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SHAHID LEGAL GROUP

SLD NEWS UPDATES

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Address: Office # 403, 4th Executive floor, Sadiq Plaza, The Mall Road Lahore

Cell: 0321-4726801 || Cell: 0300-8198529

Email: Shahid193@ymail.com | reachus.247@hotmail.com

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NATIONAL TARIFF POLICY: GOVT APPROVES PHASED ELIMINATION OF IMPORT DUTIES

BR Web Desk Published May 16, 2025

In a bid to attract investment and promote exports, the federal government on Friday decided to significantly decrease import duties, including a phased elimination of additional customs duty (ACD) and regulatory duty (RD).

As per a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), PM Shehbaz Sharif has directed the abolition of ACD, which currently ranges from 2% to 7%, and RD, which currently ranges from 5% to 90%, over the next four to five years.

Additionally, he also approved a proposal to cap customs duty (CD) at a maximum of 15%. At present, CD can exceed 100% on some items.

Meanwhile, the number of CD slabs has been reduced to four, which the government believes will significantly cut legal complexities related to imports and ensure a level playing field for various industries, read the PMO statement.

FBR allows temporary import of vehicles by tourists

The development came during a key meeting on the National Tariff Policy held at the Prime Minister's Office.

Chairing the meeting, PM Shehbaz reaffirmed his commitment that the government will spare no effort in achieving a strong economy, creating employment opportunities, and ensuring the complete and lasting elimination of inflation.

He said that a comprehensive plan for fundamental economic reforms has been formulated after extensive consultation.

As part of this economic recovery agenda, the prime minister has approved a gradual reduction in import tariffs, read the statement.

"This move is being considered a major milestone towards economic improvement and will pave the way for export-led growth.

"The decision is expected to help curb unemployment and bring inflation under control. Moreover, it is likely to attract increased international investment, which will, in turn, create new job opportunities."

As per the PMO, the decision will pave the way for more foreign investment and provide local industries with easier and cheaper access to raw materials, intermediate goods, and capital equipment.

During the meeting, the prime minister reviewed all aspects of the proposal in detail. He emphasised that reducing tariffs will not only stabilise the current account deficit but will also help generate higher revenue than what is currently being collected through customs duties.

PM Shehbaz also constituted an implementation committee.

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Haroon Akhtar, and senior officials from relevant departments attended the meeting.

NO NEW TAXES ON TOBACCO CROP, ASSURES LAW MINISTER

May 17, 2025

ISLAMABAD, May 17 — Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar on Friday assured the National Assembly that no new regulations or taxes have been imposed on the tobacco sector, particularly on the crop or landowners in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Addressing the House in response to concerns raised by Members of the National Assembly Syed Waseem and Asad Qaiser, the minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to safeguarding the interests of farmers.

Tarar emphasized that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the federal government remains focused on promoting agriculture and ensuring that farmers cultivating vital crops, including tobacco, are not burdened with unnecessary levies. He clarified that while there are discussions underway regarding raw tobacco, no policy changes or fiscal measures have been enacted that would directly affect crop producers or landowners.

He further explained that the government's regulatory role begins only after the crop moves from the farm into the processing and commercial stages. This is where accountability is essential, especially considering the vast gap in tax contributions within the tobacco industry.

Highlighting the economic imbalance, Tarar revealed that two major multinational tobacco companies hold 44% of the market share and contribute over Rs 250 billion in taxes annually. In contrast, local firms, which dominate 56% of the market, contribute just slightly above 3%, resulting in a staggering estimated tax gap of Rs 200 to 300 billion.

While reiterating the government's support for the agriculture sector, Tarar stated that improving seed quality, crop protection, and farmer access to resources remain top priorities. He said the agriculture sector is the backbone of the economy and that the government recognizes the need to empower farmers through modern techniques and policy stability.

The minister also stressed that industries, especially those generating significant profits from commodities like tobacco, must play their due role in strengthening the national economy.

In closing, Tarar reassured farmers that the federal government has no intention of placing additional financial pressure on those cultivating the tobacco crop and that their concerns are being heard and addressed at the highest level.

FBR INTRODUCES NEW LICENSING RULES FOR FREIGHT FORWARDERS

May 16, 2025

Islamabad, May 16, 2025 -In a major regulatory move aimed at formalizing and streamlining Pakistan's cargo and logistics sector, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has issued a detailed framework for licensing freight forwarders across the country.

The draft rules, released via SRO 814(I)/2025, will come into effect after a 15-day consultation period to incorporate feedback from stakeholders.

Under the newly proposed rules, no individual or entity will be allowed to operate as a freight forwarder without obtaining a proper license from the designated licensing authority. Interested applicants must submit Form-A along with required documentation, including National Tax Number (NTN), Sales Tax Registration Number (STRN), proof of membership with a recognized freight forwarders association, and an application fee of Rs5,000.

The eligibility criteria for applying include being a Pakistani citizen or a registered legal entity, aged 18 or above, and possessing valid membership with a trade body registered under the Trade Organizations Act, 2013. Additionally, applicants must demonstrate insurance coverage as required by clients or carriers.

To obtain a license, freight forwarders must also deposit a security amount of Rs200,000 for operations at a single customs station or Rs500,000 for multi-station operations, in the form of Defense Saving Certificates. The license will be valid for two years and is renewable upon compliance with regulations and payment of a Rs10,000 renewal fee.

The new rules go beyond just licensing. They lay out strict operational and ethical guidelines for freight forwarders, including their responsibility to act as intermediaries between cargo owners and carriers, ensure the timely movement of goods, manage multimodal logistics, and handle documentation and customs procedures professionally. They are also responsible for issuing house bills of lading, arranging warehousing, and ensuring proper coordination with shipping lines and exporters/importers.

Significantly, the FBR has granted the licensing authority power to suspend or revoke licenses in cases of fraud, criminal conviction, regulatory violations, or unethical practices such as bribery or misrepresentation. Any violations could also lead to forfeiture of security deposits.

In the event of a licensee's death, licenses can be transferred to legal heirs if they meet the licensing conditions. Permits for clerks involved in customs operations will also be issued, with renewal conditions and penalties for violations outlined in detail.

This move by the FBR reflects a robust step toward strengthening Pakistan's logistics and trade infrastructure, ensuring that freight forwarders operate transparently and within a formalized legal structure. It also places significant compliance responsibility on freight forwarders to uphold professional standards, contributing to a more accountable cargo handling and forwarding environment.

PAKISTAN CAPS CUSTOMS DUTY AT 15%, REDUCES DUTY SLABS TO FOUR

May 16, 2025

Islamabad, May 16, 2025 – In a bold step towards comprehensive trade and economic reform, the Government of Pakistan has announced a sweeping overhaul of its Customs tariff structure by capping the maximum customs duty at 15% and reducing the number of duty slabs to four.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif made the announcement following a high-level meeting on the National Tariff Policy, terming the initiative as a "historic economic milestone."

Under the new structure, all existing customs duty rates exceeding 15% will be gradually brought down, while Additional Customs Duty (ACD) and Regulatory Duty (RD)—currently ranging from 2% to 90%—will be phased out over the next four to five years. These duties have long been seen as barriers to trade and obstacles to industrial growth, particularly for sectors reliant on imported raw materials and machinery.

The reduction in customs duty slabs from a complex multi-tiered system to just four simplified categories is expected to eliminate ambiguity, streamline import procedures, and provide equal treatment to industries across various sectors. This simplification will also enhance transparency and reduce opportunities for misdeclaration and under-invoicing at ports.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that the restructuring of the customs duty regime was developed after thorough consultations with domestic and international economic experts. The objective, he said, is to pave the way for export-led growth, reduce inflationary pressures, stabilize the current account, and boost foreign direct investment.

"This decision is a turning point in Pakistan's journey towards a modern, inclusive, and competitive economy. It will help make our industries more efficient, improve access to affordable inputs, and support job creation while attracting global investment," the PM Office stated.

The reform package is also expected to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which often struggle under high customs duty rates and regulatory complexity. By reducing duty slabs and rationalizing tariffs, the government aims to create a more conducive environment for business growth.

To ensure proper execution, the prime minister also formed an implementation committee to monitor and oversee the rollout of these measures. Senior officials, including Federal Ministers Jam Kamal Khan, Ahad Cheema, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, and PM's Special Assistant Haroon Akhtar, attended the meeting.

The new customs policy is anticipated to be a game-changer for Pakistan's economic landscape.

RTO-1 KARACHI LOCKS DOWN TOP CAR SHOWROOM OVER POS BREACH

May 16, 2025

Karachi, May 16, 2025 – The Regional Tax Office (RTO)-1 Karachi has sealed a car showroom for violating the mandatory Point of Sale (POS) integration requirements set by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

The action was taken as part of a broader crackdown on non-compliance in the retail and commercial sectors.

According to official sources, the car showroom located in the posh Clifton area of Karachi had installed a POS system physically but failed to integrate it with the FBR's real-time online monitoring platform. This violates FBR's policy aimed at ensuring transparency and proper documentation of business transactions.

The operation was carried out under the supervision of the Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue (CCIR) of RTO-1 Karachi, who emphasized the importance of full POS integration to track sales and improve tax compliance in high-revenue sectors such as automobile dealerships. The POS system is crucial for the FBR as it facilitates real-time monitoring and digital reporting of sales, production, and other business activities.

RTO-1 officials highlighted that the action was taken under Section 33 of the Sales Tax Act, 1990, which imposes stringent penalties for non-compliance. Offending businesses may face a fine of Rs 500,000 or 200% of the tax amount, whichever is greater. In more serious cases, the law provides for imprisonment of up to two years and an additional fine of up to Rs 2 million. The Act also authorizes tax authorities to seal any non-compliant business premises, as was done in this case.

This latest enforcement underscores RTO-1 Karachi's firm stance on ensuring that showrooms and other businesses adhere strictly to POS regulations. The car showroom in Clifton is among several high-profile businesses targeted for failing to comply with FBR directives.

In a recent similar move, RTO-1 Karachi sealed a well-known jewelry outlet on Tariq Road for also violating the POS integration requirement. These back-to-back actions reflect the tax office's intensified efforts to bring more transparency and accountability into sectors known for high-value transactions.

Authorities reiterated that all showrooms and retailers must integrate their POS systems with the FBR to avoid severe penalties and business disruptions.

FBR NOTIFIES TAX STAMP PRICING FOR CEMENT MANUFACTURERS

May 16, 2025

Islamabad, May 16, 2025 – The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has officially announced the tax stamp pricing for cement manufacturers under its Track and Trace System (TTS), marking another key step in enhancing tax compliance and digital monitoring within the cement sector.

In a notification issued on Friday, the FBR specified that the price of tax stamps would now include an additional Rs976.51 per 1,000 Unique Identification Marks (UIMs), over and above the existing rate of Rs1.126. This new pricing structure applies specifically to cement manufacturers, following the directives of the Licensing Committee dated April 30, 2025, and a subsequent addendum issued on May 2, 2025.

The notification clarified that this increase is aimed at covering the one-time and service costs associated with the TTS implementation. The total cost to be recovered amounts to Rs302.38 million. Recovery will be made through stamp charges until the sale of 309.66 million UIMs by the licensed service provider to cement manufacturers is completed.

The FBR's move is part of a broader effort to strengthen the digitization of production monitoring and curb tax evasion across high-revenue industries. By incorporating the cement sector into the TTS, authorities aim to improve transparency in production volumes, sales, and tax declarations.

The licensed service provider has now been authorized to collect the updated tax stamp charges directly from cement manufacturers during the tenure of the license agreement. This enforcement is expected to improve compliance and reduce the gap between actual and reported production in the cement industry, which has historically been difficult to regulate.

FBR officials emphasized that this measure reflects a step toward fairness and accountability, ensuring all cement manufacturers contribute their due share of taxes while benefiting from a streamlined and digitized monitoring system.

The TTS of the FBR is a digital monitoring mechanism designed to prevent tax evasion and ensure accurate reporting of production and sales in key industries. It uses unique tax stamps or UIMs on products to track their movement from the point of production to the point of sale.

OICCI PROPOSES STRUCTURAL CUSTOMS REFORMS TO COMBAT SMUGGLING

May 16, 2025

Karachi, May 16, 2025 – The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) has called for wide-ranging customs reforms aimed at curbing smuggling and strengthening Pakistan's trade integrity.

In its proposals for the 2025–26 federal budget, the OICCI emphasized that enhancing customs operations is critical to promoting transparency and protecting legitimate businesses.

The OICCI is one of Pakistan's oldest and most influential business chambers, representing the interests of foreign investors and multinational companies operating in the country.

A central recommendation by OICCI involves transforming import and export data into a form of controlled public property. According to the Chamber, transparent access to such data—under strict protocols—will enable better implementation of Section 25A of the Customs Act, 1969, which deals with the government's right to take over imported goods at declared values.

