

# **HAAL AHWAL**

Monthly News Summary on Food and Agriculture

**July, 2023**

Roots for Equity









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**July, 2023**

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**Roots for Equity**



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## Preface

The Haal Ahwal was initiated in 2013 as an Urdu quarterly publication and came out with more than 20 journals till 2019. From 2020 onwards, due to Covid19's lockdown, and other resource gaps the publication was discontinued. The Urdu version of *Haal Ahwal's* was compiled as a fairly comprehensive resource bringing together current news and developments in the agriculture sector. Its aim was to provide readers with a chronological order of developments in various sub-sectors of agriculture and its interconnected domains to develop their understanding on the political economy of agriculture.

With the publication in hand, it's obvious that Haal Ahwal is being launched once again. However, after a gap of three years, it comes with some changes. The first most apparent is that, this time it's being published in English. The range of topics remain much the same, following the previous pattern of more coverage of Pakistan's domestic scene and sparingly international coverage. Haal Ahwal will now be on a monthly basis and not quarterly.

The publication covers a wide range of subjects, encompassing various aspects of agriculture and related fields. It delves into topics such as farmers, laborer, agricultural resources (including land, water, and inputs), seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural loans, agricultural machinery, and industrial production. News items on food and cash crops, fruits and vegetables, livestock, fisheries, and poultry are added. And then on more macro issues of neoliberal policies, trade, exports, imports, the corporate sector including agrochemical companies, food and fertilizer companies, corporate lobbies and foreign aid are also covered. Related issues such as environment, pollution, health and safety, climate change, and natural disasters, poverty, inflation, food security and people's and farmers resistance also have particular emphasis. All these topics will be covered more fully in the national context and where relevant to Pakistan, as part of international policies and politics. In addition, there is coverage of news on international financial institutions

(IFIs) such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Asian Development Bank; aid agencies such as the USAID and others as well as the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Though the layout of the news items has been changed quite a bit, we are retaining our take on the news items covered under Points to Ponder, which is given in the very beginning of the publication. The next section is based on excerpts of what the editorial team considers the most important news items in this period. This is followed by table of contents making it easier for readers to look for their topics of interest. And then we have the meat of the publication based on abbreviated news items included in each sub-section. As was the case for the Urdu Haal Ahwal, two major newspapers have been used for the news items included, namely the “Daily Dawn” and the “Business Recorder.” Please note, only the Sunday newspaper is used for news coverage from “The Daily News.”

At the end, we would like to add that comments and critique for making the resource more useful to our readers is very welcome.

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10,000	10 Thousand	10 Thousand	دس ہزار
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1,000,000,000	1 Billion	1 Arab	ایک ارب
10,000,000,000	10 Billion	10 Arab	دس ارب
100,000,000,000	100 Billion	1 Kharab	ایک کھرب

# Glossary

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ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADNOC	United Arab Emirates National Oil Company
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
APCA	All Pakistan Clerks Association
APT	Average Per Tonne
BoI	Board of Investment
BoR	Punjab Board of Revenue
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BSGI	Black Sea Grain Initiative
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
CAF	Corporate Agriculture Farming
CDA	Cholistan Development Authority
CDPS	Country Development Partnership Summary
CGGC	China Gezhouba Group Company
CGHE	Coalition for Global Hepatitis Elimination
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
DPP	Department of Plant Protection
EAD	Economic Affairs Division
ECC	Economic Coordination Committee
ECNEC	Executive Committee of the National Economic Council
EFF	Extended Fund Facility
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
EOUs	Export Oriented Units
EPD	Environment Protection Department
EPZs	Export Processing Zones
ER	Renewable Energy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FBR	Federal Board of Revenue
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FCS	Fishermen Cooperative Society
FED	Federal Excise Duty
FMPAC	Fertilisers Manufacturers of Pakistan Advisory Council
FPCCI	Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FPSP	Flood Protection Sector Project-III
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GLLSP-II	Gwadar-Lasbela Livelihood Support Project
Hesco	Hyderabad Electric Supply Company
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IARC	International Agency for Research on Cancer

ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IIA	Islamabad International Airport
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRSA	Indus River System Authority
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
JECFA	Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives
JPMC	Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre
KKH	Karakoram Highway
KOPIA	Korea Program for International Cooperation in Agricultural Technology
KPC	Karachi Press Club
KPK	Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa
KWSC	Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation
LHC	Lahore High Court
LHEAP	Local Hepatitis Elimination and Prevention
LOI	Letter of Intent
MBs	Manufacturing Bonds
MEPC	Marine Environment Protection Commission
MFS&R	Ministry of Food Security and Research
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NARC	National Agricultural Research Centre
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NEPRA	National Electric Power Regulatory Authority
NICH	National Institute of Child Health
NIGAB	National Institute of Genomics and Agricultural Biotechnology
NNS	National Nutrition Survey
NOCs	no-objection certificates
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIETAI	Organisation of Investment, Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
PANI	Pakistan Nutrition Initiatives
PARC	Pakistan Agricultural Research Council
PBS	Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
PCA	Permanent Court of Arbitration
PCAA	Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority
PCCC	Pakistan Central Cotton Committee
PCGA	Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association
PCMDC	Punjab Cattle Market Management & Development Company
PDMA	Provincial Disaster Management Authority

PFVA	All Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association
PGRI	Plant Genetic Resources Institute
PIBs	Pakistan Investment Bonds
PSTs	Primary School Teachers
RCC	Reinforced cement concrete
RIISP	Rural Investment and Industrial Support Project
SAP	Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Programme
SAU	Sindh Agriculture University
SBA	Stand-By Arrangement
SBP	State Bank of Pakistan
SCA	Sindh Chamber of Agriculture
SCF	Supply Chain Finance
SECP	Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan
SEZs	Special Economic Zones
SFA	Sindh Food Authority
SHRC	Sindh Human Rights Commission
SIFC	Secretary Special Investment Facilitation Council
SMASS	Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme
SNGPL	Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited
SPI	Sensitive Price Index
SROs	Statutory Regulatory Orders
SSEP	Sindh Solar Energy Project
SWRMD	Sindh Water Resources Management Department
TCP	Trading Corporation of Pakistan
TED	Turtle Excluder Device
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme-Pakistan
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UN-ESCAP	UN-Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USFDA	US Food and Drug Administration
UTF	Unilateral Trust Fund
WHO	World Health Organisation
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation
WWF-P	World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan

## Points to Ponder!

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There have been major developments in Pakistan's food and agriculture system in a matter of weeks, where after the finalization of the deeply inhumane-IMF stand-by agreement, the government of Pakistan has adopted a new strategy for trade liberalization in food and agriculture. This will end in bringing fresh onslaught of misery and hunger for the people, especially women, children and elderly in the country. The IMF conditionalities result in a massive debt burden, which is not felt only by the Pakistani people but across the neocolonial world. According to the United Nations, global public debt has surged to a record \$92 trillion in 2022. Domestic and external debt worldwide has climbed up more than five times in the past two decades, and third world countries owe almost 30 per cent of the global public debt, of which 70pc is represented by China, India and Brazil.

Based on various surveys, in the period 2017-22, 21.5 percent population in Pakistan suffered severe multidimensional poverty, while 12.9 percent is vulnerable to multidimensional poverty. Globally, in 2023, 1.1 billion out of 6.1 billion people (just over 18 percent) live in acute multidimensional poverty across 110 countries. The United Nations has called for a pause in debt repayments for countries like Pakistan. According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the global situation of economic crisis, the pandemic and other shocks, 75 million people have fallen into extreme poverty, defined as living on less than \$2.15 a day, between 2020 and the end of 2023 — and 90 million more will fall below the poverty line of \$3.65 a day. The new head of the World Bank has said that growing divides between rich and poor nations risked deepening poverty in the developing world, at a meeting of G20 finance ministers in India- a context which coming from the World Bank is almost laughable. Such statements do not stop the international financial institutions from imposing crippling conditionalities on debt-stricken countries, as is very clear from the stark economic crisis in Pakistan.

The result of thrusting neoliberal policies can be clearly seen in our domestic policy. The outgoing Prime Minister just before leaving office along with the Chief of Army Staff General Asim launched the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). The primary focus of the SIFC will be on investment and privatization, initially targeting five areas: Defense, Agriculture, Minerals, Information Technology and Telecommunication, and Energy. The Pakistan Military has been given key prominence in SIFC, which is represented by both civilian and army personnel. The SIFC will serve as a 'single window' for multi-domain cooperation with Gulf countries including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates as well as China, aiming to facilitate investment and create an enabling policy environment. According to the outgoing Prime Minister, Pakistan needs political stability to attract investment as an unstable environment discourages investment. Pakistan could attract investment of \$40 to \$50 billion in the coming years and it could make food exports to the gulf countries presently importing food products worth \$40 billion from else where; in addition, the government hopes that through these investments in agriculture there would also add to four million more jobs.

The Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir assured Pakistan Army's full cooperation in overseeing the new SIFC as well as other investment ventures. Hence, the major political upheaval in the country in the past few months has culminated in a soft coup in the country, where all facilities facilitating trade and investment will be overseen by the military, to ensure political stability in the country.

According to the Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadiq Malik, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates are taking keen interest in Pakistani information technology, agriculture and mining sectors. The Saudi government plans to provide 24 billion dollars for investment purposes, while UAE has reportedly allocated 22 billion dollars funds for exploring opportunities in three sectors of Pakistan. Similar information was shared by the Secretary, Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) Jameel Ahmed Qureshi while briefing the National Assembly Standing Committee on Board of Investment (BoI).

According to him, Saudi Arabia would like to invest in the mineral sector, while Qatar and UAE are interested in investing in agriculture. Chinese corporations are interested in investing in seed and other sectors.

In addition, a Green Initiative has been launched based on a Land Information and Management System, Center of Excellence ((LIMS-CoE) with joint ventures with multinational companies, to enhance modern agro-farming utilizing over nine million hectares of uncultivated state land. Saudi Arabia has provided an initial \$500 million investment to set up a high efficiency irrigation system. There is a belief that there will be an influx of investments from the Gulf countries.

It's also expected that a high-level Iranian delegation will be visiting shortly to discuss the possibility of exploring investment projects under a trilateral arrangement between Pakistan, China and Iran. Earlier this month, the Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir had also visited Iran.

