



# PakCrypt 2024

National Cryptography Competition

*In the silence of numbers,  
let thy wisdom shout.*

Round 1 (Online)

Round 2 (Online)

Final Round (On-Campus)

01-30 SEP, 2024

12-13 OCT, 2024

05-06 NOV, 2024



**NCCS**  
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
CYBER SECURITY



*Exciting Cash Prizes for Finalists.  
Don't miss the grand career opportunities*

**PakCrypt**  
2024

National Cryptography Competition



## Our History

PakCrypt competition was initiated in 2022 to promote young talent in the field of cryptography. Last two events of PakCrypt competition in 2022 and 2023 were a great success! It's truly inspiring to see bright minds across Pakistan come together and showcase their talent in the field of cryptography.

The PakCrypt 2023 competition included more than 500 participants from all regions of Pakistan competing in the three-round competition that culminated in a final round on the NCCS campus. The finalist teams competed for cash prizes totaling Rs. 1.4M, but the competition was much more than this. It provided young minds with opportunities to connect with industry experts, receive job offers, funding for further research, and engage in mutual collaboration.





Cash Prizes worth approx. Rs. 1.4M were distributed in 2023, besides a number of career opportunities for selected candidates.



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**PakCrypt**  
2023

**FINALISTS**

**PROFESSIONAL TRACK**

248 Participants  
16 Finalists

 <b>1</b> Muhammad Abdullah Abid	 SAMEEM SHABBIR					
 <b>2</b> Muhammad Khurram Hameed	 MUHAMMAD USMAN FAZAL AWAN	 USAMA MUSADIQ	 NASIR ALI	 MUHAMMAD SAJJAD	 WALEED AHMED	 AHSAN RASHEED ABBASI
 <b>3</b> MUHAMMAD BALEEGH UD DIN	 Muhammad Umair Aslam	 FIZZA BATOOL	 SIDRA REHMAN	 ARSHAM MUNAWAR GILL	 MEHMOOD UL HASSAN	 AZAN SHAHID



**NCCS**  
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CYBER SECURITY



**PakCrypt**  
2023

**FINALISTS**

**AMATEUR TRACK**

292 Participants  
24 Finalists

 <b>1</b> Muhammad Ahmad Bhatti	 Muhammad Ibrahim Tahir							
 <b>2</b> Syed Badar ul Islam	 Khawaja Assam Arif	 <b>3</b> Muhammad Safiullah	 Muhammad Huzaifa					
 Shah Zaib	 Sami Shahbaz	 Abdullah Qayyum	 Muhammad Haseeb Ali Imran	 Rayyan Arshad	 Abdullah Tahir	 Abdullah Aamir	 Iqra Zafar	 Fatima Khalid
 Muhammad Hammad Ali	 Syed Omer Zakir	 Suleman Nouman	 Faizan Rasheed Abbasi	 Amna Hassan	 Irum Imtiaz	 Raveeha Naseem	 Fatima Khan	 Manahil Khan



## About PakCrypt 2024 Competition

PakCrypt 2024 is a two-track, three-round competition that comprises both online and on-campus rounds. The competition aims to bring together talented minds of Pakistan around the world to showcase their skills and compete for cash prizes in both professional and amateur tracks.

### Round 1: Registration

[bit.ly/pc24reg](https://bit.ly/pc24reg)

The first round is open to all Pakistani nationals.

It involves a registration process coupled with a screening test. The registration process collects basic information about candidates, while the test serves as an entry-level filter.



Top qualifiers from Round 1 will be announced by the start of October and invited to compete in the second round.

### Round 2: Online Competition

The second round of PakCrypt will be conducted online. It is planned to take place in middle of October. Participants who qualify from Round 1 will have the opportunity to display their skills and compete against other talented individuals. The qualifiers of Round 2 will be given opportunity to register for Round 3 as a team of 1-2 persons (both of whom must be Round 3 qualified). Note that prizes will be equally shared among winning team members.

### Round 3: On-Campus Final

The final round of PakCrypt 2024 will be held on campus at NCCS, Air University, Islamabad in Nov 2024. The top teams from the previous rounds will compete for the prize and prestige.

Please visit the Crypto Corner at the NCCS website regularly for further details & announcements.



