



CoronaCrimeWatch Pakistan

Weekly Review of Organised Crime and Pandemic

Compiled by National Initiative against Organised Crime (NIOC)

30 May to 04 June 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic is not only affecting the economies and societies across the world but also changing the trends of the organized crime and illicit markets. Pakistan is already facing critical economic challenges as well as issues related to governance and internal security. While the coronavirus pandemic has complicated these challenges, it can also bring to fore new challenges related to organized crime and non-state actors in the country. There is a need for institutional vigilance to monitor the changing trends for better understanding and preparedness to cope with future challenges. The National Initiative against Organized Crime (NIOC) is initiating a weekly monitor on Organized Crime as a civil society initiative to support the institutional and community responses. The weekly brief is a result of information collected from open sources, mainly the mainstream media reports, both Urdu and English as well as information collected from various experts associated with the Project.

Corona cases in Pakistan:

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Pakistan rose to 93,983 on June 6th after over 4,500 new infections were confirmed in the country. A province-wise break up of these cases is given below:

Total confirmed cases: 93,983

- Sindh: 34,889
- Punjab: 35,308
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: 12,459
- Balochistan: 5,776

- Islamabad Capital Territory: 4,323
- Gilgit-Baltistan: 897
- AJK: 331

LEAs against Coronavirus Pandemic:

- During the week under review media has reported several cases of police personnel who tested positive of Covid-19. DIG Operations Lahore Sohail Sukhera was among the police officers who tested positive of the coronavirus during last week.¹

1. General Trends

1.1. Street Crime

Lahore police arrested two criminals looting the citizens while wearing the police uniforms. Both were involved in several incidents of establishing the fake security checks in parts of the city during lockdown and looting citizens.²

1.2. Terrorism Watch

Karachi police arrested a suspected militant linked with the militant Islamic State group on May 30th claiming he was allegedly involved in a recent gun-and-bomb attack on a clinic over non-payment of extortion and other crimes in the city. He was previously associated with the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan but in 2019 he joined Daesh, the Arabic acronym for IS.³ Rawalpindi police in Punjab province also claimed the arrest of two alleged TTP terrorists.⁴

An incident of terrorism was also recorded in interior of Sindh, where a locally made explosive device fitted in a bicycle went off at Mirokhan Chowk, Larkana, but no damages or loss of life was reported. According to another account, the bicycle was parked near an ice factory and the explosive material packed in a tin of ghee was placed on it.⁵ The banned Sindhu Desh Liberation Army (SDLA) was reportedly involved in the attack.

A review of past weeks suggests that the Baloch separatist insurgents and religiously inspired militants are trying to increase their activities mainly against security forces. In an apparently changing security landscape, as noted in a daily *Dawn* editorial, “militancy is again beginning to cast a shadow over parts of the country, kindling fears of a return to the bad old days.”⁶

¹ City 42, News Channel, June 3, 2020.

² Geo TV, May 31, 2020, <https://urdu.geo.tv/latest/222729->

³ *Dawn*, May 31, 2020, https://epaper.dawn.com/print-textview.php?StoryImage=31_05_2020_113_002

⁴ *Daily Jang*, June 3, 2020, <https://e.jang.com.pk/06-03-2020/pindi/pic.asp?picname=55.png>

⁵ *Dawn*, June 2, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1560667/ied-blast-in-larkana>

⁶ *Dawn*, June 1, 2020 <https://www.dawn.com/news/1560433/resurgent-militancy>

2. Terror Financing

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arrested a suspect facing charges of terrorism financing following dismissal of his pre-arrest bail plea by the Islamabad High Court. He was seeking bail since the FIA was probing him in connection with terrorism financing.⁷ The FIA argued that the suspect was an Afghan national and illegally running *hundi hawala* business.