The OICCI further urged the government to aggressively pursue customs information-sharing agreements with more countries. While Pakistan currently has Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for data exchange with China and Iran, OICCI noted that major exporting nations still lack online integration with Pakistan's customs systems. The recent Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement signed between Pakistan and Afghanistan was cited as a positive step in fighting illicit trade through better cooperation.

To combat the growing menace of illegal goods, OICCI proposed the establishment of a specialized customs task force empowered to raid warehouses, retailers, and manufacturers dealing in illicit or counterfeit items. It also recommended stricter penalties, including criminal liability, across all levels of the supply chain.

Modernizing customs valuation procedures was another key point. The OICCI suggested incorporating online search tools, global and regional price comparisons, and involving legal brand owners to improve accuracy and reduce manipulation in declared values.

The Chamber also stressed the importance of protecting brand integrity by blocking unauthorized imports of counterfeit goods through a brand registration mechanism managed by customs in partnership with trademark holders.

By utilizing electronic data interchange, third-country invoice matching, and big data analytics, the OICCI believes customs authorities can better profile importers and focus enforcement on high-risk shipments. This would minimize delays for legitimate businesses and significantly reduce the avenues for smuggling and tax evasion, creating a more transparent and investor-friendly trade environment in Pakistan.

PAKISTAN MAY RELAX AGE LIMIT ON USED CARS IMPORT IN BUDGET 2025-26

May 16, 2025

Pakistan is reportedly considering a major policy shift by extending the age limit for the import of old and used cars from the current three years to five years.

This proposal is expected to be part of the upcoming federal budget for the fiscal year 2025–26, according to various media sources.

Currently, Pakistan allows the import of used cars up to three years old and sport utility vehicles (SUVs) up to five years old under specific schemes. The proposed revision seeks to standardize the age limit to five years for all categories of vehicles, including passenger cars, potentially expanding the options available to consumers in Pakistan's auto market.

The government had earlier introduced a 15% regulatory duty in the 2024–25 budget on used imported cars exceeding 1,300cc, which impacted prices and import volumes. In addition to revising the age limit, Pakistan is also reviewing tariff structures on Completely Built-Up (CBU) vehicles. There are discussions around reducing tariffs to below 10%, with a long-term goal of bringing overall auto-sector tariffs down to single digits over the next five years.

To ensure proper regulation, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has implemented various controls to prevent the misuse of used car import schemes. In the past, avenues like the personal baggage scheme, transfer of residence, and gift scheme were frequently exploited. Under the current Import Policy Order (IPO) 2022, only overseas Pakistanis who have not imported, gifted, or received a vehicle in the past two years are eligible to use these schemes.

The FBR has also clarified taxation rules regarding the auction of used cars. Serviceable used vehicles will not be subject to an additional 18% sales tax if the tax has already been paid at import or local purchase. However, condemned or unserviceable cars will still be taxed at auction regardless of prior payments.

If approved, this policy change could significantly benefit car buyers in Pakistan by offering more affordable and diverse options in the used cars market.

Markets » Cotton & Textile

SPOT RATE UNCHANGED ON COTTON MARKET

Cotton Analyst ...

Recorder Report Published about 2 hours ago

LAHORE: The local cotton market on Friday remained steady and the trading volume remained low. Cotton Analyst Naseem Usman told BUSINESS RECORDER that the current cotton prices in Sindh and Punjab is in between Rs 16,500 and Rs 17,500 per maund, depending on quality and payment.

The Spot Rate remained unchanged at Rs 16,900 per maund. Polyester Fiber was available at Rs 333 per kg.

Stock & Commodity

STOXX 600 ROUNDS OFF FIFTH WEEK OF GAINS

Reuters Published May 17, 2025 Updated about an hour ago

FRANKFURT: European shares rounded off their fifth week of gains on Friday, as trade deals out of the US eased tariff worries and strong corporate results provided further boost.

The region-wide STOXX 600 index closed up 0.4%. Most local bourses were also higher, with Germany's hovering near a record high.

Luxury group Richemont rose almost 7% after reporting a slightly stronger-than-expected 7% rise in quarterly sales. It lifted the personal and household goods sector 1.2%, while the luxury index rose 2.2%.

Earnings in the region have shown resilience, with first-quarter earnings now expected to increase more than previously thought, LSEG data showed earlier in the week.

Heavyweight healthcare shares were the biggest boosts, jumping 1.2%, boosted by AstraZeneca and Novartis.

Declines in basic resource miners and technology stocks limited gains on the benchmark index.

For the week, the European benchmark index rose about 2%, driven by a deal between Washington and Beijing to lower tariffs on each other.

A week ago, Trump and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer agreed on a limited bilateral trade agreement, making way for conversations that a deal with the European Union is also around the corner.

The region was closely monitoring developments from the Russia-Ukraine peace talks, after the first direct talks in more than three years between the two warring countries yielded no ceasefire.

On the data front, French unemployment rate came at 7.1% for the first quarter.

Italian EU-harmonised consumer prices rose 2% year-on-year in April, revising down preliminary data. The preliminary estimate had pointed to a 2.1% year-on-year rise.

European Central Bank policymaker Martins Kazaks said interest rates may be at their lowest point, but higher uncertainty and sudden changes could alter the policy outlook.

Among other stocks, Novo Nordisk fell 1.8%. The drugmaker ousted CEO Lars Fruergaard Jorgensen on concerns the company is losing its first-mover advantage in the obesity drug market.

CHINA, HK STOCKS DIP WITH EARNINGS

Reuters Published May 17, 2025 Updated about an hour ago

HONG KONG: Chinese and Hong Kong stocks dropped on Friday, as market sentiment came under pressure from renewed US-China tech tensions and a disappointing earnings report from Alibaba.

Both markets ended the week positively, with the Hang Seng Index posting a fifth consecutive weekly gain.

At the close, the Shanghai Composite index was down 0.4%; while China's blue-chip CSI300 index fell 0.46%.

Liquor and insurance companies led the decline, both dropping 1.4%.

In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng Index retreated 0.46%.

Index heavyweight Alibaba Group lost more than 4% after the e-commerce giant posted quarterly revenue below analysts' estimates on Thursday.

On the geopolitical front, the US Commerce Department is considering placing more Chinese companies, including ChangXin Memory (CXMT), on its restricted export list, a person familiar with the matter told Reuters.

The Bureau of Industry and Security is also looking at adding subsidiaries of Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation and Yangtze Memory Technologies Co to the "Entity List", the source said.

"Market focus has shifted to the US-China competition on other fields, such as semiconductor and healthcare, after the two countries significantly reduced tariffs for each other," said Dickie Wong, executive director of research at Kingston Securities.

While US-China tariff truce is a positive surprise to the market, a durable resolution remains challenging, given the complex bilateral relationship, Morgan Stanley analysts said in a note, adding sentiment on mainland A-shares edged down this week with lower trading volume.

JAPANESE SHARES END FLAT

Reuters Published May 17, 2025 Updated about an hour ago

TOKYO: Japanese shares recouped early losses to end flat on Friday, as stronger-than-expected domestic earnings prompted investors to overlook a stronger yen and pour more money into stocks.

The Nikkei ended flat at 37,753.72, after falling as much as 0.73% earlier in the session on a stronger yen. The index rose 0.67% for the week in its fifth straight week of gains.

The broader Topix also reversed course, inching up 0.05% at 2,740.45 and inched up 0.2% for the week.

"The market bought back stocks on optimism of corporate outlook after a series of stronger-than-expected earnings," said Shoichi Arisawa, general manager at the investment research department at IwaiCosmo Securities.

"And more-than-expected announcements for share buybacks is very positive to the market."

The Nikkei had reclaimed the psychologically important level of 38,000 earlier this week on hopes that a Japan trade deal could be on the cards after a tariff truce between the US and China.

But since then, the market has drifted lower as a lack of clarity on trade negotiations crimped gains.

WALL STREET FLAT; SET FOR STRONG WEEKLY GAINS ON TRADE OPTIMISM

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

Wall Street's main indexes were subdued on Friday, but were still on track for robust weekly gains buoyed by a U.S.-China tariff truce and cooling inflation, while focus was on a pivotal vote on President Donald Trump's tax legislations.

U.S. equities lost some steam after a measure of consumer sentiment by the University of Michigan slipped to 50.8 for May, compared with April's 52.2, while one-year inflation expectations surged to 7.3% from 6.5%.

House Budget Committee Chairman Jodey Arrington cautioned that Friday's planned vote on the tax bill might be delayed due to opposition to the measure.

At 10:10 a.m. the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 7.64 points, or 0.02%, to 42,330.39, the S&P 500 gained 5.46 points, or 0.09%, to 5,922.39 and the Nasdaq Composite gained 15.17 points, or 0.08%, to 19,127.49.

All three main indexes were poised for weekly gains.

The market found its footing earlier in the week, rallying on Monday and Tuesday after Washington and Beijing agreed to a 90-day pause in their escalating trade war.

S&P 500, Nasdaq rise on trade optimism after soft inflation data

As a result, the S&P 500 catapulted back into the green year-to-date – the first time it is in positive territory since late February. Still, the benchmark index remains about 4% shy of its all-time peak.

"The combination of a deal with the UK and taking a step back from the untenable China tariffs certainly lays out a road map that we can get multiple bilateral trade deals accomplished and that's the largest of the positive catalyst," said Art Hogan, chief market strategist at B Riley Wealth.

Trump and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer had announced a limited bilateral trade agreement last week.

Data from earlier in the week showed U.S. retail sales growth losing steam in April, while consumer prices staged a moderate rebound.

Focus would also be on comments from Federal Reserve policymakers, with at least two officials including Richmond Fed President Thomas Barkin slated to speak throughout the day.

Most megacap and growth stocks swung higher, with Alphabet leading gains with a 2.4% rise.

Big Tech was one of the biggest drivers on Wall Street this week. The information technology sector was heading towards an 8% gain, a weekly jump echoing the surge seen when traders first seized on clear signals the White House was ready to dial back its trade hostilities with Beijing.

Shares of UnitedHealth rose 1.4% after a near 11% drop in the last session, when the stock was rocked after a report the U.S. Department of Justice had begun a criminal investigation into the insurer.

Applied Materials slipped 6.6% after the chipmaking equipment maker missed estimates for second-quarter revenue.

Charter Communications rose 3% after the media company said it would buy privately held rival Cox Communications for $21.9 billion.

Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by a 1.38-to-1 ratio on the NYSE and by a 1.29-to-1 ratio on the Nasdaq.

The S&P 500 posted 13 new 52-week highs and no new lows while the Nasdaq Composite recorded 42 new highs and 42 new lows.

KSE-100 CLOSES 313 POINTS LOWER AS LATE-SESSION SELLING ERASES EARLIER GAINS

BR Web Desk Published May 16, 2025

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed mixed trading on Friday, as its benchmark KSE-100 Index swayed in both directions before closing the last session of the week lower by 313 points.

The KSE-100 faced range-bound trading in the first half, followed by strong buying in the latter hours, which pushed the index to an intra-day high of 120,506.18.

However, selling returned in the final hours to erase the intra-day gains and pushed the index into the negative territory.

At close, the benchmark index settled at 119,649.14, down by 312.77 points or 0.26%.

"This lackluster activity can be attributed to lack of trigger and investor`s preference to remain on sideline before the weekend after index gained to close at its ever high level," brokerage house Topline Securities said in its post-market report.

Top positive contribution to the index acme from ENGROH, SYS, BAHL, UBL and BAFL, as they cumulatively contributed 271 points to the index. On the other hand top negative contribution to the index came from FFC, LUCK, MARI, OGDC, PSO and EFERT, as they lost value to weigh down on the index by 476 points to the index.

On Thursday, buying rally continued at the PSX with the KSE-100 gaining over 1% to close all-time high of 119,962 level.

On week-on-week basis, the KSE-100 gained 11.64% on ceasefire between Pakistan and India with mediation from the US and the approval of loan tranche for Pakistan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Pakistan's current account (C/A) posted slight surplus of $12 million in April 2025, against massive surplus of $1.2 billion (revised) last month, data released on Friday by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) showed. On year-on-year (YoY) basis, the C/A decreased 96% against a surplus of $315 million (revised) recorded in the same month last year.

In a bid to attract investment and promote exports, the federal government on Friday decided to significantly decrease import duties, including a phased elimination of additional customs duty (ACD) and regulatory duty (RD).

As per a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), PM Shehbaz Sharif has directed the abolition of ACD, which currently ranges from 2% to 7%, and RD, which currently ranges from 5% to 90%, over the next four to five years.

Moreover, Pakistan on Friday launched its first Sovereign Domestic Green Sukuk worth Rs30 billion at the PSX, pushing the share of Shariah-compliant financing in the country's total domestic debt to 14%, announced Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb. Pakistan's domestic debt stands at Rs37 trillion, of which Rs5 trillion—approximately 14%—is Sukuk-based debt.

Aurangzeb also informed that Pakistan was in the process of "restructuring and reorganising" its debt profile in line with global standards.

"In this regard, you will be hearing about various innovative funding products for domestic and as well as for international investors", he said.

