



Weekly



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OVERVIEW



This week's *Policy Pulse* highlights developments across governance, security and law and order, socio-economic policy, and international affairs. The central theme is institutional resilience: strengthening state capacity, protecting public services, ensuring accountability, and advancing diplomacy amid security threats, fiscal pressure, and regional uncertainty.

In governance, the FIA's crackdown on officials involved in illegal airport offloading exposed corruption and weak oversight in public services. Supreme Court rulings on spousal joint postings and women's rights in khula cases reinforced fairness in administration and family law, while the Quetta slum fire highlighted gaps in urban safety and emergency response.

Security and law and order remained strained, especially in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Field Marshal Asim Munir's Eid visit to troops in Zhob signalled operational resolve, while attacks on civilian infrastructure in Tank and repeated targeting of traders and truckers in Balochistan showed the challenge of protecting public services and economic activity.

On the socio-economic front, Prince Rahim Aga Khan's investment assurances for KP signalled promising development partnerships in health, education, and tourism. Demands to raise the minimum wage to Rs60,000 highlighted the cost-of-living crisis, while developments in urban mobility and biotechnology pointed to longer-term productivity reforms.

Internationally, Pakistan maintained an active diplomatic role through its stance on Palestine, continued US-Iran mediation, and renewed consensus with China on CPEC 2.0. Global developments, including Europe's heat dome and North Korea's missile test, reinforced wider climate and security risks.

The policy nuggets reinforce priorities of institutional accountability, civilian protection, economic relief, public service delivery, and strategic diplomacy. Overall, the week underscores the need to strengthen governance mechanisms, protect vulnerable communities, and align domestic reform with effective international engagement.

The central theme is institutional resilience: strengthening state capacity, protecting public services, ensuring accountability, and advancing diplomacy amid security threats, fiscal pressure, and regional uncertainty.

GOVERNANCE

FIA Acts Against Several Officers for Illegal Offloading of Travellers



On May 30, 2026, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) took swift action against multiple officials involved in the illegal offloading of passengers at major airports across Pakistan. The agency registered cases and initiated inquiries after credible complaints of corrupt practices where passengers were removed from flights in exchange for bribes or under undue pressure. This crackdown comes amid growing public complaints regarding harassment and extortion at airports during the Eid travel rush. The FIA has vowed to ensure accountability and improve the system to prevent such malpractices in the future.

Analysis:

This incident exposes deep-rooted corruption and poor oversight within key public institutions responsible for immigration and aviation services. It not only erodes public trust in state institutions but also damages Pakistan's international image, especially for overseas Pakistanis who frequently use these airports. The timing during the Eid period further highlights how governance failures directly affect ordinary citizens.

Way Forward:

- Strengthen digital monitoring and CCTV integration at all immigration counters.
- Introduce strict accountability mechanisms with time-bound inquiries.
- Reform airport procedures through better training and whistleblower protection.

PTI Criticises Government's Budget for Lacking Structural Reforms



On May 25-26, 2026, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) strongly criticised the government's approach to the upcoming federal budget, accusing it of failing to introduce meaningful structural reforms. Party leaders claimed the budget prioritises short-term relief over long-term governance improvements, particularly in reducing wasteful expenditure and improving institutional efficiency. The opposition demanded greater transparency in fiscal planning and better federal-provincial coordination. This reaction came ahead of the formal budget session scheduled for early June.

Analysis:

The sharp criticism reflects the deep political polarisation that continues to hinder effective governance in Pakistan. While the government defends its fiscal strategy, the lack of consensus on key reforms risks weakening implementation and public confidence. This situation underscores the urgent need for bipartisan dialogue on economic governance.

Way Forward:

- Promote cross-party consultations on major economic reforms.
- Introduce performance-based budgeting with independent monitoring.
- Focus on civil service reforms to improve implementation capacity.

GOVERNANCE

S upreme Court upholds spouse's right to joint posting



The Supreme Court ruled that spouses in government service have a legitimate expectation to be considered for joint postings under the wedlock policy, even though transfer is not an absolute right. The Court set aside a Punjab Service Tribunal decision and directed authorities to reconsider the petitioner's transfer request within 15 days. It emphasized that such policies are meant to reduce marital hardship and must be implemented fairly and consistently.

