



PAKISTAN

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Minutes of the 50th Advisory Board Meeting of NIOC



The 50th Advisory Board Meeting of NIOC was held online on Thursday 7 May 2026. The following attended:

AB Members: Tariq parvez, Zahid Hussain, Samina Ahmed and Manzoor Ahmed. Zubair Habib could not attend as he was in the US. Jawaid Akhtar could not attend due to his parole board prior commitment in West Yorkshire.

CGR Directorate was represented by the following: Tariq Khosa, Sarmad Saeed, Kaleem Imam, Saroop Ijaz, Ghalib Bandesha, Nawaz Nadeem, Ammar Jaffri and Hassan Sardar.

1) OC Strategic Framework

A team headed by Tariq Parvez completed Pakistan's Strategic Framework against Organized Crime on 31 March 2026. The work was led by UNODC National Consultant Tariq Khosa, Director CGR. A very vibrant team of CFHR was an active partner in this endeavour of great national significance. The implementation phase will start soon.

2) UNTOC Annual Report-2025

Led by CGR, the Civil Society Alliance on UNTOC Review Mechanism issued an Annual Report on Pakistan for 2025. The report has been globally disseminated to the key stakeholders. Civil society continues to work very closely with Dr Ehsan Sadiq, DG AMLA, the National Focal Person on UNTOC Review mechanism.

3) GI-TOC Strategic Framework for Pakistan

A strategic framework for Pakistan has been drafted by the Strategic Advisory Group of Central and South Asia Observatory of GI-TOC. The framework will be presented to the GITOC Board Meeting in Geneva in June 2026.

4) Crime Commission on Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)

The CCPCJ meeting will be held in the first week of June 2026. CGR will be represented there in person. Pakistan's OC Strategic Framework and UNTOC Review Mechanism will be presented in Vienna on 4-5 June 2026.

5) GI-TOC Board Meeting

The GI-TOC's board meeting will take place in Geneva on 25-26 June 2026. Tariq Khosa, Director CGR, will participate as the board member representing the GI Network of 770 members globally.

6) Crime Congress Abu Dhabi

The next Crime Congress will be held in Abu Dhabi in September 2026. Pakistan's civil society **will be well represented in the global event that takes place after every four years.**

7) UNTOC Conference of Parties

Next UNTOC COP will be held in Vienna in October 2026. It takes place every two years. Pakistan's civil society has been actively participating since 2022. It will be part of the Alliance of NGO's initiative on the Civil Society Declaration against TOC.

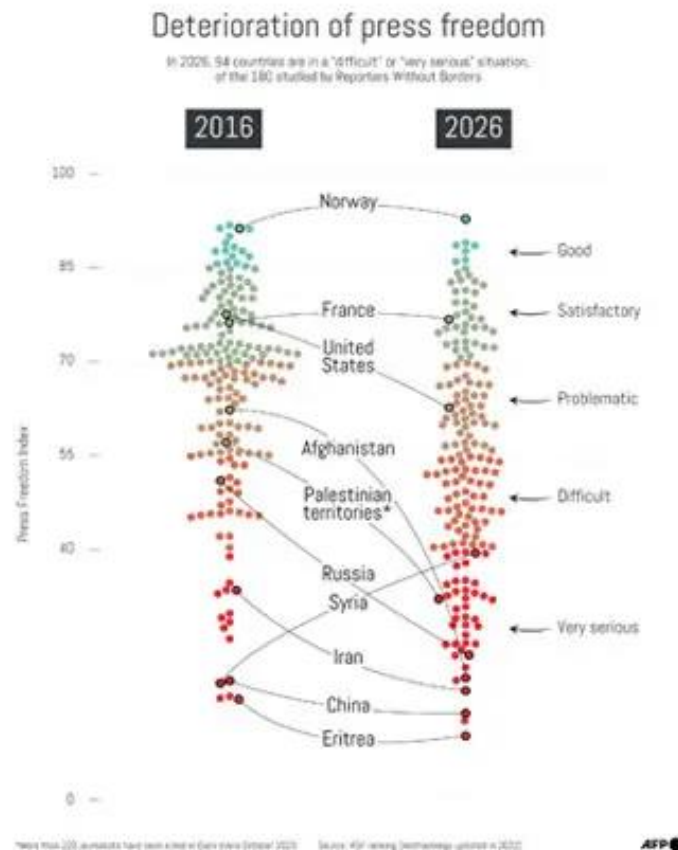
8) Position Papers and Policy Briefs

The CGR tries to issue position papers and policy briefs on organized crime in Pakistan on a monthly basis. Next policy brief will be written on crypto currency and related money laundering challenges facing the country by Kaleem Imam, Ammar Jaffri and Nawaz Nadeem.

9) CGR Blogs on OC

The Advisory Board Members and other key members of NIOC were called upon to contribute to the blog on OC on the CGR's dedicated space for the purpose.

2026 already this century's worst year for the press: RSF Press Freedom Index



PARIS: Journalism around the world is in dire straits, with Reporters Without Borders' (RSF) Press Freedom Index calling it the worst year since records began.

For the first time in its 25-year history, over half of the world's countries now fall into the "difficult" or "very serious" categories for press freedom, the media watchdog noted.

"Since RSF began publishing the World Press Freedom Index 25 years ago, press freedom has been gradually deteriorating," it noted in the sobering report, released ahead of World Press Freedom Day, which will be observed tomorrow (Sunday).

"Journalists are still being killed and imprisoned for their work, but the tactics undermining press freedom are evolving. Journalism is being asphyxiated by hostile political discourse towards reporters, weakened by a faltering media economy, and squeezed by laws being used as weapons against the press."

According to RSF statistics since Jan 1, 2026, 13 journalists were killed around the world, while 471 are currently detained. In addition, at least 21 journalists are held hostage, while 135 remain missing in action.

The US, which had already fallen from a “fairly good” to a “problematic” situation in 2024, the year of Donald Trump’s re-election, has dropped a further seven places to 64, it said.

US President Donald Trump has turned his repeated attacks on the press and journalists into a systematic policy, pushing the US down to 64th place (-7).

The drastic cuts to the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM) workforce had global repercussions, leading to the closure, suspension and downsizing of international broadcasters such as Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and Radio Free Asia (RFA) in countries where they were some of the last reliable sources of information.

Among some of the most disturbing of RSF’s findings was that the criminalisation of journalism has reaches a peak.

The Index’s legal indicator has seen the most severe decline this year. This score deteriorated in more than 60pc of states – 110 out of 180 – between 2025 and 2026.

This is notably the case in India (157th), Egypt (169th), Israel (116th) and Georgia (135th). The criminalisation of journalism, which is rooted in circumventing press law and misusing emergency legislation and common law, is proving to be a global phenomenon.

In Pakistan (153rd), the press faces relentless waves of restrictions amid a fraught political climate in which authorities seek to control, and in some cases suppress, the dissemination of journalistic content, RSF said.

Among the countries closed off to the independent press, Vladimir Putin’s Russia (172nd) has become a specialist in using laws designed to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism to restrict press freedom.

Even in established democracies, legal provisions can undermine press freedom. In Japan (62nd), the state secrecy law continues to have a chilling effect on journalism as there are no adequate protections for source confidentiality to counterbalance it, which breeds self-censorship.

In South Korea (47th), government measures introduced to combat the spread of “false information” have drawn criticism from press freedom organisations, yet another example of the persistent tension between tackling disinformation and preserving the right to report.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 2, 2026

Pakistan, UK to jointly fight organised crime



ISLAMABAD: FIA Director General held a high-level meeting with a delegation from the UK Home Office at FIA Headquarters to enhance cooperation against transnational organised crime.

The delegation included Ms Gemma Wilson (First Secretary - Justice and Home Affairs), Ms Shannon Duckworth (International Operations Liaison), and Mr Oliver Patten (Second Secretary - Security and Justice).

Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest with a focus on strengthening collaboration in investigating organized crime and addressing emerging transnational threats.

SOURCE: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE, MAY 3, 2026

HRCP highlights severe contraction of civic space, erosion of judicial independence in 2025



ISLAMABAD: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan’s (HRCP) launched its annual report for 2025, observing a severe contraction of civic space, the erosion of judicial independence and deepening insecurity over the past year.

The report, titled “State of Human Rights in 2025”, was launched in Islamabad, with HRCP Chairperson Asad Iqbal Butt, former chairperson Hina Jilani, co-chair Munizae Jahangir, vice-chair Nasreen Azhar and Secretary General Harris Khalique present.

Butt, while speaking to reporters, said it was a fact that human rights in Pakistan were in their worst state.

“It is not a report, it is a charge sheet. In 2025, as many as 273 persons faced enforced disappearance. Around 13 were traced from state agencies’ centres, but others are unknown,” he said.

Butt added that thousands of people have been missing for years and that if anyone has committed a crime, they should be produced in a court of law.

Khalique said that multiple constitutional and human rights-related violations were part of the report and on the record.

The report observed with alarm that the right to freedom of expression – particularly to question authority and demand accountability – was deeply suppressed in 2025, with far-reaching consequences for the rule of law and the protection of fundamental freedoms.

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan @HRCP87 · Follow

Freedom of expression, rule of law under stress: HRCP launches 2025 report

4 May 2026, Islamabad. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)'s annual report, State of Human Rights in 2025, documents a year marked by a severe contraction of civic space, the erosion of [Show more](#)

STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
in 2025

A year marked by a severe contraction of civic space, the erosion of judicial independence, and deepening insecurity

The right to freedom of expression was deeply suppressed in 2025, with far-reaching consequences for the rule of law and protection of fundamental freedoms, with legal and institutional mechanisms used increasingly to curb dissent.

