

Please feel free to forward to friends



# MORNING NEWS BRIEF

Your Essential Guide to the Day's Happenings

## POLITICS & GOVERNANCE

- The government has announced a new tax amnesty scheme – [the Asset Declaration Scheme](#) – after federal cabinet's approval. The scheme has been introduced through a presidential ordinance instead of routing it through the parliament as a legislative bill. Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, adviser to the Prime Minister Imran Khan on finance, has said that the scheme was aimed at documenting the economy and not revenue generation. Opposition parties have criticized the scheme saying it would [legalize corrupt money](#).
- Main Opposition party Pakistan Muslim League (N) has [requisitioned the National Assembly session](#) for a discussion on the recent terror attacks in the country. The requisition was made a day after the earlier session of the lower house of the parliament was prorogued.
- In a sign of growing unease in Pak-US ties, Washington has imposed [visa sanctions on three Pakistani officials](#) because of a row over deportation of Pakistanis overstaying in US.
- Lahore High Court has granted [post-arrest bail to Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan \(TLP\) leaders](#) Khadim Hussain Rizvi and Pir Afzal Qadri, who are facing charges related to violent protests against acquittal of blasphemy accused Asia Bibi. Asia last week left Pakistan.

## ECONOMY

- [A surge in oil prices in the international market](#) has been witnessed after Saudi Arabia claimed attacks on two of its pumping stations belonging to state oil company Aramco by explosive-laden drones operated by an unidentified source. Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih termed the attack as an "act of terrorism". Brent crude and US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were up 56 cents or 0.80% and 31 cents or 0.51% respectively.

- Planning Minister Makhdoom Khusró Bakhtiar has said that the government is planning to introduce [all-embracing structural reforms](#). He further said that the government would strive for bridging gap between imports and exports. Additionally, he highlighted the allocation of Rs 216 billion for providing subsidy on electricity to the poor who consume below 300 units per month.

## DEFENCE & SECURITY

- [Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said that Pakistan would remain neutral](#) in tensions between Iran and the USA. Expressing his concerns over the escalating situation in the Persian Gulf, he maintained that Pakistan would refrain from joining any camp in case conflict erupts in the Middle East.

## SOUTH ASIA

- Security forces of Sri Lanka have swung into action to tackle unprecedented [violence against Muslims](#) in the aftermath of Easter Bombings last month. Curfew is still in place in one of the provinces where besieged Muslims were attacked by angry mobs.
- [Despite the caste system being outlawed some 60 years ago](#), caste plays a significant role in Indian elections. The prevalence of caste system perpetuates a system of social divide where millions of so-called lower-caste Hindus face insurmountable challenges.
- UN mission has called for [cancelling of all financial ties](#) with Myanmar army for gross human rights violations against the Rohingya Muslims.

## CHINA

- Wang Yang, China's top political advisor, [met with Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena](#) on May 14, 2019, in Beijing, China. Wang assured China's unconditional support for the Sri Lankan government in tackling the emanating threats of terrorism. President Sirisena thanked China and expressed Sri Lankan desire to further enhance the bilateral relations between the two states.
- [Global stock took a down turn](#) with the intensification of US-China trade war on tariffs. China has warned the US of retaliation of similar intensity by imposing tariffs of up to 25 per cent on \$60 billion worth of the US goods. The Shanghai Composite, China's main stock index was down 0.2 per cent in afternoon trade and has lost 5.5 per cent this month.

- Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif [termed the attacks on Saudi vessels and stations](#) as an insider job by accusing the hardliners in the USA and the Middle East of stoking chaos in the Persian Gulf.
- Turkish President [Recep Tayyip Erdogan has accused Syrian government](#) of impairing the relations between Turkey and Russia by initiating a latest offensive in the northwest of Syria. Erdogan has also expressed his concerns regarding the Syrian assaults on Idlib aimed at jeopardizing the de-escalation deal signed between Russia and Turkey.



LATEST ARTICLES ON [ISLAMABAD POLICY INSTITUTE](#).

[BRI & CPEC:  
Venturing into the  
Future](#)

[By Faisal Ahmed](#)

[Iran & Pakistan: A  
Complicated  
Relationship](#)

[By Syeda Mamoona Rubab](#)

[India's Anti-Satellite  
Test](#)

[By Asma Khalid](#)

This email was sent by [ISLAMABAD POLICY INSTITUTE](#).



## ABOUT US

© 2019 Islamabad Policy Institute. | All Rights Reserved.

Contact us: [contact@ipipk.org](mailto:contact@ipipk.org)