Analysis:

The judgement strengthens the implementation of the wedlock policy by ensuring it is not ignored through rigid or arbitrary administrative decisions. It highlights the constitutional protection of family life under Article 35 and recognizes the social and psychological impact of spousal separation due to government postings. The ruling reinforces that public service rules must be applied in a manner that prioritizes fairness, welfare, and consistency.

Way Forward:

- Ensure strict and uniform implementation of wedlock policies across federal and provincial departments.
- Establish clear administrative guidelines to facilitate joint postings without excessive bureaucratic delays.
- Create a centralized mechanism for tracking and resolving spousal transfer requests efficiently.

M inor girl burnt to death in Quetta



A seven-month-old baby girl was burnt to death and two others were injured when a sudden fire engulfed a slum settlement in Quetta's Arbab Town area. The blaze rapidly spread through huts, destroying homes and leaving several families homeless. Residents alleged that delayed response from fire brigade officials worsened the scale of damage.

Analysis:

The incident highlights severe urban vulnerability in informal settlements where poor infrastructure and lack of fire safety measures increase disaster risks. It also raises concerns about emergency response efficiency and coordination in Quetta's municipal services. The tragedy reflects broader governance gaps in urban planning, disaster preparedness, and protection of marginalized communities.

Way Forward:

- Improve emergency response time and capacity of fire and rescue services in Quetta and other urban centers.
- Upgrade slum settlements with basic fire safety infrastructure, including access routes and water points.
- Strengthen early warning and rapid communication systems for urban disasters.

SECURITY AND LAW & ORDER

C DF Munir Spends Eid with Troops in Zhob, Balochistan



On May 27-28, 2026, Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Asim Munir visited frontline troops in Zhob, Balochistan, to spend Eidul Azha with them. He praised the soldiers' sacrifices and stated that "brutal and inhumane acts" by terrorists cannot weaken the nation's resolve. The visit came amid ongoing security operations in the region. ISPR highlighted the importance of troop morale and people-centric approaches in counter-terrorism efforts.

Analysis:

The high-profile visit demonstrates the military's continued focus on both operational readiness and morale-building in sensitive areas. It also sends a strong message of resolve against terrorism while emphasising the need for sustainable peace through development and governance. Such engagements help bridge the gap between security forces and local communities.

Way Forward:

- Combine kinetic operations with socio-economic development initiatives.
- Strengthen intelligence-based targeted actions against militant networks.
- Enhance coordination between civil and military authorities in restive areas.

M Militants Target Civilian Infrastructure in KP

NEWS UPDATE

MILITANTS BLOW UP GOVT SCHOOL, BASIC HEALTH UNIT IN KP'S TANK

On May 25, 2026, militants blew up a government school and a basic health unit in Tank district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The attack was widely condemned as an attempt to disrupt public services and spread fear among local communities. Security forces launched operations to track the perpetrators. This incident is part of a pattern of targeting soft civilian infrastructure in the province.

Analysis:

Such attacks reveal the persistent threat posed by militant groups aiming to undermine state authority and development efforts. They also highlight vulnerabilities in remote areas where security coverage remains challenging. The incidents put pressure on both civil and military institutions to improve protection of public assets.

Way Forward:

- Enhance security measures for schools, hospitals, and development projects.
- Accelerate deradicalisation and youth engagement programmes.
- Improve local intelligence networks and community partnerships.

SECURITY AND LAW & ORDER

Traders, truckers concerned over law and order in Balochistan



The Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Balochistan Goods Truck Owners Association expressed serious concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in Balochistan. Repeated attacks and torching of coal and goods-carrying trucks have caused significant financial losses and disrupted trade and transportation activities. Business leaders announced a broad consultative meeting on June 3 to formulate a joint strategy and future course of action.

Analysis:

The article highlights how insecurity in Balochistan is directly affecting economic activity, trade flows, and investor confidence. Frequent attacks on transport vehicles increase business costs, discourage commercial operations, and undermine regional economic development. The growing concern among traders and transporters suggests that security challenges are becoming a major obstacle to economic stability in the province.