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

Last edited 3:26 PM · May 4, 2026

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Additionally, legal and institutional mechanisms were increasingly used to curb dissent. Amendments to the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca), as well as the use of sedition and anti-terrorism laws, led to the widespread targeting of journalists, political workers, activists and lawyers.

Reports of intimidation, enforced disappearances and restrictions on movement contributed to a climate of fear and self-censorship, limiting public discourse and obscuring human rights violations.

HRCP further claimed that amendments to the 1997 Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) at the federal and Balochistan levels allowed law enforcement agencies and even the armed forces to detain any person for up to three months without charge or judicial oversight, expanding the scope for undermining fundamental rights of liberty, due process and protection from arbitrary detention.

In particular, the report highlighted a marked deterioration in judicial independence, particularly following the passage of the 27th Constitutional Amendment, which reconfigured judicial appointments and expanded executive influence.

According to the report, key court decisions during the year further narrowed democratic space, raising serious concerns about due process and the separation of powers through judgements that enabled the military trials of civilians, and effectively delegitimised the PTI by denying the party the reserved seats it had been granted in 2024.

Security challenges compounded rights violations. HRCP claims that counter-terrorism operations disproportionately affected Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, resulting in significant civilian and law enforcement casualties.

Enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and collective punishments persisted, according to HRCP, while vulnerable groups – including women, children, religious minorities, and transgender persons – continued to face violence and discrimination without adequate redress.

The report further highlighted that miners and sanitation workers in particular remained vulnerable to accidents with little reported progress in improving their safety.

Moreover, HRCP noted that climate-related disasters, particularly in Gilgit-Baltistan, caused multiple deaths and destroyed infrastructure, but the government's response remained reactive rather than long-term.

The report did, however, note several positive developments. The passage of the National Commission for Minorities Act represented a long-awaited step toward institutional protection for religious minorities.

Moreover, the Child Marriage Restraint Acts for Islamabad Capital Territory and Balochistan marked progress in safeguarding children's rights, HRCP reported, while the higher courts issued important judgments advancing women's rights in areas such as inheritance and marriage.

Targeted welfare initiatives and institutional reforms at the provincial levels also offered relief, but incrementally, HRCP said.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 4, 2026

Pakistan needs structured migration pathways



LAHORE: Emphasising the need for safer and more structured migration pathways, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has urged Pakistan to prioritise regular migration channels, skill development, and financial inclusion to maximise economic benefits while reducing risks.

Speaking at the launch of the Pakistan Migration Report 2025 at the Lahore School of Economics, IOM Pakistan Chief of Mission Mio Sato said migration remains one of the most significant global development realities, particularly for Pakistan. She stressed that migration "should be a choice and not a necessity," underlining the importance of safe and dignified migration practices. Sato highlighted key policy priorities, including aligning skill development programmes with international labour market demands, raising awareness about migration risks and opportunities, and adopting evidence-based policymaking. She also pointed to gender disparities, noting that women account for a disproportionately low share of Pakistan's migrant workforce due to socio-cultural barriers, limited access to recruitment networks, and unsafe working conditions.

The report – fourth in a series published by the Centre on Migration, Remittances and Diaspora (CIMRAD) – was launched at the varsity's Burki campus, with Rector Shahid Amjad Chaudhry terming migration a critical area of study for Pakistan's economy, which relies heavily on external inflows and remittances.

According to the report, Pakistan's outward migration remains volatile. The number of migrants dropped from 862,000 in 2023 to 725,672 in 2024 before recovering slightly to 762,499 in 2025. The decline has been attributed mainly to stricter visa regimes and shifting policies in host countries.

The Gulf region continues to dominate as the primary destination, hosting 92% of registered Pakistani migrant workers, with Saudi Arabia alone accounting for nearly half of all migrants. However, remittances from non-Gulf countries remain comparatively higher, indicating either better wages or underreporting of migrant numbers. A major concern flagged in the report is the persistent dominance of low-skilled labour. Nearly two-thirds of Pakistani migrants fall in the low or unskilled category, with their share increasing further in 2025. At the same time, migration trends are gradually diversifying toward non-GCC countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, as well as emerging Asian economies.

The report also draws attention to irregular migration, particularly toward Europe, where Pakistan ranks among the top 10 nationalities attempting illegal entry. Around 5,680 Pakistanis were apprehended at European borders in 2024, while 3,203 were recorded in the first half of 2025, with nearly 90% attempting entry via sea routes.

On the economic front, remittances posted a significant increase of 25%, rising from \$30.2 billion in 2023-24 to \$38.3 billion in 2024-25. These inflows now account for 9.34% of GDP, playing a critical role in stabilising Pakistan's external account amid rising imports and sluggish exports.

The surge in remittances has been attributed to increased migration and a gradual shift toward skilled workers, alongside inflationary pressures at home that have compelled overseas Pakistanis to send more money to support their families. However, the report cautions that tightening global migration policies, rising visa costs, and stricter labour market conditions are limiting opportunities for Pakistani workers. These constraints, it warns, are pushing more individuals toward irregular and often dangerous migration routes.

SOURCE: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE, MAY 6, 2026

Gender-based violence and our judicial officers

DR RAKHSHINDA PERVEEN

A man who reports a stolen wallet is not asked what he was wearing when he lost it, or what business he had on that street at that hour. That line of questioning, considered routine when a woman reports violence, is not seen as intrusive. It is seen as relevant. It is defended in the name of religion, culture, and an honour that is somehow always stored in the body of someone else: the *sinf-e-nazuk*, who is simultaneously held responsible for everything. This is not prejudice at the fringes. It is normalised which is what makes it so difficult to see, including for a trained, skilled judge. Judges are not above the society that shaped them. They are its microcosm, and what a society normalises, its courtrooms can quietly enforce.

Today *sinf* is a familiar word. After the drama series *Sinf-e-Aahan*, it has entered everyday conversation. Till 1999, it had no standard Urdu equivalent. I spent years introducing the concept through research, training workshops, and *Gender Watch* – a 19-episode series on PTV that won the channel's first Excellence Award for Private Production working to give language to a way of thinking our justice system urgently needed. Globally, between 27% and 30% of women experience intimate partner violence over their lifetimes; in many jurisdictions fewer than one in ten reported cases result in conviction.

Of Pakistan's 3,142 judges and judicial officers, 572 are women i.e. 18 per cent of the total. Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa leads the subordinate judiciary with roughly a quarter of positions held by women. Progress below, absence above – above where the decisions that shape everything else are made. Pakistan sits at the far end of that gap: conviction rates for domestic violence, rape and so-called honour killings remain in the low single digits. The Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey recorded physical intimate partner violence at 57% in K-P – the highest of any province, with Balochistan close behind, and Punjab and Sindh lower but far from reassuring. In rural areas, the numbers are worse. The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2026 – formally passed in January 2026 – signals long-delayed movement on protections in the ICT after fifteen years of political resistance. Whether it translates into protection depends less on its passage than on its enforcement.

In 1999, I began documenting cases of violence against women using newspaper reports and FIRs among the first studies of this kind in Pakistan. What those records showed then still holds: they are the tip of the iceberg. The FIR is the tip of that. I have since spent three decades at the non-glamorous intersections where gender-based violence meets law, policy, public health and institutional practice, training police officers, media, NGO, health professionals, parliamentarians and judicial officers. One thing has not changed: a woman who survives violence and reaches a courtroom has already cleared an enormous distance. Whether the law meets her there depends on what the judge carries inside.

Campaigns on social media gather views. Captivating music and colourful placards do not change courtroom data. Visibility and accountability are not the same thing.

Judicial discretion in bail, sentencing, evidence, custody is inherently interpretive. Unconscious bias shapes that interpretation. Judges who apply the law without awareness of bias are not more objective; they are simply less aware of the filter through which they are applying it.

In Pakistani courts, three forms operate at once. 1) Explicit bias surfaces in the ruling that cites family honour to reduce a sentence, or calls a survivor a woman of loose character. 2) Implicit bias is quieter. A woman's credibility is formed before a word of testimony is heard, and her dress and demeanour is treated as evidence the record does not contain. 3) Structural bias lives in procedure: men speaking for women in court even when the woman is the aggrieved party; FIR delay read as dishonesty rather than trauma; case withdrawal taken at face value, the coercion behind it never examined.

Jirga, panchayat and other parallel systems carry deep community authority but courts are constitutionally bound to ensure no harmful cultural practice violates fundamental rights. Rulings that compel marriage, deny inheritance or sanction violence are not legally enforceable, and the Supreme Court has said so, repeatedly. These patterns appear in documented rulings across provinces, repeated long enough to pass as normal.

Pakistan's Constitution is unambiguous: Article 25 mandates equality regardless of gender; Article 9 guarantees the right to life without exception; and CEDAW places a state duty on eliminating discriminatory practices. This is not about importing foreign values. Gender justice is rooted in Pakistan's own Constitution and in Islamic principles that have always prohibited oppression. These are our commitments not someone else's.

What the bench can do is concrete. Before pronouncing, ask whether the reasoning responds to evidence or to assumption. Remove "loose character", "provoked" and "family matter" from orders and replace them with facts, law and precedent. In custody matters, apply the child's best interest not the gender of the parent. Reverse the genders in your own reasoning: if it would not survive that, examine why. Courts are not only of law. They are of people and people are not perfect. That is why conscience cannot be kept silent. Conscience does not pronounce the verdict but it determines (or should determine) how the law is read: with bias, or with justice.