It is clear that investment in Pakistan has come at a cost. Saudi Arabia, UAE and China have provided Pakistan with much needed dollars to meet IMF conditionalities. According to Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Pakistan received \$2 billion in financial support from Saudi Arabia, and \$1 billion from UAE, shortly before the IMF's board was expected to give final approval for a much needed \$3bn bailout to the Pakistani economy. Saudi Arabia has deposited the funds with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) boosting foreign exchange reserves, which stood at around \$9.7 billion. Similarly, China has rolled over \$2.4 billion in loans to Pakistan for two years that were up for repayment in FY 24 and FY 25. Under the nine-month arrangement, Pakistan will receive about \$1.1bn upfront and the IMF will stagger disbursements of the rest.

The government has announced that the annual inflation surpassed its budgetary target and remained at 29.18 per cent for 2022-23 owing to the unprecedented rupee depreciation, increase in domestic taxes and rising global commodity prices. There is no doubt that the resounding inflation is based on the escalating debt due to neo-colonial neo liberal policies. At the same time, the elite culture of impunity has led to extreme malfunction of all productive systems in the country. Lack of



accountability to the people is the base for the current diabolical situation. The impact on the people, especially the working class, the small and landless farmers, workers of all categories melding the urban poor is tragic. People are forced to pay utility bills, as if they are not paid supply is cut-off. Ultimately, it is only food and health needs that are neglected as there is no other recourse.

The active role of foreign donors in food and agriculture is quite apparent. Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) has announced launching of new projects with the technological assistance of Korea Programme on International Agriculture (KOPIA), South Korea to enhance production of various crops. It should be noted that the venture is not only for seeds but also include breed improvement through the implementation of efficient artificial insemination services, and dissemination of improved technology for fodder production. The attention on seed and livestock breeding are of major concern, as work on genetically modified organisms continues globally. Recently scientists have genetically engineered female fruit flies that can have offspring without needing a male, marking first time “virgin birth” induced in an animal. The offspring of the flies were also able to give birth without mating, showing that the trait could be passed down generations. Such irreversible biological intervention in biodiversity can end in extreme catastrophe not to mention exacerbating environmental pollution. Pakistan, with its high dependency on foreign donors will find itself being pressurized to accept investment measures that could result in environmental and food security disasters, that is already highly at risk through the country’s vulnerability to climate crisis.

Research on wheat seeds has resulted in the release of bio-fortified wheat varieties with higher zinc content. The expectation is that the wide-scale cultivation of these seeds on nearly 3.25 million hectares of land will help to mitigate malnutrition. The research has been assisted by funding support from various donors including USAID, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom and the Pakistan government. The stated context of these new trade liberalization ventures is to increase food and

agriculture input for domestic markets, and creating exportable surplus for the Gulf states and China. However, there is no guarantee that the food security of the masses will be looked after first. Currently, according to the World Food Programme, 37 percent of Pakistanis are food-insecure and one-fifth of them are facing a severe food crisis. The remedy proposed by the government is to launch the “National Multisectoral Nutrition to Reduce Stunting and other forms of Malnutrition” worth PKR 8.5 billion under the Pakistan Nutrition Initiatives (PANI). This multisectoral programme is for highly-burdened stunted, calamity-hit and less privileged districts, including 12 districts in Balochistan, 10 in Sindh, five in Gilgit-Baltistan, and two each in Punjab and Azad Kashmir. The context is to reduce stunting and other forms of malnutrition with a multisectoral approach. As part of the project, micronutrients and nutritional supplements, Ready-to-Use Therapeutic foods are to be provided to treat stunting and wasting.

Food fortification such projects are pushed by mostly G-7 countries such as the US, UK, Germany whose multinational corporations such as Nestle, Keloggs, and others hold a monopoly over such products, globally. This is indeed capitalist plunder using people’s misery, hunger and poverty to extract money. All this in face of an ever-increasing mountain of debt in the country.

The result of allowing the corporate world to dominate over food and agriculture is more than visible. According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition Report of the UN, world hunger stopped rising in 2022 after growing for seven years but remains above pre-pandemic levels and far off track to be eradicated by 2030, Between 691 million and 783m people faced hunger last year, and the proportion of people facing chronic hunger rose from 7.9 percent of the world population in 2019 — before the pandemic — to 9.2 percent in 2022. The report also states that about 2.4 billion people — three out of 10 people on the planet — suffered from moderate or severe food insecurity in 2022.

One of course one is left to ponder that if indeed malnutrition is a major concern of the governments, then why is equitable land distribution not

being considered which would go a long way in eliminating structural causes of inequality in society. At the same time, land is being freely allocated to the military for trade and investment measures. The government is fully prepared to advance modern corporate farming initiatives and facilitate the army's role in agriculture is clear from a judgement of a Lahore High Court division two-judge bench. It had been reported last month that a single judge bench had ruled against handing over 45,000 acres of land in three districts of Punjab to the army on a 20-year lease for Corporate Agriculture Farming (CAF) under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This judgement has been struck down, with a statement that the decision by the interim government of Punjab was beyond the mandate of both the caretakers and the military. A two-judge bench has suspended the single bench's decision and has issued notices to the respondents for a date to be fixed later by the office. So, though no steps are being taken by the state to initiate any form of land distribution among small and landless farmers in the country, corporate farming as well as induction of other actors in food and agriculture production is being promoted.

Stark anti-people, anti-farmer measures have been the base for overriding people's rights, and pushing them into an abyss of hunger and poverty. To make matters worse, there is acute state negligence in safeguarding public resources. It has been reported that over 7,000 wheat bags were found filled only with straws and loose earth at a government warehouse in Khairpur, Sindh.

Corporate sector has expressed interest in agriculture related industrial raw material of textile industry and agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) on different projects especially on quality production of cotton, banana fiber and banana powder. A delegation of the country's popular Al-Karam Textiles and other industrial enterprises visited Sindh Agriculture University and discussed issues of mutual interest. The SAU university is researching the quality seed of various cotton commodities, as well as on liquid and composite fertilizer technology from banana fiber and banana residues.

At the same time, the condition of agriculture land is also deteriorating – according to the Punjab State of Environment Report 2022, released by the Environment Protection Department (EPD) Punjab, about 6.3 million hectares of land in Pakistan is salt affected and over half of this lies in the Canal Command Area, with approximate annual loss of over \$2,326 million in the cotton-wheat, rice-wheat, and mixed cropping regions of Punjab. These statistics point to not only economic and health cost to society as a whole but also to the environmental impact on biodiversity and ecological systems. Further, industrial wastewater treatment plants in Punjab are not performing up to mark, resulting in pollution of aquatic ecosystems.

On one hand there is high level of water logging and salinity being reported, and on the other there is also acute water shortages being reported in Shahdadt, Warah, Nasirabad, Sujawal Junejo and in other parts across upper Sindh, with protests being held to demand release of allocated water share in these areas where the paddy crop is being impacted by not only water shortage but escalating inflation impacting seed and fuel prices.

While there seems to be no dearth of policies and strategies to modernize agriculture, there is also a commitment by the state not to impose new taxes on agriculture, construction and real estate sectors. This is indeed highly discriminatory as the common man, the salaried class have been lashed again and again by high prices, especially the constant increase in fuel prices which accelerates prices for essential commodities. A joint venture of Chinese and Pakistani engineering companies constructing Mohmand Dam has challenged imposition of advance taxes on them; while corporations are capable of challenging imposition of income tax on them, the masses are faced with high energy bills which they have no recourse but to pay or lose access to electricity and gas, increasing transport and housing cost and inadequate food intake.

The corporate world continues to fleece small farmers. An inquiry committee of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has found urea manufacturers guilty of price fixing and recommended proceedings

against urea manufacturers and Fertiliser Manufacturers of Pakistan Advisory Council (FMPAC). Similarly, ginners are refusing to buy cotton from farmers based on prices mandated by the government.

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) Pakistan's exports and imports have declined by 12.71 percent, and 31 percent, respectively from last year. There has been a decline in mango exports. According to the All Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA), the decrease in mango exports was a new SOP (standard operating procedure) requiring mandatory hot water treatment (HWT) of mangoes from approved plants only. This has resulted in closure of a vast majority of such plants, leading to further job loss among the plant workers.

With respect to seafood exports, Pakistan has achieved its highest mark of \$496 million – however, the gains are also a manifestation of the devaluation of Pakistan rupee. The US continues to ban shrimp export because of non-compliance with Turtle Excluder Device (TED) regulations. The ban has lasted six years and has negatively impacted on the seafood industry. Similarly, the EU also has a partial ban on seafood exports from Pakistan. It is interesting that with so much emphasis on trade liberalization, the country continues to face restrictions on its trading commodities by first world nations using technical barriers to trade for protecting their markets, and the local produce of their own producers.

The government has decided to hand over the bulk and general cargo terminal at Karachi Port's East Wharf to Abu Dhabi Ports through a government-to-government deal under the Inter-Governmental Commercial Transaction Act, 2022. It has been reported that the Karachi Port Trust has already handed over the control of container terminal to AD Ports of UAE for 50 years after negotiations for an upfront \$50 million price for existing fixed infrastructure and a \$102m investment in five years for infrastructure development, \$18m royalty and an annual rent of Rs1,100 per square metre — just Rs7 higher than for previous

operators of container terminal. According to news reports, these prices were fixed without any independent assessment.

Not only Karachi port, but the operations of Islamabad International Airport have also been outsourced. The Minister for Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique has informed the National Assembly that Islamabad International Airport would be outsourced for 15 years within three to four months. According to Mr Rafique outsourcing will have no impact on employees, and the navigational services and runway operations will not be outsourced, with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) continue providing its services. Islamabad outsourcing is said to be first, and Lahore and Karachi airports will be contracted, later. Further, the privatization of the national flag carrier – Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) is also on the books. It has been reported that the World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC) is acting as the Financial Advisor for airports outsourcing.

According to reports, UAE, Qatar, Turkey, China and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have expressed special interest in outsourcing of Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore airports. Sources claimed that Saudi Arabia's Bin Laden group is making efforts to take on airports outsourcing while Qatar government has shown more interest in taking over the cargo sector of the airports.

At the same time, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal has stated that Pakistan has great advantage in low cost of labor, an element which attracted investment in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. These statements were in context to the construction of Special Economic Zones under CPEC. According to the minister, Chinese companies intend to start business in Pakistan and had invested in the Gwadar Free Zone.

