

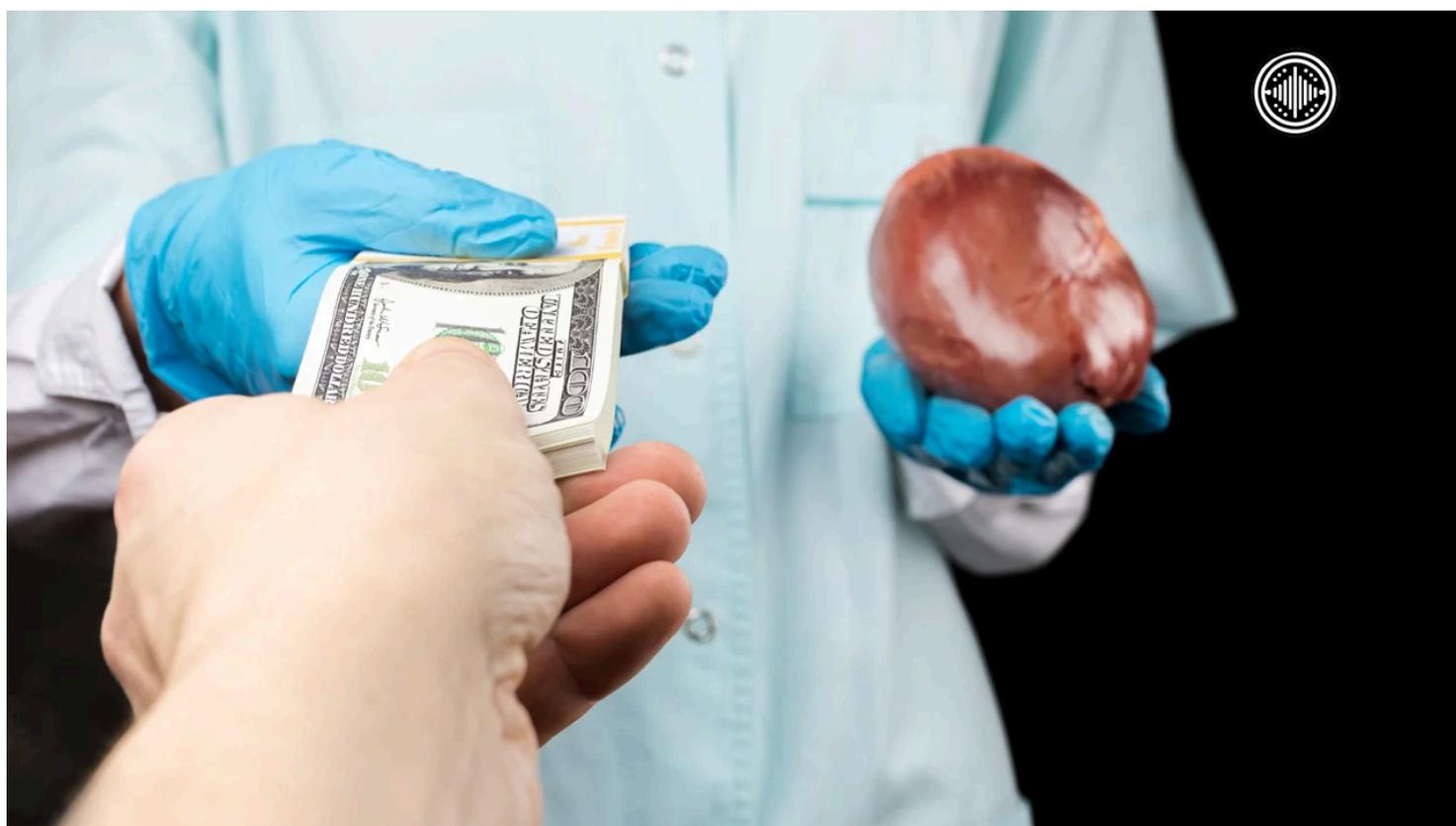
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Illegal Kidney Transplant Racket Busted in Sheikhpura

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– Categories: Crime



Sheikhpura authorities, in coordination with the Punjab Human Organ Transplantation Authority (PHOTA), law enforcement, and health regulators, have successfully dismantled an illegal kidney transplant network operating from a private facility on Faisalabad Road.

Security officials confirmed that during the raid, which was prompted by actionable intelligence, eight individuals were arrested while an unauthorized kidney transplant was underway. Among the suspects is Dr. Waqas Mustafa, believed to be a surgeon involved in the procedure. Others detained included two women, operation theatre staff, agents, and

support personnel. The operation targeted a foreign national recipient, while the kidney donor, identified as a resident of Sheikhpura, reportedly received no compensation.

Preliminary inquiry suggests that the accused charged approximately Rs 7 million for the illegal transplant. The donor, described by officials as economically disadvantaged, was allegedly recruited under false or coercive pretenses and received only about Rs 500,000. The recipient paid the full amount to complete the illicit procedure.

PHOTA representatives stated that further arrests are anticipated. The agency is actively pursuing Naseem, described as a suspected unlicensed practitioner linked to the network. Additional raids are ongoing across Sheikhpura and other Punjab cities to identify and arrest other network participants involved in organ trafficking.

A health official reminded that the Human Organ and Tissue Transplant Act 2010 prohibits commercial organ trade and mandates licensed medical practitioners and facilities for legal transplants. Despite these regulations, enforcement challenges persist, and illegal transplant cases in the province are rising, especially targeting vulnerable individuals from poor backgrounds.

This case follows earlier crackdowns, such as the December 2023 bust in Lahore, where a gang implicated in organizing around 80 illegal transplants, including those involving foreign recipients, was arrested. In that instance, brokers purchased kidneys for Rs 300,000–400,000 and sold them for Rs 7–8 million.

Local authorities emphasized their commitment to ensuring compliance with medical regulations and protecting vulnerable groups. Both police and health regulators confirmed that the patient and donor from Sheikhpura were safely shifted to a qualified public hospital for medical care and evaluation. The facility has been temporarily sealed pending formal legal action.

Investigations remain active. Authorities are reviewing facility records, medical documentation, and agent activities. Legal proceedings are underway, and no formal charges have yet been filed. Officials say the case will be prosecuted under the organ transplant law, which mandates severe penalties for commercial transplants and trafficking. Further updates will follow as the investigation progresses.

This operation comes amid increasing scrutiny of transplant ethics in Pakistan. Observers have called for stronger regulatory enforcement, expanded PHOTA powers, and systematic oversight to prevent exploitation and uphold ethical medical practices across the province.