



## Sindh Governor House opens its doors to public for the first time

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**KARACHI:** Within minutes, after a basic security check and the act of depositing one's national identity card, the Governor House was accessible to the general public early Friday morning to partake in its glorious history, treasured artefacts, and lush green gardens.

Such a precedent has never been set before, and though the early morning dew did not witness a large turnout, as the Karachi morning warmed, the crowds swelled and thoroughly enjoyed not just the grounds of the Governor House but also its other sections.

The promise of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf to allow public access to the state building was followed through when Sindh Governor Imran Ismail was himself present to greet the people and take a turn around the gardens as well as some sections of the building that have been cordoned off.

### *Imran Ismail greets families upon their arrival at his official residence*

Visitors were happy to see first-hand the office of the Father of the Nation Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and eagerly took in the memorabilia present, including photos.

Governor Ismail expressed his joy at the sight of the public enjoying the previously forbidden grounds of the sprawling Governor House.

“We had promised change in Pakistan and today indicates the beginning of this change. The public is welcomed to the Governor House and you will not face any problems here. All you need to do is come to the entrance with your NIC and explore the treasures it houses and the beautiful gardens.”

### **Guided tours planned**

He also urged the public to take active interest in the country's well-being. “Guided tours will also be introduced in a few days and we want the parks of the Governor House to be used by public without any hesitation so they can benefit from the history of this place. Everyone should follow the instructions displayed and take ownership of this space.”

The presence of security was marked with police and Rangers deployed at different points within the premises to keep things under control. Initially, only families have been allowed entry and prior written permission needs to be taken for visitors coming in groups.

Students, men and women, old and young all trickled in and enjoyed taking selfies and interacting with the governor.

Instructions in Urdu are visibly displayed and underscored the need to keep the premises clean and tidy. Visitors have also been asked to respect the greenery and not trample on the plants and flowers that are lovingly taken care of by the gardeners.

Some visitors suggested that the gardens should house more native species of flowers and trees that are representative of the old green Karachi that once was.

At one end of the Governor House grounds is a Frangipani tree, at another end the Ashoka tree stands while the imposing Banyan tree demands the attention and respect of the visitors.

However, the birds living in these trees were not too happy with the influx of visitors and the crows in particular were very vocal each time a visitor would linger for too long under the trees. They probably are not used to being interrupted so early in the morning. Let's hope they become more welcoming over time.

Visitors are allowed to enter the Governor House from Gate No 1; timings of the visit are from 6am to 9am every day and from 4.30pm to 6.30pm on Sunday.

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