



CPDI BUDGET WATCH

After expanding to Bangladesh and UAE, Pakistani startup Abhi has plans for 'further growth'

Business Recorder (December 21, 2023)

Financial platform Abhi has shown itself to be one of the bright spots in Pakistan's startup scene even when things have been dim - just \$5.2 million was raised across eight deals in April-June this year. But this Karachi-based firm that works with companies to enable their employees to access funds before payday has raised \$21 million in venture capital (VC) funding, with investors including Dubai-based Global Ventures and VentureSouq. It has also raised \$15 to \$20 million in debt ... [Read More](#)

Conditions for \$350m loan: WB assured GST on goods

The News (December 21, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has accepted demands of the World Bank (WB) for harmonizing general sales tax (GST) on goods and services and jacking up valuation rates of properties to obtain approval of a \$350 million programme loan. To keep property assessment ratios at no less than 85 percent of market value, the Provincial Boards of Revenue have adopted the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) valuation tables as their district collectorate valuation tables in at least 21 dis ... [Read More](#)

Pakistan, ADB sign \$1.2b loan agreements for budget support

Profit.pakistantoday.com.pk (December 20, 2023)

Pakistan has inked six loan agreements with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), securing a total of \$1.2 billion in financing. Approximately one-third of this amount is earmarked for budget financing, marking a significant development following the recent agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Economic Affairs Division (EAD) and the local ADB office formalized these agreements on Friday, with the ADB committing to provide \$400m ... [Read More](#)

World Bank approves \$350m in financing to support fiscal, competitive reforms in Pakistan

The Dawn (December 20, 2023)

The World Bank's board of executive directors approved \$350 million in financing for the Second Resilient Institutions for Sustainable Economy (RISE-II) operation in Pakistan on Tuesday. Najy Benhassine, World Bank's country director for Pakistan, in a statement highlighted that this project completes the initial phase of "tax, energy and business climate reforms" aimed at improving fiscal revenues and stimulating competition and investment. RISE-II aims to strengthen fiscal manage ... [Read More](#)

KSE-100 loses nearly 4% as major correction continues

Business Recorder (December 19, 2023)

A correction that most analysts say was expected continued to take its toll on share prices at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) as the benchmark KSE-100 lost nearly 4% during trading on Tuesday. At close, the benchmark index settled at 62,833.03, a decrease of 2,371.64 points or 3.64%. Earlier, the index even hit an intra-day low of 62,360.78. Across-the-board selling was witnessed with index-heavy sectors including automobile assemblers, cement, chemical, commercial ban ... [Read More](#)

Loan inflows remain below quarter of projection

The Dawn (December 19, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: Despite the International Monetary Fund (IMF) onboard, Pakistan received about \$4.285 billion in foreign loans, less than one-fourth of the annual budget estimate in the wake of poor credit rating and adverse conditions in the global financial markets. In its monthly report on Foreign Economic Assistance (FEA), the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) on Monday said the country received just \$4.285bn in the July-November period of 2023-24 against its annual ... [Read More](#)

Shariah-compliant counter at PSX

Tribune.com.pk (December 18, 2023)

KARACHI: The potential of attracting Shariah-compliant investors to the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) was witnessed once again with massive participation in Pakistan's first listed government Ijarah Sukuk issuance. Against the auction target of Rs30 billion set by the Ministry of Finance, the bids received from retail and institutional investors were over Rs396.2 billion and the maiden auction was 13 times oversubscribed. It is interesting to note that the government was ... [Read More](#)

Pakistan's current account posts surplus of \$9mn in November

Business Recorder (December 18, 2023)

After four consecutive months of deficits, Pakistan's current account posted a surplus of \$9 million in November 2023. This is also in stark contrast to the deficit of \$157 million recorded in the same month of the previous year, revealed data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Monday. This is the first surplus since June 2023, but remains massively lower in terms of volume when it stood at \$520 million. Experts said the surplus comes amid a significant increase in the country's expo ... [Read More](#)

Money market schemes allowed to invest in debt securities

Business Recorder (December 17, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: The government has allowed money market schemes to invest in government debt securities, traded through the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), to ensure maximum participation of mutual funds in Sukuks/government securities. The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued a direction number 7 of 2023 on the Categorization of Open-End Collective Investment Schemes (CIS). The SECP has issued directions to the ... [Read More](#)

Rupee seen falling 5pc-10pc in 2024 amid economic challenges

The News (December 17, 2023)

