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## Bahria Town Faces Shutdown Amid NAB Crackdown

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One of Pakistan's most prominent real estate empires, Bahria Town, is facing a complete operational shutdown amid an expanding investigation by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The company's founder, Malik Riaz Hussain, announced on Tuesday that his firm's activities across the country have come to a halt following a series of government actions, including asset freezes and staff arrests.

Hussain, widely regarded as one of Pakistan's wealthiest businessmen, posted on the social media platform X, stating that the current situation had "paralyzed" the organization. "We are

being forced to completely shut down all Bahria Town activities across Pakistan,” he wrote. “We apologize to the residents and stakeholders of Bahria Town.”

The crackdown comes amid ongoing probes into Hussain’s financial dealings, particularly his alleged connection to former Prime Minister Imran Khan through the controversial Al-Qadir Trust case. In January 2025, Khan was sentenced to 14 years in prison over accusations that he and his wife accepted land from Hussain in exchange for favors during his time in office. While Hussain has not publicly admitted wrongdoing, speculation over his role has continued to mount.

The NAB has frozen Bahria Town’s bank accounts, impounded company vehicles, and detained dozens of employees. The agency has also issued a warning to the public about investing in Hussain’s Dubai-based luxury apartment project, labeling it a possible avenue for money laundering.

Earlier this year, Pakistan’s Defense Minister Khawaja Asif confirmed that the government was working to secure Hussain’s extradition from the United Arab Emirates. However, reports now suggest that Hussain may have left the UAE, and his current location remains unclear.

In his latest appeal, Hussain called on state institutions to engage in constructive dialogue, offering full cooperation in any arbitration process and assuring compliance with any resulting decisions, including financial penalties.

Founded in the late 1990s, Bahria Town has grown to become one of Pakistan’s largest private-sector employers and a major player in the country’s real estate development sector. Despite numerous controversies over land acquisition practices, the company has maintained a strong presence in urban housing projects.

The Al-Qadir Trust case has drawn attention both domestically and internationally. In 2019, the UK’s National Crime Agency (NCA) announced a settlement with Hussain, in which £190 million, including a £50 million property in London, was handed over to settle a probe into the suspected proceeds of crime. That money was supposed to be returned to Pakistan’s national treasury but was allegedly used to settle other financial liabilities, triggering further investigation.

While Hussain has denied all allegations, his legal troubles continue to escalate. His future in Pakistan's real estate industry remains uncertain as state institutions press forward with their inquiries.