Shahnawaz

State-run energy firm reports sharp rise in indigenous production as new wells add over 9,700 barrels of oil and 74 MMSCFD gas

ISLAMABAD, June 4, 2026 — The Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (Oil and Gas Development Company Limited) has brought 11 new wells into production across Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Balochistan during the first 10 months of FY2025–26, significantly increasing indigenous oil and gas output.

According to official production data, the newly commissioned wells have added 9,734 barrels per day (BPD) of oil and 74.25 million standard cubic feet per day (MMSCFD) of gas to Pakistan's energy system.

Officials said the development represents the company's highest annual contribution from newly commissioned wells in the past four years, reflecting accelerated efforts to enhance domestic hydrocarbon production, improve energy security and reduce reliance on imported fuels.

Out of the 11 wells, six are located in Sindh, two in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, one in Punjab and two in Balochistan.

The latest increase in output highlights improved performance from recent discoveries and development projects brought into commercial production during the current fiscal year.

For comparison, the company brought five wells into production in FY2022–23, contributing 990 BPD of oil and 18.28 MMSCFD of gas. In FY2023–24, 11 wells added 4,398 BPD of oil and 43.23 MMSCFD of gas, while eight wells in FY2024–25 contributed 744 BPD of oil and 41.80 MMSCFD of gas.

Overall, OGDCL data show that 35 wells were brought into production between FY2022–23 and FY2025–26 (up to April), collectively contributing 15,866 BPD of oil and 177.56 MMSCFD of gas.

The company said the sharp rise in output during FY2025–26 underscores its continued focus on maximising indigenous hydrocarbon resources and strengthening Pakistan's energy security through timely field development and production expansion.

Rates

SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: Karachi Shipping Intelligence report incorporating changes till 7 am on Thursday (June 04, 2026).

Alongside East Wharf

Berth No.	Ship	Working	Agent	Berthing Date
OP-2	San Remo	Load (H.S.F.O)	Alpine Marine Service	17-05-2026
B-1	Baraawe-1	Disc Chemical	Eastwind Shipping Company	01-06-2026

B-2	Jkt Miracle	Disc Chemical	Alpine Marine Service	04-06-2026
B-4/B-5	Niwa	-	Gac Pakistan	28-05-2026
B-6/B-7	Wan Hai 612	Dis/Load Containers	Riazeda	02-06-2026
B-9/B-8	Benita	Dis/Load Containers	Eastwind Shipping Company	03-06-2026
B-10/B-11	Sw Legend	Load Clinkers	Bulk Shipping Agencies	31-05-2026
B-11/B-12	Top Fortune	Disc General Cargo	Seahawks Asia Global	03-06-2026
B-13/B-14	Scion Charlotte	Disc Soya Bean Seeds	Ocean Services	31-05-2026
B-14/B-15	Rui Ning 6	Disc Ganeral Cargo	Legend Shipping & Logistics	03-06-2026
B-16/B-17	Akson Sandra	Load Talc Powder	Project Shippin	31-05-2026
Num-1	Khalidi 1	Load Rice	Noor Sons	31-05-2026
Num-1	Al Hijirat	Load Rice	Noor Sons	10-05-2026
Num-2	Salami	Load Rice	AL Faizan International	13-05-2026

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Alongside WEST Wharf

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B-21	Kian	Load Rice	Tradelink International	30-05-2026
B-24	Avarosa 101	Load Rice	Baluchistan Shipping Co	20-05-2026
B-24/B-25	Primavera II	Load Cement	Ocean Services	25-05-2026
B-26/B-27	Xin Fu Zhou	Dis/Load Containers	Oceansea Shipping	03-06-2026
B-29/B-30	Feng Hai 66	Dis/Load Containers	Feeder Logistic	03-06-2026

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Alongside SOUTH Wharf

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Sapt-1	Msc Madeleine	Dis/Load Containers	Msc Agency Pak	01-06-2026
Sapt-2	MscEsthi	Dis/Load Containers	Msc Agency Pak	04-06-2026
Sapt-3	Oocl Washington	Dis/Load Containers	Cosco Shipping Ling Pak	03-06-2026
Sapt-4	X-Press Capella	Dis/Load Containers	X-Press Feeder Shipping	02-06-2026

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Expected Sailing

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Name of Vessel	Expected Date	Expected Arrival Cargo	Agent
Marine Ista	04-06-2026	-	-
Kian	04-06-2026	Load Rice	Tradelink International
Baraawe-1	04-06-2026	Disc Chemical	Eastwind Shipping