The government narrative on privatization schemes is that state-owned enterprises are 'bleeding the economy' while the Gulf countries are willing to invest in agriculture and modern machinery. The government officials of a government which are to leave office in just a matter of weeks have basically put our ports, airports and food security in bondage, while selling 'cheap labor' as an advantage. Though officials enjoy free

housing, electricity, transport, vehicle but have forced not only intense poverty, joblessness and hunger on the masses, but also leasing country's assets to meet a debt which was based on one hand neo-colonial principals and reforms on the other maintaining a corrupt elite power in the country. No doubt, these new developments do not speak well for the people's rights especially farmers rights as a number of draconian laws were passed in quick succession just before Interim government took over the running of the country.

The situation of the people, whether in urban or rural settings is deplorable. A marker could also be the Economist Intelligence Units (EIU) Global Livability Index 2023. EIU it has ranked Karachi 169th out of a total of 173 cities, among the top five 'least livable' urban centers in the world. The index focuses on the post-Covid recovery of cities across the world, and rates living conditions based on five categories — stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education, and infrastructure. Similar issues are reported for Lahore. According to a WHO report, air pollution much above stated limits have resulted in the loss of 5.3 and 4.8 years of life expectancy from 1998-2016 among populations of Lahore and Faisalabad cities respectively.

Pakistan is ranked third among the top 10 countries with the largest number of maternal deaths, neonatal mortality and stillbirths in 2020. The remedies provided by our government are quite abysmal; for instance, the government of Sindh has announced the issuance of free-of-cost health cards up to PKR 0.5 million for low-income people. It should be noted that the health and environment conditions of the Sindh, especially Karachi leads to oft-happening mishaps – the latest has been outbreak of gastroenteritis in Malir, Karachi. Water shortage, polluted water supply, as well as rising temperatures due to climate change exacerbate environmental and health issues.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has announced \$66 million in funding to support the government of Pakistan's efforts to reduce the twin climate impacts of flooding and drought. The seven-year project titled Recharge Pakistan: Building Pakistan's Resilience to Climate Change through

Ecosystem-Based Adaptation for Integrated Flood Risk Management is the largest investment at the national level to date in an ecosystem-based approach to flood and water resources management. The investment is meant to improve the ‘resilience’ of some of the country’s most vulnerable communities affected by climate change, including catastrophic flooding.

Quite interestingly, in addition to the GCF funding, the project is supported through a collective \$12 million investment and technical support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Coca-Cola Foundation and WWF-Pakistan.

Given that the partners include a notorious multinational corporation that is responsible for spreading plastic pollution, supported by the most imperialist G-7 state, the project can hardly be considered promising; the greed for profits and markets remain the ultimate aim of the corporate sector and cannot be trusted to yield any benefit to the people.

One needs to also look at the intense carbon footprint left by one of the biggest corporate sectors, the global shipping network. Both the maritime and aviation sector have remained out of the Paris Agreement in terms of cutting down carbon emissions. To make matters worse, militaries account for 5.5 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, and they are not bound by international climate agreements.

So, while the UN chief Antonio Guterres has stated “The era of global warming has ended; the era of global boiling has arrived,” the corporate sector and military might of imperialist countries continue to inflict havoc on the planet. This is much in evidence not only in Pakistan but across Asia, as well as Europe and other parts of the globe.

The people across the country have been protesting against the various atrocities faced by them through embedded structures of injustice and inequality, imposed by the dual character of a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society.



The high prices of energy, as well as inadequate services supplied through a very hard summer, made unbearable through the climate crisis, resulted in many protests across the nation, from Peshawar to Karachi. In Lyari, Karachi people's protest was met with police using tear gas and baton charge. The high inflation, rising prices and further infliction of taxes was another reason for people to take to the streets, including salaried working class who came with a banner "Save the Salaried Class." Protests were also held by cotton farmers who were not being paid their due as set by the government.

In Balochistan, the Balochistan National Party (BNP-Mengal) carried out a province-wide strike against the worsening law and order situation in particular areas of Khuzdar district. Another protest in Balochistan was organized by relatives of missing persons, and traffic remained suspended on N-25 highway between two cities Quetta and Karachi

A rally was organized by the Karachi Bachao Tehreek comprised thousands of demolition affectees (including women, children, the elderly and the disabled,) who had been forcibly evicted from their quarters next to various sewage lines. Their demands included immediate resettlement and rehabilitation.

Various group of government employees also protested in various parts of the country for either non-payment of their salaries or demanding increase in salaries.

It is clear that the impact of neoliberalism is being felt deeply by the people from various walks of life, of course the working class and peasantry bearing the deepest impact. As the abject neglect of the people rises, the flaunting of elite culture is playing out in mass riots and protests. The ultimate result of vastly exploitative and oppressive policies does not bode well for the people or the planet.

1 Hectare = 2.471 Acres

1 Acre = 4,840 Square Yards

1 Ton = 25 Mann = 1000 Kg

1 Mann = 40 Kg

## National News

### Agricultural Production Resources

- The government has put into gear a new strategy, backed by the army and financed by the food-deficit Gulf countries and China, to tackle critical issues of low agricultural productivity, food insecurity and food imports.
- The GIS-based initiative aims at enhancing modern agro-farming, and utilising 22m acres of uncultivated state land.
- The World Food Programme has said that 37pc of Pakistanis are food-insecure and one-fifth of them are facing a severe food crisis.
- The Bahawalpur bench of Lahore High Court has granted permission to allot Cholistan land to local applicants.
- A Lahore High Court division bench suspended an earlier decision by a single judge bench, which had ruled against handing over 45,000 acres of land in three districts of Punjab to the army on a 20-year lease for Corporate Agriculture Farming (CAF) under the CPEC.
- The two-judge bench suspended the single bench's decision and issued notices to the respondents for a date to be fixed later by the office.
- Punjab Board of Revenue (BoR) has accorded approval to a pilot project for conducting digital land survey under Punjab Urban Land System Enhancement (PULSE) programme in the districts of Lodhran and Hafizabad.
- 6.3 million hectares of land in Pakistan is salt affected and over half of this lies in the Canal Command Area.
- The economic impacts of such land degradation indicate an annual loss of over 2326 million USD in the cropping regions of Punjab.
- The soils in agricultural land irrigated with industrial wastewater contain significant levels of heavy metals that bio-accumulate in plants and travel in the food chain posing serious health threats to consumers.
- The performance efficiency of wastewater treatment facilities installed in various industrial sectors is very low, with 'very poor' performance for sugar and paper mills.
- The rise in seed prices together with rapid escalation of cost in fertilisers used in paddy fields and late arrival of water would have drastic consequences for overall rice production.
- The persistent water shortage triggered protests in Shahdadkot, Warah, Lahu Rounk, Nasirabad, Sujawal Junejo and other parts in upper Sindh.
- Pakistan has demanded 'scrupulous respect' for the Indus Waters Treaty and raised the issue at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

## **Agricultural Inputs**

- ECNEC approved Solarisation of Agriculture Tube-wells” in four provinces at a cost of Rs377.236 billion.
- PARC announced that it was launching three new projects with the technological assistance of South Korea to enhance production of various crops.
- The new initiatives include breed improvement through the implementation of efficient artificial insemination services, the dissemination of improved technology for fodder production.
- The government has committed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to sustainably raise additional revenue by targeting undertaxed sectors such as agriculture and construction, broaden the tax base, and improve progressively.
- In the Letter of Intent (LOI) submitted by the government to the IMF, the government has reiterated its commitment not to launch any new tax amnesties or grant further any new tax exemptions in 2023-24 including through the budget or statutory regulatory orders(SROs) without prior National Assembly approval.
- Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said the government had not imposed new taxes on agriculture, construction and real estate sectors.
- An inquiry committee of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) found urea manufacturers guilty of price fixing.
- A high level Iranian delegation led by Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian will visit next week to discuss bilateral issues including possibility of exploring investment projects under a trilateral arrangement between Pakistan, China and Iran. Iranian delegation is coming to Pakistan just days after the visit of Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir to Iran.
- CIMMYT says self-sufficiency in wheat production is now more attainable for Pakistan with the release of 31 wheat varieties since 2021, resulting from collaborative projects between Pakistani wheat breeding programmes and CIMMYT along with funding support from various donors USAID, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom and the Pakistan government.

## **Agricultural Output**

- Ginnerys have decided to suspend buying raw cotton from farmers across the country after district commissioners in the cotton belt, both in Sindh and Punjab, directed them to pay the growers not less than Rs8,500 per maund.
- Secretary Agriculture Punjab reiterated that the federal government has issued directives to the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) to immediately start purchasing cotton to ensure a price of Rs 8500 per maund to the growers.

## Trade

- Pakistan's trade deficit narrowed by 43.03 per cent to \$27.547 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23 (July-June).
- The country's exports during the fiscal year 2022-23 were recorded at \$27.744 billion declined by 12.71 per cent.
- The imports decreased by 31 per cent to \$55.291 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23.
- Pakistan's merchandise exports dipped by 12.71 per cent year-on-year to \$27.54 billion in 2022-23 from \$31.78bn in the preceding fiscal year.
- Imports fell 31pc to \$55.29bn in FY 23 from \$80.13bn in FY 22.
- Bilateral trade volume of Pakistan with China has crossed the psychological barrier of \$20 billion and stood at \$20.8 billion in FY 22.
- Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has expressed his satisfaction that FPCCI's years of relentless policy advocacy initiatives for the barter trade with Russia, Iran and Afghanistan has borne fruits. We have pitched barter trade, border markets and currency swap mechanisms very diligently in tens of top-level meetings with the concerned ministries and relevant governmental institutions over the past three-and-a-half years.
- Amid a 20 per cent drop in production, mango exporters have said achieving the export target of 125,000 tonnes has become a distant possibility due to the poor strategy of the Department of Plant Protection (DPP).
- Pakistan's exports to the Middle East dipped 12.28 per cent year-on-year to \$2.127 billion in the first 11 months of FY 23.
- Pakistan's exports of textiles and clothing contracted by 14.63 per cent year-on-year to \$16.50 billion during the outgoing FY 23 due to higher production costs.
- Pakistan's seafood export hits the highest mark of \$496 million in 2022-23 because of the rupee depreciation, despite over-fishing and global slowdown.
- The seafood export could be much higher if the US ban on shrimp trade did not exist.
- Pakistan's non-textile exports fell by 9.87 per cent to \$11.23 billion in outgoing FY 23 compared to \$12.46bn in the preceding year.
- The government will import 100,000 tons of Russian crude oil every month.

## International Aid / Loan

- The government has borrowed \$10.844 billion from multiple financing sources including \$2.206 billion from foreign commercial banks during the FY 22-23.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates are taking keen interest in Pakistani information technology, agriculture and mining sectors. KSA has planned to fix funds of 24 billion dollars for investment purposes, while UAE

allocated 22 billion dollars funds for exploring opportunities in three sectors of Pakistan.

