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## Pakistan Government Renews Polio Eradication Pledge at Global Forum

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Pakistan's government reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to eradicating polio at the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) meeting of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) in Geneva from July 14–17, 2025. Highlighting progress and addressing challenges, the delegation showcased Pakistan's resolve to eliminate the virus. This article explores the nation's efforts, persistent hurdles, and the path to a polio-free future.

At the Geneva forum, Pakistan's delegation, led by Minister of State for Health Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmad Bharat, emphasized a revitalized “whole-of-government” approach to support provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) in combating polio, a crippling disease still endemic in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Ayesha Raza Farooq, the Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication, noted that no cases were reported in Karachi, Quetta, or Peshawar in 2025, a testament to high-quality vaccination campaigns, per Dawn. However, wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) persists in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), with 41 cases reported by October 2024, alongside positive sewage samples in 45 districts, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Farooq highlighted the National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP) 2024–25, which focuses on enhanced surveillance, targeted campaigns, and community trust-building to counter vaccine hesitancy. “We've confined the virus to limited areas, but sewage detections remind us to vaccinate every child,” she said, as quoted by PakTribune. Collaboration with law enforcement and the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) has improved outreach in high-risk areas. Despite challenges like insecurity and misinformation, Pakistan vaccinated 45 million children in October 2024, per Wikipedia. Support from partners like the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF bolsters these efforts.

Pakistan's resolve reflects a commitment to national pride and global health security, standing firm against polio despite complex sociopolitical barriers. Unlike some nations with wavering priorities, Pakistan's unified strategy, backed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, positions it to overcome the virus, ensuring a healthier future for its children.