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## **May 01, 2021: National / International [Current Affairs](#)**

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### **1. EU Parliament move to review trade ties with Pakistan**

- The European Parliament this week adopted a resolution calling for a review of trade relations with Pakistan and ending its eligibility for the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) status.
  - The resolution linked the review to Pakistan`s blasphemy laws, in particular the case of Shagufta Kausar and Shafqat Emmanuel, who have been on death row since 2014 for sending `blasphemous` text messages a charge they deny.
  - It was overwhelmingly passed 662 to 3 with 26 not voting.
  - The text called on the European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to `immediately review Pakistan`s eligibility for GSP+ status in light of current events`
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### **2. Balochistan Assembly forms committee over award of exploration blocks**

- The Balochistan Assembly on April 30, 2021 set up a special technical committee to find out details of petroleum exploration blocks awarded to state-run oil and gas companies without taking the province into confidence.
- Balochistan National Party (BNP-Mengal) lawmaker Sana Baloch, while speaking on a call-attention notice in the provincial assembly on Friday, pointed out that the federal government had allocated six blocks to the companies for exploration of mineral resources in the provinces, including Balochistan, without taking the provinces into confidence, which was a violation of the Constitution. He said three big companies were given licences for

exploration of oil and gas in Balochistan, adding that these companies would spend billions of rupees on exploration work while the province would get only \$30,000 out of the huge investment

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### **3. PTA helps Sri Lanka with mobile number portability**

- The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has extended training and technical support to the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka for successful implementation of Mobile Number Portability (MNP) in the country.
  - The Sri Lankan regulator has planned to introduce MNP for mobile phone users in the country and intends to follow processes adopted by the PTA.
  - Pakistan is the first country in South Asia to have introduced this facility for its mobile phone users in 2007
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### **4. Two-day lockdown in Lahore from today**

- Keeping in view the worsening Covid19 situation, the government has decided to place Lahore under a complete lockdown on Saturday and Sunday (May 1 and 2).
  - The lockdown restrictions will not be applicable to the industry operating under coronavirus-related standard operating procedures (SOPs).
  - On the other hand, the Lahore City District Administration urged the public at large to wear masks and ensure social distancing protocols to avert the further spread of the infection as the city witnessed 14,000 news cases out of which 226 people died during the last seven days
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### **5. Rs2.18bn economic package okayed for South Waziristan**

- The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has approved a Rs2.18 billion worth of project to develop and revitalise economic infrastructure of South Waziristan tribal district over a period of three years.
- The Special Integrated Area Development Package for South Waziristan district was approved by the Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) in its meeting.

## **6. First shipment under TIR convention for Uzbekistan leaves**

- After a delay of 30 months, the first-ever shipment under the Convention on the International Transport of Goods for traffic-intransit of goods across the border has left for Uzbekistan from Pakistan via the Torkham border customs station.
  - Pakistan Customs processed the first-ever TIR consignment from Karachi at Torkham destined for Tashkent via Afghanistan. The consignment consisted of herbal medicines and after completion of all Customs formalities at Torkham it crossed into Afghanistan
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## **7. FBR surpasses revenue collection target by Rs34bn in April**

- The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) surpassed its revenue collection target by Rs34 billion to Rs384bn in April, the second highest collection in the second half of current fiscal year (FY21), provisional data collected by the tax authorities on April 30, 2021 showed.
  - April has emerged as the second consecutive month when the FBR revenue collection surpassed the projected monthly target despite Covid-19 impact on all segments of economy
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## **8. US Senate gets bill for duty-free zones along Pak-Afghan border**

- A bipartisan bill was moved in the US Senate on Friday to establish duty-free export zones along the Pak-Afghan border.
  - The Pakistan-Afghanistan Economic Development Act `would serve as an important instrument to support that outcome,` said an official statement issued with the proposed legislation.
  - `The bill would establish Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs) in Afghanistan and Pakistan`s border regions to allow certain products from these areas to enter the US duty-free,` the statement added. `This will generate greater economic opportunity for the people in these war-torn areas and lay the groundwork for a more stable region
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## 9. Singapore puts curbs on South Asian travelers

- Singapore will block entry to visitors with recent travel history to Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka from May 2 due to sustained increases in Covid19 cases in the region, its health ministry announced on April 30, 2021.
  - The entry ban applies to long-term visa holders and short-term visitors. Singapore has already blocked visitors from India, which is battling a surge of infections.
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## 10. US State Dept OKs sale of patrol planes to India

- The US State Department has approved the potential sale of six Boeing-made P-8I patrol aircraft and related equipment to India for an estimated cost of \$2.42 billion.
  - India`s potential purchase of P-8 aircraft would help expand its maritime surveillance capabilities.
  - The package would include tactical radio, missile warning sensors, GPS systems, support equipment, spares and technical support, the Pentagon said
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### April 2021:

- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 30, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 29, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 28, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 27, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 26, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 25, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 24, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 23, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 22, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(April 21, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [1](#)
- [2](#)
- [3](#)
- [>>](#)

**March 2021:**

- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 30, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 29, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 28, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 27, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 26, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 25, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 24, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 23, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 22, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(March 21, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [1](#)
  - [2](#)
  - [3](#)
  - [>>](#)

**February 2021:**

- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 28, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 27, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 26, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 25, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 24, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 23, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 22, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 21, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 20, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
  - [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(February 19, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [1](#)
  - [2](#)
  - [3](#)
  - [>>](#)

**January 2021:**

- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 31, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 30, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)

- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 29, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 28, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 27, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 26, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 25, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 24, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 23, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(January 22, 2021\) for CSS, PMS](#)

- [1](#)
- [2](#)
- [3](#)
- [>>](#)

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