- Pakistan has received \$2b in financial support from KSA, a day before the IMF's board is expected to give final approval for a much needed \$3bn bailout.
- Pakistan received a much-needed inflow of \$1 billion from the United Arab Emirates, hours before the formal approval of the \$3 billion nine-month Stand-By Arrangement by the executive board of the International Monetary Fund.
- A lot of investment proposals have come from Arab countries. Saudi Arabia is looking to invest in minerals. Qatar and UAE are interested in investing in agriculture whereas Chinese companies are also looking to invest in Pakistan in other sectors including seeds.
- Special Economic Zones (SEZs) will facilitate Chinese investment in Pakistan. The launch of other economic zones is at the advanced stages in Sindh, Punjab, and Balochistan. Pakistan has a great advantage in low cost of labour.
- China has rolled over \$2.4 billion in loans to Pakistan for two years that were up for repayment in FY 24 and FY 25.

## **International Financial Institutions (IFIs)**

- To date, the ADB has committed 740 public sector loans, grants, and technical assistance totaling \$39.7 billion to Pakistan. Cumulative loan and grant disbursements to Pakistan amount to \$30.76 billion.

## **Policy**

- Ecnec continued approving seven more projects worth Rs446 billion and revised another Rs377bn worth of solarisation project for countrywide tube wells. Last week too, Ecnec approved six projects with an estimated cost of Rs1.077 trillion.
- Private sector has expressed interest in agriculture related industrial raw material of textile industry and agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) on different projects especially on quality production of cotton, banana fiber and Banana powder.
- Islamabad International Airport would be outsourced for 15 years within three to four months, and it would have no impact on its employees, once it's done, Lahore and Karachi airports will be outsourced.
- Green Pakistan Initiative aimed at enhancing food security of Pakistan, and increase exports and reduce the agriculture- related imports.
- Green Pakistan Initiative would bring about the second agriculture revolution in the country and would create four million jobs.

## **Environment**

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has ranked Pakistan's largest city among the top five 'least livable' urban centres in the world.

- The Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori announced the issuance of free-of-cost health cards to the people with low income.
- Pakistan ranked third among the top 10 countries with the largest number of maternal deaths, neonatal mortality and stillbirths in 2020.
- While international bodies consider a certain amount of daily use of artificial sweetener aspartame as safe, health experts called for discouraging use of all kinds of sugar substitutes.
- Amid government efforts to control the outbreak of gastroenteritis in a Malir village, the number of patients affected by the illness rose to over 300. The health department had earlier stated that 259 people had reported complaints of acute watery diarrhoea at health facilities from Sheedi Goth since June 28.

## **Socio-Economical Condition**

- The domestic debt of the central government rose to Rs37.054tr in May from Rs31.085tr, showing an increase of 19.2 per cent or Rs5.969tr.
- The external debt increased by Rs5.161tr to Rs21.908tr during the 11 months.
- The central government's total debt increased by Rs11.13tr or 23.3pc to Rs58.962tr during the 11 months of FY 23.
- Wheat production in Sindh missed its target by 100,000 tonnes. The procurement target was missed by 0.5 million tonnes in 2022-23.
- As per the National Nutrition Survey (NNS) of 2018, nearly 37 per cent of households are food insecure, 40.2pc of children under the age of five suffer from stunted growth, 29pc are underweight, and 18pc are wasted, and The NNS confirms that 49.1pc of children in the country are iron deficient.
- Over 7,000 wheat bags were found filled only with straws and loose earth at a government godown.
- Millers and Punjab Food Department blame each other for the increase in prices of wheat and its products. Pakistan Flour Mills Association Chairman Asim Raza claims that the ban on storing more than 200 maunds of wheat has led to Rs75 per 40kg further hike in wheat price as its rate in the open market has reached Rs4,725 per 40kg, while the rate of 20kg flour bag has touched the mark of Rs2,800 per bag.
- Pakistan has ranked 99th out of the 121 countries with sufficient data to calculate 2022 GHI scores.
- The government announced that the annual inflation surpassed its budgetary target and remained at 29.18 per cent for 2022-23.
- Consumer inflation was recorded at 29.4pc in June, easing from the unprecedented 38pc in May.
- Inflation had stayed above 20pc from June last year to January. It then hit 31.6pc in February, crossed 35pc in March, escalated to 36.4pc in April and 37.97pc in May now eased to 29.4pc in June.

- High fuel prices have increased production and transportation costs, making food more expensive. The costly fertiliser has also made it difficult for farmers to afford essential inputs. The poultry industry is facing a crisis due to high import costs and restrictions on soybean imports.
- According to a statement, SCCI acting president said that business community had pinned high hopes about economic improvement and stability in the currency rates on a staff level agreement between the government of Pakistan and IMF. However, there was no improvement and stability in the national economy even after getting loan from IMF.

## **Climate Change**

- Over the past 30 years (1975–2005), the minimum temperature of Punjab has increased by 0.97°C and the maximum temperature by 1.14°C, putting it on the list of most vulnerable regions to climate change.
- WHO reports that the exceeding levels of air pollution have resulted in the loss of 5.3 and 4.8 years of life expectancy from 1998-2016 among populations of Lahore and Faisalabad cities respectively.
- The temperature has increased by 2-4 degree Celsius in the plains of the province and 2-6 degree Celsius in its northern areas.
- When it came to climate change, Pakistan was the fourth or fifth high-risk country but authorities were doing nothing to check massive deforestation.
- The mountains were facing real risk as glaciers were melting faster than average, probably beyond 300 per cent.
- The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has announced \$66 million in funding to support the government of Pakistan's efforts to reduce the twin climate impacts of flooding and drought.
- The project is supported through a collective \$12 million investment and technical support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Coca-Cola Foundation and WWF-Pakistan.

## **Climate Disasters**

- Pakistan and Switzerland signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at preventing natural disasters and improving response to them in Pakistan.
- Hundreds of villages in various areas of the province were submerged under water due to the low to medium floods in the Ravi, Sutlej, and Indus rivers.
- More than 14,000 people and their cattle were evacuated from villages in eastern Pakistan.
- The NDMA has warned of about urban flooding and landslides as torrential rains coupled with severe weather conditions have wreaked havoc across several parts of the country, resulting in the loss of at least 168 lives, injuring 254, killing 374 livestock and damaging 1,270 houses.

## **Resistance**

- Hundreds of people from the outskirts of the provincial capital stormed a grid station and shut down feeders complaining about prolonged power suspension amid hot and humid weather.
- Residents of Lyari staged a violent protest against prolonged loadshedding in their area and blocked both tracks of Mauripur Road, stopping vehicular traffic and forcing police to fire tear gas shells and baton charge the protesters.
- Sindh United Party (SUP) activists, along with members of several other nationalist groups and cotton growers organised a rally from State Life Building to the DC Office over government's inaction with regard to the implementation of its notification fixing the cotton procurement rate at Rs8,500 per 40kgs.
- The Ghar Bahali Rally organised by the Karachi Bachao Tehreek comprised thousands of affectees, including women, children, the elderly and the disabled, all demanding immediate resettlement and rehabilitation.
- Traffic between Quetta and Karachi remained suspended for several hours after the relatives of a missing person blocked the N-25 highway.
- Youth and civil society activists demanded an end to the 'ruthless' cutting of precious trees in Dukat village of Kabal tehsil.
- Women of Junglekhel blocked the old Indus highway against the electricity loadshedding of 18 hours and 11 hours of gas suspension, raising slogans against the Peshawar Electric Supply Company and the SNGPL.
- The Climate March 2023, which saw a large number of individuals, communities and organisations walking from Frere Hall to the Karachi Press Club, was all about committed people joining forces to amplify their message and bring attention to the urgent need for doing something for climate change and environmental preservation.
- The Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority employees staged a protest by putting on black armbands at several airports against the government's decision to outsource the operations and land assets of three significant airports.
- Enraged protesters wielding sticks raised slogans against the power utility outside the main entrance to the Hesco office, which was closed during the protest. The protesters demanded restoration of power supply and immediate repair of faulty transformers.

## **International News**

### **Agricultural Production Resources**

- Global agricultural and food production are projected to continue to increase over the next 10 years, but at a slower pace of growth than the previous decade due to demographic trends.



## **Trade**

- India has signed an agreement with the United Arab Emirates that will allow it to settle trade in rupees instead of dollars.

## **Policy**

- Scientists said they have genetically engineered female fruit flies that can have offspring without needing a male.

## **Environment**

- Currently shipping belches out roughly the same level of greenhouse gases as aviation. Shipping, around two per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, is judged to be off course in the fight against climate change.

## **Socio-Economical Condition**

- Global public debt surged to a record \$92 trillion in 2022.
- Domestic and external debt worldwide has increased more than five times in the last two decades.
- Developing countries owe almost 30 per cent of the global public debt, of which 70pc is represented by China, India and Brazil.
- In Africa, the amount spent on interest payments is higher than spending on either education or health.
- 3.3 billion people living in countries that spend more on debt interest payments than on health or education.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin told African leaders he would gift them tens of thousands of tonnes of grain within months despite Western sanctions.
- Between 691 million and 783m people faced hunger last year.
- The proportion of people facing chronic hunger rose from 7.9 per cent of the world population in 2019 — before the pandemic — to 9.2pc in 2022.
- Some 2.4 billion people — three out of 10 people on the planet — suffered from moderate or severe food insecurity in 2022.
- UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said, “Global food systems are broken — and billions of people are paying the price”.
- Nearly one-third of the world’s food is wasted or lost.
- For 2017-22, 21.5 percent population in Pakistan is in severe multidimensional poverty, while 12.9pc is vulnerable to multidimensional poverty.
- 1.1 billion out of 6.1bn people (just over 18pc) live in acute multidimensional poverty across 110 countries.
- 75 million people will have fallen into extreme poverty, defined as living on less than \$2.15 a day, between 2020 and the end of 2023 — and 90 million more will fall below the poverty line of \$3.65 a day.

- The poorest suffer the most and their incomes in 2023 are projected to remain below pre-pandemic levels.
- 3.3 billion people, nearly half of humanity, live in countries that spend more on paying interest on debt than on education and health.
- World Bank said that growing divides between rich and poor nations risked deepening poverty in the developing world.