KARACHI: The rupee may extend its slide in 2024 as the country grapples with economic challenges such as soaring inflation, hefty debt obligations, a widening external financing gap and dwindling foreign exchange reserves, a report from Tresmark, a financial terminal, said on Saturday. The rupee, which has dropped 20 percent against the dollar this year, could depreciate another 5-10 percent next year as Pakistan suffers from near-zero growth, low productivity, high ... [Read More](#)

Short-term inflation surges past 43pc

The Dawn (December 16, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: Annual short-term inflation surged 43.16 per cent in the week ending on Dec 14, primarily fuelled by pulses, rice and vegetables, reported the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics on Friday. The weekly inflation remained above 41pc for the fifth week in a row as gas prices, electricity tariffs stood higher than a year ago. This record-setting surge in prices has significantly eroded consumer purchasing power, underscoring the financial strain on households. On an annual basis, the ... [Read More](#)

ICT industry in Pakistan: Ministry, JICA commencing project to strength business collaboration

Business Recorder (December 16, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) are commencing the project for strengthening business collaboration of the ICT industry in Pakistan aimed at increasing Pakistan's ICT industry exports to Japan. The formal Record of Discussions was signed by Ali Asghar (senior joint secretary MoITT), Kinoshita Yasumitsu (chief representative JICA Pakistan Office), Zeeshan Khattak (chief co... [Read More](#)

‘Mobilise domestic savings to grow per capita income’

The Dawn (December 15, 2023)

KARACHI: Former State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) governor Dr Ishrat Husain said on Thursday it'd take 70 years for Pakistan to double its per capita income at the current rates of savings, investment and population growth. Speaking at the International InsureImpact Conference 2023 organised by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), Dr Husain said the non-bank financial sector must step up to the plate and mobilise domestic savings to achieve better ec... [Read More](#)

Startup Abhi selected among UAE's Future 100 companies

The News (December 15, 2023)

KARACHI: Abhi, a Pakistani fintech that provides innovative finance solutions to businesses and their employees, has been selected as one of the Future 100 companies of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the startup said on Thursday. Future100, an initiative launched by the UAE's economy ministry in partnership with its minister of state for government development and future, spotlights the top 100 startups contributing to the nation's readiness for the future and com ... [Read More](#)

\$2bn Thar power plant achieves financial close

The Dawn (December 14, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: The Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) — a one-window facility of the federal government — on Wednesday announced the \$2 billion financial closing of the country's largest Thar coal-fired power project, currently operational at Thar, by Shanghai Electric Corporation, China. In a statement, the PPIB said the financial close agreement was signed by PPIB Managing Director Shah Jahan Mirza, Chief Executive of the project company Meng ... [Read More](#)

Finance minister urges overhaul of Pakistan's lagging insurance industry

The News (December 14, 2023)

KARACHI: The interim finance minister on Wednesday called for more private and foreign investment in the country's insurance sector, which has one of the lowest penetration rates in the region. Dr Shamshad Akhtar, speaking at a conference via video link, said Pakistan needed a major overhaul of its insurance industry to overcome its challenges and keep pace with global trends. "We need to concentrate on lifting the low penetration ratio of the insurance industry. It is a sobering fact th ... [Read More](#)

COP28 in Dubai: 5 key takeaways for Pakistan

Business Recorder (December 13, 2023)

One of the world's most important climate change conferences, the UN's COP28, came to an end on Tuesday. With Pakistan taking a major hit from the impact of climate change, still reeling from the devastating floods of 2022, Business Recorder looks at which announcements were most important for Pakistan at this year's summit. Caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar introduced 'Recharge Pakistan' — a seven-year, \$77.8-million pr ... [Read More](#)

Ethiopia seeks Pakistani investment for financial sector

The News (December 13, 2023)

Islamabad: The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) on Tuesday sought collaboration with Pakistan in the financial sector in order to attract investment from Pakistani businessmen for its flourishing economy. Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Jemal Beker Abdula expressed the desire for collaboration in a meeting with Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, according to a news releas ... [Read More](#)

China agrees to review FTA, enhance yuan-based trade with Pakistan, says Gohar Ijaz

Profit.pakistantoday.com.pk (December 12, 2023)

The Chinese government has shown a willingness to entertain Pakistan's request for amending the existing Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and enhance yuan-based trade with Pakistan, Interim Commerce Minister, Gohar Ejaz said on Monday. This decision, as reported by Dawn, was made during the visit of the Interim Commerce Minister, who is leading a delegation of 20 members in China. The mutual understanding between Pakistan and China involves a thorough revisio ... [Read More](#)