So the questions remain. How long will the survivor stand in the dock of her own case? How many times will a woman be labelled kari/kali while the real perpetrator disappears into the background? How long will domestic violence be called a private matter and quietly filed away? How long will a rape survivor be made to feel like the accused?

Every word in a judgment tells society who the law is for. That message is not written by campaigns or placards. It is written by the judge in each order, in each courtroom, across this country.

SOURCE: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE, MAY 6, 2026

Pakistan, Bangladesh sign agreement to combat drug trafficking



Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Bangladesh Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed sign a memorandum of understanding in Dhaka on May 8, 2026.

Pakistan and Bangladesh have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen bilateral cooperation against drug trafficking and narcotics abuse, the Ministry of Interior said.

The development came during Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's visit to Dhaka, where he met his Bangladeshi counterpart Salahuddin Ahmed, according to the ministry.

It said that Naqvi and Ahmed signed the MoU on behalf of their respective governments, adding that both also agreed to set up a secretary-level joint working group between their ministries.

Under the MoU, both countries will fully cooperate to prevent the illegal transportation and smuggling of narcotics, while joint efforts will be made to "curb the growing trend of drug abuse and eliminate its negative impacts", the ministry said.

It was also agreed that a joint strategy will be formulated to dismantle narcotics sale and supply networks. The relevant agencies of both countries will exchange timely intelligence and information regarding drug traffickers and trafficking networks, the interior ministry said.

“Training of personnel, use of modern technology, and best practices for narcotics prevention will be shared between the two sides,” it added.

According to the ministry, Naqvi also offered full cooperation to his Bangladeshi counterpart regarding the Safe City project.

“We will support the government of Bangladesh in the project in every possible way,” the ministry quoted him as saying.

According to the ministry, both sides also agreed on enhancing cooperation between the two countries in the areas of bilateral ties, internal security, and the training of civil armed forces. Discussions were also held on increasing cooperation to combat terrorism and prevent human trafficking. The interior ministers also exchanged views on joint measures for counter-terrorism.

Naqvi and Ahmed held detailed discussions on “enhancing mutual cooperation in the areas of cybercrimes, organised crime, and financial fraud”, the ministry said, adding they also discussed cooperation in training programmes for officers at police academies.

It said that Naqvi invited his Bangladeshi counterpart to visit Pakistan, while the latter thanked him for offering cooperation on the Safe City project.

Relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh remained shaky during the rule of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina. However, following the popular revolt against her government and her subsequent exile, relations between the two countries improved markedly.

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal had attended the oath-taking ceremony of Bangladesh’s Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in February.

Last December, National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq travelled to Dhaka for the funeral of the country’s first female prime minister Khaleda Zia.

In August 2025, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar had also visited Dhaka and met interim ruler Professor Muhammad Yunus.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 9, 2026

Sindh's resolve against narcotics to face tough test



A SUDDEN flurry of activity by police, though much awaited, is being seen in Sindh to take on those dealing in the infamous narcotics trade. The actions are largely seen in major urban centres. While the action is indeed appreciable, it remains enigmatic too.

Investigations and background conversations by Dawn with senior government sources reveal different theories behind the ongoing exercise.

People with authority both in civilian and non-civilian set-ups confide to Dawn, on condition of anonymity, that the Sindh police have been “pushed” by the powers that be to tackle the issue of narcotics trade, tobacco, gutka, safina, mainpuri, ‘ice’ or crystal meth (methamphetamine), seriously.

Linking the recent removal of the SSPs of Sanghar, Thatta and Umerkot districts from their respective posts with the ongoing action, they said that sleuths of an intelligence agency had picked up an accountant of SSP-Sanghar office along with some suspected dealers.

However, the transfer notifications remained silent about the reason, but a top-ranking official has confirmed that an internal inquiry was underway against one of the two officers.

“As for theories, one is, the powers that be want the police to curb it, for the cross-border trade is a potential source for terror financing of banned outfits in Balochistan who seek to destabilise the country. Another one indicates this campaign may have political reasons,” notes a senior official, who is privy to government-level interaction for quite some time.

The third theory indicates that the police leadership has been told that drugs trade can bring weapons to Sindh thus needs to be crushed, the official says.

“The smuggled products from Afghanistan and Iran end up in Balochistan to head for Sindh where centres like Karachi and Hyderabad serve as big markets. Balochistan has no such prospects for either drugs or gutka, mainpuri. So, the boys rightly believe if supply is curbed, it [the trade] will drop,” he adds.

“This is what is seen”, he continues, “in Karachi, where the trade has declined by 80pc through these steps, for this purpose, the SHOs, that were believed to be part of the trade or patronising it, have been removed,” says the officer.

In Karachi, another senior official says, around 17-18 SHOs have been shown the door.

“Names of SHOs are now recommended by an Additional IG-led committee with three DIGs as members. Policemen with no criminal record, corruption-related suspension, having best communication skills and experience of thana are recommended to SSPs concerned for posting. It can be replicated elsewhere in Sindh,” he adds.

It was against this backdrop that the police started coming down heavily on sale/supply of narcotics in major urban centres, including Hyderabad, which is considered a “goose that lays golden eggs for policemen”.

Since this black economy is undocumented exact numbers of earnings couldn't be determined, but the scale of banned trade shows it involves huge amounts of money shared right from bottom to top levels.

“Millions exchange hands on a weekly basis here. It has enabled officers to invest in foreign destinations, filling stations, real estate, etc, through their buddies,” quips another police officer, who knows in and out of the business. “Hardly, a district level police officer can be mentioned who avoided the charm of this earning,” he claims.

“That's why,” says an officer, “some SHOs were glued to particular police stations for a long time due to their political backings”.

There are several police stations in Karachi, Hyderabad and other parts of the province which are considered lucrative.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 11, 2026

Number of small boat migrants to UK tops 200,000



LONDON: More than 200,000 migrants have arrived on UK shores in small boats since records began in 2018, latest government statistics showed.

The tally comes as the anti-immigration party Reform UK surged in local elections dominated by national issues including immigration. Home Office figures published on Saturday showed 70 people arrived in one boat on Friday. The northern French coast is the main point of departure for migrants hoping to reach Britain, usually risking the journey in flimsy, overcrowded boats. Friday's crossing pushed the total number of arrivals since current data began to 200,013.

The figure is calculated using the government's official statistics for 2018 to 2025 and provisional figures recorded so far this year. Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer is increasingly under pressure over the issue. His interior minister Shabana Mahmood has proposed cutting back on protections for refugees and ending automatic benefits for asylum seekers. At least 29 migrants died at sea attempting the crossing in 2025, according to a tally based on official French and British sources. A further six people have died this year.

Britain and France last month agreed a new three-year deal in an attempt to stop undocumented migrants making the risky journey, with France pledging to ramp up law enforcement and Britain promising hundreds of millions of euros to fund the effort.

Last year a total of 41,472 migrants landed on England's southern shore after making the crossing from northern France.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 11, 2026

Bannu attack

THE attack was audacious and well-coordinated. On the night of May 9, terrorists struck a police outpost in KP's Bannu district, martyring 15 officers and injuring three, according to official reports. An explosive-laden truck rammed into the post, followed by what seems to have been a coordinated assault from multiple directions involving heavy weaponry and drones.

This suggests sophistication in terrorist tactics, and it seems the sole purpose of the attack was to cause maximum casualties. It is yet another grim reminder of how fraught the security situation remains in the province, where terrorists have repeatedly attempted to challenge the state's writ. The human cost, borne once again by police families, cannot be measured. Unfortunately, without a successful counterterrorism plan, chances of similar attacks by terrorists remain very high. The state must ensure that the perpetrators are brought swiftly to justice. The civilian leadership was quick to condemn the attack, express sorrow and vow to eliminate terrorism. The president attributed the attack to Indian sponsorship and Afghan Taliban sanctuary – accusations that have now become routine in official statements following such incidents. He made it clear that Pakistan would “target not only the terrorists, but also their facilitators and sponsors”. Such pronouncements, too, have become familiar.

While the assertions themselves are certainly not unfounded, what is missing is decisive action on the ground against the terrorists who frequently operate in groups. And such action is not possible without deploying a robust intelligence-gathering strategy and coordinated planning involving all branches of security.

Furthermore, a sociopolitical diagnosis of what is going wrong in the western provinces needs to be shared with the Pakistani public to foster a wider understanding of the roots of this malaise. The state needs to devise a comprehensive response strategy to the emergent threats from terrorists, and this can only be achieved when there is broad buy-in from different stakeholders in Pakistan's internal security calculus. The messaging from all branches of the state needs to be targeted and consistent.

Unfortunately, it seems that we are confusing the different fault lines that threaten internal cohesion. The security narrative and strategy of the KP government diverges considerably from the state's position, with the resulting dissonance providing emboldened malign actors greater space to operate; the rising toll from terrorist attacks represents the costs it is imposing on the country. Repeated vows to eliminate terrorism will remain insufficient as long as there is no united front to back them up with. There is also a dire need for a cohesive anti-terror policy that provides zero room for confusion or double games. Clearance operations continue in problem areas to rid them of terrorists, but without a whole-of-nation approach, eradicating this menace remains an uphill challenge.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 12, 2026

Govt pledges AML action



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has assured the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that it will enhance interagency data sharing to curb money laundering, as the government has finally decided to move against officials who could not detect nearly Rs70 billion in alleged money laundering through the import of solar panels.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has established a supervisory committee that will now monitor disciplinary action against officials who failed to detect and stop the money laundering disguised as solar panel imports a few years ago, showed the notification. The committee was formed after reviewing an inquiry report on trade-based money laundering through solar panel imports. The committee has started holding meetings to discuss the findings and monitor implementation of the report's recommendations, sources added.