Meanwhile, the Pakistani rupee saw a marginal decline against the US dollar, depreciating 0.02% in the inter-bank market on Friday. At close, the local currency settled at 281.66, a loss of Re0.05 against the greenback.

Volume on the all-share index decreased to 572.29 million from 698.96 million recorded in the previous close.

The value of shares declined to Rs29.03 billion from Rs39.09 billion in the previous session.

At-Tahur Ltd was the volume leader with 44.63 million shares, followed by Cnergyico PK with 32.29 million shares, and Lotte Chemical with 28.64 million shares.

Shares of 465 companies were traded on Friday, of which 206 registered an increase, 209 recorded a fall, while 50 remained unchanged.

INDIAN SHARES LOG WEEKLY GAINS ON CEASEFIRE WITH PAKISTAN, US DEAL HOPES

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

India's benchmark equity indexes posted a weekly rise as investors cheered a truce with Pakistan, trade talks with the United States and expectations of domestic interest rate cuts.

The Nifty 50 rose 4.21% to 25,019.80 for the week and the BSE Sensex gained 3.62% to 82,330.59. On the day, the indexes fell about 0.2% each, dragged by a pullback in IT stocks.

"The announcement of a ceasefire between India and Pakistan eased worries of escalation of military tensions and triggered risk-on sentiment, while the U.S-China trade truce, progress in India-U.S. trade negotiations and cooling domestic inflation sustained the weekly gains," said Aishvarya Dadheech, chief investment officer of Fident Asset Management.

With foreign inflows likely to sustain, the outlook for Indian markets remains positive, said Dadheech.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday that India has offered a trade deal with zero tariffs, driving markets higher. India's trade secretary said that trade talks with the U.S. are progressing well. Trade minister Piyush Goyal will lead an Indian delegation to advance negotiations.

India's benchmarks inch higher as tech, metal stocks gain

India's more domestically-focussed small-caps and mid-caps advanced 9.2% and 7.2% this week, led by defence stocks and post-results rallies in key constituents.

"The sharp resurgence in broader markets is a sign of things changing for good," Fident Asset's Dadheech said.

All 13 major sectors advanced from a week earlier.

The IT index rose 5.8%, helped by easing recession worries in the world's largest economy. Metal shares jumped 9.3% to log their best week in four years, aided by weakness in the dollar.

Interest rate-sensitive heavyweight financials and realty shares climbed 3.8% and 10.8% after data showed retail inflation fell to a near six-year low.

India's no. 2 telecom operator Bharti Airtel declined 2.9% on the day after a $1 billion stake sale by large shareholder Singapore Telecommunications.

DUBAI AND ABU DHABI END WEEK IN POSITIVE TERRITORY AS TRUMP WRAPS GULF TOUR

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

Dubai's main share index rose to a record high on Friday, settling up 1.05%, as a slew of business deals between the United Arab Emirates and the United States boosted investor confidence.

President Donald Trump on his last stop of a Gulf tour on Friday said that the United Arab Emirates and the United States had agreed on a path for the Gulf country to buy advanced AI semiconductors from U.S. companies, a major win for Abu Dhabi's efforts to become a global AI hub.

Deals featuring advancements in AI alongside investments in aviation, energy, and other industrial sectors, have improved the outlook for various sectors and fuelled expectations for broader economic growth and development in the UAE, Osama Al Saifi, Managing Director for MENA at Traze said in a note.

Abu Dhabi's benchmark index also closed up 0.3%, the index clocked gains for fifth straight week and clocked a weekly gain of 0.29%.

Most Gulf bourses settle flat, oil prices fall

Meanwhile, oil prices also improved, with Brent crude futures rising 0.5% on Friday. O/R

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 ABU DHABI     rose 0.30% to 9,654.22
 DUBAI         rose 1.05% to 5,455.41
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SRI LANKAN SHARES GAIN FOR THE SIXTH STRAIGHT WEEK

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

Sri Lankan shares rose on Friday to end the sixth successive week with gains, as communication services stocks fuelled a higher finish to the session.

The CSE All Share index settled up 0.4% at 16,379.39. The benchmark gained 2.9% in the week - highest since late-January.

Industrial Asphalts (Ceylon) and E.B. Creasy & Company were the top two percentage gainers on the CSE All Share, rising 33.33% and 24.88%, respectively.

Trading volume on the CSE All Share index fell to 153.9 million shares from 180.1 million in the previous session.

Broad gains lift Sri Lanka shares in first session of truncated week

The equity market's turnover fell to 3.11 billion Sri Lankan rupees ($10.4 million) from 4.56 billion rupees in the previous session, according to exchange data.

Foreign investors were net buyers, purchasing stocks worth 346.1 million rupees, while domestic investors were net sellers, offloading shares worth 2.93 billion rupees, the data showed.

EUROPE'S STOXX 600 SET FOR FIFTH STRAIGHT WEEKLY RISE

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

European shares extended gains on Friday, supported by healthcare stocks, and were on track to end the week in positive territory as benign headlines about a US-China temporary truce sparked risk-on sentiment.

The region-wide STOXX 600 index rose 0.4% by 0710 GMT, set for its fifth consecutive weekly advance.

Other local bourses also traded in the green at open, with Germany's hovering near a record high.

The heavyweight healthcare sub-index led gains with a 1.4% rise, boosted by Novo Nordisk and Novartis.

The region was closely monitoring developments from the Russia-Ukraine peace talks, a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin declined to meet face-to-face with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskiyy.

According to Vladimir Medinsky, the head of the Russian delegation, talks between the representatives of the two warring countries are scheduled for the day.

Investors awaited euro zone trade balance figures for March as well as Italy's inflation rate, due later in the day.

European shares pull back after rally

Among individual stocks, reinsurance company Swiss Re fell 1.2%.

The company posted claims of $570 million from deadly wildfires in Los Angeles earlier this year.

Luxury group Richemont reported a slightly stronger-than-forecast 7% rise in quarterly sales, taking its shares 4% higher in early trading.

CHINA, HK STOCKS FALL WITH EARNINGS, US TECH RESTRICTIONS IN FOCUS

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

HONG KONG: Chinese and Hong Kong stocks extended their losses on Friday, as market sentiment came under pressure from renewed US-China tech tensions and a disappointing earnings report from Alibaba.

Tech shares lift Hong Kong stocks, earnings in focus

- At the midday break, the Shanghai Composite index was down 0.52% at 3,363.32 points.
- China's blue-chip CSI300 index was down 0.57%, with its financial sector sub-index lower by 1.31%, the consumer staples sector down 1.04%, the real estate index down 0.61% and the healthcare sub-index down 0.36%.
- In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng Index was down 0.81% at 23,262.80.
- Index heavyweight Alibaba Group lost 5.3% by midday after the e-commerce giant posted quarterly revenue below analysts' estimates on Thursday.
- On the geopolitical front, the US Commerce Department is considering placing more Chinese companies, including ChangXin Memory (CXMT), on its restricted export list, a person familiar with the matter told Reuters.

- The Bureau of Industry and Security is also looking at adding subsidiaries of Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation and Yangtze Memory Technologies Co to the "Entity List", the source said.
- "Market focus has shifted to the US-China competition on other fields, such as semiconductor and healthcare, after the two countries significantly reduced tariffs for each other," said Dickie Wong, executive director of research at Kingston Securities.
- While US-China tariff truce is a positive surprise to the market, a durable resolution remains challenging, given the complex bilateral relationship, Morgan Stanley analysts said in a note, adding sentiment on mainland A-shares edged down this week with lower trading volume.
- The smaller Shenzhen index was up 0.34%, the start-up board ChiNext Composite index was higher by 0.16% and Shanghai's tech-focused STAR50 index was down 0.59%.
- Around the region, MSCI's Asia ex-Japan stock index was weaker by 0.15% while Japan's Nikkei index was down 0.04%.

AUSTRALIA SHARES HIT OVER TWO-MONTH HIGH, RBA RATE DECISION IN FOCUS

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

Australian shares jumped to an over two-month high on Friday, led by gains in banks and miners, ahead of the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) policy decision next week, where the central bank is widely expected to cut interest rates.

The S&P/ASX 200 index rose as much as 1.2% to 8,398.2, its highest level since February 20, by 0029 GMT.

The index was on track to log its eighth consecutive session of gains.

The benchmark is up 1.8% for the week, its best weekly performance since April 28.

The RBA is expected to cut interest rates by 25 basis points on Tuesday, its second in over four years, and deliver two more cuts this year, a Reuters poll showed.

Meanwhile, iron ore prices have been on a winning streak this week, thanks to a trade truce between China and the US that lifted hopes of stronger demand. On the local bourse, miners climbed 1.7%, since China is Australia's largest trading partner.

The sub-index is on track to record its sixth straight weekly gain.

Miners BHP Group, Rio Tinto and Fortescue added 0.8%, 0.9% and 0.9%, respectively. Gold stocks advanced by 3.7%. However, the sub-index lost 10.4% this week.

Gold miners Northern Star Resources and Genesis Minerals were up 3.6% and 4.9%, respectively.

Australia shares close higher as banks, consumer stocks rise

Evolution Mining rose 4.9% and was among the top gainers on the benchmark index.

Financials rose 1%, with National Australia Bank, Westpac, ANZ and Commonwealth Bank of Australia rising between 1% and 1.9%.

New Zealand's benchmark S&P/NZX 50 index fell 0.4% to 12,834.33.

Globally, Japan's Nikkei was down 0.1% on Friday, while overnight the US S&P 500 ended 0.41% higher and the Nasdaq closed down 0.18%.

JAPANESE SHARES FALL ON STRONGER YEN

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

TOKYO: Japanese shares fell on Friday, weighed down by a stronger yen, while investors took a cautious stance after the Nikkei crossed the psychologically important level of 38,000 this week.

The Nikkei fell 0.25% to 37,659.39 by the midday break, but is set to rise 0.4% for the week to mark its fifth straight weekly gain.

The broader Topix slipped 0.19% to 2,733.8 and is on course for a 0.2% weekly gain.

"The Nikkei rose to 38,000 from around 31,000 in just over a month. Most investors don't think the index will keep rising at the same pace," said Seiichi Suzuki, chief equity market analyst at Tokai Tokyo Intelligence Laboratory.

The Nikkei has fully recouped its losses since US President Donald Trump's April 2 tariff announcements, rising more than 20% from its 1-1/2-year low hit on April 7.

The yen rose 0.3% to 145.2 against the dollar on Friday after downside surprises on US economic data this week cemented bets of more Federal Reserve rate cuts this year.

A stronger yen typically weighs on exporter shares by reducing the value of overseas earnings when converted back into Japanese currency.

Chip-related Tokyo Electron and Advantest fell 3.21% and 2.62%, respectively, to drag the Nikkei the most. Sony Group slipped 2.96%.

Bucking the trend, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group rose 1.53% after announcing a share buyback worth about 250 billion yen ($1.72 billion).

Peers Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group and Mizuho Financial Group fell 1.96% and 1.94%, respectively, even as the three banking groups posted record annual net profit in the last financial year.

Japan's Nikkei tracks US peers higher, climbs nearly 1%

"Share buybacks are a strong tailwind for stock prices, and Japanese firms are set to buy back as much as 8.5 trillion yen worth of shares in April and May alone.

The Nikkei's recovery will continue," said Tokai Tokyo's Suzuki.

Phone company KDDI also rose 0.6% after announcing as much as 400 billion yen ($2.76 billion) worth of share buybacks.

RUPEE REGISTERS MARGINAL DECLINE AGAINST US DOLLAR

- Local currency settles at 281.66 against greenback in inter-bank market

Recorder Report Published May 16, 2025
Rupee's Performance Against US Dollar Since 04 March 2025

The Pakistani rupee saw a marginal decline against the US dollar, depreciating 0.02% in the inter-bank market on Friday.

At close, the local currency settled at 281.66, a loss of Re0.05 against the greenback.

On Thursday, the rupee closed the day at 281.61.

Internationally, the US dollar fell in tandem with US Treasury yields on Friday after downside surprises on US economic data this week cemented bets of more Federal Reserve rate cuts this year.

The week started out with a mix of market tailwinds headlined by a US-China trade truce which propelled the US dollar higher, though the euphoria soon fizzled out and left currencies trading sideways.

Most of the action in the foreign exchange market came from the dollar's moves against the South Korean won, where it fell sharply for two straight days on news that Washington and Seoul discussed the dollar/won market earlier this month.

The dollar last traded 0.14% lower at 1,394.70 won.

In the broader market, the US dollar was struggling to regain its footing after an overnight slide following data which showed US producer prices unexpectedly fell in April.

Against a basket of currencies, the US dollar fell 0.1% to 100.70, though it was on track for a marginal weekly gain of 0.3% thanks to its sharp 1.3% rise on Monday.

Markets are now pricing in roughly 56 basis points worth of Fed cuts by December, up from 49 bps the previous day.