## Instructions

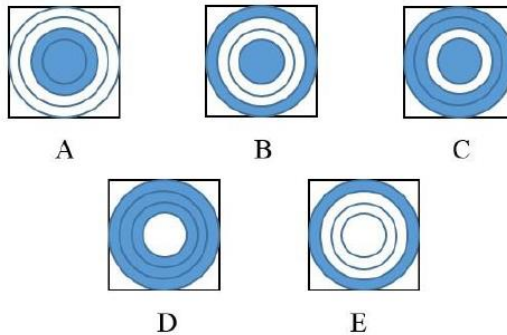
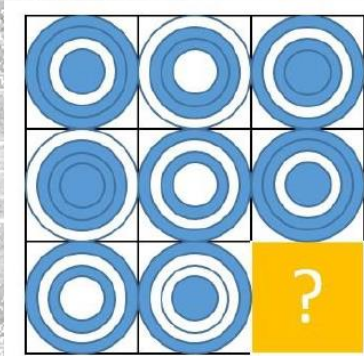
- △ The registration for Round 1 is estimated to take approximately 30 minutes. It's general math aptitude test. Plan accordingly.
- △ The concepts in following resources will help to unlock many riddles of Round 2.
  - Stu Schwartz: Cryptology for Beginners (Amateur)
  - W. Stalling: Cryptography and Network Security 7e and JP Aumasson: Serious Cryptography (Professional)
- △ For Round 3, if you are coming out of the twin-cities, there are a number of slots for free accommodation. Please contact the organizers if you are selected for Round 3, at least 2 weeks in advance.
- △ No TA / DA is admissible for Round 3 participants, however, food and accommodation may be arranged for qualified top teams. Further, each finalist team that does not fall in top-3 slots will receive an encouragement cash prize.
- △ For Amateur Track in Round 3, a teacher of corresponding institute may accompany as part of the student team, however, the teacher will not be allowed to help students in Round 3 challenges.
- △ The amount of prize money, allied benefits, and distribution formula will be announced prior to Round 3; At baseline, Rs. 1.7M is already allocated by PakCrypt organizers for prizes.
- △ All Pakistani nationals, except employees of intelligence/sensitive orgs, are allowed to participate. In case of confusion, contact PakCrypt organizers at [2024@pakcrypt.org](mailto:2024@pakcrypt.org)
- △ For Amateurs, the upper age limit is 20-year.  
(born after 01-Jul-2004)



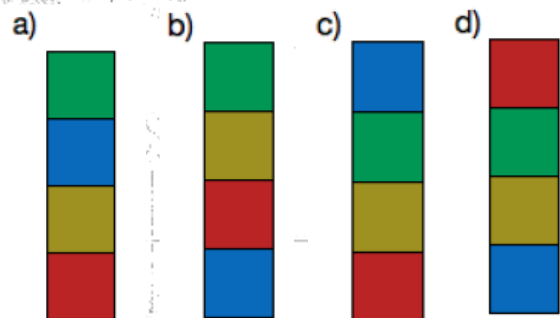
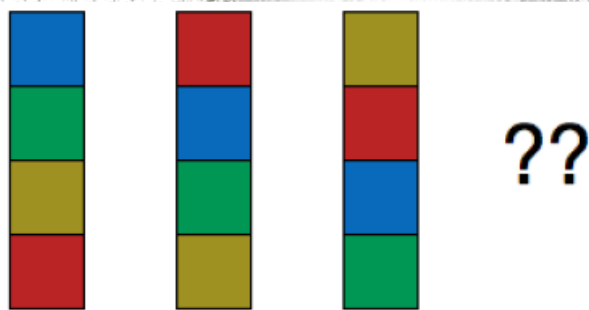
## Sample Questions For Registration (Amateur and Professional)

**Q # 1:-** Consider the sequence of numbers: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, .... and so on. What would be the next number in this sequence?

**Q # 2:-** What is next?



**Q # 3:-** What is next?



**Q # 4:-** A bag contains 4 red, 3 blue, and 2 green balls. If a ball is drawn at random from the bag, what is the probability that it is:

- a) Red
- b) Not Green
- c) Blue Or Green



## Sample Questions For Registration (Amateur and Professional)

**Q # 5:-** A group of friends went on a holiday to a beach resort. They've decided to participate in a relay race where each person can run at a different speed. The group consists of 4 friends: Alice, Bob, Charlie, and David. Here are their respective speeds:

Alice can complete the race in 10 minutes; Bob can complete the race in 15 minutes; Charlie can complete the race in 20 minutes; David can complete the race in 25 minutes

However, due to the rules of the relay race, only two people can run at the same time, and they must carry a baton that they pass on to the next pair. The speed of each pair is determined by the slower person.