The inquiry report observed that the solar panel money laundering case reflects a total failure of government structures, and the scam was very easily executed by exploiting systemic weaknesses, inefficiencies and inaction. An earlier inquiry committee had been constituted to ascertain the facts, determine the exact magnitude of the scam, estimate the volume of foreign

currency outflows as trade based money laundering, and ascertain the reasons for the failure to detect the scam in time.

In trade-based money laundering, launderers over invoice imports and under invoice exports to move money out of the country. According to previously published data, from 2017 to 2022, about 6,232 import documents were over invoiced, and Rs69.5 billion were laundered from Pakistan through solar panel imports.

As part of the understanding reached under the third staff level agreement with the IMF, Pakistan has now assured the global lender that it "will enhance interagency data sharing by exploring a range of data points and policy instruments, including through coordination on foreign currency reporting on import payments and customs Data". The IMF was further told that the government would ensure better monitoring and mitigate the risks of trade-based money laundering at both macro trend and transactional levels. The Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU) actively shares financial intelligence with relevant agencies, especially leveraging proactive outreach by customs.

However, according to the solar panel inquiry report findings recently shared with the prime minister, the FMU exhibited weak controls and undertook ineffective currency and specious transaction analysis. The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) registered bogus companies with minimal capital, performed no analysis of annual returns or audit reports, and failed to pre-empt money laundering risks through effective monitoring.

The sources said that the inquiry report also stated that the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) was found to have ineffective bank inspections despite elaborate money laundering regulations. The central bank delayed penalties and took action only when the Senate Standing Committee on Finance intervened. It did not report any disciplinary action against responsible bank officials.

Commercial banks cleared over invoiced values from 2017 to 2022, and no effective action or post audit was undertaken during that period. The banks facilitated criminal elements to launder billions of rupees without taking any responsibility, which under SBP regulations was their primary function. Government structures failed to deter organised criminal activity, departments operated in silos, and no inter agency coordination prevented early detection or mitigated trade-based money laundering. Each agency deflected responsibility, citing another's mandate, and assumed that the other agency was rigorously monitoring.

The inquiry committee has recommended disciplinary action against officers and supervisory management responsible for facilitating money laundering, and criminal proceedings against bank officials who facilitated criminal elements. It has recommended departmental and disciplinary action against responsible officers of the FMU, SECP, Inland Revenue Service, Customs and anti money laundering agencies.

The committee also recommended that the SBP strengthen compliance monitoring through real-time and automated tools, conduct internal performance audits of inspection and enforcement units, and establish an accountability regime for repeated non-compliance by banks.

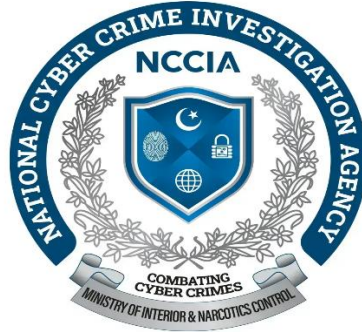
Sources said Pakistan has assured the IMF that, based on the ongoing update of the 2023 National Risk Assessment and under coordination by the National AML/CFT Authority, it will prioritise reforms with a focus on enhancing the effectiveness of AML/CFT supervision of, and preventive measures by, designated nonfinancial businesses and professions (DNFBPs). The government will improve the availability and accuracy of beneficial ownership information, especially on SECP's central registry, to prevent misuse of legal entities. For DNFBPs, notably real estate agents, the tax authorities and the FMU will address low levels of suspicious transaction reporting (STRs) through ongoing reform of the STR framework and by requiring entities to register with the goAML system.

The prime minister's supervisory committee, headed by Establishment Division Secretary Barrister Nabeel Awan, will monitor disciplinary proceedings related to the over-invoicing of solar panels by importers. It will monitor disciplinary proceedings against the officers and employees of relevant organisations who are found responsible for the administrative lapses or facilitating over-invoicing of the solar panels by importers.

It will also determine supervisory responsibility, identify officials and employees not cited in the inquiry committee's report, and review overall progress, submitting a fortnightly report to the Prime Minister's Office.

SOURCE: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE, MAY 12, 2026

NCCIA Punjab busts fake call centre in Lahore as part of crackdown against financial fraud



LAHORE: The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has busted a fake call centre in Lahore and arrested seven suspects, including three women.

According to Director Muhammad Ali Waseem, NCCIA Punjab has launched a province-wide crackdown against organised gangs allegedly involved in online investment and financial fraud.

The suspects were operating a trading call centre in Lahore, where they duped citizens through WhatsApp messages and mobile phone calls by luring them into fraudulent investment schemes, a spokesperson for NCCIA said. During the raid, suspects Ejaz Ahmed, Muhammad Abdullah, Akhlaq Ali, Muhammad Hamza, Fiza, Samreen and Noreen were arrested and a case has been registered against them under various sections of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 and the Pakistan Penal Code.

The spokesperson further said the suspects used WhatsApp, mobile phone calls and social media platforms to contact victims, offering lucrative investment opportunities and promising high returns. “The victims’ money was later transferred into various bank accounts and digital wallets controlled by the gang,” he said. The suspects had set up a fully operational call centre where several operators were engaged in trapping citizens in fake trading and investment schemes, the spokesperson added. One such victim, Khurram Ashfaq, said that the suspects fraudulently obtained Rs2,779,501 from him by luring him into investing in an online trading application.

Nine mobile phones, four computer systems, 415 fake active SIM cards, 610 fake silicone thumb impressions, 56 ATM cards and 13 biometric verification devices have been recovered from the suspects.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 14, 2026

Unkind cyberspace

WHEN abuse occurs face to face, the boundaries are clear. Yet, the same behaviour online is treated less seriously. Harassment in Pakistan’s digital space takes place through coded language, slang, political and faith-based insinuations, and “context-specific hate campaigns”, stresses the Digital Rights Foundation’s security helpline. The new DRF report logs digital intimidation faced by vulnerable groups – women, religious and gender minorities. It presents sextortion, hacking and deepfake imagery as emergent dangers. Online-brokered identity-centric harm is further magnified via algorithms and other social media undercurrents. Between May 2024 and December 2025, the DRF’s helpline tackled 5,041 new cases. Its survey showed that 64pc received a swift response, 93pc were advised digital safety and 92pc reported lower risk after support.

The impact of online abuse is as multilayered as is its tangible version. So are its consequences. Switched-off devices are no solution. The state must clean up the internet environment, especially for marginalised sections, with targeted campaigns to spread awareness about digital safety. The DRF even suggests the use of digital tools to fix compromised accounts, hacking, blackmail, fraud, image-based violations and more. Rapid platform responsiveness is vital for control, identification and recovery. Equally important is ensuring that the reach of human rights activists and digital experts is not suppressed. The authorities cannot wait for online harm to take on a more concrete form. Digital rights mean that the government, public bodies and tech enterprises must collaborate to protect the online public. Safety and reporting mechanisms, enabled by a prompt crisis response, must be accessible to minorities, trans persons, women and children. Moreover, anti-amplification safeguards are necessary to protect reputations. Strong privacy protocols with accountability for platforms are also crucial to prevent repeated exposure to damaging content. Transparency, enforcement of cyber laws and better conviction rates must reinforce these safeguards to stop online harm in its tracks.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 18, 2026

IG vows to unmask 'Pinky drug cartel' operatives



KARACHI: The Sindh police chief Javed Alam Odho said that several credible names had surfaced in the high-profile Anmol, alias Pinky, case, vowing that all those involved - including drug buyers and those engaged in large-scale distribution - would be exposed.

Addressing traders at the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and later speaking to the media, IGP Odho said crimes such as extortion and narcotics trafficking were increasingly shifting to cyberspace. He revealed that the suspect, Pinky, could be operating several accounts, adding that the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) had been engaged to probe financial and banking aspects of the case.

He cautioned against glamorising the accused, saying such portrayal should not reach a point where films are made about criminals. He clarified that Pinky had not been provided any extraordinary security, but only routine protection.

IGP Odho said they were compiling lists of drug dealers operating near educational institutions and those using digital platforms for narcotics sales. He added that, with the

support of the Sindh government, efforts were underway to eradicate drugs, and over 1,000 suspects had already been arrested. "Those involved in narcotics will not be spared," he added.

Referring to operations in riverine (katcha) areas, IGP Odho said the success of the ongoing crackdown was due to the efforts of Sindh police personnel. He claimed that street crime in Karachi was gradually declining each month, though further reduction remained a priority. He added that the pace of the katcha operation, ongoing for the past two and a half years, needed to be accelerated, as several pockets still remained no-go areas where dacoits possessed modern weaponry.

"In the past, police frequently had to retrieve bodies of citizens from these areas," he said, referring to key routes including the motorway, National Highway and Indus Highway along the Indus River. "Our resolve is to make the katcha region peaceful."

He said that in the past four months, 41 hardened criminals had been killed, while 320 had surrendered and more than 600 had either been arrested or laid down arms across a 250-kilometre stretch.

The provincial police chief further stated that Karachi no longer had no-go areas and claimed that none existed across Sindh. He stressed the need for sustainable peace through coordinated efforts with the provincial government, including work on grain storage systems.