Way Forward:

- Strengthen security measures along major trade and transport routes in Balochistan.
- Improve intelligence-sharing and coordination between law enforcement agencies and transport associations.
- Provide compensation or insurance support mechanisms for businesses affected by attacks.

CM chairs meeting on security measures across Balochistan



A high-level meeting chaired by Mir Sarfraz Bugti reviewed security, sanitation, and administrative preparations for Eidul Azha across Balochistan. Authorities announced that banned organisations would not be allowed to collect sacrificial animal hides, and strict action would be taken against violations. Comprehensive security plans, control rooms, and waste management arrangements have been finalised to ensure peaceful Eid celebrations.

Analysis:

The article reflects the government's effort to strengthen security and maintain state authority during a major religious event in a province facing persistent security challenges. The ban on hide collection by outlawed groups aims to prevent potential financing and influence of banned organisations. Simultaneously, the focus on sanitation and public services highlights the importance of effective governance and public administration during large-scale religious gatherings.

Way Forward:

- Ensure strict implementation of the ban on hide collection by banned organisations through effective monitoring and enforcement.
- Maintain enhanced security at Eidgahs, mosques, and public gathering places to prevent security incidents.
- Strengthen coordination among police, district administrations, and local governments for rapid response during Eid.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

A ga Khan assures KP governor, CM of investment in province



Prince Rahim Aga Khan V assured the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government of continued investment and development partnerships in the province. During meetings with Faisal Karim Kundi and Sohail Afridi, he agreed to establish an Aga Khan University and Hospital in Peshawar and discussed opportunities in mining, natural resources, and tourism. He also pledged long-term cooperation to help reduce poverty and promote regional development.

Analysis:

Its highlights the growing role of development partnerships in addressing economic and social challenges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Investment in education, healthcare, tourism, and mineral resources could contribute to job creation, human capital development, and poverty reduction. The commitment reflects confidence in the province's development potential and the importance of public-private collaboration for sustainable growth.

Way Forward:

- Develop transparent investment frameworks to attract further private and philanthropic investment.
- Promote responsible mining and mineral exploration while ensuring environmental sustainability.
- Expand tourism infrastructure and improve connectivity to unlock the province's tourism potential.

C all to Fix Minimum Wage at Rs60,000 Amid High Inflation



On May 31, 2026, Qaumi Awami Tehreek President Ayaz Latif Palijo demanded that the minimum wage for industrial workers be fixed at Rs60,000 per month in the upcoming federal budget. He also called for a 60% increase in government employees' salaries and pensions, citing the "ruthless wave of inflation" that has pushed the prices of essential items like flour, rice, pulses, milk, medicines, gas, and electricity bills sharply higher. Palijo warned that inflation has crossed 35% and urged the government to provide adequate funds for education and health in the budget. The statement was issued from Hyderabad.

Analysis:

This demand reflects the severe cost-of-living crisis faced by low-income and middle-class families across Pakistan. Persistent high inflation is eroding purchasing power and deepening poverty, making it difficult for workers to meet basic needs. It also puts pressure on the government ahead of the budget presentation to balance fiscal discipline with public relief measures.

Way Forward:

- Carefully assess the impact of minimum wage revision on industry competitiveness and inflation.
- Introduce targeted subsidies or social protection programmes for low-income households.
- Link wage increases with productivity enhancements and skill development initiatives.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Dar Reaffirms Pakistan's Stance on Palestine Amid Abraham Accords Push



On May 29-30, 2026, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar reiterated Pakistan's firm commitment to the Palestinian cause during high-level meetings in Washington. He made it clear that Pakistan will not alter its principled stance on Palestine even as pressure grows for broader regional normalisation under the Abraham Accords framework. The statement came as discussions around the US-Iran deal included potential expansion of the Accords. Dar emphasised that Pakistan supports peace but not at the cost of core principles.

Analysis:

This position highlights Pakistan's delicate balancing act in international diplomacy — maintaining strong ties with the US and Gulf states while upholding its traditional stance on Palestine. It also shows how global geopolitical shifts continue to test Pakistan's foreign policy choices. The statement helps preserve domestic political consensus on the issue.

Way Forward:

- Continue balanced diplomacy between major powers and regional allies.
- Strengthen coordination with like-minded countries on the Palestine issue.
- Leverage diplomatic engagements to secure economic and trade benefits.

