



## OVERVIEW

This issue of *Policy Pulse* highlights a range of strategic developments, security concerns, and policy shifts shaping Pakistan’s governance and economic landscape. The brutal attack on travelers in Balochistan underscores the persistent security threats in the region, necessitating stronger intelligence coordination and targeted operations. Similarly, the assassination of a police officer guarding a polio team in Bajaur reflects the ongoing challenges in ensuring healthcare access in high-risk areas. These incidents reinforce the urgent need for comprehensive counterterrorism measures, community engagement, and enhanced law enforcement capabilities.

On the global front, Pakistan raised concerns at the UN Security Council about the unravelling of the multilateral system, citing unresolved conflicts in Kashmir and Palestine. This highlights Islamabad’s diplomatic balancing act as it navigates regional security dynamics, strained India ties, and geopolitical shifts in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Pakistan-France relations witnessed a boost in enhancing aviation ties, signaling the potential for expanded trade and investment cooperation. Similarly, the approval of Balochistan’s Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy 2025-2035 marks a significant step towards marine resource conservation, job creation, and economic sustainability. However, effective implementation and strict enforcement of regulatory measures will be key to its success.

Policy Nuggets reinforce these themes, addressing issues like tax reforms, climate financing, and digital infrastructure expansion. Pakistan’s negotiations with the IMF for a \$1 billion climate finance initiative present an opportunity to align economic policies with sustainability goals. Moreover, technological advancements such as the establishment of cutting-edge data centres pave the way for a more digitized governance model. As Pakistan maneuvers through these complex challenges, a forward-looking approach emphasizing security, sustainable development, and international cooperation remains imperative.

## Inside This Issue

✚ 7 Punjab-bound travelers gunned down in Barkhan, Balochistan	2
✚ Police officer guarding polio team martyred in Bajaur	2
✚ France eyes stronger aviation partnership with Pakistan	3
✚ Pakistan warns of UN Charter’s potential collapse	4
✚ Balochistan approves Fisheries Policy	5
✚ Policy Nuggets	6

### 7 Punjab-bound travelers gunned down in Balochistan's Barkhan

Unknown assailants stopped a passenger bus in Barkhan district, removed several passengers, and killed seven people traveling to Punjab. The deputy commissioner of Barkhan reported that FC and Levies forces had arrived at the scene and secured the area. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reiterated the government's commitment to eliminating terrorism following the fatal shooting of seven Punjab-bound passengers in Barkhan district.



PM asserted that those who target innocent and defenseless people will face severe consequences. Expressing grief over the killing of the bus passengers, he conveyed his sympathies to the bereaved families and prayed for the departed souls.

### Analysis

Another incident of brutality incurred in sequence to recent assaults in Balochistan. The province has been experiencing a series of attacks targeting individuals from Punjab. In April 2024, two separate incidents resulted in deaths of nine people, killed after being pulled from a bus near Noshki, while two Punjabi laborers were fatally shot in Kech. In May 2024, seven barbers from Punjab were fatally shot near Gwadar, while in August, 23 travelers were forcibly removed from trucks and buses and killed in Musa Khail district. Despite of CM Balochistan's commitments and efforts, security of Punjabi individuals could not be assured and killing incidents have not stopped. This requires serious attention from local and Federal Government to ensure security and protection of citizens.

### Way Forward

- Increase surveillance and patrolling in high-risk areas, especially on interprovincial routes. Enhance intelligence gathering and coordination among security agencies.
- Launch targeted operations against terrorist networks operating in the region and strengthen border security to prevent the movement of militants.
- Ensure swift trials and strict punishment for those involved in terrorist activities.

### Policeman guarding polio team martyred in Bajaur

A police official was martyred in Bajaur in an attack on a polio vaccination team. The attack took place in the Damadola Serai area. According to reports, the policeman was on his way to his post when assailants on a motorbike opened fire, killing him instantly. However, the polio team remained unharmed. Police and security forces have launched a search operation in the area to track down the attackers. A five-day polio vaccination campaign began in four tehsils of Bajaur, following the postponement of the drive due to security concerns.



## Analysis

The local government should address the security discrepancies for health workers and take strict actions against the culprits. Seventy-four polio cases reported in 2024, and 3 new cases have been discovered this year. Polio remains a persistent challenge in Pakistan, one of the few countries where the virus is still endemic. Despite extensive vaccination efforts, sporadic cases continue to emerge, primarily in high-risk areas such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Security threats, misinformation, and vaccine hesitancy hinder eradication efforts. The government, in collaboration with global health organizations, is actively working to strengthen immunization campaigns and address these challenges to achieve a polio-free Pakistan. However, such incidents impede successful completion of vaccination across country and create hurdles in achieving polio-free state goals.

## Way Forward

- Deploy armed security personnel to escort polio teams, especially in high-risk areas.
- Ensure foolproof security measures for healthcare workers during vaccination drive.
- Advance intelligence assessments can be held to identify potential threats and take preventive action.
- Implement door-to-door vaccination under increased security cover and set up designated centers in safer areas for immunization.