Highlighting urban challenges, IGP Odho proposed relocating wholesale markets outside the metropolis, similar to the vegetable market, to ease traffic congestion. He also suggested developing expressways for industrial zones, particularly along the Northern Bypass, terming it a long-term solution to traffic issues.

"The core issue lies with Karachi Port. The business community must work with the government to address it," he said, adding that collective efforts had led to the success of initiatives such as "Bunyan-un-Marsoos."

He further stated that over Rs500 million had been collected in fines, reiterating that the objective was to ensure enforcement of the law. He added that the presence of wholesale markets within the city contributed significantly to traffic congestion and called on the KCCI to play its role in relocating them.

IGP Odho said vehicle number plate fees in Sindh had been reduced to align with neighbouring provinces, while trackers had been installed in 70 per cent of tankers. He added that vehicle fitness certification would be introduced under a public-private partnership model, in collaboration with automobile companies.

SOURCE: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE, MAY 20, 2026

Migrant outflow declines in recent years due to visa restrictions: report

LAHORE: International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Pakistan Chief of Mission Mio Sato highlighted migration as one of the most important development realities across the globe, with particular relevance to Pakistan.

She was addressing at the launch of “The Pakistan Migration Report 2025,” fourth in the series published by the Centre on Migration, Remittances and Diaspora (CIMRAD) at the Lahore School of Economics (LSE).

While underscoring the need for prioritising regular pathways of migration, Ms Sato implied that migration should be a choice and not a necessity. She discussed some of the key aspects for the safe and dignified migration from Pakistan, including provision of skill training programmes, to meet the international labour market demands, raising awareness about the opportunities and risks of migration at all stages, and evidence-based solutions.

She also identified gender gaps in migration indicating that the under-representation of women in international labour force migration was not because of limited opportunities but due to barriers such as socio-cultural norms, limited access to recruitment networks and unsafe working conditions. LSE Rector Dr Shahid Amjad Chaudhry opened the proceedings of the ceremony and proposed migration as a significant topic to study at every level, particularly in the perspective of Pakistan – a country entirely dependent on the outside world for its consumption and worker’s remittances.

The 2025 report highlights the persistent fluctuation in the migrant outflow from Pakistan as the numbers plummeted from 862,000 in 2023 to 725,672 in 2024 and rose slightly again to 762,499 in 2025.

While outward migration remains irregular and non-linear over time, the report attributes the recent decline primarily to the visa restrictions and policy shifts in the host countries. It provides comprehensive analysis of recent trends in migration from Pakistan to two regions separately – the Gulf countries and the rest of the world – along with trends in remittance inflows and emerging policy challenges. A significant portion of workers continue to migrate to the Gulf countries, hosting 92 percent of the registered migrant workers, with Saudi Arabia retaining its position as the top destination, attracting half of all migrants.

Nevertheless, remittance inflows are comparatively higher from non-GCC countries, signifying the presence of high-wage earning migrants or under-reporting of migrant numbers.

A key finding of the report is that around two-third of Pakistani labour migrants are still categorised as low-skilled or unskilled workers as their combined share further increased by 12pc in 2025.

The report underscores the recent diversification in migration patterns beyond the Gulf. The non-GCC countries, including UK, Canada, Australia and emerging Asian economies, are experiencing a notable increase in migrant inflows.

The report points out the continuation of the lower levels of women participation in the migrant labour force as just one percent of the total.

Furthermore, irregular migration remains a concern, especially in Europe, making Pakistan one of the top 10 nationalities entering Europe illegally. The number of Pakistanis apprehended at various European borders was 5,680 in 2024 and 3,203 in the first half of 2025, with about 90pc trying to enter by sea.

The report states a 25pc rise in officially recorded remittance inflows from USD 30.2bn in 2023-24 to USD 38.3bn during 2024-25. This surge is significant in stabilising the economy, and helping to avert balance-of-payments challenge amidst rising imports and stagnant exports. Remittances now account for 9.34% of the GDP. The surge in remittances was driven by higher outmigration and a shift toward skilled workers. Besides, high inflation during recent years led to a fall in real income of households, subsequently, increased pressure on migrants to provide more support to their families back home.

The report also discusses growing challenges in the global migration landscape. The increasingly stringent migration policies by the major destination countries, higher visa fees and rejections, and tightening of labour market conditions curtailing opportunities for Pakistani migrants. These greater constraints on regular migration are contributing to the rise in irregular migration through dangerous and life-threatening routes.

Other speakers at the launch ceremony included CIMRAD Director Dr Rashid Amjad, GIDS Dr Fareeha Zafar and LSE Research & Teaching Fellow Zahra Mughis.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 20, 2026

FIA busts illegal kidney trade network in Islamabad, arrests 9 including urologist



ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) Anti-Corruption Circle, Islamabad Zone, arrested nine people, including a well-known urologist and a private hospital employee, for their alleged involvement in illegal kidney transplantation and organ trafficking. According to FIA officials, the arrests were made during a raid at a prominent private hospital in Islamabad, where illegal kidney removal operations were allegedly being carried out. The doctor and hospital employee are described as key operatives in the network.

The operation was carried out under the direction of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, FIA Director General Usman Anwar, and Director Islamabad Zone Syed Shahzad Nadeem Bukhari. Several others present at the scene, including alleged donors, recipients and hospital staff, were also taken into custody for questioning and shifted to the FIA office.

Officials said the crackdown was part of an ongoing investigation into a wider network targeting poor people from underdeveloped districts of southern Punjab, particularly Rahim Yar Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan.

The suspects allegedly lured financially distressed individuals into selling their kidneys for small amounts before selling the organs at much higher prices.

The FIA said the scope of the investigation had been expanded and further raids were under way to apprehend other members of the network.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 20, 2026

Government stands firm on offloadings



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior & Narcotics Control Talal Chaudhry told the National Assembly on Friday that passengers travelling abroad, even with valid passports and visas, are sometimes subjected to additional profiling and screening to stop misuse of legal travel channels.

He explained that this system helps identify high-risk travel patterns linked to smuggling networks, though it has also led to complaints from passengers who were offloaded despite having complete documents.

He said strengthened monitoring has reduced illegal migration attempts by an estimated 47 per cent, calling it a significant improvement.

He said, "2,222 people have been offloaded under the E-Exit system."

He stressed that the purpose of the system is not to stop genuine travellers but to block human smuggling networks.

The minister said, under the Prime Minister's zero-tolerance policy on illegal immigration, strict action is being taken against human smuggling networks operating in and outside the country.

Responding to a calling attention notice about Pakistani citizens detained in Cambodia in connection with alleged cybercrime and scam-related cases after being trapped in fraudulent job schemes, he said that since June 2023, around 3,158 agents involved in illegal immigration facilitation have been arrested.

He said assets worth millions of rupees belonging to these agents have been seized, while bank accounts holding large amounts of money have been frozen.

He added that accountability action has also been taken within the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), where some officials were found to be involved in assisting such networks. In several cases, entire shifts were removed after investigations. According to him, more than 100 FIA officials have faced disciplinary action, including criminal cases and convictions, over their alleged role in human smuggling.

The minister said the ongoing crackdown aims to dismantle organised networks that exploit citizens through illegal migration routes and fake travel arrangements. He added that special focus has been placed on routes leading to Cambodia, where many Pakistanis were reportedly trapped in fake job schemes and later faced detention or legal action.

He said such cases increased during 2024 and 2025, prompting stronger enforcement measures. Providing further details, he said the FIA conducted 286 inquiries related to Cambodia, leading to 111 criminal cases.

He added that profiling systems were developed to identify passengers using suspicious travel routes linked to illegal migration.

He said 222 passengers have so far been offloaded at airports as a preventive step.

He also stated that around 15,000 Pakistanis are currently in Cambodia, many of whom were misled by online job scams. He added that Cambodian authorities have also tightened regulations in response to the situation.

Around \$1 million in fines imposed on 1,272 affected Pakistanis were waived through coordination efforts, while emergency travel documents and passports were provided to facilitate their return. This includes 631 emergency travel documents, 112 new passports, and 75 renewed passports. He confirmed that four Pakistani nationals had died in Cambodia and their bodies were repatriated. He said the route involves complex trafficking networks passing through countries including Thailand, Malaysia, and Myanmar before reaching Cambodia. He added that awareness campaigns by FIA and advisories from the Foreign Ministry continue, but many citizens still fall victim to agents and online fraud.

He said a large number of affected Pakistanis have already been safely brought back through coordinated rescue efforts.

SOURCE: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE, MAY 23, 2026

Quantifying organised crime

BY TARIQ PARVEZ

THE world is increasingly beginning to view organised crime (OC) as a serious global threat. It is not simply a law-and-order problem, but a cancer that is rapidly metastasising to vital parts of the state, including the economy, governance and national security.

Many countries, such as the UK and Australia, have quantified the cost of OC, which is an essential step towards understanding and combating it. For instance, the UK has estimated that the cost of OC it had to bear was £37 billion in 2025. In Australia, it was estimated to be \$82bn annually. It has been generally accepted that a consolidated cost estimate of the harm caused by all manner of OC is not merely an academic exercise but an essential tool for designing, prioritising and implementing national strategies.