Given these conditions:

- a) What is the fastest time that all friends can complete the race?
- b) What is the order of runners for that fastest time?

**Q # 6:-** Consider the following statements: "All apples are fruits. No fruit is a vegetable. Some vegetables are green."

Based on these statements (and nothing else), answer the following questions:

- a) Are all fruits apples?
- b) Can an apple be a vegetable?
- c) Are all vegetables green?



## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Amateur)

**Q # 1:-** What is Next?

1	1	2	4
1	2	5	12
2	5	14	37
4	12	37	?

The Answer is 106

**Q # 2:-** Arrange one of each of the four given numbers, as well as one each of the symbols — (minus), x (times) and + (plus) in every row and column to arrive at the answer at the end of the row or column, making the calculations in the order in which they appear. (Hint:- Only 2,3,7,8 are used)

3	+	8	×	2	-	7	=	15
-		-		+		+		
	+						=	48
+		+		×				
	-	3	+	8	×		=	24
×				-				
	×			7		3	=	12
=		=		=		=		
64		8		33		27		

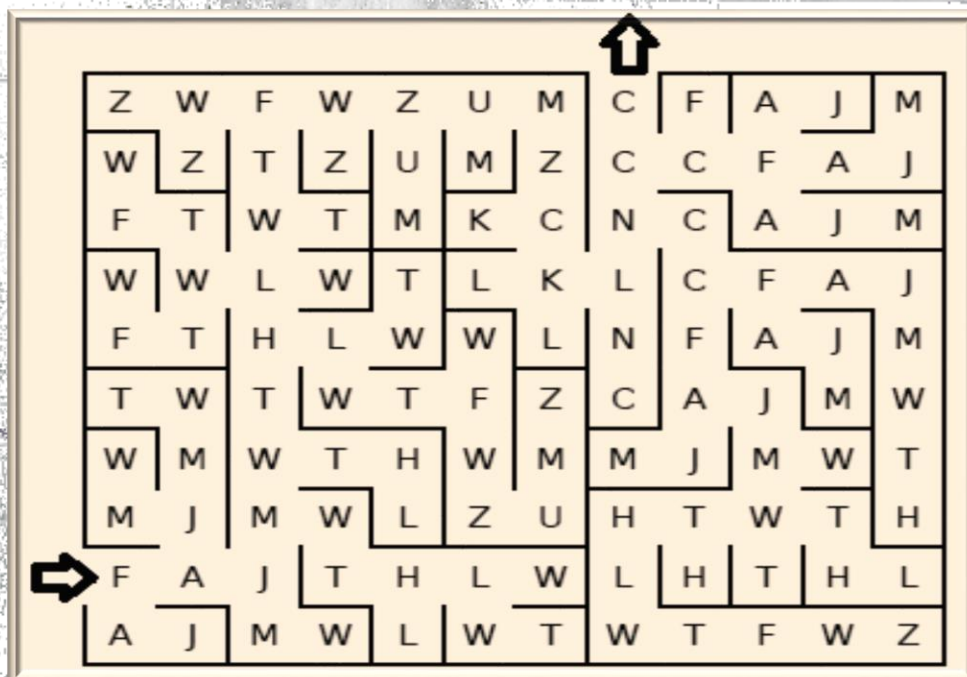


## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Amateur)

Solution:-

3	+	8	×	2	-	7	=	15
-		-		+		+		
2	+	7	-	3	×	8	=	48
+		+		×		×		
7	-	3	+	8	×	2	=	24
×		×		-		-		
8	×	2	-	7	+	3	=	12
=		=		=		=		
64		8		33		27		

Q # 3:- A message is hidden in the following maze. What is the message? (Hint: Message starts with FAIL)





## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Amateur)

**Solution:-** First solve the maze. The answer will be "FAJMWTHLWTFWZUMZCKLNCC". As the message starts with "FAIL", FAJM corresponds to it. It is easy to check that there is no shift in F and A. There is one shift in I and L. Moving Forward, it is easy to judge that the sequence of shifts for letters is 00,11,22,33,44,..... Mapping these shifts will result in "FAILUREISPARTOFSUCCESS"