			Company
Wan Hai 612	03-06-2026	Dis/Load Containers	Riazeda
Benite	04-06-2026	Dis/Load Containers	Eastwind Shipping Company
San Remo	04-06-2026	Load (H.S.F.O)	Alpine Marine Service
Sw Legend	04-06-2026	Load Clinkers	Bulk Shipping Agencies
Primavera II	04-06-2026	Load Cement	Ocean Services
Akson Sandra	04-06-2026	Load Talc Powder	Project Shipping

Expected Arrivals

M.T.Mardan	04-06-2026	D/73000 Crude Oil	-
Marine Ista	03-06-2026	L/980 Lsfo	-
Chemromad Wing	04-06-2026	D/7970 Ethylene Glycol	-
Hua Chuang 66	04-06-2026	D/L Container	-
Jens Maersk	04-06-2026	D/L Container	-
Kmtc Nhava Sheva	04-06-2026	Container	-
Oocl Dalian	04-06-2026	Container	-
Sibi	04-06-2026	D/300 Containers	-
Bbg Leader	04-06-2026	L/58700 Clinkers	-
Stolt Norland	05-06-2026	D/4080 Lube Oil	-
Msc Paris	05-06-2026	Container	-
Selen	05-06-2026	Container	-
Ever Excel	05-06-2026	Container	-
CmaCgm Petra	05-06-2026	Container	-
One Readiness	05-06-2026	Container	-
Inter Sydney	05-06-2026	Container	-
Gfs Jade	05-06-2026	Container	-
Azhar	05-06-2026	L/2000 Rice	-
Bi Jia Shan	05-06-2026	L/46600 Clinkers	-

Ship Sailed

Name of Vessel	Departure Date	Ships Departures Cargo	Agent
Dp World Jebel Ali	04-06-2026	Container	-
Bright Falcon	04-06-2026	Clinkers	-
Spirit Of Bertram	04-06-2026	Container	-
M.T. Karachi	04-06-2026	Tanker	-

KIBOR INTERBANK OFFERED RATES

KARACHI: Kibor interbank offered rates on Thursday (June 04, 2026). ========================== KIBOR...

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: Kibor interbank offered rates on Thursday (June 04, 2026).

KIBOR

Tenor	BID	OFFER
1-Week	11.35	11.85
2-Week	11.39	11.89
1-Month	11.52	12.02
3-Month	11.98	12.23
6-Month	12.24	12.49
9-Month	12.39	12.89
1-Year	12.44	12.94

Data source: SBP

LME OFFICIAL PRICES

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

LONDON: The following were Wednesday official prices.

ALUMINIUM

CONTRACT	BID	OFFER
Cash	3796.50	3797.00
3-month	3721.00	3723.00

COPPER

CONTRACT	BID	OFFER
Cash	13919.50	13920.50
3-month	13930.00	13932.00

ZINC

CONTRACT	BID	OFFER
Cash	3624.00	3624.50

3-month	3639.00	3639.50

NICKEL

CONTRACT	BID	OFFER
Cash	18800.00	18810.00
3-month	18990.00	19010.00

LEAD

CONTRACT	BID	OFFER
Cash	2033.00	2035.00
3-month	2034.00	2035.00

Source: London Metals Exchange.

ACTIVITIES OF KARACHI PORT TRUST, PORT QASIM

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: The Karachi Port Trust handled 174,730 tonnes of Cargo Comprising 121,166 tonnes of Import Cargo and 53,564 tonnes of Export Cargo during last 24 hours, ending at 0700 hours.

The Total Import Cargo of 121,166 tonnes Comprised of 94,674 tonnes of Containerized Cargo, 3,970 tonnes of B. Bulk Cargo, 5,646 tonnes of Soya Bean Seeds & 16,876 tonnes of Liquid Cargo.

The Total Export Cargo of 53,564 tonnes Comprised of 29,442 tonnes of Containerized Cargo, 460 tonnes of B Bulk Cargo,4,870 tonnes of Cement,9,999 tonnes of Clinkers, 1,102 tonnes of Rice, 4,473 tonnes of Talc Powder & 3,218 tonnes of Liquid Cargo.

Around, 06 ships namely, Benita, Feng Hai 66, Top Fortune, Marine Ista, Jkt Miracle, & Msc Esthi berthed at the Karachi Port Trust.

Approximately, 05 ships namely, Dp World Jebel Ali, Bright Falcon, Spirit Of Bertram & MT Karachi sailed from the Karachi Port Trust.