Sadly, Pakistan, which, according to the Global Organised Crime Index 2025, is among the countries most vulnerable to such crime, lacks this tool without which it cannot formulate a holistic national strategy against OC. There is a need to remedy matters. The existing system in Pakistan for evaluating the cost of harm caused by OC suffers from two main shortcomings. One, all the relevant departments dealing with OC, whether at the federal or provincial level, work in silos. These departments often have their own national risk assessment estimates, limited to crimes within their respective purview. There is no cross-departmental, integrated, national estimate of harm from all types of OC. Thus, we don't have the broader picture of OC's dominance in Pakistan. Second, LEAs dealing with OCs in Pakistan often view these crimes through a narrow law-enforcement lens and therefore measure them using law-and-order metrics, such as the number of criminal cases registered, raids conducted, and arrests and seizures made. This approach, though important, overlooks the quantification of a much graver and wider harm caused by a variety of OC to our economy, governance and national security. For instance, in the case of narcotics trafficking, our assessment is confined to arrests, seizures, etc, while the more harmful costs like impact on the economy, health, infiltration into legitimate business, terrorist financing, etc, are not counted. Thus, our existing assessment system provides only a partial picture of the actual harm caused by OC and fails to identify all beneficiaries of the crimes. The cumulative effect of these two major gaps is that we don't have an accurate total cost estimate of the harm caused by OC or knowledge of facilitating factors.

Basing our national anti-OC strategy on an incomplete risk assessment is likely to adversely affect its efficacy. There are three main areas of concern. One, it leads to the reduced importance of OC at the policymaking level. Pakistan is a resource-constrained country, and many national challenges vie for a share of the funds and priority. We need data to support the claim that OC is a more serious threat to getting a seat at the table. Since we don't have a figure indicating the total cost of the harm caused by OC, combating it doesn't receive the importance it deserves at the policymaking level.

Two, the political economy of organised crime is one of its main drivers. It needs to be borne in mind that, like elsewhere, OC in Pakistan survives, not because of weak laws but political patronage, bureaucratic collusion, an ineffective judiciary, widespread corruption and powerful criminal networks. Having an across-the-board, independent, holistic total cost of OC in the country would help uncover the political economy of OC by identifying the entire network of crime, its real beneficiaries and its nexus with political and economic systems, without exception. It will also improve the transparency of measures taken by the government. In the existing system of partial risk assessment, these important enablers of OC in Pakistan remain hidden in the shadows, confining government efforts to tackle OC to the arrest of the latter's foot soldiers and minor seizures. Thus, incomplete data is an important factor in determining the effectiveness of our national strategy.

Three, because we lack data regarding the total cost of OC, it is not possible to compare the harm caused by different types of OCs individually. This results in the irrational allocation of the state's financial resources to departments dealing with different types of OCs, not on the basis of the harm caused by a certain OC, but on the basis of arbitrary criteria. Thus, more harmful types of OCs can end up with fewer resources. Places like the UK and the EU have addressed this issue in their respective strategies by adopting the 'high value targets' approach, ie, arriving at the total cost of all forms of OCs and allocating maximum resources to those which are the most harmful. This approach needs to be emulated in Pakistan.

The Anti-Money Laundering Authority (2023) should be immediately tasked with estimating the total cost of OC in Pakistan. The data may be used as a basis for formulating a new strategy against OC. Entities with experience in dealing with OC, including international agencies such as the FATF, IMF, and UNODC, and regional organisations like the EU, as well as countries such as the UK and Australia, can be asked to assist. The cost findings should be shared with the public in the interest of transparency and to secure political and public buy-in, thereby building pressure on the government to act.

Recently, the prime minister, during discussions with the IMF, reportedly said that a committee was being set up to investigate a multi-billion money-laundering scam through the over-invoicing of solar panels. That is a cosmetic response. The urgency and gravity of the increasing threat of OC in Pakistan demands that we go beyond setting up committees and take the bold decision to unmask the powerful but hidden beneficiaries by working out the total cost of OC.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 24, 2026

EU-backed justice project marks successful completion



ISLAMABAD: The European Union-funded 'Deliver Justice Project' concluded with a ceremony in Islamabad on Thursday, marking five years of efforts to improve access to justice, strengthen people-centred services and advance rule of law reforms across Pakistan.

Jointly implemented by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UN Women, the project operated in Islamabad, Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, supporting justice and security institutions, civil society organisations and local communities.

The closing ceremony brought together representatives from the Supreme Court, the Economic Affairs Ministry, provincial justice and security institutions, civil society, media and community groups to review the project's impact and partnerships. Justice champions from K-P and Balochistan were also recognised for promoting inclusive and accessible justice services.

European Union Ambassador to Pakistan Raimundas Karoblis said the EU remained committed to supporting a more efficient, safer and accessible justice system in Pakistan, adding that the project had strengthened the justice sector in K-P and Balochistan.

The event featured testimonials from women lawyers, women police officers and community members who benefited from legal awareness, legal aid and justice services under the initiative. An interactive Impact Hub showcased the project's achievements, research findings and personal stories from across the programme areas.

Supreme Court Justice Shahid Waheed, who attended as chief guest, said justice institutions worldwide were expected not only to resolve disputes but also to ensure justice remained accessible, inclusive, transparent and responsive to society's needs. He said justice institutions in developing democracies carried an added responsibility to protect constitutional rights and reinforce public trust.

SOURCE: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE, MAY 24, 2026

Emergence of fluid security structures

BY FAISAL ALI RAJA

Police forces tend to dissipate, fragment or lose operational authority when an existing supporting system weakens, public legitimacy erodes or state institutions can no longer proffer assistance, coordination and command. In many countries, policing depends heavily on centralised authority, legal trust and public money; once these foundations disappear, policemen may resign, refuse orders or divide into groups to pursue collective interests. In militancy-infested regions, target killings of policemen can trigger a chain reaction which, if not immediately addressed, may lead to the formation of fluid police structures which are volatile, unpredictable and can act for or against state institutions. In special circumstances, groups comprising former police officials or ex-military men are more lethal in tactics, attacks, strategy and structure than ordinary armed groups. If they tend to join hands with militant forces, state legitimacy gets challenged every day. These groups are adept in weapon handling, public coercion, training and recruitment. Hence, such structures can easily take law into their own hands, fill in for the state's inadequacy, open avenues of financial flows through illegal means - forced taxation, smuggling, extortion etc - and act as a limited pseudo self-government in a given region.

Civil-military force coordination is of immense importance in such cases. Neither civilian government can fight it out independently nor a military force may challenge the situation on its own. The worst-case scenario occurs when one institution tries to mitigate its damages while using another as a shield. The operational mismatch makes convergence difficult as both see things differently. The points of conversion - survival in a hostile environment, a common enemy of all shades, and mutual protection agenda - may be a starting point. Sometimes these fluid security structures appear as peace restoring groups - a community-based support structure or committee - working alongside local authorities against rising militant violence and repeated attacks on security forces. The primary function of such a setup is to assist in maintaining law and order by encouraging civilians to share information about suspicious activities, militant movement and possible safe houses. It also aims to connect residents and group members in areas where insecurity breeds fear and mistrust.

These individuals describe themselves as defenders of local peace rather than as a political organisation, emphasising collective responsibility for protecting markets, roads, schools and neighbourhoods from militant influence. In practice, such committees operate as a bridge between the state and the local population, especially in areas where police cannot face operational challenges alone, by maintaining intelligence coordination, community mobilisation and support for anti-militant operations. They find their roots in conflict-prone districts where state institutions do not step in immediately to protect locals. They also strategically exploit the presence of traditional tribal networks that still hold influence over public behaviour and local decision-making in such areas.

This fluid security arrangement, however, has many pitfalls for the state institutions and the police organisation. As police officials feel isolated, under-equipped or unsupported by higher authorities, they start depending on such groups for defence or operational support. Resultantly, the boundaries between state authority and a local armed organisation blur. In post-2003 Iraq, most police officers joined sectarian militias, tribal armed groups or insurgent organisations because they offered protection, income or political influence during the chaos that followed the invasion. Others fled to safer regions or neighbouring countries. In Sunni-majority areas especially, former security personnel were sometimes involved in armed resistance against coalition forces and the Iraqi government.

State institutions must carefully assess and regulate these fluid security structures before they drift beyond institutional control. If managed properly, some community-based arrangements can temporarily supplement state capacity in conflict zones.

SOURCE: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE, MAY 24, 2026

The quest for governance

BY MOHIUDDIN AAZIM



Faced with mounting fiscal pressures, rising inflation, and growing public frustration, the state is under immense pressure to rebuild trust in governance while stabilising the economy.

To meet a major International Monetary Fund (IMF) condition, the federal government plans to collect an additional Rs1.1 trillion in revenue during the next fiscal year through a combination of federal and provincial measures. Yet behind the numbers lies a deeper question: can Pakistan truly reform its system without confronting corruption in all its forms?

The government's revenue strategy is ambitious. Of the total additional target, approximately Rs680 billion is expected from the federal side, mainly through the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and a substantial increase in petroleum levy.

Simultaneously, authorities are planning an aggressive administrative crackdown on tax evasion. Revenue from anti-evasion measures is projected to double to Rs778bn through a "faceless" tax system, stricter audits, digital invoicing, and real-time banking data integration. The sales tax net is also expected to widen by including additional fast-moving consumer goods.

Provincial governments, meanwhile, have been assigned roughly Rs400bn in additional revenue responsibilities, including agricultural income taxation, expanded sales tax enforcement, and improved property tax collection.

These reforms are not merely technical adjustments. They represent an acknowledgement that Pakistan's fiscal crisis is deeply intertwined with corruption, tax evasion, and weak governance structures.

The IMF estimates that corruption, hidden incomes, and tax evasion cost Pakistan nearly Rs3.4tr annually – roughly 3.9pc of GDP.