Oil prices, a key indicator of currency parity, held steady on Friday, heading for a second consecutive weekly gain due to easing US-China trade tensions though a potential return of Iranian supply limited price gains.

Brent crude futures dipped 1 cent to $64.52 a barrel by 0326 GMT.

US West Texas Intermediate crude futures added 2 cents to $61.64.

Both contracts fell more than 2% in the previous session following a selloff due to the rising prospect of an Iranian nuclear deal.

President Donald Trump said the US was nearing a nuclear deal with Iran, with Tehran “sort of” agreeing to its terms. However, a source familiar with the talks said there were still issues to resolve.

Inter-bank market rates for dollar on Friday

BID	Rs 281.66
OFFER	Rs 281.86

Open-market movement

In the open market, the PKR lost 15 paise for buying and remained unchanged for selling against USD, closing at 282.65 and 283.75, respectively.

Against Euro, the PKR lost 11 paise for buying and 3 paise for selling, closing at 315.96 and 318.56, respectively.

Against UAE Dirham, the PKR lost 6 paisa for buying and remained unchanged for selling, closing at 76.99 and 77.45, respectively.

Against Saudi Riyal, the PKR lost 5 paise for buying and remained unchanged for selling, closing at 75.26 and 75.70, respectively.

Open-market rates for dollar on Friday

BID	Rs 282.65
OFFER	Rs 283.75

PSX CROSSES HISTORIC 120,000 POINT MARK INTRADAY BUT CLOSES LOWER

May 16, 2025

Karachi, May 16, 2025 – The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) made history on Friday by crossing the psychological barrier of 120,000 points during intraday trading for the first time ever.

However, despite this significant milestone, the market witnessed profit-taking that led to a lower close.

The benchmark KSE-100 index of PSX surged as high as 120,506 points during the trading session, setting a new all-time intraday record for Pakistan's capital market. However, by the close of trading, the index had declined by 313 points, ending at 119,649—down from Thursday's record closing of 119,962 points.

Market analysts at Topline Securities described the day as range-bound, with the index fluctuating between an intraday high of +544 points and a low of -421 points. They noted that investors opted to book profits and remained on the sidelines ahead of the weekend, especially after the index's recent strong performance and record highs. The absence of any major fresh trigger also contributed to the cautious sentiment across PSX.

Positive contributions to the index came primarily from ENGROH, Systems Limited (SYS), Bank AL Habib (BAHL), United Bank Limited (UBL), and Bank Alfalah (BAFL), which collectively added 271 points. On the flip side, key negative contributors included Fauji Fertilizer (FFC), Lucky Cement (LUCK), Mari Petroleum (MARI), Oil and Gas Development Company (OGDC), Pakistan State Oil (PSO), and Engro Fertilizers (EFERT), together dragging the index down by 476 points.

From a traded value perspective, HUBCO led the market with PKR 1.24 billion in value, followed by PSO (PKR 1.21 billion), Nishat Mills (NML), Pak Elektron (PAEL), and UBL.

Later in the session, investor interest turned toward the engineering sector. The sector saw gains following the Prime Minister's announcement to gradually abolish Additional Customs Duty (ACD) and Regulatory Duty (RD) over the next four to five years. He also approved a cap on Customs Duty (CD) at a maximum of 15%, down from the current level that exceeds 100% on some items.

Overall, trading activity at PSX remained strong, with volumes reaching 570 million shares and total traded value clocking in at PKR 29 billion, signaling continued investor engagement despite the late-session pullback.

Money & Banking

US DOLLAR CLIMBS AFTER DATA

Reuters Published May 17, 2025 Updated about an hour ago

NEW YORK: The dollar rose on Friday after the latest round of economic data showed a jump in import prices while consumer sentiment remained subdued, putting it on pace for a fourth straight weekly advance.

The Labor Department said import prices gained 0.1% last month after dropping 0.4% in March as a jump in the cost of capital goods outweighed cheaper energy prices. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast import prices, which exclude tariffs, would decrease 0.4%.

The dollar began to strengthen after a separate reading from the University of Michigan Surveys of Consumers showed its Consumer Sentiment Index dropped to 50.8 this month, below the 53.4 estimate, from a final reading of 52.2 in April.

In addition, the 12-month inflation expectations of consumers shot up to 7.3% from 6.5%.

The greenback began the week with a surge of more than 1% on Monday after the United States and China announced a 90-day pause on most of the tariffs imposed on each other's goods since early April, easing fears of a global recession, but has trended lower since in part due to tepid economic data.

"There's all this data, but the headlines are taking over," said Juan Perez, director of trading at Monex USA in Washington. "The issue with (trade) developments is that they're just happening a whole lot faster, and the ongoing, never-ending lack of guidance for the future continues.

Meanwhile, we're looking at data that is not truly reflecting all of the anxiety that we've really been living through." The dollar index, which measures the greenback against a basket of currencies, rose 0.31% to 101.08, with the euro down 0.26% at $1.1158.

The greenback is up about 0.7% on the week, which would mark its biggest weekly gain in about 2-1/2 months, while the euro is down 0.8% on the week, and on track for its biggest weekly decline since early February.

The greenback is still down nearly 3% since April 2, when US President Donald Trump announced his spate of tariffs on countries around the globe. "The very idea that trade is not getting away from turbulence continues to affect the long-term faith in the dollar," said Perez.

Markets have dialed back expectations for rate cuts from the US Federal Reserve this year as a result of the signs of easing trade tensions, pricing in a 65.9% chance for the first cut of at least 25 basis points (bps) at the central bank's September meeting, according to LSEG data.

The prior view was for a likely cut in July. Against the Japanese yen, the dollar strengthened 0.24% to 146.02. Japan's economy shrank for the first time in a year and at a faster pace than expected, data for the March quarter showed on Friday.

The dollar is up 0.4% for the week against the yen. Japanese Finance Minister Katsunobu Kato said he would seek to discuss foreign exchange issues with US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on the understanding that excessive currency volatility is undesirable and hopes to meet with Bessent next week. Sterling weakened 0.31% to $1.3256 and is down 0.4% on the week.

INDIAN RUPEE CLOSE FLAT

Reuters Published May 17, 2025 Updated about an hour ago

MUMBAI: The Indian rupee closed nearly flat on Friday but notched its second consecutive weekly fall as a relief rally following an India-Pakistan truce proved fleeting in the face of sustained dollar demand from local companies and foreign banks.

On the day, outflows related to an equity block deal weighed on the rupee, while broad weakness in the dollar and mild exporter hedging helped keep a lid on the currency's losses, traders said.

The rupee closed at 85.5050 against the US dollar, nearly unchanegd from its close of 85.55 in the previous session. It declined 0.1% on the week after falling nearly 1% the previous week.

The currency hovered in a 84.6250-85.7225 range over a holiday-shortened trading week which saw the currency markets react to a ceasefire between India and Pakistan, a US-China trade pact, developments in trade negotiations between India and the US alongside choppy price action in the US dollar.

RUPIAH, WON LEAD ASIAN CURRENCY RALLY

Reuters Published May 17, 2025 Updated about an hour ago

BENGALURU: Asian currencies surged on Friday, with Indonesia's rupiah and South Korea's won leading the charge against a weakening dollar as disappointing US economic indicators cemented expectations for more Federal Reserve interest rate cuts this year.

The rupiah strengthened as much as 0.7% to 16,395 per dollar, staging a notable recovery despite being the region's worst performer year-to-date with losses exceeding 2%. The unit was last up 0.5%.

"The rupiah is playing catch up to the recovery of other Asian currencies, after an extended bout of underperformance, riding also on better sentiments in the onshore stock market," said Radhika Rao, senior economist at DBS Bank.

Jakarta's benchmark index climbed 0.6% on Friday, extending its winning streak to a fifth consecutive week with a robust 4% advance since Monday.

With inflation still within the target range, policymakers have room to reinforce their pro-growth stance with an interest rate cut this month, Rao said.

Bank Indonesia will deliver its policy decision on Wednesday, and analysts anticipate rates will remain unchanged.

Other regional currencies also advanced, with the Malaysian ringgit and Philippine peso gaining 0.2% and 0.4%, respectively, while the Thai baht added 0.2%.

The South Korean won rose 0.5%, advancing for a fourth consecutive session in its third straight week of gains.

The currency broke through the psychologically important 1,400 level on Wednesday with a 1.8% surge following talks between South Korea and the US to discuss the dollar/won market on May 5.

The sharp movement mirrors the Taiwanese dollar's early-May rally, when it surged 6% over two days. On Friday, it edged up 0.2%, heading for a seventh consecutive weekly rise.

MOODY'S PUSHES U.S. OUT OF ELITE 'AAA' CLUB CITING RISING DEBT

Reuters Published about 6 hours ago

Moody's on Friday downgraded its credit rating of the United States by a notch to "Aa1" from "Aaa", citing rising debt and interest "that are significantly higher than similarly rated sovereigns".

"Successive US administrations and Congress have failed to agree on measures to reverse the trend of large annual fiscal deficits and growing interest costs," Moody's said.

Moody's was the last among major ratings agencies to keep a top, triple-A rating for U.S. sovereign debt, though it had lowered its outlook in late 2023 due to wider fiscal deficit and higher interest payments.

US banks modest use of risk transfers is credit positive, Moody's says

On Friday, the agency changed its outlook on the U.S. to "stable" from "negative."

It typically "resolves" an outlook, meaning in case of a negative outlook it either brings it back to stable or goes ahead with a rating downgrade, within 18 to 24 months, so an update to its rating was likely at some point this year.

INDIA'S FOREX RESERVES HIT SEVEN-MONTH PEAK

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

MUMBAI: India's foreign exchange reserves rose by $4.5 billion to hit a seven month-peak of $690.6 billion as of May 9, according to data released by the central bank on Friday.

The reserves have risen by around $56 billion over 2025 so far, and are now about $14 billion below the all-time high of $704.9 billion hit in late September 2024.

Changes in foreign currency assets, expressed in dollar terms, include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of other currencies held in its reserves.

For the week ended May 9, the rupee declined by 0.9% pressured by an intensification of the India-Pakistan conflict. The two nuclear-armed neighbors announced a ceasefire on May 10.

India's forex reserves drop $2 billion, snap 8-week streak of gains

The rupee closed at 85.5050 on Friday, down 0.1% on the week in the face of persistent dollar bids from local companies and foreign banks.

Foreign exchange reserves include India's Reserve Tranche position in the International Monetary Fund.

Foreign exchange reserves (in million US dollars)

	May 9, 2025	May 2, 2025
Foreign currency assets	581,373	581,177
Gold	86,337	81,820
SDRs	18,532	18,558
Reserve Tranche Position	4,374	4,509
Total	690,617	686,064

PAKISTAN "RESTRUCTURING AND REORGANISING" ITS DEBT, SAYS AURANGZEB

Salman Siddiqui Published May 16, 2025

Pakistan is in the process of "restructuring and reorganising" its debt profile in line with global standards, said Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Friday.

"In this regard, you will be hearing about various innovative funding products for domestic and as well as for international investors", Aurangzeb said while addressing the Pakistan Stock

Exchange (PSX) via a video link at the launch of Pakistan's First Sovereign Domestic Green Sukuk worth Rs30 billion.

The launch of the Green Sukuk, a type of Islamic bond used to finance environmentally sustainable projects, is part of Pakistan's domestic debt restructuring strategy.

It was learnt that Finance ministry and the central bank have kick-started the process to make domestic debt restructuring sustainable.

This includes converting short-term loans into longer tenure instruments and reducing large interest payments on the total debt to create fiscal space for development project spending.

"We (Pakistan) want to follow the Malaysian (debt management/restructuring) model… and we can learn a lot from them and move in that direction," said Aurangzeb, without giving much detail on the Malaysian model.

The restructuring of the domestic debt profiling was reflected in the recent buy-back of T-bills and their replacement with low-cost and long-term debt instruments like Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIBs).

Back in 2024, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Governor Jameel Ahmad said the government's reliance on short-term T-bills had dropped to 21% of the total debt mix, down from 24% and was expected to fall below 20% by the end of FY25.

Climate financing:

Meanwhile, shifting his talk onto climate financing, Aurangzeb reiterated that climate change "is an existential threat for Pakistan".

He said the required financing was available, but at the same time, "we [Pakistan] are required to adopt concrete reform measures on climate".

"One should never be complacent about the financing. Now the ball is in our court to come up with investable and bankable projects."

Pakistan, having suffered catastrophic floods in 2022, has stepped up efforts to mobilise climate financing to mitigate the climate change threat.

Last week, the IMF Executive Board approved $1.3 billion in climate financing, i.e. Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) for Pakistan.

Last year in November, the country received $500 million in climate financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Earlier this year, Islamabad inked a 10-year Country Partnership Framework with the World Bank to address climate challenges.

Meanwhile, PSX Chairperson Dr Shamshad Akhtar informed on Friday that Pakistan intended to issue both Green Sukuks and Green Conventional Bonds.