## Climate Change

- Militaries account for 5.5 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, but defence forces are not bound by international climate agreements to report or cut their carbon emissions.
- People are increasingly turning to courts to combat the crisis.
- 2,180 climate-related cases have been filed in a year — reflecting a steady increase from 884 cases in 2017 and from 1,550 cases in 2020.
- Environment ministers from G20 nations failed to agree on peaking global emissions by 2025 and other crucial issues to address the global climate crisis.
- The target of keeping long-term global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius is moving out of reach.
- Global average sea surface temperatures hit 21°C in late March.
- Last month was the hottest June on record in Britain.
- Temperatures reached June records across northwest Europe while parts of Canada, the United States, Mexico, Asia and eastern Australia “were significantly warmer than normal”. On the other hand it was cooler than normal in western Australia, the western United States and western Russia.
- Over past 20 years huge swathes of the world’s oceans have changed colour.
- “The era of global warming has ended; the era of global boiling has arrived,” UN chief Antonio Guterres told.
- This month’s mean global temperature is projected to be at least 0.2C (0.4F) warmer than July 2019, the former hottest in the 174-year observational record.

## Climate Disaster

- The projected scenario of 2-degree warming indicates annual losses of nearly \$1 trillion or three per cent of regional GDP in disaster-related deaths and economic impacts.
- The share of people exposed to multi-hazard risk is forecast to increase to 85pc of the region’s population under 1.5°C warming and 87pc under 2°C warming.
- 61,000 people may have died in Europe’s sweltering heatwaves last summer.

More than **20 protest** were recorded across country on various issues including Energy shortages & inflated bills, inflation, employment, privatization and corruption among others.

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### USD Exchange Rate List

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>USD</b>	<b>PKR ≈</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> July	Saturday	1	287
3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Monday	1	286
10 <sup>th</sup> July	Monday	1	280
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Monday	1	280
24 <sup>th</sup> July	Monday	1	288
31 <sup>st</sup> July	Monday	1	287

# **1 #AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES**

## **Food concerns**

The government has put into gear a new strategy, backed by the army and financed by the food-deficit Gulf countries and China, to tackle critical issues of low agricultural productivity, food insecurity and food imports. The Land Information and Management System–Centre of Excellence will focus on transforming how farming is done in Pakistan with a view to optimising agricultural output for improving domestic food security and creating exportable surplus for the Gulf states and China. It is being financed by Saudi assistance of \$500m. The GIS-based initiative aims at enhancing modern agro-farming, and utilising 22m acres of uncultivated state land. The government is expecting huge investments in agriculture from the Gulf and China under LIMS. It is perhaps the first multipronged strategy designed to simultaneously target urgent challenges related to agriculture: growing food insecurity, a surging food and agricultural import bill and diminishing export surplus. With food insecurity rising in the country — the World Food Programme has said that 37pc of Pakistanis are food-insecure and one-fifth of them are facing a severe food crisis — it is imperative for policymakers to quickly design strategies to deal with long-standing, deeper structural issues such as climate impact, soil erosion, land fragmentation, lower crop yields, etc. All these are pulling down Pakistan’s important agriculture sector.

This becomes even more critical as the population is projected to grow to 367.8m by 2050. The surging population has already put unbearable pressure on the food system, and food insecurity in the country is billed to worsen in the coming years unless remedial steps are taken now. With the country’s agriculture sector characterised mostly by smallholder farmers, the rise in the demand for food has to be met either through an increase in yield or expansion in cultivable cropland. Pakistan needs to work on both as climate change, resulting in droughts, floods, uncertain weather patterns, etc, is likely to increase the already considerable stress on the food supply system. There is no doubt that the government needs to encourage the utilisation of uncultivated state land to boost crop output. Besides investing in swathes of wasteland to make them cultivable, it must also put a stop to the encroachment of agricultural lands by sprawling housing schemes. (Dawn Editorial, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 6)

## **1.1 #Land**

### **Court allows allotment of land to locals in Cholistan**

The Bahawalpur bench of Lahore High Court has granted permission to allot Cholistan land to local applicants. According to petitioners hailing from the desert, the process of the allotment of land in Cholistan had been delayed since 2014 when the former Punjab chief minister Mian Shehbaz, under the Cholistan package, announced to allot them land in the desert. They maintained that due to complicated procedure, land in question

could not be allotted to them. A CDA official submitted in the court the scrutiny process of thousands of applications was going on. (Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

### **LHC suspends order to stop Punjab land transfer to army**

A Lahore High Court division bench suspended an earlier decision by a single judge bench, which had ruled against handing over 45,000 acres of land in three districts of Punjab to the army on a 20-year lease for Corporate Agriculture Farming (CAF) under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). On June 21, Justice Abid Hussain Chattha had struck down the land lease decision by the interim government of Punjab, saying that the agreement was beyond the mandate of both the caretakers and the military. The two-judge bench suspended the single bench's decision and issued notices to the respondents for a date to be fixed later by the office. The army wanted ownership of land in Bhakkar, Khushab and Sahiwal for the purpose of corporate agriculture farming under the CPEC. (Dawn, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

### **Bilawal gives land rights to 5,000 flood-hit families**

In the first phase of a project to give ownership rights of residential units to flood victims of Sindh, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari distributed title deeds among 5,000 families whose houses had been damaged during the last year's unprecedented rains and flooding, the distribution ceremony held in the flood-affected village of Larkana district. (Dawn, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

### **Land record to be digitised in Lodhran, Hafizabad**

Punjab Board of Revenue (BoR) has accorded approval to a pilot project for conducting digital land survey under Punjab Urban Land System Enhancement (PULSE) programme in the districts of Lodhran and Hafizabad. (Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### **Human activities degrade 46pc soil quality in Punjab: Report**

More than half (56 percent) of the geographic area of Punjab is currently under cultivation. Human activities like disposal of solid waste, sewage and industrial discharges, leachate contamination from landfills sites, deposition of air pollutants in soil and unsustainable agricultural practices have greatly degraded the soil quality.

Punjab State of Environment Report 2022, recently released by the Environment Protection Department (EPD) Punjab, says about 6.3 million hectares of land in Pakistan is salt affected and over half of this lies in the Canal Command Area. Secondary salinization in Punjab is mostly due to seepage of water through unlined canals in the Indus plains causing a rise in the water table thus resulting in waterlogged conditions and salinity. High salt concentration in irrigation water, accumulation of salt due to faulty irrigation practices, and poor soil drainage are also among the main causes of

secondary salinity in Punjab. The salts brought in by the rivers and their tributaries are estimated at 23 million tons (Mt) annually.

The economic impacts of such land degradation indicate an annual loss of over 2326 million USD in the cotton-wheat, rice-wheat, and mixed cropping regions of Punjab. The Forest Department, Government of Punjab, manages over six million rangelands. The rangelands are mostly located in Potohar, Thal and Cholistan regions. About 0.4 million farmers/grazers live in the vicinity of these rangelands are directly benefited by grazing about 1.2 million animals, the report said and added, overgrazing causes desertification of land due to loss of vegetation cover, trampling and soil compaction, so these Rangelands are managed on a rotational basis.

The discharge of untreated wastewater and sewage disposal is leading to heavy metal contamination in soils. The soils in agricultural land irrigated with industrial wastewater contain significant levels of heavy metals that bio-accumulate in plants and travel in the food chain posing serious health threats to consumers. Although the average value of heavy metals such as Chromium, Copper, Lead and Nickel in soils was within permissible limits, however, the transfer of these metals from soil to plants is significant due to biological magnification.

The fertility status of all soil types is rated as 'good' based on the presence of essential micronutrients. The establishment of a continuous soil quality monitoring and reporting system, lining of the canals to prevent water seepage, research for the development of salt-tolerant varieties and policy development and investment in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices are required for maintaining soil quality.

There are 392 industrial wastewater treatment plants in Punjab comprising primary (206), secondary (180), and tertiary (6) treatment facilities. The limited industrial wastewater treatment facilities are not only deteriorating aquatic ecosystems but also hampering trade opportunities with many countries. Meeting international standards of trade requires effective environmental management by the industrial units, such as optimizing resource utilization and treating waste before its discharge from the industry.

Moreover, the performance efficiency of wastewater treatment facilities installed in various industrial sectors is very low, with 'very poor' performance for sugar and paper mills. Whereas, performance is 'poor' for leather and tanning, power looms, foods, oil, fats and ghee, and animal feed industries. (Business Recorder, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

## **1.2 # Water**

### **Firms constructing dam move high court against FBR tax notices**

A joint venture of Chinese and Pakistani engineering companies constructing Mohmand Dam has challenged in Peshawar High Court on multiple grounds the imposition of

advance income tax on it by Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). M/S CGGC (China Gezhouba Group Company)-DESCON Engineering Joint Venture has filed a petition in the high court, requesting it to declare as illegal the issuance of income tax notice to it. (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Use of raw sewage for vegetable cultivation continues in city despite court orders**

While the Sindh High Court has given strict directives against cultivation of vegetables using sewage, a report of the Sindh Food Authority (SFA) has revealed that the exercise is still being carried out on the outskirts of the metropolis, it emerged. The SHC had time and again issued clear directives to authorities to take action against use of wastewater for vegetable cultivation particularly on the Malir river bed. The use of untreated sewage in the cultivation of vegetables is causing a number of diseases, including hepatitis and cancer. Wastewater should not be used for vegetable production because these chemicals are absorbed by the vegetables along with the water, and this affects health. Apart from inspecting regular food outlets, production facilities and eateries, teams of the SFA went a step further and `in the first phase` identified some 500 acres within Karachi division, where cultivation of mostly edible agriculture produce were under way by using untreated sewage. (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

### **Growers fear water issues may undermine paddy cultivation in Sindh**

Representatives of growers' organisations have expressed fear that release of smaller volume of water, much less than the sanctioned amount, and its late arrival in canals irrigating rice belt in upper Sindh will cast negative impact on paddy production. Paddy was cultivated on 90 per cent of land on the right bank of Indus River. Rice Canal, Dadu Canal, Warah Canal and Khirthar Canal were the main irrigation arteries which irrigated the vast paddy fields of different varieties on 2,200,000 acres, which also included Badin and other districts of lower Sindh. The rise in seed prices together with rapid escalation of cost in fertilisers used in paddy fields and late arrival of water would have drastic consequences for overall rice production. The persistent water shortage triggered protests in Shahdadkot, Warah, Lalu Rounk, Nasirabad, Sujawal Junejo and other parts in upper Sindh. The growers' leaders demanded the government ensure timely release of water into the canals irrigating the rice belt to encourage farmers to cultivate paddy and the varieties. (Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