3. Drug Trafficking

During the week under review, KP police did a crackdown against the drug dealers across the province. Peshawar police arrested 10 drug dealers and recovered 9 kg hashish, four kg heroin and other drugs in several crackdowns.⁸ Meanwhile Capital Police Officer of Peshawar ordered for launch of a special operation against the manufactures of ice drug.⁹ Separately, in Hangu, police recovered 2 kg of hashish; district Mardan police arrested 18 drug paddlers;¹⁰ in Mohmand, police recovered 1200 gram hashish; in Dera Ismail Khan, police recovered 2 hashish dealers;¹¹ district Haripur police arrested one drug dealer and recovered 5.5kg hashish from him;¹² and district Mardan police arrested 18 drug dealers.¹³ In Orakzai district, local administration destroyed a poppy field and recovered 8kg refined hashish from its owner.¹⁴ Mardan police also launched a crackdown against the narcotics smugglers and drug peddlers and arrested 16 suspects including 3 members of narcotics inter-district smuggling gang and recovered a huge quantity of narcotics.¹⁵

While Islamabad police has arrested nine drug peddlers and recovered 2.2 kg hashish from them.¹⁶

⁷ *Dawn*, June 3, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1560941>

⁸ *Daily 92*, June 3, 2020,

https://www.roznama92news.com/efrontend/web/index.php/?station_id=4&page_id=5&is_common=&xdate=2020-6-3&n=n17

⁹ *Daily 92*, June 5, 2020,

https://www.roznama92news.com/efrontend/web/index.php/?station_id=4&page_id=1&is_common=&xdate=2020-06-05&n=n3

¹⁰ *Daily 92*, June 2, 2020,

https://www.roznama92news.com/efrontend/web/index.php/?station_id=4&page_id=1&is_common=&xdate=2020-06-02&n=n18

¹¹ *Daily 92*, May 30, 2020, <https://www.roznama92news.com/backend/web/uploads/epaper/4/2020/05/30052020/P06-PEW-049.jpg>

¹² *Daily Express*, June 2, 2020,

https://www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=1107478842&Issue=NP_ISB&Date=20200602

¹³ *Daily 92*, Jun 2, 2020,

https://www.roznama92news.com/efrontend/web/index.php/?station_id=4&page_id=1&is_common=&xdate=2020-06-02&n=n18

¹⁴ *Daily 92*, June 3, 2020,

https://www.roznama92news.com/efrontend/web/index.php/?station_id=4&page_id=1&is_common=&xdate=2020-6-3&n=n11

¹⁵ *The Nation*, May 31, 2020, <https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2020-05-31/page-4/detail-9>

¹⁶ *The Express Tribune*, May 30, 2020,

https://epaper.tribune.com.pk/DisplayDetails.aspx?ENI_ID=11202005300233&EN_ID=11202005300072&EMID=11202005300033

4. Cyber Crime

During the last week of Ramadan, 322 cases of cybercrimes were reported from Lahore, the provincial capital of Punjab, The Cyber Crime wing of Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arrested three suspects who were involved in credit cards fraud and bank accounts hacking.¹⁷

A civil society organization the Digital Rights Foundation has reported a 189 per cent increase in complaints registered with their Cyber Harassment Helpline during Pakistan's countrywide lockdown, enforced to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus. The organization reported a combined 136 complaints of cyber harassment in March and April — during the lockdown — compared to 47 such complaints, an increase of 189pc, before the lockdown in January and February.¹⁸

¹⁷ *Daily Express*, June 2, 2020, https://www.express.com.pk/epaper/PoPupwindow.aspx?newsID=1107473252&Issue=NP_LHE&Date=20200531

¹⁸ *Dawn*, June 3, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1561065>

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About NIOC:

National Initiative against Organized Crime (NIOC), in collaboration with the Global Initiative Resilience Fund is the first-ever initiative in Pakistan launched by a group of committed professionals and experts with law enforcement, media and other public service backgrounds. NIOC aims to build community resilience and influence public policy to combat organized crime.

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