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# MORNING NEWS BRIEF

Your Essential Guide to the Day's Happenings

## POLITICS & GOVERNANCE

- Prime Minister Imran Khan, while felicitating his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on [BJP's victory in Lok Sabha elections](#), hoped to work together with him for regional peace and prosperity. Responding to Mr Khan's message, Mr Modi said he always gave [primacy to peace and development](#). Mr Modi's [BJP got a landslide victory](#) in the just concluded elections, whose results were announced on Thursday.
- [Islamabad Policy Institute \(IPI\) in its preliminary assessment of Indian election results](#) observed that Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won a second consecutive term in office by rallying its hardline Hindu nationalist base and highlighting the national security element, and this winning strategy could encourage Prime Minister Narendra [Modi's government, in its next tenure, to persist with its harsh policy for Pakistan and pursue domestic policies that will be prejudicial to the interests of minority communities](#), especially India's 190 million Muslims.
- Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, who a day earlier met with his Indian counterpart Sushma Swaraj, emphasized on [good-faith diplomacy and result-oriented dialogue](#) for enduring peace and prosperity in South Asia.
- FO has, meanwhile, [warned India against changing the status of Occupied Kashmir](#) in its Constitution.
- In a missile test that many see as being timed with the announcement of Indian election results, Pakistan conducted the [training launch of Shaheen-II Missile](#). Defense analysts believe that the purpose of the test was to signal restraint to Modi's strategic ambitions.
- Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif is in Islamabad for talks with Pakistani leadership on the escalating tensions between his country and US plus its Arab allies. Foreign Office said it [supports dialogue for resolution of the conflict](#) and upholding of the nuclear agreement between Iran and P5+1.
- PM Imran Khan has ordered continued [action against electricity and gas thieves](#) without any discrimination.
- The [Supreme Court of Pakistan will start using the e-Court system](#) from Monday under which its registries in the provinces would be connected through the latest technology to its principal seat in the federal capital.

## ECONOMY

- Continuing with changes in its economic team, the government appointed Naveed Kamran Baloch as the [new federal finance secretary](#) after removing Muhammad Younas Dagha. The latest change comes ahead of the announcement of [next fiscal year's budget, which is likely to be announced on June 11](#).
- Appointments of Adviser on Finance Dr Hafeez Sheikh and Governor State Bank have, meanwhile, been [challenged in the Supreme Court](#).
- The government is aiming to introduce [new tax measures worth Rs775 billion](#) in the forthcoming budget for the fiscal year 2019-20. A [13% cut in development expenditures](#) is also expected in the next budget.
- The [foreign exchange reserves](#) held by the central bank shrank 8.9% on a weekly basis, according to latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan.

## CHINA

- China's Commerce Ministry's spokesman Gao Feng has [warned the US of retaliatory strict measures](#) if the US continues with its unbridled tariff war. He said that China would always give preeminence to the interests of its own firms.

## THE MIDDLE EAST

- Amidst simmering tensions between the US and Iran in the Persian Gulf region, American administration is dwelling [on a plan to place as many as 5,000 additional troops in the Middle East](#).

- The UN Secretary-General's special representative for Libya Ghassan Salam has expressed his deep concerns about the [ongoing civil war in Libya, which if continued unabated, can wreak immeasurable havoc](#) leaving the future of Libya in the doldrums. The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has also stressed on a global unity in the wake of worsening humanitarian conditions in Libya.
- In a surprising move, [both the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have showed their willingness to attend the meeting](#) being held in Bahrain in connection with investments in Gaza Strip and West Bank. The meeting is going to take place on the 25th of next month with the US playing a major role in its organization.
- Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Aka has said that despite witnessing a marked improvement in relations with the US, strained over the purchase of Russian S-400 defense systems and U.S. F-35 fighter jets, [Turkey is ready for any potential sanctions aimed at it.](#)



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