ADB to help better access of women to micro credit

The Dawn (December 12, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Monday announced that it has approved \$155.5 million in financing for Pakistan that will support policy reforms enhancing women's access to finance and providing credit to women-led micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. In a statement, the Manila-based lending agency said the financing comprised a \$100 million policy-based loan that supports legal and regulatory reforms to improve women better access to ... [Read More](#)

ADB approves another loan for Pakistan

The News (December 11, 2023)

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$155.5 million loan for Pakistan to support women's financial inclusion to "boost their livelihoods while contributing significantly to the economy". According to a statement issued by the Manila-based lender on Monday, the loan aimed at supporting policy reforms to enhance women's access to finance and provide credit to women-led micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. The development comes days after the ADB approved \$658.8... [Read More](#)

ADB okays \$155.5 million to boost financial inclusion in Pakistan

Samaa.tv (December 11, 2023)

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Monday greenlit a substantial financial package of \$155.5 million aimed at fostering policy reforms to bolster women's access to finance in Pakistan. This comprehensive initiative targets the empowerment of women and women-led micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) through legal, regulatory, and financial support. The approved financing comprises a \$100 million policy-based loan, dedicated to supporting crucial legal and ... [Read More](#)

Govt seeks to cure Sino-Pak trade imbalance

Business Recorder (December 10, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: The caretaker Minister for Commerce and Industries and Production, Gohar Ijaz is reaching China on Sunday (today) to find new buyers, explore prospects of relocation of the Chinese textile industry to Pakistan as Beijing has earned \$100 billion from Pakistan through its exports whereas it imported Pakistani goods of only \$10 billion during this period. A high-profile business delegation is also accompanying him. The visit is a follow-up to the visit of the caretaker Prime ... [Read More](#)

FINTECH FUSION: PAKISTAN JOINS THE OPEN BANKING REVOLUTION

Tribune.com.pk (December 10, 2023)

KARACHI: Pakistan's economy is not an exception to the disruptive global financial trend known as open banking. Due to technical improvements and legislative actions, Pakistan's financial environment has gradually shifted towards open banking in recent years. Through the use of Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), open banking enables financial data from banks to be accessed and utilised by outside financial service providers. The aim is to promote create ... [Read More](#)

IMF board to review loan deal on Jan 11

The Dawn (December 09, 2023)

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Executive Board is slated to consider Pakistan's first review on Jan 11, paving the way for the approval of a crucial \$700 million tranche. This financial injection follows the Staff-Level Agreement (SLA) reached last month between Pakistan and the IMF under the nine-month \$3bn Stand-By Arrangement (SBA). "We can confirm that the board meeting for Pakistan will take place on Jan 11," the IMF said in an email sent [Read More](#)

PSX breaches 66k barrier, PKR gains more ground amid positive economic outlook

Profit.pakistantoday.com.pk (December 09, 2023)

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued its bullish momentum, reaching new highs in the week ending on Dec 8, 2023. The benchmark KSE-100 index gained 7.35% week-on-week (WoW) to close at 66,224 points, the highest level in its history. The Pakistani rupee also appreciated against the US dollar by 0.39% WoW to settle at 283.87. According to a report by AKD Securities Limited, the stock market was driven by positive news regarding the country's economic prosp.... [Read More](#)

Body to probe smuggling of Afghan transit trade goods

Business Recorder (December 08, 2023)

ISLAMABAD: The caretaker government is said to have constituted an inquiry committee to investigate the smuggling of Afghan transit trade goods. Sources said as per the Prime Minister's Office letter, the caretaker prime minister has constituted an inquiry committee to investigate rampant smuggling of Afghan transit trade goods, with special focus on the abnormal increase in the volume of Afghan transit trade in the financial year 2022-23. The Committee woul ... [Read More](#)

Pakistan stock market crosses another historic milestone by surging past 66,000 points

Arabnews.com (December 08, 2023)

KARACHI: Pakistan equities on Friday hit yet another record high by breaching the 66,000-mark amid bullish sentiments built on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) program and completion of its first review, rupee stability, and the government's plan to raise Rs90 billion through Islamic bonds, equity analysts said. The key stock index, KSE100, closed the weekend trading session at a historic high level of 66,223 after gaining 1,505 points, or rising 2.33 percent. During the trad ... [Read More](#)

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