### **Punjab PDMA issues alert as more water released in Sutlej**

Riverine areas in Punjab continue to face the threat of rising water levels in rivers as the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) issued a "high alert" after India released more water into the Sutlej river. Water from the Chenab river entered low-lying areas near Chiniot and damaged crops and farmhouses. A medium-level flood of 162,000 cusecs of water entered the limits of Chiniot and inundated crops at thousands of acres of land in dozens of low-lying villages. (Dawn, July 12, 2023 Page 1)

## **Pakistan demands respect for Indus Waters Treaty**

Pakistan has demanded `scrupulous respect` for the Indus Waters Treaty, which supports the world`s largest irrigation system and is vital for the national economy. Pakistan raised the issue at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), held at the UN headquarters in New York. On Jan 25, India sent a notice to Pakistan demanding the modification of the Indus Waters Treaty. Pakistan has so far refused to engage. The World Bank, which is affiliated with the UN system, arbitrates water disputes between the two countries. The treaty, which India, Pakistan, and the World Bank originally signed in 1960, allocates rights over the waters of several rivers in the Indus Basin to both states. (Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **Growers` body demands water for withering paddy fields**

Protesting against the shortage of irrigation water and its diversion in contravention of the Water Apportionment Accord-1991, the Sindh Abadgar Board (SAB`s) leaders of Qambar-Shahdadkot demanded releasing the judicious share of water into Ratodero, Shahdadkot and Saifullah Magsi branches (channels) irrigating paddy fields in the district. (Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

## **CM promises more funds to fix Leh Nullah**

Punjab Caretaker CM said that the provincial government would spend more money to avert flooding in Leh Nullah. At least Rs120 million were spent on its dredging in addition to 11 other drains in the garrison city. (Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

## **2 #AGRICULTURAL INPUTS**

### **2.1 #Agricultural Loan & Finance**

## **ECNEC approves Rs377bn agri tube-well solarisation plan**

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), approved, “Prime Minister`s National Programme for Solarisation of Agriculture Tube-wells” in four provinces at a cost of Rs377.236 billion with a gestation period of three years. The ECNEC also considered and approved a project of the government of KPK titled, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Rural Investment and Industrial Support Project (RIISP) to be executed by the provincial government at a cost of Rs110,700 million including IDA loan of USD 300 million from World Bank and government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa share of Rs29,700 million (in kind). The project will be completed in two phases, i.e., Phase-I in six years (2023-2029) and Phase-II also in six years. The ECNEC further considered and approved a project of the Ministry of Energy (Power Division) titled, “Evacuation of Power from 800-MW Mohmand Dam HPP to the National Grid (PC-I)” at a rationalised cost of Rs14,319.18 million including FEC of Rs6,318.38 million. (Business Recorder, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **2.2 # Agricultural Machinery**

### **PARC to launch three projects with Korean assistance**

The Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) announced that it was launching three new projects with the technological assistance of South Korea to enhance production of various crops. The new initiatives include breed improvement through the implementation of efficient artificial insemination services, the dissemination of improved technology for fodder production and the enhancement of chilli export technologies through the production of high quality chillies.

Korea Program on International Agriculture, Kopia-Pakistan Centre Director Dr Cho Gyoungrae announced that the Pakistan-Korea Joint Programme on Certified Seed Potato Production System was set to yield an impressive production of 160,000 tons of certified seed potato, and expressed a firm commitment to extend cooperation in the livestock sector, ensuring its continued growth and development. These initiatives, focusing on the development of technologies for seed potato, chillies and fodder crop production, are being implemented through the joint efforts of the PARC and KOPIA. (Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

## **2.3 # Agricultural Taxes**

### **Govt committed to targeting agri and construction sectors**

The government has committed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to sustainably raise additional revenue by targeting undertaxed sectors such as agriculture and construction, broaden the tax base, and improve progressively. In the Letter of Intent (LOI) submitted by the government to the IMF, the government has reiterated its commitment not to launch any new tax amnesties or grant further any new tax exemptions in 2023-24 including through the budget or statutory regulatory orders (SROs) without prior National Assembly approval.

According to the IMF report, titled, “Country Report, Request For A Stand-By Arrangement”, the IMF has projected Rs9,415 billion as tax collection target for the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for 2023-24. Out of this, direct taxes target has been set at Rs3,884 billion; sales tax Rs3,607 billion; customs duty Rs1,324 billion, and the target of federal excise duty (FED) has been projected at Rs600 billion for 2023-24. (Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **No new taxes on agriculture, real estate, Dar tells NA**

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said the government had not imposed new taxes on agriculture, construction and real estate sectors and would not do so in future as well in the wake of a \$3 billion loan deal signed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) last month. (Dawn, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)



## **2.4 # Fertilizer**

### **Inquiry finds urea makers guilty of price fixing**

An inquiry committee of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) found urea manufacturers guilty of price fixing. The committee recommended to the CCP initiate proceedings against urea manufacturers and the Fertilisers Manufacturers of Pakistan Advisory Council (FMPAC) by announcing the maximum retail price of urea at Rs1,768 per 50 kg bag. (Dawn, July 12, 2023 Page 9)

### **Growers` body slams blackmarketing of urea fertiliser**

Condemning black market in urea fertiliser, the Sindh Chamber of Agriculture (SCA) senior vice president has urged the prime minister and federal minister for industries and production to take action against those involved in that activity. He also appealed to the army chief to order inquiry into affairs of the main manufacturing companies of urea involved in that illegal act. By the end of June when they started cultivating rice in non-perennial area, price of urea fertiliser went skyrocketing. He said that a bag of urea was being sold for Rs4,000 instead of Rs3,100, when matter was brought to the notice of the agriculture department, it didn't take any action against dealers. He demanded investigation into it and hoped that enquiry would be held to fix responsibility. He said if the exploiters were given a free hand, they would not only destroy crops, but also deprive Pakistan of billions of rupees. (Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

### **Joint investment in fertilizer production under study**

A high level Iranian delegation led by Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian will visit next week to discuss bilateral issues including possibility of exploring investment projects under a trilateral arrangement between Pakistan, China and Iran. Iranian delegation is coming to Pakistan just days after the visit of Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir to Iran. Both countries are also negotiating proposals for joint investment in fertilizer production. The understanding was reached between Islamabad and Tehran last month during a visit of a four-member Iranian delegation from the Organisation of Investment, Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran (OIETAI). Last month, Pakistan approved bilateral trade with three countries including Iran. (Business Recorder, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

## **2.5 # Pesticide**

### **Pesticide importers lodge complaint over delay in release of consignments**

Pesticide importers from Balochistan have lodged a complaint with the Ministry of Food Security and Research (MFS&R) against an attached department of the ministry for not releasing their consignments despite court orders. The importers have alleged that the Department of Plant Protection (DPP) were harassing them and deliberately delaying

release of their consignments. It said the importers were facing significant financial losses in terms of demurrage and detention charges at the port amounting to approximately Rs3 million. (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

## **2.6 # Seed**

### **Pakistan can be self-sufficient in wheat, says agency**

The International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) says self-sufficiency in wheat production is now more attainable for Pakistan with the release of 31 wheat varieties since 2021 which will help the country's 9 million hectares of cultivated wheat fields become more productive, climate resilient and disease resistant. The varieties, a selection of 30 bread wheat and one durum wheat, 26 of which developed from wheat germ-plasm provided by the Mexico-based International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) were selected after rigorous testing of international nurseries and field trials by partners across Pakistan.

During this period, three bread wheat varieties were also developed from local breeding programmes and two varieties (one each of durum and bread wheat) were also developed from the germ-plasm provided by the Beirut-based research institute International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA). These efforts are moving Pakistan closer to its goal of improving food and nutrition security through wheat production, as outlined in the Pakistan 'Vision 2025' and 'Vision for Agriculture 2030'. Releasing a new variety is only the first step in changing the course of Pakistan's wheat crop. The next step is delivering these new, quality seeds to markets quickly so farmers can realise the benefits as soon as possible. Over multiple years and locations, the new varieties have exhibited a yield potential of 5 to 20 per cent higher than current popular varieties for their respective regions and also feature excellent grain quality and attainable yields of over seven tons per hectare. The new crop of the varieties exhibits impressive resistance to leaf and yellow rusts, compatibility with wheat-rice and wheat-cotton farming systems, and resilience to stressors such as drought and heat.

Malnutrition is rampant in Pakistan and the release of bio-fortified wheat varieties with higher zinc content will help mitigate its deleterious effects, especially among children and women. 'Akbar-2019', a bio-fortified variety released in 2019, is now cultivated on nearly 3.25 million hectares. Farmers like 'Akbar-2019' because of its 8 to 10 per cent higher yields, rust resistance, and consumers report its good chapati (an unleavened flatbread) quality. "It is gratifying seeing these new varieties resulting from collaborative projects between Pakistani wheat breeding programmes and CIMMYT along with funding support from various donors (USAID, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom and the Pakistan government," said Ravi Singh, wheat expert and senior adviser at CIMMYT headquartered in Mexico. (Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT**

### **3.1 # Cash Crop**

#### **Ginners suspend raw cotton buying**

Ginners have decided to suspend buying raw cotton from farmers across the country after district commissioners in the cotton belt, both in Sindh and Punjab, directed them to pay the growers not less than Rs8,500 per maund. Provincial governments of Sindh and Punjab through the district administrations had asked the ginning factories to pay at least Rs8,500 per maund, the minimum support price fixed by the federal government, to the cotton growers or face closure of their mills.

Manzoor Wassan, the adviser to the Sindh chief minister on agriculture, was quoted as saying that the action was initiated after receiving complaints from growers in Sanghar, Mirpur Khas, Nawabshah, Khairpur and other districts that they were being paid only Rs6,500 against the official price of Rs8,500 per maund. Similar reports were received from Vehari, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalnagar and other cotton-growing districts in Punjab.

The ginners said that it was the government that was to ensure the payment of Rs8,500 cotton intervention price by introducing the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) as the second player in the market and not the private sector. Inviting the growers to join them in their struggle against the government, Mr Waheed said in a statement that half of the ginning factories had closed their business because of higher tax rates with the minimum facilities. (Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

#### **TCP directed to immediately start purchasing cotton**

Secretary Agriculture Punjab Iftikhar Ali Sahoo reiterated that the federal government has issued directives to the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) to immediately start purchasing cotton to ensure a price of Rs 8500 per maund to the growers. While legal action is also being taken against those involved in this heinous crime. Secretary of Agriculture directed to accelerate of the campaign against fake pesticides and registering cases against those involved in this business under the MPO act.