Progress in US-Iran Negotiations with Pakistan's Mediation



Multiple Dawn reports from May 25 to 30, 2026, indicated continued progress in US-Iran negotiations, with Pakistan playing a key mediation role. Field Marshal Asim Munir's recent engagements and backchannel efforts were credited with keeping the dialogue alive. US officials acknowledged Pakistan's contribution while Iranian sides described the process as being in a sensitive phase. President Trump also made statements linking the deal to broader regional issues.

Analysis:

Pakistan's mediation has significantly enhanced its global diplomatic profile in a short period. However, the fragile nature of the talks and external pressures (including demands related to Abraham Accords) pose challenges. Success in this process could bring both prestige and risks if expectations are not managed carefully.

Way Forward:

- Maintain neutrality and credibility as a mediator.
- Coordinate with China, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey for support.
- Protect Pakistan's economic and security interests during the process.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

H eat dome over Europe scorches UK, France, Spain



A powerful "heat dome" over Western Europe pushed temperatures to record highs in the UK, France, and Spain, with temperatures reaching 34.8°C in London and expected to hit 38°C in parts of Spain. Authorities issued heatwave alerts, restricted outdoor work, and reported heat-related deaths and hospitalizations. Scientists and weather agencies linked the extreme temperatures to climate change, warning that such events are becoming more frequent.

Analysis:

The heatwave demonstrates the growing impact of climate change on public health, infrastructure, and economic activity across Europe. Record-breaking temperatures occurring in May indicate that extreme weather events are becoming more intense and less predictable. The crisis highlights the urgent need for climate adaptation measures alongside efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Way Forward:

- Expand early warning systems, establish cooling centres, and implement heat action plans in major cities such as Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad to reduce heat-related illnesses and deaths.
- Pakistan should upgrade schools, hospitals, transport systems, and urban planning to withstand extreme temperatures, drawing lessons from European experiences.
- Pakistan should increase investment in solar, wind, and water-efficient technologies while promoting afforestation and climate-resilient agriculture to reduce vulnerability to future heatwaves.

I ran says agreement with US 'not imminent'



Iran stated that a final agreement with the United States is not imminent despite progress on many issues, accusing Washington of changing its positions during negotiations. Both sides are discussing a framework to end regional conflict, address the Strait of Hormuz, and eventually tackle Iran's nuclear programme. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian reaffirmed that Iran would not yield to US pressure, while the US said diplomacy remains its preferred path.

Analysis:

The article reflects cautious progress in US-Iran diplomacy, with both sides seeking an agreement while maintaining firm positions on key issues. The Strait of Hormuz and Iran's nuclear activities remain central challenges because of their implications for global energy security and regional stability. Continued negotiations indicate a preference for diplomacy, but mutual distrust and unresolved differences continue to delay a breakthrough.

Way Forward:

- Pakistan should continue encouraging dialogue between Iran, the US, and regional stakeholders to reduce tensions and prevent further conflict in the Middle East.
- Pakistan should closely monitor developments in the Strait of Hormuz, as any disruption could affect oil supplies, energy prices, inflation, and economic stability.
- Pakistan should maintain constructive relations with both Iran and Gulf countries while supporting peaceful conflict resolution through diplomatic and multilateral channels.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Pakistan, China forge 'broad new consensus' to boost ties



Pakistan and China agreed on a “broad new consensus” to deepen strategic ties, expand CPEC 2.0, and strengthen cooperation in trade, technology, security, and regional diplomacy. Both sides reaffirmed support on core issues, including Kashmir and counter-terrorism, while committing to connectivity, energy, agriculture, AI, Gwadar Port, and industrial cooperation.

Analysis:

The visit reflects an upgraded phase of Pakistan-China relations, moving beyond infrastructure toward technology, security, and governance cooperation. CPEC 2.0 signals renewed investment momentum, but its success depends on Pakistan's internal stability, project security, and policy consistency.

Way Forward:

- Strengthen security for Chinese personnel and projects to maintain investor confidence and ensure smooth CPEC implementation.
- Focus on industrial zones, agriculture modernization, and export-oriented production rather than only infrastructure development.
- Utilize scholarships, AI cooperation, and agricultural training programs to develop skilled workforce and reduce technological dependency.