**Q # 4:-** An Encryption scheme is provided below.

Keys	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
A,B	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
C,D	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	N
E,F	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	N	O
G,H	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	N	O	P
I,J	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	N	O	P	Q
K,L	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	N	O	P	Q	R
M,N	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	N	O	P	Q	R	S
O,P	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
Q,R	V	W	X	Y	Z	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
S,T	W	X	Y	Z	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
U,V	X	Y	Z	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W
W,X	Y	Z	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X
Y,Z	Z	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y

Using the keyword "HELLO", the plaintext "CRYPTOGRAPHY" is encrypted as "SCGKMLVMSIXJ". What is the plaintext for "JTMJLUGW" with same Keyword?

**Solution:-** ZEROSEVEN



## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Professionals)

**Q # 1:-** A company has provided public and private RSA keys to all the employees of its organization.

a) The company boss has used the same value of  $p$ ,  $q$  and thus  $n$  to generate the different private and public keys for each employee. Values of  $p, q$  are not shared with any employee.

b) The private key is securely provided to each employee and all the public keys have been posted on the company whatsapp group.

You are one of the employees and your job is to break the system i.e. provided that you have your private and public key and the value of  $n$ , find the private key of any other employee (you already have the public keys of all employees).

As an example, we are providing you a sample value of  $n$  and one private/public key pair.

$N$ :-

6b81d90c01b573521f728943af7deeffdbf3bf39d4b7b92057d4bbb7  
e395909d5fd0643aab511fb2f21e9e4bca7a9f2dca5e1afd22328d60  
5566223c0efa0f7e55215f467d4fb88baaf3f11347dff5701a8cda615  
a489ae95d1eea4fa2aae21a84f5309a1297949a2223c09949f2309  
e3e1b56c075c2c4593347ba10e74da009

$E_{emp1} = 10001$

$D_{emp1} =$

4ad930800780893597e76a61d180e0310ab5fd610a148fb350f32f6  
eabe8a9b2a7ceb2b99624f8e8e16127dca4b012bb12b5ca1c8afe9f  
277ecd88f03f8d21d36a67cfac3ad3458184aec03922f150b79d2f4  
b3512eb4e042a553e4dd65a9ada6a8bcea2c6505c53e50e2c1dcff  
3c286419cbba9e15cf3896a717d4dabb3ea01

$E_{emp2} = 10111$ , What is the value of  $D_{emp2}$ ?

(Note:- Simple RSA is used without any padding schemes)



## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Professionals)

Solution:-

1. Compute  $k=ed-1$  ( $k$  is a multiple of  $\Phi(n)$ )
2. Determine the exponent of 2,  $t$ , in the factorization of  $k$ , i.e. factor  $k$  into the form  $k=2^t r$  with  $t>0$  and  $r$  is odd.
3. Pick a random  $x$   $|2\leq x<N$
4. Compute the sequence  $s = g^{k/2}, g^{k/4}, \dots, g^{k/2^t} \pmod{N}$
5. Determine the first index  $i$  such that  $s_i \neq \pm 1$  (but of course its square will be 1)
  - o If no such index exists, choose a new  $x$  and try again.
  - o Otherwise, let  $p=\gcd(s_{i-1}, N)$  and  $q=N/p$ .

**Q # 2:-** Master Inc. Corporations database server is under attack, the attacker uses the following equation, to encrypt the data:

$$Ay + 17 \pmod{26}$$

When the attack is complete, the attacker leaves a message flashing on the screen.

"MLKB CRXE NMLV LGRG LNEX BQJB WGGC BNEB XZNP VRDB"

The CERT team is trying their best to make sense of the message, as they believe, it could reveal the identity of attacker, can you help them?



## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Professionals)

Solution:- Let

$$C = Ay + 17 \pmod{26}$$

Where,  $C$  stands for text appears on screen and  $x$  is required text.  $C - 17 = Ay \pmod{26}$   $C - 17 / A = y \pmod{26}$

So, for value of  $A$ , the following condition must holds.  
 $\gcd(A, 26) = 1$

Hence, possible value of  $A$  are  $\{1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25\}$

For  $A=1$ :

$$\text{Equation becomes } (C-17)/1 = y \pmod{26}, C-17 = y \pmod{26}$$

Now by putting one by one value of appeared text in above equation, corresponding text is "VUTK ---- ---- ---- ----". It does not show a meaningful text.