The meeting was also informed that 28 ginning factories were working in the Multan division and picking of early sown cotton is underway. The Secretary directed all the ginning factories to make a daily report of the arrival of cotton in their factories, stock position and quality of the crop. DG Agriculture (Pest Warning) Punjab Rana Faqeer Ahmad said that the overall health of the cotton crop in Multan Division was good but an attack of white fly had been witnessed in Khanewal, Mian Channu and Vehari while Thrips attack had been observed in Lodhran. However, this attack was still below the economic threshold, he added. (Business Recorder, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

## **Statistics reveal cotton boom this year**

For the first time in the country's history, collective cotton production statistics have been released in the month of July instead of September with a record cotton yield expected this year in the country. According to the data released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA), as of July 15, a total of 858,000 bales have reached ginning factories across the country. Out of them, 659,134 bales arrived in Sindh and 198,873 in Punjab's ginning factories. The PCGA report indicates that textile mills have purchased 691,731 bales as of July 15, 1,000 bales have been exported and 165,276 saleable bales are available with the factories.

The national cotton production target this year has been set at 12.70 million bales (170kg each). And if favourable weather conditions sustain, Pakistan's total cotton production could exceed 10 million bales for the first time in nearly 12 years. It should be noted that last year, Pakistan's total cotton production was at its lowest in history, with just 4.9m bales produced. (Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

## **Govt urged to fix cotton support price early**

Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on National Food Security and Research Syed Muzaffar Hussain Shah has expressed deep concern over the delay on part of the government to announce the minimum support price for the cotton production this year. The meeting of the committee held earlier this week has already recommended fixing of minimum support price at Rs8,500 per 40kg. The economic coordination committee of the cabinet is mandated to fix the support price. The committee expressed concern over the non-payment of salaries to the staff of Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC), and sought a report from the ministry for non-recovery of cotton cess from textile mills. The chairman asked the government to expedite the collection of cotton cess and arrange payment of salaries to the staff. (Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

# **4 #NON-AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

## **4.1 # Fisheries**

### **10 fishermen languishing in Indian jails for six years reunite with families in Karachi**

As many as 10 Pakistani fishermen, who were languishing in Indian jails for some six years, were reunited with their families. They were handed over to Pakistani authorities at the Wagah Border in Lahore by India on July 16. Thereafter they were kept in quarantine for a few days to make sure they were healthy. According to the Fishermen Cooperative Society (FCS), there are still 89 Pakistani fishermen locked up in Indian jails. It was also pointed out that while Pakistan has recently released 400 Indian fishermen, India on their part have only released 19. (Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

## 4.2 # Livestock

### **Poisonous fodder claims lives of 17 cows**

Up to 17 cows belonging to a herd of more than 60 cows died after consuming poisonous fodder, herb called buroo. (Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

### **Over 70 goats perish after drinking 'poisonous' water**

As many as 70 goats died after drinking poisonous water at a watercourse near Bachal Leghari village in Digri taluka. Shepherds told that their goats started collapsing one after the other after drinking from the watercourse and 70 of them died within minutes before they could do something to save them. They suspected the water was poisonous and someone must have mixed some toxic substance into it.

They said that they were completely ruined as the goats were owned by villagers and they were too poor to make up their loss. They demanded the district administration order an inquiry into the incident, nab the person responsible for poisoning the watercourse and provide them compensation for the perished goats. (Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

## 5 # TRADE

### **Jul-Jun trade deficit shrinks 43.03pc to \$27.547bn YoY**

Pakistan's trade deficit narrowed by 43.03 per cent to \$27.547 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23 (July-June) as compared to \$48.354 billion during the same period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said. The country's exports during the fiscal year 2022-23 were recorded at \$27.744 billion against exports of \$31.782 billion in fiscal year 2021-22, i.e. declined by 12.71 per cent, according to the trade data released by PBS. The imports decreased by 31 per cent during the period under review by going down from \$80.136 billion in 2021-22 to \$55.291 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23. On a year-on-year basis, exports witnessed a decline of 18.71 per cent and were recorded at \$2.366 billion in June 2023 against the exports of \$2.911 billion in June 2022. The imports also decreased to \$4.180 billion in June 2023 from \$7.857 billion in June 2022, showing negative growth of 46.80 per cent. The trade deficit narrowed by 63.32 per cent on a YoY basis to \$1.814 billion in June 2023 compared to \$4.946 billion in June 2022. The trade deficit narrowed by 14.76 per cent on a month-on-month basis and stood at \$1.814 billion in June 2023 compared to \$2.128 billion in May 2023. (Business Recorder, July 4<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **Exports shrink 19pc in June, record 10th straight drop**

Pakistan's merchandise exports dipped by 12.71 per cent year-on-year to \$27.54 billion in 2022-23 from \$31.78bn in the preceding fiscal year, showed data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. The export contraction continued for the 10th month in a

row, plunging by 18.72pc year-on-year to \$2.36bn in June. The export proceeds are declining because of internal and external factors stoking up fears about the closure of industrial units, especially textile and clothing. The government has projected a \$32bn target for the outgoing FY 23. However, the export target was missed by a wide margin of \$4.46bn.

Throughout the entire fiscal year, there was a conspicuous absence of any statements or meetings within the commerce ministry to address the causes behind the decline in exports and propose solutions to assist exporters. The commerce minister's engagements primarily consisted of frequent foreign tours, while failing to make any public statements regarding the diminishing exports.

At the same time, imports also plunged by 46.80pc to \$4.18bn in June compared to \$7.85bn in the corresponding month last year. Imports fell 31pc to \$55.29bn in FY 23 from \$80.13bn in FY 22. The trade deficit decelerated by 43.03pc to \$27.54bn in FY 23 from \$48.35bn in the preceding fiscal year. In June, the trade deficit fell year-on-year by 63.32pc to \$1.81bn. (Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### ***Trade with China crosses 'psychological barrier' of \$20bn: FPCCI***

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), has apprised that bilateral trade volume of Pakistan with China has crossed the psychological barrier of \$20 billion and stood at \$20.8 billion in FY 22; and, China has emerged as the most important source of investments into Pakistan's energy and infrastructure sectors. In fact, China is the most reliable economic partner of Pakistan, he added. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh stressed that despite continuous investments by China, Pakistan is still facing a trade imbalance with China; with imports from China showing an upward trend, as opposed to the downward trajectory depicted by Pakistan's exports, stood at \$3.04 billion, (Business Recorder, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### ***Russia, Iran, & Afghanistan: FPCCI's initiatives for barter trade bear fruit: chief***

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has expressed his satisfaction that FPCCI's years of relentless policy advocacy initiatives for the barter trade with Russia, Iran and Afghanistan has borne fruits. We have pitched barter trade, border markets and currency swap mechanisms very diligently in tens of top-level meetings with the concerned ministries and relevant governmental institutions over the past three-and-a-half years. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh apprised that FPCCI's repeated proposals and demands were aimed at persuading the government to decisively move forward for the enablement, facilitation and operationalisation of the barter trade with Iran, Afghanistan and Russia; and, now Pakistan's trade with three very important countries can multiply quickly due to the prevalent gaps and share interdependencies in import and export potential of Pakistan. (Business Recorder, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 7)

## **Pakistan-South Korea trade gets significant boost**

The trade between Pakistan and South Korea has witnessed a significant boost, with Pakistan's exports to Korea doubling in the past year, reaching an impressive \$306 million. Korea's exports to Pakistan experienced a decline of 30%. (Business Recorder, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **'Green channel' facility: FBR increases clearance of imports and exports to 66pc**

In a major trade facilitation step, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has increased the clearance of imports and exports through the "green channel" facility from 35 percent to 66 percent. Najy Benhassine, Country Director, World Bank, and Chairman Federal Board of Revenue Mr. A sim Ahmad held a meeting at FBR Headquarters to review the progress of Pakistan Raises Revenue Program during the last financial year. (Business Recorder, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **5.1 # Exports**

### **Regional exports fall as sales to China shrink by a quarter**

Pakistan's exports to nine neighbouring countries recorded a significant decline of 19.68 per cent during the first 11 months of the outgoing FY 23, according to data gathered by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This drop is largely attributed to a decrease in shipments to China. Notably, the decline in trade is not limited to exports alone, as imports, particularly from China, have also witnessed a sharp decrease in the 11MFY 23. The country's exports to Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Iran, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives dipped to \$3.353 billion — just 13.21pc of Pakistan's total exports of \$25.38bn in July-May FY 23. China accounts for the majority share of regional exports, standing at 56.39pc, while the remaining share is distributed among eight other countries. (Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Pakistan set to miss mango export target**

Amid a 20 per cent drop in production, mango exporters have said achieving the export target of 125,000 tonnes has become a distant possibility due to the poor strategy of the Department of Plant Protection (DPP). All Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA) said the DPP on June 12 issued a new SOP [standard operating procedure] requiring hot water treatment (HWT) of mangoes mandatory from the approved plants only. `Due to this discriminatory policy and favouritism of the DPP, 90 per cent of the 35 plants have been shut down, resulting in a loss of \$44 million due to the closure of HWT plants which were not issued no-objection certificates (NOCs) by the DPP.

Around 2,500 labour (skilled and unskilled) employed in these plants have become jobless due to the closure of these plants while 6,000 labour working with growers have

been badly affected as well. PFVA chairman Muhammad Shehzad Sheikh said exporters had confirmed orders of mangoes from various countries and due to the non-operational status of HWT plants by the DPP, India would take advantage of the situation and avail the confirmed orders and would capture these international markets for future as well. Punjab produces 70pc of mango while Sindh holds 29pc share and 1pc by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. About 50pc of mangoes are exported from Pakistan by sea, 35pc by land and 15pc by air. (Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Exports to Middle East fall**

Pakistan's exports to the Middle East dipped 12.28 per cent year-on-year to \$2.127 billion in the first 11 months of FY 23, mainly driven by a substantial decline in exports to the United Arab Emirates. Nearly 62pc of total exports to the region go to the UAE market alone. However, it suffered a decline of 20.46pc to \$1.341bn in 11MFY 23 from \$2.425bn over the corresponding months last year (FY22). Pakistan's second biggest market in the region in terms of value is Saudi Arabia. However, the exports jumped 21.41pc to \$457.113m in 11MFY 23 from \$376.485m in the preceding fiscal year. Exports to Saudi Arabia have stagnated at around \$500m in the last decade due to no expansion in market access as compared to the UAE. Pakistan's exports to Qatar dipped 13.77pc to \$152.880m in 11MFY 23 from \$177.296m during 11MFY 22. Pakistan exports to Kuwait fell by 7.92pc to \$117.353m during the July-May FY 23 from \$122.356m over the corresponding months of last year. Pakistan exports to Bahrain dipped 6.06pc to \$59.275m in 11MFY 23 against \$63.103m over the corresponding year. (Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Export orders for lint start pouring in**

Federal and Punjab authorities discuss measures to ensure that cotton growers get the support price as the country secures the first white lint export orders for the new crop. The caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi had earlier in the day advised the cotton growers not to undersell their crop and emphasised that the government is committed to ensuring the sale of cotton at a minimum rate of Rs8,500 per maund. (Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Textile exports contract 15pc to \$16.5bn**

Pakistan's exports of textiles and clothing contracted by 14.63 per cent year-on-year to \$16.50 billion during the outgoing FY 23 due to higher production costs, liquidity constraints and lower global demand. As a result of this decline in exports of textile and clothing, Pakistan's total merchandise exports dipped by 12.71pc year-on-year to \$27.54bn in 2022-23 from \$31.78bn in the preceding fiscal year. The textile export sector experienced a troubling trend of negative growth right from the beginning of the current fiscal year, except for a slight increase in August 2022 due to a backlog from the previous month.