For decades, anti-corruption rhetoric in Pakistan has been loud but fleeting. Governments have announced crackdowns with dramatic language, only for momentum to dissipate once political interests intervened. What Pakistan requires today is not selective accountability or televised arrests, but a structural and sustainable anti-corruption drive that transforms institutions rather than headlines.

One of the most significant proposed reforms is the public asset declaration system for all officers from Grades 17 to 22 by December 2026. If implemented properly, this measure could fundamentally alter the bureaucratic culture of secrecy that has persisted for decades.

Equally important is the proposal to allow banks access to these declarations to identify glaring discrepancies between income and assets. In a country where modestly paid officials often accumulate unexplained wealth, luxury properties, and foreign assets, financial transparency can no longer be optional.

The urgency of reform becomes clearer when examining recent data. Out of approximately 5.9 million tax returns filed recently, nearly 43 per cent reportedly declared zero income. Such figures expose the scale of underreporting and the weaknesses of enforcement mechanisms.

Another encouraging proposal is to identify the 10 highest-risk government departments by October 2026 for targeted anti-corruption strategies. The proposal for the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to conduct specialised vulnerability assessments suggests a shift from reactive accountability toward preventive governance. Yet, no anti-corruption framework can succeed unless NAB itself undergoes serious reform.

Pakistan's accountability history remains scarred by allegations of political engineering, selective prosecutions, and institutional misuse. Proposed amendments to the NAB Ordinance by January 2027 could therefore prove crucial. A transparent and merit-based process for selecting the NAB chairman – involving opposition members, judiciary representatives, and civil society may help restore credibility to an institution whose public image has suffered considerably.

Transparency within accountability institutions is equally essential. Publishing NAB's operational procedures, annual statistics, and enforcement records online would ensure that accountability watchdogs themselves remain accountable. Institutions derive legitimacy not merely from legal authority, but from public trust.

Provincial anti-corruption establishments also require urgent strengthening. Corruption is often experienced most directly at district and provincial levels, where citizens interact daily with patwaris, contractors, police officials, staff of lower judiciary, and licensing authorities. Empowering provincial watchdogs with stronger investigative tools and financial intelligence capabilities is therefore utmost necessary.

The same logic applies to state-owned enterprises (SOEs), which have long functioned as centres of inefficiency, patronage, and financial leakage.

Net adjusted losses in Pakistan's SOE portfolio reportedly rose sharply from Rs30.6bn in FY24 to Rs122.9bn in FY25, according to recent reports. The National Highway Authority alone incurred losses approaching Rs295bn.

Nowhere is the crisis more visible than in the power sector. Distribution company inefficiencies caused by theft and poor recoveries added nearly Rs397bn to circular debt in FY25 alone. Total circular debt has crossed Rs1.5tr, while liabilities to independent power producers and unfunded pension obligations continue to mount. These losses ultimately fall upon taxpayers and consumers already struggling with soaring utility bills.

Equally politically sensitive is the proposed policy to liberalise the sugar market. Repeated sugar crises, price manipulation, hoarding, and controversial export approvals have reinforced public perceptions that economic policymaking frequently serves cartels rather than consumers.

Tax simplification itself is an anti-corruption strategy and another reform proposal under consideration. After all, complex tax systems create fertile ground for bribery, discretionary settlements, and harassment.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 25, 2026

In chains

THE question should never be about who is at the receiving end at any given point in time: an assault on an individual or institution's freedom is an assault on everyone's freedoms. Last week, 600 journalists from all over the country lent their voice to a declaration rejecting a law that has unreasonably limited the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of speech granted to every citizen under Article 19.

Having gathered in Islamabad for a convention titled 'Media Laws, Regulations and Ethics', organised by the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Union of Journalists (RIUJ), Pakistani journalists and media practitioners have demanded that parliament review all laws affecting them that contradict Article 19, while formally rejecting the Peca 2025 amendments, which the Declaration terms "a draconian 'black law' specifically engineered to facilitate the arm-twisting of journalists and the suppression of Pakistan's media landscape". The Declaration offers valuable insights into the state of Pakistani media today. Men and women who have dedicated their lives, their physical health and mental well-being, to championing the rights and interests of the public, feel they are constantly under siege. Their jobs are increasingly unsafe and no longer guaranteed; salaries that once represented middle-class stability have been eroded massively by breakneck inflation; the state refuses or fails to provide them with physical or economic security; and reputations built over years of dedicated work are now under constant attack by whoever disagrees with their views.

There is, therefore, much resentment against those seen as responsible for the difficulties journalists have been facing. The government, in particular, receives flak for taking advantage of the industry's weakened economics to try to force the media to give up their principled positions through various means of coercion.

It is hoped that this Declaration can provide the impetus needed for journalists and media practitioners to coalesce around shared grievances and work towards solutions that will benefit them collectively. It is critical to challenge and push back collectively against legislative, economic and administrative tools used to limit the freedom of speech. In Islamabad, the community presented a unified front: it was a powerful, heartening moment.

One hopes it will not be remembered as a merely symbolic one. Building on the 'Islamabad Declaration', the industry must now collectively resolve to push parliament, along with other stakeholders such as civil society and the judiciary, to take up the demand to review laws repugnant to Pakistani's constitutional rights.

A movement was launched against Peca last year by journalists and media practitioners. Unfortunately, it fizzled out due to a lack of sustained interest by the industry. This time, the industry must find allies, including among political parties, who are willing to push the agenda for civil liberties along with it more consistently.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 25, 2026

A holistic approach to security

BY SHAUKAT JAVED



Pakistan is once again witnessing a disturbing surge in terrorism, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, where militant groups.

This renewed wave of violence is a stark reminder that despite years of military operations and immense national sacrifice, the threat of terrorism in Pakistan has not been fully defeated but has evolved into a more complex and dangerous hybrid challenge.

Pakistan's struggle with terrorism did not begin after 9/11, but the events that followed fundamentally transformed both the scale and character of violence within the country. Before the global war on terror, Pakistan was primarily confronted with sectarian conflict, ethno-political violence in Karachi and sub-nationalist insurgencies in Balochistan. Over the decades, political use of religion gradually shifted the state away from the inclusive vision articulated by Quaid-e-Azam in his August 11 speech.

However, after 9/11, the threat landscape changed dramatically. Terrorism in Pakistan acquired a far more organised, transnational and religiously motivated character.

Suicide bombing emerged as the principal weapon of terror, targeting civilians, mosques, educational institutions, security forces and public spaces. The number of terrorist incidents increased rapidly, reaching a peak in 2010 with more than 2,000 attacks recorded across the country. Pakistan paid an immense price. More than 80,000 Pakistanis, including civilians and security personnel, lost their lives, while the economic cost exceeded \$150 billion.

The entire region was destabilised, social cohesion weakened and investor confidence severely damaged. Yet despite these enormous sacrifices, Pakistan's resilience and the sustained efforts of its armed forces, intelligence agencies and law-enforcement institutions managed to significantly reduce the level of violence over time.

Through large-scale kinetic operations such as Zarb e Azb, Radd ul Fasaad, and extensive intelligence-based operations, the militant infrastructure was disrupted and terrorist networks were weakened. By 2020, the number of terrorist incidents had declined to nearly 200 annually, creating cautious optimism that the country was finally overcoming one of the darkest phases in its history. Unfortunately, this relative stability proved temporary. The abrupt US withdrawal from Afghanistan fundamentally altered the regional security environment. Anti-Pakistan militant organisations, including the TTP, Al Qaeda, Islamic State Khorasan Province, Haqqani network, BLA and its allies, have re-emerged with renewed confidence and operational capacity. Many of these groups gained access to sophisticated weapons abandoned in Afghanistan and reportedly benefited from external Indian sponsorship.

The nature of violence has also evolved into a more dangerous hybrid threat. Terrorism today is not confined to bombings and armed attacks. It now combines cyber attacks and propaganda, disinformation campaigns, digital radicalisation and psychological operations designed to erode public confidence in state institutions and deepen political and ethnic fault lines.

Pakistan is once again witnessing coordinated assaults occurring simultaneously across multiple regions, targeting both civilians and security personnel. Last year, the number of incidents and casualties reportedly surpassed even the peak levels recorded in 2010. What remains missing in reaction is a comprehensive and coherent national counterterrorism strategy. Pakistan has introduced several national security and internal security policies, along with the National Action Plan and its revised version, but implementation has remained fragmented and inconsistent. Counterterrorism still operates largely through a security-centric lens without adequately addressing the political, ideological, economic and governance dimensions of the crisis.

Nacta was envisioned as the central coordinating institution responsible for integrating national efforts and developing a counter-extremism narrative. However, its institutional role remains weak and unclear. The counter-narrative effort has largely remained confined to a single framework that addresses only the broader frustrations and aspirations of Pakistan's youth. Extremism today spreads not only through religious arguments but also through perceptions of injustice, exclusion, unemployment, corruption, and political alienation.

At the operational level, the challenge is equally serious. Police and security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan are still not fully equipped with modern surveillance systems, advanced weapons, cyber monitoring capabilities and technological resources needed to confront contemporary hybrid threats. Intelligence-based operations remain necessary, but they cannot alone eliminate the underlying causes of militancy.

Balochistan presents perhaps the clearest example of why a purely kinetic approach cannot succeed indefinitely. The perception that local populations do not sufficiently benefit from the province's natural wealth has contributed to deep political grievances and feelings of alienation. Similarly, the unresolved issue of missing persons remains one of the most emotionally charged and politically damaging issues in the province.