## Diplomatic Relations

### France eyes stronger aviation partnership with Pakistan



French Ambassador Nicolas Galey greeted Pakistan International Airlines CEO Amir Hayat and his team to his residence in Islamabad to celebrate relaunch of their national airlines' direct flights between Islamabad and Paris. Describing the development as a significant milestone, he emphasized the strong aviation ties between France and Pakistan. He noted that the introduction of direct flights would further enhance the connection between the two nations.

French Ambassador to Pakistan emphasized the strengthening partnership between France and Pakistan. In a meeting with Sardar Zahoor Iqbal, Chairperson of the France-Pakistan Business Forum, he advocated for the expansion of diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties. He affirmed that relations between the two nations are firmly established, with France acknowledging Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and stability.

## Analysis

French companies are increasingly investing in Pakistan, with ongoing efforts to strengthen collaboration between the private sectors of both nations. There is vast potential for French investment in Pakistan, particularly in sectors such as dairy, where French expertise could play a valuable role. The recent

decision to resume Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flights to France can be marked a positive step towards enhanced bilateral cooperation among the two countries.

## Way Forward

- Keep active the Pakistan-France business forum to facilitate business matchmaking and addressing investor concerns.
- Negotiate tax incentives and special economic zones (SEZs) to attract French companies to invest and operate in Pakistan.
- Encourage French firms to invest in airport development, aerospace engineering, and urban infrastructure projects.
- Encourage public-private partnership (PPP) models in infrastructure, technology, and agriculture sectors to attract long-term French investment.

## Pakistan warns of UN Charter's potential collapse amid rising global tensions

A meeting was convened by China with United Nations Security Council on multilateralism and global governance. Ishaq Dar, Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister addressed the meeting and stated that Pakistan urged a renewed commitment to multilateralism, cautioning that the global order established under the UN Charter faced the risk of unraveling unless timely corrective measures were implemented.



In his remarks, Dar emphasized the ongoing conflicts in Palestine and Jammu & Kashmir, warning that they pose a serious threat to global peace and stability. He stressed the urgency for the 15-member Security Council to enforce its resolutions. The Jammu and Kashmir dispute remains an open wound and a persistent threat to international peace and security.

In the meeting, Dar also referred to a multitude of interconnected crises threatening international peace and security, economic stability, and sustainable development. He stated that despite the cross-border terrorism, Pakistan will continue its engagement with the Interim government in Kabul, facilitate humanitarian support to the millions of destitute people in Afghanistan and support Afghanistan's economic and social development.

## Analysis

Pakistan grapples with a range of internal and external challenges. The macro issues that may be solved with cooperation of other regional partners are worthy to be raised on forums such as UN Security Council platform. Internally, the country faces security threats from terrorism, political instability, economic struggles, and ethnic tensions. Externally, Pakistan navigates complex regional dynamics, including strained ties with India over Kashmir, border security concerns with Afghanistan, and economic dependencies on global powers. Balancing relations with Afghanistan and addressing geopolitical pressures pose challenges for diplomatic policies of Pakistan.

## Way Forward

- Maintain a balanced foreign policy by leveraging ties with Afghanistan, U.S., and regional partners to attract investments and strategic cooperation.
- Raise concerns on international forums regarding Kashmir conflict and offer peaceful dialogue with India on the issue.
- Take a leadership role in the United Nations (UN), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to address main issues like climate change, counterterrorism, and human rights faced by Pakistan.

## Institutional Framework

### Balochistan approves Fisheries Policy



Provincial Cabinet of Balochistan has approved the Balochistan Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy 2025-2035. The policy termed as “landmark achievement” and the first of its kind in the country’s history reflecting Balochistan government’s strong commitment to development and effective governance, and responsible management of provincial resources. It aims to drive aquaculture growth, fostering socio-economic progress by creating alternative livelihood opportunities for communities across the province.

The Fisheries Department will implement a monitoring, control, and surveillance system while working in coordination with federal law enforcement agencies. Additionally, reforms will be introduced to enhance the governance of harbors and coastal development, ensuring more efficient and sustainable management.