PORT QASIM

A total of thirteen ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, CMA CM Rimbaud and Chem Stremleft the port on Thursday morning while four more ships, Hua Chuang, Vela Nova, PGC Patreas and Sea Champion are expected to sail on Thursday afternoon.

Cargo throughput of 142,418comprising 121,022tonnes imports cargo and 21,396tonnes export cargo was handled at the Port, including containerized cargo carried in 2,264 Containers (1,054 TEUs Imports and 1,210 TEUs export)during the last 24 hours.

There are 22 ships at outer anchorage of the port, out of them six ships namely, Xin Hai Tong 50, Gas Rosea, Trimmu, Hua Chuang 66, Spirit of Bertram and Vela Nova & another ship Hansa Europe carrying Coal, Chemicals, LPG and Containers are expected to take berths at HFP & S,EVTL, SSGC and QICT respectively on Thursday, 4th June-2026, while two more container ships MSCVildax and MSC Esthi are due to arrive at Port Qasim on Friday, 5th June,2026 and two more ships namely Agios Dimitrios and MSC Ikaria VI are due to arrive at on Saturday, 6th June,2026, & DP World Channel and MSC GFS Jade are due to arrive on Sunday, 7th June-2026.

EQUITIES EXTEND GAINS

Published June 5, 2026 Updated about 2 hours ago

By Recorder Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) extended its gains on Thursday as cautious optimism surrounding a potential diplomatic breakthrough between the United States and Iran encouraged selective buying in heavyweight stocks, helping the benchmark index close firmly in positive territory.

The benchmark KSE-100 Index gained 984.86 points, or 0.58 percent, to close at 171,175.51 points against 170,190.64 points recorded in the previous session.

The market remained positive throughout the day, with the benchmark touching an intraday high of 171,455.77 points and a low of 170,563.41 points before settling near the upper end of its trading range.

BRIndex100 closed at 18,896.32 points, gaining 182.65 points or 0.98 percent over the previous session, with total turnover reaching 414.97 million shares. BRIndex30 settled at 69,276.28 points, up 1,107.88 points or 1.63 percent, on total volume of 407.95 million shares.

According to Ali Najib, Deputy Head of Trading at Arif Habib Limited, investor sentiment remained cautiously optimistic as hopes of progress in ongoing US-Iran negotiations continued to support the market. He said that although the absence of a formal agreement kept risk appetite somewhat restrained, buying interest in key blue-chip stocks enabled the benchmark index to maintain its upward trajectory.

Najib noted that Fauji Fertilizer Company (FFC), Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL), Oil and Gas Development Company (OGDC), Lucky Cement (LUCK), and Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTC) emerged as the major gainers and collectively contributed 459 points to the benchmark index. However, gains were partially offset by selling pressure in Bank Alfalah (BAHL), Meezan Bank (MEBL), Engro Fertilizers (EFERT), Service Industries (SRVI), and Packages Limited (PKGS), which cumulatively shaved off 88 points.

Overall market capitalization expanded significantly to Rs18.983 trillion compared with Rs18.864 trillion recorded in the previous session, reflecting an increase of nearly Rs120 billion in the value of listed equities.

Trading activity also strengthened considerably. In the regular market, turnover rose to 697.17 million shares from 551.95 million shares a day earlier, while traded value increased to Rs26.14 billion from Rs23.76 billion.

Market breadth overwhelmingly favored advancing stocks, highlighting the broad-based nature of the rally. In the Ready Market, 316 companies advanced, 128 declined and 48 remained unchanged out of 492 active stocks.

Activity in the trading ring remained concentrated in a handful of highly liquid counters. Beco Steel Limited emerged as the volume leader with turnover of 113.09 million shares, closing at Rs6.03 against Rs5.77 previously. Pakistan International Bulk Terminal followed with turnover of 32.17 million shares and a closing price of Rs17.32. WorldCall Telecom ranked third with 31.10 million shares traded, closing at Rs1.26.

On the gainers' board, Khairpur Sugar Mills Limited registered the highest increase in the ready market, surging by Rs209.02 to close at Rs2,373.63. Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited followed with a gain of Rs123.22, ending the session at Rs25,985.25. Conversely, Blessed Textiles Limited suffered the steepest decline, losing Rs55.93 to settle at Rs1,128.37, while Ismail Industries Limited shed Rs42.07 to close at Rs1,920.01.