For  $A=3$ :

$$\text{Equation becomes } (C-17)/3 = y \pmod{26}, 9(C-17) = y \pmod{26}$$

Now by putting one by one value of appeared text in above equation, corresponding text is "HYPM ---- ---- ---- ----". It does not show a meaningful text.

For  $A=5$ :

$$\text{Equation becomes } (C-17)/5 = y \pmod{26}, 21(C-17) = y \pmod{26}$$

Now by putting one by one value of appeared text in above equation, corresponding text is "ZEJC ---- ---- ---- ----". It does not show a meaningful text.

For  $A=7$ :

$$\text{Equation becomes } (C-17)7 = y \pmod{26}, 15(C-17) = y \pmod{26}$$

Now by putting one by one value of appeared text in above equation, corresponding plain text is "DOZU ---- ---- ---- ----". It does not show a meaningful text.



## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Professionals)

Solution Q #2:- For  $A=9$ :

Equation becomes  $(C-17)/9=y \bmod 26$ ,  $3(C-17)=y \bmod 26$

Now by putting one by one value of appeared text in above equation, corresponding text is "LIFE ---- ---- ---- ----  
- ---- ---- ---- ----". It shows a meaningful text. So, continuing in this way, get a whole text which is "LIFE HAS NO LIMITATIONS EXCEPT THE ONES YOU MAKE".

**Q # 3:-** You have been provided with the public key of a fictive person – Ahmed – and a list of intercepted messages. The signedMessages is a list of intercepted messages containing the plain text and the ECDSA signature. The hash of plain Text used for the signature is also provided with the message. Value of  $q$  is 503.

```
{  
  "name": "Ahmed",  
  "publicKey": {  
    "x": "82",  
    "y": "246"  
  },  
}
```



## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Professionals)

```
"signedMessages": [{
  "text": "Pakistani",
  "hash": 263,
  "signature": {
    "r": "423",
    "s": "142"
  }
}, {
  "text": "Cryptography",
  "hash": 323,
  "signature": {
    "r": "414",
    "s": "390"
  }
}, {
  "text": "CryptoC",
  "hash": 114,
  "signature": {
    "r": "469",
    "s": "388"
  }
}, {
  "text": "Crypto2024",
  "hash": 362,
  "signature": {
    "r": "56",
    "s": "290"
  }
}, {
  "text": "Challenge",
  "hash": 263,
  "signature": {
    "r": "56",
    "s": "243"
  }
}]
```



## Sample Questions For Round 2 and Final Round (Professionals)

You are required to impersonate Ahmed and sign following messages on his behalf.

Text	Hash
Pakistan	277
Cryptography	227
NCCS	284

Solution:- This is nonce attack. The last two values of signature 'r' are same so they have been generated with the same value of "k".

And we can find it with the formula

$$K = (S_4 - S_5)^{-1} * (H(m_4) - H(m_5)) \% q$$

Putting the values, we get  $k = 473$

Now the private key can be extracted from the formula of  $S_4$  or  $S_5$  e.g.  $S_5 = k^{-1} * (H(m_5) + r * d)$  and it comes out as 431.

Once you have the private key, it is trivial to sign any message.



# PakCrypt Participants' Data Collection and Usage Agreement

By participating in PakCrypt, you agree to the collection and use of your personal information by the PakCrypt Organization Committee for the following purposes:

- Verification of participants for Age / Association / Nationality / Place of Residence / etc.
- Informing participants of PakCrypt Updates
- Distributing prizes to participants in the final round

Personal information will not be shared with any commercial entity or used for any other purposes without your consent.

**Disclaimer:** The terms and conditions of the PakCrypt 2024 Competition, including dates and prize money, are subject to change by the PakCrypt organizers without explicit prior notice. The organizers' selected jury has discretionary powers for decision-making including awarding points and the selection of winners. All media, information, and data in this brochure have been collected and assembled by anonymous volunteers. Therefore, the PakCrypt organizers or NCCS bear no responsibility for copyright infringements or any other similar legal claims.