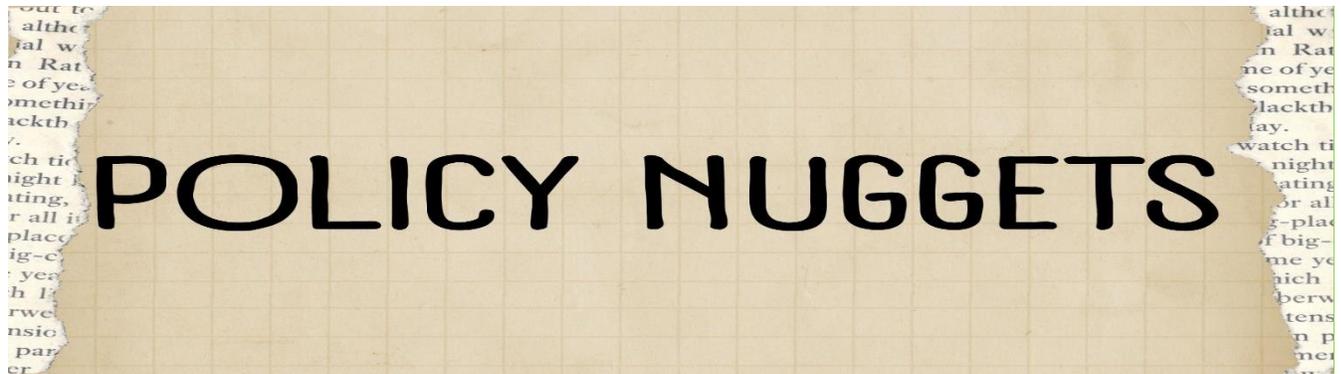
### Analysis

Pakistan’s fisheries sector holds significant economic potential, contributing to exports, food security, and coastal livelihoods. However, it faces severe challenges, including overfishing, lack of modern infrastructure, weak regulatory enforcement, and environmental degradation. Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing further depletes marine resources, while insufficient investment in aquaculture limits sectoral growth. Additionally, the absence of a comprehensive policy framework and weak coordination between federal and provincial authorities hinder sustainable development.

To unlock its full potential, Pakistan must implement scientific resource management, modernize fishing fleets, enforce strict regulations, and invest in aquaculture and value-added seafood processing. The Fisheries Policy will promote sustainable fishing practices, regulate resource management, and curb illegal fishing, ensuring long-term marine conservation. Additionally, it will drive aquaculture development, create alternative livelihoods, and enhance the sector’s economic contribution.

## Way Forward

- Implement scientific stock assessments to regulate fishing quotas and prevent overfishing.
- Modernize harbor facilities and cold storage chains to improve fish handling and reduce post-harvest losses.
- Introduce coastal development projects and upgrade fishing vessels with modern equipment and eco-friendly technologies.



Incident/News	Impact	Recommendation	Priority
Shehbaz visited Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan	Strengthening Pakistan-Azerbaijan-Uzbekistan ties with a focus on trade, energy, defense cooperation and investment.	Expand bilateral energy agreements to secure affordable energy imports; explore defense collaborations to enhance regional security; promote trade diversification beyond hydrocarbons.  <i>"Economic cooperation and regional connectivity are the cornerstones of sustainable development and mutual prosperity." — Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of Uzbekistan</i>	High
Tax reforms reduced burden on exchequer: Aurangzeb	Improved tax collection mechanisms have eased fiscal pressure but require sustained implementation.	Ensure broad-based tax reforms that incentivize compliance and penalize evasion; expand digital tracking of transactions to curb tax fraud and undocumented wealth.  <i>"Taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society." — Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.</i>	Highest
Six terrorists killed in Karak action	Security forces successfully neutralized a terror threat, highlighting persistent internal security risks.	Strengthen intelligence-sharing frameworks to preempt future attacks; enhance community-based counterterrorism initiatives to deter local recruitment.  <i>"The fight against terrorism is not just a military fight; it is a fight for values." — Tony Blair</i>	Highest

Maryam approves mega plan for sewage, drainage systems	Major urban infrastructure overhaul to tackle flooding and sanitation issues in Punjab.	Implement climate-resilient drainage systems in high-risk urban zones; integrate smart water management solutions for efficient resource use.  <i>"Cities are the future of civilization. How we build them will determine our fate." — Jan Gehl</i>	High
IMF, Pakistan to open \$1bn climate finance talks	Climate finance talks with IMF signal a shift toward sustainable economic strategies.	Ensure transparent allocation of climate funds for targeted mitigation projects; strengthen policy frameworks to integrate climate resilience into national economic planning.  <i>"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it." — Robert Swan</i>	Highest
Polymakers asked to involve women in water resource management	Gender-inclusive water policies can enhance sustainability and efficiency.	Establish women-led community water management councils; integrate gender-sensitive policies into national water conservation strategies.  <i>"When women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life." — Kofi Annan</i>	High
Ahsan inaugurates cutting-edge data centre at NED University	Pakistan advances its digital infrastructure, enhancing research and tech capabilities.	Foster public-private partnerships to expand AI and big data applications; integrate data-driven governance for enhanced decision-making.  <i>"Information is the oil of the 21st century, and analytics is the combustion engine." — Peter Sondergaard</i>	High
Total elimination of terrorism govt's mission: PM	Renewed counterterrorism commitment signals national security prioritization.	Strengthen border security to prevent cross-border militant movement; enhance intelligence-led operations targeting terrorist networks.  <i>"Terrorism has no nationality or religion." — Vladimir Putin</i>	Highest



### **Editorial Team**

**Dr. Naveed Elahi**

**Faryal Maaz**

**Jahanzeb Waheed**

**Naeema Naeem**

National School of Public Policy  
87- Shahrah e Quaid e Azam, Lahore.

Email: [policypulse.nipp@nspp.gov.pk](mailto:policypulse.nipp@nspp.gov.pk)