Among sectoral BR indices, the BR Automobile Assembler Index advanced by 58.86 points, or 0.22 percent, to close at 27,349.97 points with turnover of 7.19 million shares. The BR Cement Index recorded a strong gain of 177.42 points, or 1.51 percent, to settle at 11,928.12 points on turnover of 60.13 million shares.

The BR Commercial Banks Index added 50.70 points, or 0.09 percent, to close at 57,332.10 points with volume of 31.26 million shares. Likewise, the BR Power Generation and Distribution Index increased by 134.98 points, or 0.49 percent, to finish at 27,767.22 points on turnover of 20.47 million shares.

The BR Oil and Gas Index climbed by 167.72 points, or 1.13 percent, to close at 15,071.13 points with trading volume of 54.54 million shares. The BR Technology and Communication Index posted a gain of 42.65 points, or 1.10 percent, to settle at 3,911.09 points on turnover of 108.10 million shares.

Looking ahead, Ali Najib said hopes surrounding a potential US-Iran diplomatic breakthrough continue to underpin investor sentiment. However, he cautioned that until greater clarity emerges on the geopolitical front, markets are likely to remain highly sensitive to headlines, with stock-specific developments expected to drive near-term performance.

Market participants will continue to closely monitor diplomatic engagements, movements in international oil prices and corporate developments for directional cues in the sessions ahead.

OPEN MARKET FOREX RATES

Updated at: 5/6/2026 8:00 AM (PST)

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	196.62	202.55
Bahrain Dinar	733.85	743.95
Canadian Dollar	199.46	206.22
China Yuan	38.00	38.75
Danish Krone	43.37	43.77
Euro	322.05	327.55
Hong Kong Dollar	34.89	35.89
Indian Rupee	2.73	2.98
Japanese Yen	1.7218	1.8209
Kuwaiti Dinar	883.35	893.75
Malaysian Ringgit	67.15	67.85
NewZealand $	161.58	166.81
Norwegians Krone	27.85	28.15
Omani Riyal	719.15	730.25
Qatari Riyal	74.80	75.75
Saudi Riyal	73.85	74.65
Singapore Dollar	214.96	220.81
Swedish Korona	30.25	30.55
Swiss Franc	350.32	356.80
Thai Bhat	8.52	8.67
U.A.E Dirham	75.37	76.37
UK Pound Sterling	372.55	378.25
US Dollar	278.20	279.45

INTER BANK RATES

Updated at: 5/6/2026 8:00 AM (PST)

Currency	**Bank Buying TT Clean**	**Bank Selling TT & OD**
Australian Dollar	199.65	200.01
Canadian Dollar	201.04	201.40
China Yuan	41.07	41.14
Danish Krone	43.23	43.31
Euro	323.04	323.62
Hong Kong Dollar	35.51	35.58
Japanese Yen	1.7400	1.7432
Saudi Riyal	74.15	74.28
Singapore Dollar	216.86	217.25
Swedish Korona	29.67	29.72
Swiss Franc	351.90	352.53
Thai Bhat	8.51	8.53
UK Pound Sterling	373.63	374.31
US Dollar	278.35	278.85

GOLD RATE

Bullion / Gold Price Today

As on Fri, Jun 05 2026, 02:58 GMT

Metal	Symbol	PKR for 10 Gm	PKR for 1 Tola	PKR for 1 Ounce	
Gold	XAU	400,574	466,734	1,245,945	
Palladium	XPD	118,577	138,162	368,823	
Platinum	XPT	169,556	197,560	527,386	
Silver	XAG	6,608	7,700	20,555	

for local market Gold Rates in Pakistan

Gold Price in Pakistan

As on Fri, Jun 05 2026, 02:58 GMT

Gold Rate	24K Gold	22K Gold	21K Gold	18K Gold
per Tola Gold	Rs. 466700	Rs. 427805	Rs. 408363	Rs. 350025
per 10 Gram	Rs. 400200	Rs. 366847	Rs. 350175	Rs. 300150
per Gram Gold	Rs. 40020	Rs. 36685	Rs. 35018	Rs. 30015
per Ounce	Rs. 1134500	Rs. 1039951	Rs. 992688	Rs. 850875

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	9,746	11,356	30,314	
Euro	EUR	1,238	1,442	3,850	
Japanese Yen	JPY	230,289	268,324	716,291	
Saudi Riyal	SAR	5,398	6,290	16,791	
U.A.E Dirham	AED	5,287	6,160	16,444	
UK Pound Sterling	GBP	1,071	1,248	3,332	
US Dollar	USD	1,440	1,677	4,478	