“Pakistan is required $348 billion in climate adaptation by 2030, which is beyond the capacity of traditional financing alone,” she said.

Green Sukuks are seen as a gateway to the $4 trillion Islamic finance and $2.5 trillion green bond markets, according to Akhtar.

With the country’s energy mix still heavily reliant on fossil fuels, i.e. 60%, experts believe Green Sukuks can support Pakistan’s transition to renewables.

Economic indicators improve

Advisor to the Finance minister, Khurram Schehzad said Pakistan’s economy was improving as suggested by key indicators, including the country’s debt-to-GDP ratio that reduced to 65% from 74% in the recent past.

“Besides, the tax-to-GDP ratio has increased to 10.6% at present compared to 9.5% some 15-month ago. This is projected to hit 11% by end of FY26. This all became possible due to significant increase in collection of revenue in taxes in the country,” he said.

He, however, highlighted climate change and population growth as the two major challenges at national level.

Schehzad anticipated Pakistan would introduce Panda bond sometime in the last quarter of the ongoing calendar year 2025 to access to Chinese markets.

PAKISTAN’S REER INDEX CLOCKS IN AT 99.42 IN APRIL 2025

BR Web Desk Published May 16, 2025

Pakistan’s Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER), a measure of the value of a currency against a weighted average of several foreign currencies, dropped to 99.42 in April 2025, down from 101.55 (revised) in March 2025, data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Friday showed.

A REER above 100 means the country’s exports are uncompetitive, while imports are cheaper. The situation reverses when REER is below 100 on the index.

As per SBP’s latest data, the REER depreciated 2.1% month-on-month (MoM) in April 2025.

When compared with April 2024, the REER value decreased by 4.8%, when it stood at 104.44.

The SBP says a REER index of 100 should not be misinterpreted as denoting the equilibrium value of the currency.

"Movement of the REER away from 100 simply reflects changes relative to its average value in 2010 and is unrelated to its equilibrium value," the central bank said in an explanatory note on the topic.

Meanwhile, the Nominal Effective Exchange Rate Index (NEER) decreased by 1.06% MoM in April 2025 to a provisional value of 38.12 from 38.53 (revised) in March 2025.

On a yearly basis, the NEER index decreased 2.97% from the value of 39.29 in April 2024.

What is REER?

As per the central bank, REER is an index of the price of a basket of goods in one country relative to the price of the same basket in that country's major trading partners.

"The prices of these baskets expressed in the same currency using the nominal exchange rate with each trading partner. The price of each trading partner's basket is weighted by its share in imports, exports, or total foreign trade," the SBP website says.

PAKISTAN'S CURRENT ACCOUNT POSTS $12MN SURPLUS IN APRIL 2025

- On YoY basis, C/A decreases 96% against $315 million surplus in same month last year

BR Web Desk Published May 16, 2025

Pakistan's current account (C/A) posted slight surplus of $12 million in April 2025, against massive surplus of $1.2 billion (revised) last month, data released on Friday by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) showed.

On year-on-year (YoY) basis, the C/A decreased 96% against a surplus of $315 million (revised) recorded in the same month last year.

The decline in the current account surplus comes on the back of a significant increase in the import bill during the period.

"The current account surplus narrowed in April as remittances, a key source of inflows for Pakistan, declined sharply due to normalisation, while the widened trade deficit further strained the external balance," Waqas Ghani, Head of Research at JS Global, told BUSINESS RECORDER.

Overall, the figure takes Pakistan's current account to a surplus of $1.88 billion in the first ten months of the current fiscal year (10MFY25), in stark contrast to a massive deficit of $1.34 billion in the same period of the previous fiscal year.

"We maintain our FY25 current account surplus target of $2.5-3 billion, or 0.6-0.7% of GDP," said Topline Securities, in a note.

Breakdown

In April 2025, the country's total export of goods and services amounted to $3.33 billion, up 1.2% as compared to $3.29 billion in the same month of the previous year.

Meanwhile, total imports clocked in at $6.14 billion during April 2025, an increase of 15% on a yearly basis, according to SBP data.

Workers' remittances clocked in at $3.18 billion in April 2025, an increase of over 13% as compared to the previous year.

Low economic growth, along with high inflation, has helped curtail Pakistan's current account deficit, with an increase in exports also helping the cause. A high interest rate, which has declined in recent months, and some restrictions on imports have also aided the policymakers' objective of a narrower current account deficit.

PAKISTAN ISSUES RS30BN GREEN SUKUK TO FUND RENEWABLE PROJECTS

- Sukuk reflects growing investor confidence in Pakistan's economy, says Aurangzeb

Salman Siddiqui Published May 16, 2025

Pakistan on Friday launched its first Sovereign Domestic Green Sukuk worth Rs30 billion at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), pushing the share of Shariah-compliant financing in the country's total domestic debt to 14%, announced Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb.

Pakistan's domestic debt stands at Rs37 trillion, of which Rs5 trillion—approximately 14%—is Sukuk-based debt.

Addressing the event via video link, Aurangzeb said the Sukuk reflects growing investor confidence in Pakistan's economy and the capital market. Based on an Ijarah structure, the three-year Sukuk will carry a variable rental rate and is being issued under the Sustainable Investment Sukuk framework.

Green Sukuk

The bidding process was ongoing on Friday morning at the time of filing this report. The Sukuk will be listed and tradable on the PSX.

Proceeds will be utilised to fund eligible green energy projects, including the construction of three dams.

Meezan Bank is acting as the lead Joint financial advisor, along with Dubai Islamic Bank, Bank Islami, and Alfalah Islamic.

The auction is open to local retail, institutional, and corporate investors, as well as to non-resident Pakistanis (NRPs), Roshan Digital Account holders, and foreign investors.

The launch coincided with Youm-e-Tashakur (Thanksgiving Day), as the PSX opened after reaching an all-time high of 119,961.91 points a day earlier.

"The best is yet to come for both PSX and Pakistan," Aurangzeb said, highlighting investor optimism, including among global investors he met recently in London.

Green Sukuk auction on 16th

The finance minister noted that international investors have shown interest in Pakistan, provided the country maintains macroeconomic stability and continues reforms in energy, taxation, and state-owned enterprises.

Aurangzeb added that the government is in consultation with stakeholders to present a promising budget for FY26.

Business & Finance » Industry

PHDEC'S MANGO-BAGGING INITIATIVE BOOSTS EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES

Press Release Published May 17, 2025 Updated about an hour ago

MULTAN: Pakistan Horticulture Development and Export Company (PHDEC) launched its Mango Bagging Pilot Project and hosted a Workshop on Mango Orchard Management in Jalalpur, Multan.

Attended by exporters, progressive growers, and industry stakeholders, the event highlighted how mango bagging enhances fruit quality, meets international standards, and drives export growth. With Pakistan producing 1.8 million tons of mangoes annually but exporting only 7% due to quality issues, PHDEC's initiative empowers exporters to tap high-value global markets.

The workshop, themed "Mango Orchard Management During and After Fruit Harvest in the Context of Climate Change and Bagging Techniques" equipped exporters with insights to improve fruit marketability.

Abdul Ghaffar Grewal, a mango expert, shared best practices for orchard management, emphasizing post-harvest pruning and nutrition to combat climate-induced stress.

Dr Kashif from MNS-University of Agriculture, Multan, detailed bagging techniques, advising application at the marble stage for 40–45 days to ensure premium-quality fruit. These practices directly benefit exporters by producing mangoes that meet stringent buyer requirements, fetching higher prices.

PHDEC's Mango Bagging Pilot Project, now in its third season, has transformed export prospects. By distributing mango bags and facilitating the procurement of one million bags, including imports from China, PHDEC has enabled exporters to deliver blemish-free, visually appealing mangoes.

Bagged mangoes have consistently secured premium prices in over 40 countries, with exporters reporting increased demand. Athar Hussain Khokhar, CEO of PHDEC, noted, "Bagging ensures compliance with international quality standards, opening doors to high-end markets and strengthening exporter profitability."

TANVEER URGES BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO END INTERNAL CONFLICTS

Recorder Report Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: S.M. Tanveer, Patron-in-Chief of the ruling United Business Group (UBG), said that the time has come for Pakistan's business community to unite. "We must end internal conflicts and think beyond small differences.

We have tried to put an end to disputes with the opposition. Our aim should be for the FPCCI to draft the federal budget and present it to the government. If we set the policies, then no institution would dare ask us for bribes," he said. "If we stand united, we will become a powerful force." He made these remarks while addressing a dinner hosted by leading investor Aqeel Karim Dhedhi.

During the dinner, Aqeel Karim Dhedhi and other guests paid glowing tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces and pledged full support.

S.M. Tanveer praised the military for its success against India. "The enemy country India is vile—it has killed our children. We are proud of our armed forces, who launched operations after Fajr prayers and concluded them successfully by Asr. India's entire plan to eliminate Pakistan has fallen apart."

He added, "We have launched an economic war, and its results must be seen within the next five years. While global interest rates are 4–5%, Pakistan's remain at 11%, which must be reduced immediately."

Chairman BMG Zubair Motiwala remarked, "If India is wiped out, there will be no Hindu country left in the world, but God forbid, if Pakistan is eliminated, there will still be 54 Muslim nations. India wanted to turn Pakistan into Gaza, but by the grace of Allah, He helped us. It's fine to celebrate with joy, but let us thank Allah and offer prayers of gratitude." He thanked Pakistan's close ally China for its unwavering support. "Pakistan was not created to perish; it will remain strong and stable. In times of national crisis, unity is our greatest strength. Now is the time for unity, not division. Not just the business community, but all political leaders must also come together and sign a Charter of Economy. Our share in regional trade is only 4%, and we must increase it."

KCCI President Jawed Bilwani said, "In the war with India, Allah granted our armed forces success. The business community should offer two raka'ahs of prayer in gratitude. Members should also ask their families to do the same. Unity between the public and political parties must continue. We must pray for the country's development, survival, and security. The same spirit of unity and patriotism shown during the Pakistan-India tension is needed to solve all national problems."

Khalid Tawab said, "We are proud of the strength our military demonstrated in just one night. With Allah's help, they proved the saying: 'One strike of the blacksmith is worth a hundred of the goldsmith.' The war has united us slightly, but we need to become one nation."

Ahmed Chinoy praised Aqeel Karim Dhedhi for honouring the top military leadership. He paid strong tribute to Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Air Staff Zaheer Ahmad Babar, and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf for their wise leadership, patience, and strategic competence in difficult times.

The event was also addressed by Businessmen Group Chairman Zubair Motiwala, KCCI President Jawed Bilwani, Khalid Tawab, and Ahmed Chinoy. Notable attendees included former State Bank Governor and Pakistan Stock Exchange Chairperson Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Arif Habib (Chairman, Arif Habib Group), Saqib Fayaz Magon, Aman Paracha, Asif Sakhi, Tariq Haleem, Rafiq Suleman, Abdullah Zaki, Mian Zahid Hussain, Rasheed Jan Mohammad, Asif Inam, Iftikhar Ahmed Sheikh, Younus Soomro, Abdul Sami Khan, Hassan Bakhshi, Malik Khuda Bakhsh, Faisal Moiz Khan, Anjum Nisar, Zubair Chhaya, Faisal Khalil, Rehan Hanif, Haji Ghani Usman, Abdul Rasheed Godil, Sharjeel Goplani, Naheed Masood, Rizwan Shahid, Nadeem Mahboob Magon, Shahid Javed Qureshi, Shakeel Ahmed Dhingra, and many other prominent business personalities.

ILLICIT TOBACCO TRADE THRIVES AS TTS FAILS TO HELP CURB VIOLATIONS

Mohammad Bilal Tahir Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: Inefficiency of the Track and Trace System (TTS) in the tobacco sector is causing huge losses to the tune of Rs400 billion to the national exchequer every year, industry experts said.

Sharing the Institute of Public Opinion Research's 2024 (IPOR) findings, they said the unchecked illicit tobacco trade thrives in Pakistani markets.

The study showed compliant brands follow all the requirements stipulated by the Government of Pakistan.

These requirements include having a Track and Trace Stamp, a graphical health warning, a printed retail price, an underage warning, and the manufacturer's name on the packaging.

These brands are also compliant with the Brand Licensing Regime of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and are sold above the minimum legal price of Rs162.25.

The study further explored that locally manufactured duty-not-paid brands do not comply with one or more of the stipulated requirements by the government.

These brands also fail to comply with the Brand Licensing Regime of the FBR and are sold below the minimum legal price of Rs162.25.

Smuggled brands are completely non-compliant with the requirements. These brands do not have a Track and Trace Stamp and other guidelines lay down by the Government of Pakistan.

Regarding Track and Trace System (TTS) compliance at the point of sale, a total of 413 brands were found in the market. Out of these, only 19 brands had the TTS stamp in all areas. Thirteen brands were found both with and without the TTS stamp. Ninety-five of the brands were locally manufactured and did not have the TTS stamp. Additionally, 286 smuggled brands were found without the TTS stamp.

