

## Pakistan Strengthens Cybercrime Enforcement

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— Categories: Crime



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The federal government of Pakistan has issued formal rules for the National Cybercrime Investigation Agency (NCCIA), expanding its authority to investigate online crimes under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act and the Pakistan Penal Code. The regulations aim to strengthen Pakistan's capacity to respond to cybercrime while maintaining professional oversight and accountability.

The NCCIA will be authorized to conduct investigations based on credible reports and seek support from international organizations and provincial agencies. The rules outline formal approval processes for initiating inquiries and conducting investigations, requiring the director general's consent before taking action, including freezing or restoring property linked to cybercrime cases.

The regulations are intended to promote a disciplined operational structure within the agency. NCCIA personnel will wear uniforms, reflecting a professional and accountable approach to law enforcement. A self-accountability unit will be established to oversee internal operations, ensuring transparency and integrity in investigations.

The agency plans to establish specialized units focused on emerging digital threats. These units will address online financial fraud and harassment of children in digital spaces. Law enforcement officials say the units are intended to enhance the protection of citizens against cyber exploitation while improving the effectiveness of cybercrime investigations nationwide.

The NCCIA is expected to coordinate closely with national security agencies, law enforcement departments, and international organizations. Officials highlight that collaboration with global partners will be crucial in addressing cross-border cybercrime, which increasingly threatens personal data, financial security, and online safety.

Cybercrime has become a growing concern in Pakistan, with digital threats ranging from identity theft and financial scams to online harassment. By creating dedicated units and establishing clear protocols, the government aims to respond more effectively to these challenges. Experts note that a professional and well-coordinated agency is essential to maintain public trust and protect citizens in a digital environment.

Human rights observers note that effective cybercrime enforcement can help protect vulnerable populations, particularly children, from online abuse. Experts caution that the agency's powers must be exercised transparently to prevent misuse and ensure investigations focus on legal violations.

The NCCIA's expanded authority is a step in Pakistan's efforts to modernize its approach to digital crime. Officials say the initiative reflects the government's recognition of cybersecurity as a national priority and its commitment to aligning domestic policies with international standards for online safety and law enforcement.

By formalizing procedures, establishing specialized units, and emphasizing accountability, Pakistan aims to strengthen its digital security framework. The government underscores that protecting citizens from cyber threats, particularly financial exploitation and online harassment, remains a core objective of the NCCIA's new operational rules.