North Korea fires ballistic missile into Yellow Sea



North Korea launched several projectiles, including a short-range ballistic missile, into the Yellow Sea, according to South Korea's military. The missile traveled about 80 kilometers as part of a series of recent weapons tests. Seoul condemned the move and reiterated calls for denuclearisation and renewed dialogue.

Analysis:

The missile test reflects North Korea's continued strategy of military signalling to assert its nuclear capability and strengthen deterrence. It also highlights persistent tensions on the Korean Peninsula, where diplomatic engagement remains stalled. The repeated tests increase regional insecurity and challenge international non-proliferation efforts.

Way Forward:

- Pakistan should strengthen diplomatic engagement through multilateral talks involving both Koreas, the US, and regional stakeholders like China.
- Increase monitoring and defensive readiness in South Korea and allied forces to manage escalation risks.
- Revive step-by-step denuclearisation frameworks that combine sanctions relief with verifiable disarmament measures.

POLICY NUGGETS

1 Govt plans Wapda Security Force for water projects.

Impact: Strengthens protection of critical water and hydropower infrastructure, reduces risks of disruptions, delays, and cost escalations.

Recommendation: Ensure strong civilian oversight, transparency, and community engagement around major infrastructure projects.

“Security is the first condition of development.” – Kofi Annan

2 Polio team security challenged after cop injured in Chaman attack.

Impact: Threaten immunisation coverage and risk undermining Pakistan’s efforts to eradicate polio permanently.

Recommendation: Expand local trust-building and community partnerships alongside security measures to improve vaccine campaign acceptance.

“Vaccines are the tugboats of preventive health.” – William Foegle

3 Pakistan imports cotton from the US and Brazil before the local ginning season.

Impact: Highlights weakening domestic agricultural productivity and may increase pressure on foreign exchange reserves.

Recommendation: Strengthen domestic cotton productivity through seed innovation, water management, and farmer incentives.

“A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself.” – Franklin D. Roosevelt

4 Faster completion of Karachi Red Line project Pushed by CM of Sindh.

Impact: Reduces congestion, Improves urban mobility, and lower environmental pollution in Pakistan’s largest city.

Recommendation: Urban transport projects should integrate feeder routes and digital traffic systems to maximise accessibility and long-term efficiency.

“A developed country is not a place where the poor have cars. It’s where the rich use public transportation.” – Enrique Peñalosa

5 Education regulators in Islamabad under ad hoc leadership

Impact: Weakens governance, delays reforms, and affects oversight of public and private educational institutions in the federal capital.

Recommendation: Prioritise merit-based and timely appointments to key education bodies to strengthen institutional continuity and accountability.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” – Nelson Mandela

6 Pakistan moves to liberalise the GMO regulatory regime.

Impact: Boosts investment in biotechnology, eases GMO imports for edible oil and poultry sectors, and promotes scientific research in universities and private institutions.

Recommendation: Pair regulatory liberalisation with transparent biosafety monitoring, public awareness, and independent scientific oversight.

“Science and technology revolutionize our lives, but memory, tradition and myth frame our response.” – Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.

7 Pakistan Renews Support for UN Peacekeeping

Impact: Pakistan’s continued role in UN peacekeeping enhances its global reputation and reinforces its commitment to international peace and security.

Recommendation: Pakistan should strengthen training and modern capabilities to effectively respond to evolving security challenges.

“Peacekeeping is a unique global partnership.” – Kofi Annan

8 NA, Senate budget sessions summoned on June 5

Impact: The upcoming budget will shape Pakistan’s economic priorities, fiscal policies, and development spending for FY2026–27.

Recommendation: The government should prioritize fiscal discipline, development spending, and inflation control to support sustainable economic growth.

“The art of economics consists in looking beyond immediate effects.” – Henry Hazlitt

9 Dar invites overseas Pakistanis in US to 'honour their roots' and invest in the country

Impact: Ishaq Dar's call may encourage greater overseas Pakistani investment and strengthen economic ties with the diaspora.

Recommendation: The government should offer transparent policies and investor-friendly incentives to attract diaspora capital.

“Investment in knowledge pays the best interest.” – Benjamin Franklin



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