Industry expert Osama Siddiqi said the economic impact will further deteriorate if these illicit brands remain unchecked.

To solve this issue, he advised the authorities to ensure TTS coverage and routine inspections.

AHSAN ARTICULATES GOVT'S LONG-TERM ECONOMIC VISION

Naveed Butt Published May 17, 2025 Updated about an hour ago

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal, on Thursday, articulated the government's long-term economic vision aimed at transforming Pakistan into a modern, knowledge-based and inclusive economy, while calling upon development partners to continue their collaborative role in supporting Pakistan's reform and development agenda.

Addressing the Development Partners Workshop in Islamabad, the minister extended his appreciation to multilateral and bilateral institutions for their sustained support during national emergencies, public health crises, and economic challenges. He remarked that the solidarity shown by development partners had been both "timely and transformative," particularly in times when Pakistan faced some of its most testing circumstances.

The minister said that Pakistan, like many countries in the Global South, faced a complex set of challenges including fiscal constraints, climate shocks, food and water insecurity, and development gaps. However, he noted that the country also stood at the cusp of significant opportunity, given its young and growing population—65 per cent of whom are under the age of 30.

Outlining the government's economic transformation plan titled, Uraan Pakistan, Prof Iqbal said the vision aims to position Pakistan as a $1 trillion economy by 2025 and a $3 trillion economy by 2047. The roadmap, he said, is anchored in the "Five Es Framework"—focusing on Exports, E-Governance, Equity and Empowerment, Environment, and Energy—as key pillars for strategic development.

Under the first pillar of exports, the minister stressed the need for diversifying Pakistan's export base beyond textiles to sectors such as information technology, pharmaceuticals, food processing, creative industries, and the blue economy. He highlighted ongoing efforts to expand global market access through Special Economic Zones under CPEC, and regional connectivity via Central and West Asian corridors.

On E-Governance, Prof Iqbal said the government had launched the "Digital Pakistan" initiative aimed at digitising public services, expanding broadband coverage, promoting digital literacy, and enabling youth-led entrepreneurship. He stated that Pakistan's IT exports had already crossed the $2.5 billion mark and held significant potential for growth. He invited development partners to contribute in building digital infrastructure, nurturing human capital, and enhancing cyber resilience.

The third pillar, Equity and Empowerment, places citizens at the centre of the development process. The minister highlighted initiatives aimed at improving health, education, nutrition, and skills development, alongside programmes for gender equity and economic inclusion in less developed regions such as Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, and the newly-merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He also announced the declaration of a "national education emergency," acknowledging the urgent need to bring over 23 million out-of-school children into the education system if Pakistan is to remain competitive in the 21st century.

"Our goal is to leave no one behind," he emphasised, calling on development partners to collaborate on innovative solutions to address the country's human development deficits.

Prof Iqbal concluded his address by reaffirming the government's commitment to reform, inclusive development, and strategic partnerships. He called upon the development community to continue playing a constructive role in enabling Pakistan to realise its long-term goals. "Together, we can turn Pakistan's potential into sustainable progress," he remarked.

PVMA SEEKS GOVT'S HELP TO RECOVER DUES AGAINST USC

Recorder Report Published May 17, 2025 Updated about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: Sheikh Umer Rehan, Chairman of Pakistan Vanaspati Manufacturers Association (PVMA), has urged Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production, Haroon Akhtar Khan, to take immediate notice of billions of rupees outstanding dues against Utility Stores Corporation (USC) and devise a permanent solution.

Rehan warned that “If the current situation continues, many ghee mills will be forced to shut down operations, leading to serious disruptions in the national supply of ghee and cooking oil.” He expressed grave concern over the non-payment of billions of rupees in outstanding dues owed to ghee and cooking oil manufacturers by the now-defunct Utility Stores Corporation (USC). These payments, pending for several months, have pushed the industry into a deep financial crisis, threatening the continuity of production and raising fears of potential shutdowns.

Rehan stated that this critical issue has been brought repeatedly to the attention of senior government officials and relevant ministers, yet no concrete progress has been made. “Due to the delay in payments, the working capital of ghee and oil manufacturers remains stuck, severely impacting cash flow and creating unsustainable financial pressure,” he said.

Highlighting the recent closure of the Utility Stores Corporation by the government, the PVMA chairman pointed out that manufacturers’ substantial investments remain trapped. “Despite supplying subsidized products under government directives, mills have not been paid. The dissolution of USC without settling these liabilities has only worsened the crisis,” he added.

Rehan called on the government to urgently arrange for the clearance of these outstanding dues to protect the industry from further damage and ensure the uninterrupted availability of essential edible oil products to the public.

CDWP CLEARS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WORTH RS15.9BN, REFERS RS127BN SCHEMES TO ECNEC

BR Web Desk Published May 16, 2025

The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) on Friday approved ten development projects, five of which, worth Rs15.9 billion, were cleared at its own level, while five major schemes amounting to approximately Rs 127.1 billion were referred to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) for final approval.

The meeting, chaired by Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, reviewed proposals across multiple sectors including higher education, IT, environment, governance, and transport.

Among the key projects referred to ECNEC was the Rs40.76 billion revised FBR modernization project, aimed at overhauling the tax authority’s digital infrastructure with World Bank funding.

It includes cloud deployment, software upgrades, and the rollout of advanced tools like e-way billing, vehicle tracking, and faceless assessments.

ECNEC approves 9 uplift projects worth Rs355.736bn

Another major referral included the Rs27 billion Chief Minister Punjab Laptop Program, a non-PSDP-funded initiative to distribute laptops to over 112,000 students across the province to promote digital literacy and human capital development.

CDWP also referred the Rs12.3 billion Sindh schools reconstruction project to ECNEC. The project aims to rebuild flood-damaged schools, with a focus on girls' and mixed-enrollment institutions in the worst-hit districts.

Two transport projects in Sindh, the Rs37.7 billion Sindh Coastal Highway (Phase II) and the Rs9.28 billion dualization of Tando Allahyar–Tando Adam Road, were also forwarded for ECNEC consideration.

Projects approved at the CDWP level include the Rs7.4 billion Revamping IT Industry Landscape, aimed at workforce training and strategic branding to boost exports, and the Rs2.45 billion innovation centre at Islamia College University, Peshawar.

Ecnec approves 13 key projects worth Rs1.275trn

In the environment sector, the CDWP approved a UN Habitat-funded Rs106 million project for developing a national urban strategy and climate resilience guidelines to reduce the impact of urban flooding and climate disasters.

Speaking during the meeting, Ahsan Iqbal stressed that only those projects that directly contribute to institutional efficiency and national growth should be included in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP).

He emphasized aligning projects with the "URAAN Pakistan" vision, ensuring cost transparency, and curbing inflated estimates.

The minister also directed the Planning Ministry to develop a construction rate notification mechanism and encouraged coordination between the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Punjab government for consolidated laptop procurement.

AURANGZEB ENGAGES AMERICAN BUSINESSES ON BUDGET 2025-26

May 17, 2025

Islamabad, May 17, 2025 – Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a high-level meeting on Friday with representatives of American businesses in Pakistan to discuss key tax and economic proposals for the upcoming 2025-26 federal budget.

The meeting took place with a delegation from the American Business Council (ABC), led by ABC President Kamran Attaullah Khan, and included senior executives from several prominent American companies operating across various sectors in Pakistan. Senior officials from the Finance Division and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) also participated in the session.

At the beginning of the discussion, Aurangzeb shared highlights from his recent visit to Washington, where he attended the Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. He mentioned productive engagements with the US-Pakistan Business Council and reiterated the government’s commitment to strengthening economic ties with American stakeholders.

Aurangzeb acknowledged the contributions of American businesses to Pakistan’s economy, noting that their investment and operational footprint play a vital role in fostering growth. “We deeply value our partnership with the American business community and aim to enhance collaboration through a stable, predictable policy environment,” he stated.

The ABC delegation raised several budget-related concerns and sector-specific challenges. In response, Aurangzeb emphasized that constructive engagement must extend beyond the annual budget process. “Policy dialogue should be a continuous exercise, not just confined to a fiscal cycle,” he remarked.

The finance minister highlighted ongoing reforms aimed at fiscal consolidation and macroeconomic stabilization. He underscored the importance of broadening the tax base, enhancing compliance, and eliminating inefficiencies through digitalization. “Our reforms are focused on formalizing the economy, streamlining the FBR, and ensuring transparency through technology-driven solutions,” said Aurangzeb.

He also noted that while Pakistan has secured financial backing for several initiatives, the real need now lies in technical expertise. “In many areas, we require knowledge and skill sets more than capital. Collaboration with global partners can help accelerate reform implementation,” he added.

The American Business Council appreciated the government’s openness and reaffirmed their willingness to work closely with the authorities.

The meeting concluded on an optimistic note, with both sides agreeing to deepen engagement and explore new avenues for investment, trade, and economic development.

PAKISTAN’S TEXTILE EXPORTS NEAR $15 BILLION IN 10MFY25

May 16, 2025

Islamabad, May 16, 2025 – Pakistan’s textile exports have shown a strong performance during the first ten months (July to April) of the fiscal year 2024-25, reaching close to the $15 billion mark.

According to the latest data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the country's textile exports rose by 8.41%, totaling $14.83 billion compared to $13.68 billion in the same period of the previous fiscal year.

This growth in textile exports has been primarily driven by a significant increase in the shipment of several key textile products. Notably, exports of knitwear surged by 15.47%, reaching $4.12 billion, up from $3.57 billion last year. Bed wear exports also posted healthy growth, increasing by 12.18% to $2.57 billion.

Other textile categories contributing to the export surge include towels, which grew by 4.49% to $903.33 million, and tents, canvas, and tarpaulin products, which increased by 11.65% to $109 million. The export of readymade garments saw a notable boost, rising by 17.52% to $3.39 billion compared to $2.89 billion in the corresponding period last year.

Additionally, the export of art silk and synthetic textile grew by 9.74% to $330.86 million, while made-up articles (excluding towels and bed wear) rose by 9.10% to $642.65 million. Exports of other miscellaneous textile materials also showed a modest increase of 2.59%, totaling $610.87 million.

Despite these gains, some segments of the textile sector experienced setbacks. The export of raw cotton plummeted by 98.45%, reaching just $0.87 million from $56.09 million last year. Cotton yarn exports declined by 31.91% to $576.02 million, while cotton carded or combed exports nearly disappeared, dropping by 99.28% to just $6,000. Similarly, exports of yarns other than cotton fell slightly by 4.08% to $27.59 million.

On a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, textile exports for April 2025 dipped slightly by 1.35%, recording $1.22 billion as compared to $1.24 billion in April 2024. Moreover, on a Month-on-Month (MoM) basis, textile shipments dropped sharply by 14.64% in April 2025, down from $1.43 billion in March.

Overall, while there are fluctuations in some areas, the upward trend in Pakistan's textile exports underlines a resilient performance in the sector amid global economic challenges.

Business & Finance » Companies

ABHI PARTNERS WITH LULU FINANCIAL HOLDINGS

Recorder Report Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: Pakistan's fintech ABHI, through its Middle East chapter, has partnered with LuLu Financial Holdings, a leading global financial services conglomerate, to enhance financial inclusion and improve access to timely remittance solutions.

As part of the partnership, workers in the UAE will be able to access their earned wages instantly and remit funds to their families back home through LuLu Exchange without having to wait for payday.

Through this initiative, workers in the UAE will benefit from Earned Wage Access (EWA) and Send Now, Pay Later (SNPL) services, giving them greater financial flexibility and control over their income. By offering instant access to earned wages and enabling timely remittances, the partnership addresses a key financial need among expatriate workers, empowering them to support their families with greater ease and security.

Abhi, an embedded finance platform specializing in technology-driven solutions, will provide the operational framework for LuLuFin. This will enable customers to access their earned wages before their scheduled payday while also allowing employees to send money internationally instantly with the flexibility to defer payment. The service will be rolled out across all major corridors, with the launch for Pakistani customers scheduled for May.

Commenting on this development Thampi Sudarsanan, Chief Executive Officer LuLu Exchange UAE, said that this partnership with ABHI represents a bold step toward redefining financial connectivity for global diasporas. By leveraging cutting-edge technology, we aim to create a seamless bridge for expatriates to support their families, setting the stage for a future where financial inclusivity knows no borders, he added.

Omair Ansari, Co-Founder & CEO of Abhi Middle East Limited, said that the partnership with LuLu Financial Holdings marks a significant step-in enabling expatriates to access their hard-earned wages seamlessly and support their families back home without financial strain.

By integrating ABHI’s technology with Lulu’s extensive market expertise, we are dedicated to promoting financial inclusion and providing underserved communities with greater flexibility and convenience in managing their finances, he added.

This partnership underscores LuLuFin’s commitment to enabling economic empowerment through innovative financial solutions. By joining hands with ABHI, a pioneer in digital financial services, the initiative will ensure that individuals and small businesses gain access to timely credit, which can be instrumental in fostering entrepreneurial growth and uplifting communities.