Without addressing these grievances politically and constitutionally, security measures alone are unlikely to produce lasting stability. Confidence-building measures are urgently required. Political engagement with peaceful and non-violent groups may help reduce alienation and restore confidence in democratic processes. Treating all dissent through an exclusively securitised framework risks widening the gap between the federation and already marginalised communities.

Pakistan, therefore, requires a shift from a narrow counterterrorism doctrine towards a broader national resilience strategy. Counterterrorism cannot succeed without political stability, democratic continuity, institutional coordination, economic reform and social inclusion. A credible civilian-led coordination structure is essential, with Nacta functioning effectively under a transparent national framework rather than remaining institutionally overshadowed.

Equally important is investment in human development. Many districts in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa suffer from poverty levels significantly higher than the national average. Lack of education, unemployment, weak healthcare systems and limited economic opportunities create fertile ground for radicalisation and militant recruitment. Development spending in these regions, especially in the newly merged districts, should therefore be viewed not merely as welfare but as a long-term national security investment.

At the same time, national security discourse itself requires maturity and balance. Observing national milestones should remain occasions for gratitude, reflection and renewed national resolve rather than triumphalism. These occasions should inspire humility, unity and preparedness rather than political spectacle or emotional chest thumping. Nations strengthen themselves through sober confidence, gratitude to Allah, institutional seriousness and constant readiness to safeguard sovereignty and national interests.

Pakistan has demonstrated extraordinary resilience over the past two decades. The sacrifices of civilians, police and the armed forces have prevented the collapse of the state under immense pressure. But resilience alone is not enough. The country now needs strategic clarity and political courage to move beyond reactive policies and perpetual crisis management.

The fight against terrorism today is not only military. It is ideological, political, economic, technological and psychological. Sustainable peace will only emerge when security measures are combined with justice, inclusion, constitutional governance and public trust. Without such a holistic approach, Pakistan risks remaining trapped in an endless cycle of violence and reaction rather than moving towards durable peace and national stability.

SOURCE: THE NEWS, MAY 26, 2026

Balochistan tragedy

A PALL has descended on Eid festivities. The Sunday suicide bombing in Quetta has left many grieving their loved ones at a time when others will be celebrating the bonds of faith and family. According to the official count, more than a dozen lives were snuffed out, and at least 20 people were left injured; later reports put the toll much higher.

Maimed bodies of women and children were seen being carted from the site on stretchers. One wonders what monstrous instinct compelled the perpetrators to commit such senseless violence. Officials and hospital sources later noted that the victims were mainly passengers of the ill-fated shuttle train, on their way to board the Peshawar-bound Jaffar Express, as well as pedestrians and residents living along the railway track where the bombing occurred. The Balochistan Liberation Army claimed the attack, cementing its credentials as a terrorist outfit that resorts to violence against defenceless victims.

The fact that terrorists were once again able to target travellers is of particular concern. It seems that the Jaffar Express, which connects the provinces of Balochistan and KP and passes through Sindh and Punjab, has become a symbolic target for malicious elements. This is a major problem for those responsible for ensuring the security of both the citizenry and the infrastructure of the province; the authorities must devise an actionable plan to address this menace.

It is also deeply regrettable that actors claiming to represent Baloch interests have made a legitimate target of what are otherwise unarmed civilians. No ideology can justify the murder of innocents, and there must be zero tolerance for such hateful elements. The state must receive all the support it requires to take action and neutralise these merchants of death.

That said, there must also be some reflection on why Balochistan continues to slip out of the hands of those tasked with its administration and governance. The state keeps reiterating the role of hostile foreign actors in fomenting unrest, yet seems to be short on ideas on how to prevent the ingress of such actors and their ideologies in Baloch society. The sense of alienation within the Baloch people, which allows these foreign forces to feed on the locals' dissatisfaction and disillusionment, is rarely addressed.

Political wisdom dictates that the people of Balochistan must be empowered and, in turn, also be responsible for peace and stability within their society. But this can only happen if the province is allowed to experience an unhindered and relatively clean political process. Lastly, the centre has made a mistake by pushing away Baloch leaders who may have harboured grievances but still respected the Constitution and denounced violence. It is time to re-engage with them and let them propose solutions for the province's multiple troubles.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 26, 2026

Culture of silence' blamed for surge in violence against women

SUKKUR: A coalition of human rights advocates, legal experts and civil society leaders have demanded an urgent overhaul of the justice system, warning that statutory protections for women are being actively undermined by poor institutional implementation and deep-rooted societal stigma. Speaking at a seminar titled "Violence Against Women: Culture of Silence, Societal Acceptance and Institutional Response" at the Sukkur Arts Council, speakers cautioned that legislation alone is insufficient to combat gender-based violence without a drastic shift in public mindset and state accountability.

The event, co-hosted by the Sindh Women Lawyers Alliance, the National Commission for Rights of Women, and the Community Development Foundation (CDF), highlighted the stark contrast between written law and reality on the ground. Keynote speaker Ms Rubina Brohi categorised violence against women as a severe breach of fundamental human rights rather than a private domestic matter. While acknowledging that protective legislation exists on paper, she noted that systemic failures within law enforcement and the judiciary routinely deny survivors timely justice. "The lack of effective implementation remains our greatest hurdle," Ms Brohi stated, calling for a proactive, accountable approach from the police, prosecution departments, and the judiciary to guarantee survivor protection.

Panellists also observed that a pervasive 'culture of silence' – fuelled by intense social pressure, fear of retaliation and cultural stigma – continues to prevent victims from reporting abuse, effectively shielding perpetrators from legal consequences. The delegates argued that legal frameworks must be paired with grassroots community mobilisation to dismantle misogynistic social attitudes.

Representatives from various civil society organisations outlined a multi-layered support strategy, advocating for target-driven awareness campaigns to dismantle systemic biases, alongside streamlined, state-funded legal aid for survivors navigating the courts. Furthermore, they stressed the critical need for dedicated psychosocial support services, including counselling and robust mental health infrastructure, to assist traumatised victims.

The seminar, which drew a diverse audience of lawyers, journalists, academics and students, featured prominent contributions from Dr Qasim Sodhar, Wahab Pandhrani, Jan Odhano, Seema Maheshwari and Rukhsana Mangi.

The forum concluded with the unanimous adoption of a joint resolution. The declaration demands stringent institutional accountability, immediate enforcement of existing pro-women laws and a unified collective campaign to eradicate violence against women and girls across the province.

SOURCE: DAWN, MAY 27, 2026

A Crisis Manager for Vienna: Monica Juma Takes the Helm at UNODC and UNOV



A historic leadership change at the UN City in Vienna: Monica Juma, an experienced Kenyan diplomat and security expert, has officially assumed her duties as the new Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV) and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). With the rank of Under-Secretary-General, Juma thus assumes one of the most influential positions for an African diplomat in the entire UN system. She succeeds Ghada Waly of Egypt.

Juma stepped into her dual leadership roles in Vienna at a moment of global uncertainty, highlighting the considerable challenges and responsibilities that come with guiding both offices. She stated: “I am incredibly proud and honored to lead these two offices in Vienna at a critical moment for multilateralism. I look forward to drawing on my experience in defense, security, and diplomacy to support the UN’s efforts in addressing the most pressing challenges of our time – including drugs, organized crime, corruption, and terrorism.”

Her appointment is seen as a strong signal within the international community. Until Juma officially took office, John Brandolino (Head of the Department of Treaty Affairs) had been serving as acting head. East African media and political observers emphasize that Juma’s rise reflects the growing diplomatic significance of Kenya and Africa in global governance structures.

From Nairobi to Oxford to the global stage

Born in 1963, Juma has an exceptionally broad track record spanning both operational security policy and cutting-edge academic research. After earning her bachelor's and master's degrees in government and public administration from the University of Nairobi, she received her Ph.D. in political science from the prestigious University of Oxford in the United Kingdom, where she also earned a certificate in refugee studies. In addition to English, she is fluent in Kiswahili and Kamba.

Before accepting the position in Vienna, she made a significant impact on Kenya's government, security architecture, and ministries. From 2022 to early 2026, she served as the very first National Security Advisor to Kenyan President William Ruto and as Secretary of the National Security Council. Under former President Uhuru Kenyatta, she successively served as Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Energy, and served as interim Cabinet Secretary for Petroleum and Mining. Between 2010 and 2013, she represented her home country as ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti, as well as serving as permanent representative to the African Union (AU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

Juma is no stranger to the White House either: Dr. Monica Kathina Juma's connections to the U.S. stem from her influential role in security policy and academia. In May 2024, she was among the hand-picked state guests at U.S. President Joe Biden's official state banquet in honor of the Kenyan president, reflecting her significant involvement in U.S.-Kenya security collaborations amidst Kenya's designation as a "Major Non-NATO Ally." As National Security Advisor, Juma was pivotal in forging these agreements during Kenyan President William Ruto's state visit. Additionally, she served as an adjunct faculty member at the African Centre for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, where she applied her extensive experience in teaching security analysis and conflict resolution to U.S. military officers and diplomats.

Huge tasks await in Vienna

Juma's schedule for the coming months is already packed. She is taking the helm at a time when transnational criminal networks are rapidly going digital. The UNODC's agenda currently includes monumental tasks such as combating global cybercrime, international human trafficking, modern "sextortion" (online sexual blackmail), and curbing illicit financial flows and the global drug trade.

With Juma, Vienna gains a strategist who understands the interplay between regional conflicts and global security like few others. Observers view her appointment as an opportunity to infuse the often cumbersome multilateral UN processes with new, pragmatic momentum.

SOURCE: VINDOBONA.ORG



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