FLYDUBAI COMMENCES ITS OPERATIONS AT BKIAP

Recorder Report Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: FlyDubai has commenced its operations at Bacha Khan International Airport, Peshawar (BKIAP). The inaugural flight FZ-375 from Dubai landed at BKIAP last night carrying 164 passengers and was welcomed with the traditional water cannon salute in a ceremonial reception.

Following the aircraft’s arrival, a celebratory cake-cutting ceremony was held at the airport terminal.

The event was attended by numerous high-ranking officials, including the Airport Manager, Airside Manager, Duty Terminal Manager, FlyDubai Director Commercial, Chief Security Officer ASF, CFRO, Deputy Director Operations ASF, Deputy Director FIA, and several FlyDubai staff members.

"This new service represents a significant milestone in expanding aviation connectivity between Peshawar and the Gulf region," said PAA spokesman.

"It will also enhance access to European destinations for travellers from this region," he added. The inaugural return flight departed from Peshawar to Dubai as scheduled at 02:20 hours, carrying 185 passengers.

This new route is expected to boost tourism and business travel while providing more options for the significant Pakistani expatriate community working in the United Arab Emirates and beyond.

NEW PAINT WARRANTY PROGRAMME 'AITMAAD KA NAYA RUNG' LAUNCHED

Recorder Report Published May 17, 2025 Updated about 2 hours ago

LAHORE: Nearly three in every four Pakistani homeowners today prioritize quality and long-term performance while purchasing paint. In fact, the latest research by Dulux reveals that paint consumers in Pakistan consistently trust the brand for its superior quality and durability.

In 2021, AkzoNobel Pakistan Limited, a leading paint and Coatings Company and the maker of Dulux Paints, launched the Dulux Assurance programme. This breakthrough initiative was designed to assure paint customers of Dulux's superior quality, and offered three months guarantee on perfect colour, uniform finish, and stated coverage on its marquee seven products.

Encouraged by the overwhelming customer response, AkzoNobel has further built on that promise and launched the new Dulux Assurance™ Warranty Programme — the first-ever warranty programme in Pakistan paint industry.

Mubbasher Omar, CEO of AkzoNobel Pakistan said, "For nearly 60 years, AkzoNobel has been a trusted partner for millions of families in Pakistan. Today's urban customers are increasingly seeking paints that merge the best of aesthetics with long-lasting performance.

At Dulux, we understand that choosing the perfect paint that delivers assured results can be overwhelming and we're addressing this key customer concern with Dulux Assurance™ Warranty Programme. Our exceptional quality now comes backed by an unmatched warranty, making Dulux the ultimate "Aitmaad Ka Naya Rung".

At the core of new Dulux Assurance™ Warranty Programme is the new warranty up to 12 years that covers 13 solutions across interior, exterior, waterproofing and enamel paints.

MEHDI JOINS JAZZ AS GROUP HEAD CORPORATE, REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Recorder Report Published May 17, 2025 Updated about 2 hours ago

ISLAMABAD: Zaheer Mehdi has joined Jazz as Group Head Corporate and Regulatory Affairs, effective June 16, 2025.

In this role, he will also support governance across Jazz's financial services entities — Mobilink Bank and JazzCash — as the company strengthens its institutional oversight and strategic preparedness.

Zaheer brings over 30 years of experience in corporate banking, regulatory affairs, public policy, and financial services.

Prior to joining Jazz, he served as Chief Government and Corporate Relations Officer at Engro Corporation, where he led regulatory advocacy and contributed to corporate strategy as part of the Executive Committee. His distinguished career includes senior roles at Standard Chartered, where he served as CEO of Standard Chartered Modaraba and Managing Director of Standard Chartered Bank, working closely with regulators, policymakers, and industry stakeholders.

As part of this transition, Jazz also announced that Syed Fakhar Ahmed, who has led the Corporate and Regulatory Affairs function with distinction, will now take on the role of Advisor, Special Initiatives. Over the years, Fakhar has played an instrumental role in advancing Jazz's public policy agenda, expanding high-level engagement, and ensuring the company's credible voice during moments of national importance — from the COVID-19 pandemic and 2022 floods to the evolving geopolitical climate.

Welcoming him to the leadership team, Aamir Ibrahim, CEO of Jazz and Chairman of Mobilink Bank, said, Aamir Ibrahim, CEO of Jazz, said: "Zaheer's appointment reflects our commitment to strengthening institutional relationships and regulatory alignment as we evolve into a multi-vertical ServiceCo. His cross-industry experience and deep understanding of policy and governance will be key to our next chapter. I would also like to thank Fakhar for his steady leadership and the impact he's made in advancing Jazz's external engagement agenda."

These leadership changes are aligned with Jazz's broader transformation into Pakistan's leading ServiceCo—an integrated digital services company serving over 100 million users across fintech (JazzCash), entertainment (Tamasha), digital self-care (SIMOSA), insurtech (FikrFree), cloud (Garaj), and gaming (GameNow). This evolution reflects Jazz's strategic shift from connectivity to capability, delivering technology-driven platforms that improve lives and livelihoods across the country.

NVIDIA SEEKS SHANGHAI R&D SITE AFTER US CHIP CURBS

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

HONG KONG: Nvidia is seeking a site in Shanghai for a research and development centre, three sources close to the matter said, reflecting the strategic significance of the Chinese market where U.S. curbs on advanced chip exports have hit sales.

The U.S. chipmaker began the search in early 2025 and is primarily evaluating locations in Shanghai's Minhang and Xuhui districts, one of the sources said.

The project gained momentum after a surprise visit to China by Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang last month, said two of the sources.

Huang, who has consistently said China is critical to Nvidia's growth, made his visit immediately after the U.S. placed new restrictions on China-bound shipments of its H20 chips, the only AI chip the company can sell legally in China.

Huang met senior Chinese officials, including Vice Premier He Lifeng and Shanghai's mayor Gong Zheng.

Nvidia supplier Foxconn cuts outlook due to currency appreciation

Reuters reported earlier this month that Nvidia plans to release a downgraded version of the H20 chip for China in the next two months, as it seeks to prop up sales in the country, where it has been lost market share to domestic rivals such as Huawei.

China generated $17 billion in revenue for Nvidia in the fiscal year ending January 26, accounting for 13% of the company's total sales.

The local government of Shanghai, which hosts China's largest foreign business community, including firms such as Tesla, has expressed willingness to offer incentives for the Nvidia project, including tax reductions, said two of the sources.

The local authorities are also considering offering a substantial amount of land to Nvidia for its China R&D centre, one source added.

Nvidia declined to comment, while the Shanghai city government did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The sources declined to be named, as the plan is not public.

Following his visit to China, Huang told CNBC that the country's AI market could reach approximately $50 billion within the next two-to-three years.

He said that being excluded from this rapidly expanding sector would represent a "tremendous loss" for Nvidia, especially as competition with Huawei intensifies.

During an earnings call in February, before H20 chip sales to China were restricted, Nvidia executives said the company's sales to China were about half the level before U.S. export controls.

Since 2022, the U.S. government has imposed restrictions on the export of Nvidia's most advanced chips to China, citing concerns over potential military applications.

The Financial Times first reported on Friday about Nvidia's plan to build a R&D centre in China.

HYUNDAI INDIA AIMS FOR 7%-8% ANNUAL EXPORTS GROWTH AFTER QUARTERLY PROFIT BEAT

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

Hyundai Motor India said on Friday it expects exports to grow 7%–8% in the fiscal year to March 2026, after a 14% rise in fourth-quarter overseas shipments helped it beat profit estimates.

The carmaker posted a quarterly profit of 16.14 billion rupees, down 4% year-on-year but well above analysts' expectations of 13.17 billion rupees, according to LSEG data.

Exports for fiscal 2025 grew 0.1%, hurt by the Red Sea crisis.

The South Korean carmaker aims to make India its top export hub outside its home market and a base for emerging markets.

Hyundai said it is preparing to start production at its third plant in Maharashtra by the third-quarter, allocating 40% of this year's 70 billion rupee ($818.5 million) capex to expand output from an initial 130,000 units.

The company joins market leader Maruti Suzuki in targeting higher exports to offset weak domestic demand, while aiming for a 1%–2% rise in domestic sales this fiscal amid rising competition.

Hyundai Motor books 2% rise in Q1 operating profit

It also plans to launch 20 new combustion engine models and six electric vehicles by fiscal 2030, with eight slated for release over the next two years.

For the current year, Hyundai's Indian arm expects earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA margin to remain in double-digits. It reported a fourth-quarter EBITDA margin of 14.1%.

It also said it aims for its EVs to capture a higher market share than for those of its combustion engine vehicles by March 2026.

Shares of the company closed 1% higher on the day. Since listing in late October 2024 after India's biggest initial public offering, Hyundai India is down 5%.

PAKISTAN TEXTILE MANUFACTURER TO ESTABLISH IT/EV DIVISION AS SECONDARY BUSINESS

- Says textile business to remain the principal business

BR Web Desk Published May 16, 2025

Bilal Fibres Limited, a textile manufacturer, said on Friday that its Board has approved the proposal to establish IT/Health Tech/EV Division as a potential secondary line of business.

The listed company announced the development in a notice to the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) today.

"The Board of Directors of the company deliberated upon the strategic diversification of the company's business in view of the current suspension of its textile operations," the company said.

It said that the Board reaffirmed that the textile business remained the principal business.

"The Board approved the proposal to establish IT/Health Tech/EV Division to explore opportunities in the technology sector, including the provision of B2B, B2C services etc as a potential secondary line of business of the company in compliance with Clause 3 (ii) of the Memorandum of Association of the company and subject to completion of necessary corporate formalities where required," the notice to the PSX said.

Meanwhile, the company also announced the resignation of Anwaar Abbas from the office of director, with effect from 16th May 2025.

The Board has appointed Muhammad Usman Saber, an IT professional, as "director with immediate effect to fill the casual vacancy on the Board".

SAPPHIRE FIBRES LIMITED SEEKS MAJORITY STAKE IN RAFHAN MAIZE

BR Web Desk Published May 16, 2025

Sapphire Fibres Limited has expressed its intention to acquire up to 6,991,052 voting shares (representing 75.69% of the paid-up capital) of Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited (RMPL), one of Pakistan's largest agro-based companies.

This was shared by RMPL in a notice to the Pakistan Stock Exchange on Friday.

"It is hereby informed that Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited has received firm intention from Sapphire Fibres Limited to acquire up to 6,991,052 voting shares (representing 75.69% of the paid-up capital) of the target company, beyond the thresholds prescribed under section 111 of the Securities Act, 2015," read the notice.

The company said that the intention was notified to the board of directors of RMPL on May 16, 2025.

"The securities exchange is requested to make the above information immediately available to the shareholders of RMPL under regulation 5(1), by placing it on the notice board and through notification."

Rafhan Maize announces major expansion to boost production & exports

RMPL started operations in Pakistan as a corn refining industry in 1953. Over the years, the company has grown into one of the biggest agro-based industries of Pakistan.

The company produces a variety of food ingredients and industrial products using maize as a basic raw material to manufacture and sell a number of industrial products, principal ones being industrial starches, liquid glucose, dextrose, dextrin and gluten meals.

Markets » Energy

LESCO TO ENSURE UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY

Recorder Report Published May 17, 2025 Updated about 2 hours ago

LAHORE: The Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has taken several proactive measures to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the summer season. The company has issued directives to all offices to balance the load on distribution transformers to prevent overloading and ensure a stable power supply.

According to details, load balancing will help reduce transformer burnouts and tripping incidents which can cause power outages and disrupt the supply. With the onset of summer, the load on transformers has increased due to the rising temperatures. To mitigate this, the LESCO has initiated measures to prevent transformer burnouts, which not only cause financial losses to the company but also result in prolonged power outages for consumers.

In anticipation of the heatwave, the LESCO has issued directives to its field staff to take necessary precautions and ensure that the power supply remains stable. These measures are expected to minimize disruptions and provide relief to consumers during the peak summer months.

POL PRICE ADJUSTMENT: OGRA'S ADVICE DISREGARDED

Wasim Iqbal Published about 2 hours ago

ISLAMABAD: Consumers see a smaller reduction in high-speed diesel (HSD) prices than initially proposed by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra). Effective May 16, 2025, the federal government has reduced HSD price by Rs2 per litre, significantly less than Ogra's recommended Rs4.09 per litre decrease.

Meanwhile, petrol prices will remain unchanged, as a result of government adjustments to the inland freight equalization margin (IFEM) and exchange rate adjustments, despite OGRA suggesting a Rs1.25 per litre decrease.

The federal government adjusted Rs2.09 per litre out of total recommendedRs4.09 per litre decrease in HSD in exchange rate and IFEM on HSD.

Avg of platts with incidentals and duty on HSD reduced by Rs4.09 per litre from Rs159.47 per litre on May 1 to Rs155.38 per litre on May 16, 2025.

The government allowed exchange rate impact of 84 paisa in the review.

The IFEM increased by Rs1.55 per litre from Rs3.33 per litre to Rs4.88 per litre.

District margin and dealer margin on HSD was kept unchanged at Rs7.87 per litre and Rs8.64 per litre, whereas, extra margin reduced from 31 paisa to 1 paisa.

Avg of platts with incidentals and duty on petrol reduced by Rs1.25 per litre from Rs151.71 per litre on May 1 to Rs150.46 per litre on May 16, 2025.

The government allowed exchange rate impact of 1.25 per litre from 0.09 paisa to Rs1.34 per litre in the review.

The IFEM remained unchanged at Rs6.30 per litre.

GLOBAL LNG: ASIAN SPOT LNG PRICES RISE SLIGHTLY ON US-CHINA TARIFF TRUCE

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

LONDON: Asian spot liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices rose slightly for the second week running amid a slight uptick in demand as industrial sentiment improved

following a 90-day tariff truce agreed by the United States and China during trade talks.

The average LNG price for July delivery into north-east Asia was at $11.75 per million British thermal units (mmBtu), up from $11.50/mmBtu last week, industry sources estimated.

“Activity has picked up somewhat and prices have started to trend upwards with some utilities and traders stepping in to pick up June cargos,” said Toby Copson, chairman at Davenport Energy Partners.

He added that the market was not tight from a fundamental perspective but lower prices have tempted some buyers who need to satisfy their contractual volume obligations.

In April, China, the world’s largest LNG buyer, recorded its lowest LNG demand since October 2022, and has been reselling U.S.-sourced LNG cargoes to Europe due to a tariff war with the United States.

A 90-day tariff truce was agreed by the United States and China during trade talks in Switzerland last weekend.

This could unblock some of the two-way trade brought to a standstill by the conflict between the world’s two biggest economies. If a final deal between the two powers is agreed, it might spur economic activity in China and support a pick up in gas demand.

Global LNG: Asian spot prices hold at 1-year low as demand remains tepid

“While these tariffs are unlikely to have an effect on physical LNG flows, with China’s 25% tariff on U.S. LNG still enough of an incentive for Chinese firms to send their U.S. cargoes elsewhere, the positive news supported industrial demand expectations,” said Martin Senior, head of LNG pricing at Argus.

Go Katayama, LNG and gas analyst at data analytics firm Kpler said that further Asian price upside is possible driven by warmer-than-normal temperatures in Thailand.

In Europe, gas prices at the Dutch TTF hub remain range-bound between 34-35 euros per megawatt hour.

“While ample supply and subdued demand have kept prices capped, a persistently narrow JKM-TTF spread is prompting renewed price competition with Asia. Upcoming colder weather across Germany and central eastern Europe may nudge TTF prices higher,” Kpler’s Katayama said.

“The outlook remains range-bound due to relaxed EU storage targets and coupming maintenance at key regasification sites like Zeebrugge and Montoir,” he added.

S&P Global Commodity Insights assessed its daily North West Europe LNG Marker (NWM) price benchmark for cargoes delivered in June on an ex-ship (DES) basis at $10.897/mmBtu on May 15, a $0.63/mmBtu discount to the June gas price at the TTF hub.

Argus assessed the price for June delivery at $10.845/mmBtu, while Spark Commodities assessed it at $10.946/mmBtu.

The U.S. arbitrage to north-east Asia via the Cape of Good Hope increased this week, marginally pointing to Europe, while the arbitrage via Panama continues to point to Asia, said Spark Commodities analyst Qasim Afghan.

In the LNG freight market, Atlantic rates showed their largest week-on-week drop since January and were assessed at $32,500/day on Friday, while Pacific rates remained relatively stable at $22,250/day, Afghan added.

OIL HEADS FOR WEEKLY GAIN BUT REMAINS UNDER SUPPLY HIKE PRESSURE

- Brent crude futures were up 29 cents, or 0.5%, at $64.82 per barrel

Reuters Published May 16, 2025

LONDON: Oil prices edged up on Friday, heading for a second consecutive weekly gain on easing U.S.-China trade tensions, although the optimism was somewhat offset by higher supply expectations from Iran and OPEC+.

Brent crude futures were up 29 cents, or 0.5%, at $64.82 per barrel at 1054 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 27 cents, or 0.4%, to $61.89.

Both contracts fell more than 2% in the previous session on the prospect of an Iranian nuclear deal, which could result in more barrels being released onto the global market.

“The enthusiasm resulting from progress in relations between the U.S. and China allowed the oil price to recover,” said Harry Tchiliguirian, group head of research at Onyx Capital Group.

“But OPEC+ accelerates the unwinding of its voluntary supply cuts and the U.S.-Iran nuclear talks are still ongoing, keeping the barrels of the latter still flowing to China.”

U.S. President Donald Trump said the U.S. was nearing a nuclear deal with Iran, with Tehran “sort of” agreeing to its terms. However, a source familiar with the talks said there were still issues to resolve.

Crude oil climbs more than $1 on tariff cuts, outlook

ING analysts wrote in a note that a nuclear deal lifting sanctions would allow Iran to increase oil output, resulting in additional supply of around 400,000 barrels per day.

Despite the potential supply pressure, both Brent and WTI are up around 1.5% so far this week.

Sentiment was boosted when the U.S. and China, the world's two biggest oil consumers and economies, agreed to a 90-day pause on their trade war during which both sides would sharply lower trade duties.

The hefty reciprocal tariffs had raised fears of a sharp blow to global growth and oil demand.

Analysts at BMI, a unit of Fitch Solutions, said in a research report, however, that "while the 90-day cooling off period leaves the door open for additional progress on lowering trade barriers on both sides, the uncertainty on longer-term trade policy will limit price upside."

Adding to market concerns was an expected surplus.

The International Energy Agency on Thursday hiked its 2025 global supply growth forecast by 380,000 bpd and projected a surplus for next year, despite a minor upward revision of its 2025 global oil demand forecast by 20,000 bpd.

Investors were also watching for signs of interest rate cuts by the U.S. Federal Reserve, which could bolster the economy and oil demand.

PAKISTAN KEEPS PETROL PRICE UNCHANGED UNTIL MAY 31, 2025

May 16, 2025

In a recent announcement, the government of Pakistan has decided to maintain the current petrol price at Rs252.63 per litre for the second half of May 2025.

This decision means that there will be no change in the petrol price across the country until May 31, despite a recent downward trend in global oil prices.

The federal government made this announcement on Thursday, opting not to pass on the potential relief from declining international rates to the general public. Instead, the benefit is being retained by oil refineries, petroleum marketing companies, and fuel dealers. This strategic move reflects Pakistan's ongoing efforts to balance fiscal pressures while stabilizing the domestic energy market.

However, there is some relief for consumers using High-Speed Diesel (HSD). The price of HSD has been reduced by Rs2, lowering it from Rs256.64 to Rs254.64 per litre. The revised prices have come into effect starting May 16, 2025.

The decision to hold petrol prices steady was taken following recommendations by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) and consultations with relevant ministries. According to officials, while international petroleum prices have shown signs of easing, the government is prioritizing internal economic adjustments and revenue targets over immediate consumer relief.

Petrol remains a critical commodity for Pakistan's transport and logistics sectors, and its price has a direct impact on inflation and the overall cost of living. By keeping petrol prices unchanged, Pakistan aims to provide stability in fuel pricing, though the decision may draw criticism from sections of the public expecting price cuts in light of global market trends.

This marks the second consecutive fortnight where Pakistan has resisted reducing petrol rates, signaling a cautious approach to fiscal management amid broader economic challenges. Consumers in Pakistan will now have to wait until the next review, due at the end of May, for any possible change in petrol prices.

Markets – Rates

BRINDEX100 AND BR SECTORAL INDICES

KARACHI: BRIndex100 and BR Sectoral Indices on Friday (May 16, 2025). ==================================== BR...

Recorder Report Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: BRIndex100 and BR Sectoral Indices on Friday (May 16, 2025).

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BR INDICASE AT A GLANCE
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             BRINDEX100
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Day Close:                119,649.14
High:                     120,506.18
Low:                      119,541.15
Net Change:                   312.77
Volume (000):                235,071
Value (000):              17,703,404
Makt Cap (000)         3,578,212,000
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BR AUTOMOBILE ASSEMBLER
------------------------------------
Day Close:                 22,183.52
NET CH                    (-) 104.60
------------------------------------
BR CEMENT
------------------------------------
Day Close:                 10,192.04
NET CH                    (-) 100.14
------------------------------------
BR COMMERCIAL BANKS
------------------------------------
Day Close:                 34,915.06
NET CH                    (+) 210.76
------------------------------------
BR POWER GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION
------------------------------------
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Day Close:                 19,720.72
NET CH                     (-) 90.92
------------------------------------
BR OIL AND GAS
------------------------------------
Day Close:                 11,767.44
NET CH                    (-) 132.58
------------------------------------
BR TECH & COMM
------------------------------------
Day Close:                  4,988.20
NET CH                      (+) 7.76
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As on:                  16- May -2025
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These indices are available Live on Aaj TV, www.brecorder.com and www.khistocks.com.

For further information please visit www.khistocks.com

KIBOR INTERBANK OFFERED RATES

KARACHI: Kibor interbank offered rates on Friday (May 16, 2025). ========================== KIBOR...

Published about 2 hours ago

KARACHI: Kibor interbank offered rates on Friday (May 16, 2025).

Tenor	BID	OFFER
1-Week	10.95	11.45
2-Week	10.96	11.46
1-Month	10.97	11.47
3-Month	11.13	11.38
6-Month	11.16	11.41
9-Month	11.16	11.66
1-Year	11.16	11.66

Data source: SBP

OPEN MARKET FOREX RATES

Updated at: 17/5/2025 8:05 AM (PST)

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183.25	185.50
Bahrain Dinar	748.05	756.05
Canadian Dollar	203.10	205.50
China Yuan	37.59	37.99
Danish Krone	42.25	42.65
Euro	315.85	318.65
Hong Kong Dollar	35.94	36.29
Indian Rupee	3.19	3.28
Japanese Yen	1.95	2.01
Kuwaiti Dinar	912.55	922.05
Malaysian Ringgit	64.95	65.55
NewZealand $	164.62	166.62
Norwegians Krone	26.89	27.19
Omani Riyal	732.65	741.15
Qatari Riyal	76.68	77.38
Saudi Riyal	75.15	75.70
Singapore Dollar	214.73	216.73
Swedish Korona	28.65	28.95
Swiss Franc	336.16	338.96
Thai Bhat	8.4	8.55
U.A.E Dirham	76.80	77.45
UK Pound Sterling	375.30	378.8
US Dollar	282.25	283.75

INTER BANK RATES

Updated at: 17/5/2025 8:05 AM (PST)

Currency	Bank Buying TT Clean	Bank Selling TT & OD
Australian Dollar	181.45	181.78
Canadian Dollar	201.66	202.02
China Yuan	39.27	39.34
Danish Krone	42.27	42.34
Euro	315.33	315.89
Hong Kong Dollar	36.05	36.11
Japanese Yen	1.9371	1.9405
Saudi Riyal	75.05	75.19
Singapore Dollar	217.41	217.80
Swedish Korona	29.13	29.18
Swiss Franc	335.55	336.15
Thai Bhat	8.5	8.51
UK Pound Sterling	374.07	374.74
US Dollar	281.50	282.00

GOLD RATE

Bullion / Gold Price Today

As on Sat, May 17 2025, 02:58 GMT

Metal	Symbol	PKR for 10 Gm	PKR for 1 Tola	PKR for 1 Ounce	
Gold	XAU	291,548	339,700	906,830	
Palladium	XPD	87,769	102,265	272,997	
Platinum	XPT	90,061	104,935	280,125	
Silver	XAG	2,946	3,433	9,164	

for local market Gold Rates in Pakistan

Gold Price in Pakistan

As on Sat, May 17 2025, 02:58 GMT

Gold Rate	24K Gold	22K Gold	21K Gold	18K Gold
per Tola Gold	Rs. 339700	Rs. 311389	Rs. 297238	Rs. 254775
per 10 Gram	Rs. 291200	Rs. 266931	Rs. 254800	Rs. 218400
per Gram Gold	Rs. 29120	Rs. 26693	Rs. 25480	Rs. 21840
per Ounce	Rs. 825500	Rs. 756703	Rs. 722313	Rs. 619125

Gold Rate

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

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

Gold Rates in other Major Currencies

Currency	Symbol	10 Gm	1 Tola	1 Ounce	
China Yuan	CNY	7,462	8,694	23,209	
Euro	EUR	925	1,078	2,878	
Japanese Yen	JPY	150,740	175,636	468,860	
Saudi Riyal	SAR	3,882	4,523	12,073	
U.A.E Dirham	AED	3,801	4,429	11,824	
UK Pound Sterling	GBP	779	907	2,422	
US Dollar	USD	1,035	1,206	3,219	