The import of textile machinery declined by 57.03pc in FY 23 — a sign that expansion or modernisation projects were not a priority. Furthermore, the import of raw cotton also dipped by 8.15pc in FY 23 followed by a decline of 34.77pc in the import of synthetic fibre, 33.65pc in synthetic silk yarn and 14.56pc in worn clothing. (Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Historic! FY23 seafood exports hit \$496m mark**

Pakistan's seafood export hits the highest mark of \$496 million in 2022-23 because of the rupee depreciation, despite over-fishing and global slowdown. Pakistan exported cuttlefish, squid, octopus, ivory shell and other shellfish to a number of non-traditional fisheries markets. US ban on the country's shrimp export because of the non-compliance with Turtle Excluder Device (TED) regulations. The seafood export could be much higher if the US ban on shrimp trade did not exist, which pulled down the country's exact seafood industry potential. The US ban is now running into its sixth consecutive year, the concerned authorities seem indifferent to invite the next mission of the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to review the restriction. Similarly, the EU also carries a ban on the country's seafood export, which it had imposed in 2007. A partial ban was lifted on an ad-hoc basis with a permission only to three companies to export seafood to the EU.

India's 500 and Iran's 104 companies export seafood to the EU but Pakistan is faced with a ban even after 16 years, even the authorities are unwilling to negotiate with the European Union to remove the restriction fully. There are over 300 seafood processing establishments under the Pakistan Fish Inspection and Quality Control Act 1997 and if these plants are allowed to export their fish products, export can even reach a level of about \$1 billion. About 200 metric tons of tuna worth \$200 million are annually transported to Iran through traditional channels that are not the part of the country's total seafood export, nor earnings. There is a need that this traditional trade may be harmonized with national laws which will increase Pakistan's export value to about \$700 million to \$1 billion. (Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **215,752 tonnes of sugar exported in FY23**

Pakistan exported a significant quantity of 215,752 tonnes of sugar during the February-June period of the outgoing FY 23 against zero foreign sales in the comparable period the preceding year, causing a surge in domestic retail prices of the sweetener, showed data compiled by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The sugar industry had been demanding permission for the export of surplus volumes since March 2022 when the price was in the range of Rs80-85 per kg, but government allowed it in February this year. According to a commerce ministry report, the net sugar consumption stood at over 5m tonnes. A Re1 increase per kg means over Rs5bn net transfer of resources from consumers. Sugar imports plunged by 98.01pc to 6,205 tonnes in FY 23 against 312,477 tonnes in FY 22. (Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **Non-textile exports fall to \$11.2bn in 2022-23**

Pakistan's non-textile exports fell by 9.87 per cent to \$11.23 billion in outgoing FY 23 compared to \$12.46bn in the preceding year, according to data compiled by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The PBS reported that export proceeds from the non-textile sector showed a stagnant trend since the beginning of FY 23 due to demand contraction in the buyers' market. Exports showed no growth since September 2022 on a year-on-year basis. The rice exports dipped 14.47pc in value and 25.29pc in quantity in FY 23 from a year ago. The decline was observed in the export of basmati and non-basmati rice during the period under review. (Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **Record meat exports fetch \$427m in a year**

Despite surging domestic prices, the country exported record 100,194 tonnes of meat and meat preparations in FY 23 exceeding the previous peak of 95,648 tonnes recorded in FY 21. As per data issued by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the country earned foreign exchange of \$427 million in FY 23 versus \$331m in FY 21. The exporters fetched an average per tonne price (APT) of \$4,258 as compared to \$3,467 in FY 21. The exports rose 30pc in quantity and 25pc in value when compared with 76,868 tonnes (\$341m) in FY 22 at an APT of \$4,436. Contrary to this, the Economic Survey FY 23 says that cattle, buffalo and goat production soared to 55.5 million, 45m and 84.7m during FY 23 from 51.5m, 42.4m and 80.3m in FY 21. Beef and mutton production rose to 2,544,000 tonnes and 799,000 tonnes in FY 23 from 2,380,000 and 765,000 tonnes in FY 21. (Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **ECC allows export from EPZs, MBs, EOUs to Afghanistan**

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet has reportedly allowed export of vegetable ghee/cooking oil from Export Processing Zones (EPZs), manufacturing bonds (MBs), and export oriented units (EOUs) to Afghanistan. (Business Recorder, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **Rice exports earn Pakistan \$2.1bn in tumultuous FY23**

Despite significant production losses and other major challenges, Pakistan exported a total of 3.717 million tonnes of rice to earn \$2.149 billion in FY 23. The export of basmati varieties of rice stood at 595,120 tonnes fetching \$650,423 at an average per tonne (APT) rate of \$1,092. Coarse or non-basmati varieties' export touched 3.122 million tonnes, fetching \$1.498bn at an APT rate of \$480. In the preceding year, the country fetched \$2.5bn by making export shipments of 4.8m tonnes. Exports have been mainly hit by a drop in production, as against 9.1 million tonnes output during 2021-22, the country could harvest around 6 million tonnes of rice in FY 23, a fall of over 34pc. Floods and torrential rains had damaged paddy crops, particularly in Sindh and south Punjab districts and the overall crop losses had been estimated at around 20pc. At least

35pc of the standing rice crop had been damaged in Sindh and 29pc in south Punjab while other rice-growing areas were partially hit by excessive heatwaves which affected the yields and the losses were reflected in the exports. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **5.2 # Import**

### **Govt to import 100,000 tons of Russian oil every month**

In a bid to ensure cheap energy in the country, the government will import 100,000 tons of Russian crude oil every month. The Minister of State for Petroleum, Dr Musadik Malik said Russian crude oil is cheaper than other oils in global market. The State Minister said that the government is expected to sign an agreement with Azerbaijan to buy cheap LNG very soon. He also announced that private sector is allowed to purchase cheap LNG for their industry. However, he made it clear that the private sector will not be allowed to resale the cheap LNG. He said an agreement with Saudi Arabia for setting up oil refinery in Pakistan with the estimated investment of \$10 billion is also expected soon. (Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

### **UAE firm to take over KPT`s cargo terminal too**

After the transfer of container terminal, the government has decided in principle to hand over the bulk and general cargo terminal at Karachi Port`s East Wharf to Abu Dhabi Ports through a government-to-government deal under the Inter-Governmental Commercial Transaction Act, 2022. The meeting was informed that in terms of Section 3 of the Inter-Governmental Commercial Transactions Act, “the federal government may enter into an agreement with any state for the purposes” of commercial transactions. These include broad parameters and mechanism for execution of intended commercial transaction. The KPT has already handed over the control of container terminal (berths 6 to 9 at East Wharf) to AD Ports of UAE for 50 years after negotiations for an upfront \$50 million price for existing fixed infrastructure and a \$102m investment in five years for infrastructure development, \$18m royalty and an annual rent of Rs1,100 per square metre — just Rs7 higher than for previous operators of container terminal — without any independent assessment. (Business Recorder, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **7 # INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN**

### **Afghan refugees get \$18m cash under UN`s programme**

The UN refugee agency has completed the disbursement of cash assistance to over one million registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan who were impacted by the prolonged difficult economic situation in the aftermath of last year`s devastating floods. The cash assistance programme, which was launched in January 2023 in collaboration with the Pakistan government, officially completed by the end of June. Pakistan hosts over 1.3 million registered Afghan refugees and 427,000 people in refugee-like situations from

Afghanistan. The assistance has helped those hardest hit by the economic downturn by enabling them to meet their basic needs. (Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

### **Govt borrows \$10.84bn from multiple sources**

The government has borrowed \$10.844 billion from multiple financing sources including \$2.206 billion from foreign commercial banks during the fiscal year 2022-23 compared to \$16.974 billion borrowed during the same period of 2021-22, showing a decline of around 37 percent. The government had budgeted foreign assistance of \$22.817 billion for the fiscal year 2022-23 including \$7.5 billion foreign commercial banks. However, the \$10.844 billion does not include the rollover of friendly countries' deposits amounting to \$6 billion (i.e. \$3 billion each from China and Saudi Arabia), and the re-financing of Chinese loan of \$1.3 billion. The Economic Affairs Division data shows that the country borrowed \$2.206 billion from foreign commercial banks during the fiscal year 2022-23 including \$1.306 billion in June 2023. The government had budgeted \$7.472 billion under the head of borrowing from foreign commercial banks, however, only \$2.206 billion was materialized i.e. registered a shortfall of \$5.266 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23.

The country received \$1.166 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the fiscal year 2022-23. Contrary to past practices, the EAD has also listed the loans taken from the IMF. If the IMF loan is excluded, then the country received \$9.678 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23 compared to \$16.974 billion during the same period of 2021-22, indicating the slowdown in inflows. The government procured \$2.231 billion in external loans in June 2023. The country received \$788.97 million under the head of "Naya Pakistan Certificate" during the fiscal year including \$46.03 million in June 2023.

The country received \$5.224 billion from multilaterals, \$1.458 billion from bilateral and \$1.166 billion from IMF during July-June 2022-23. The non-project aid was \$8.779 billion including \$7.419 billion for budgetary support and project aid was \$2.064 billion. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) disbursed \$2.266 billion during the period under review compared to the budgeted \$3.202 billion for the fiscal year 2022-23. The ADB disbursed \$229.91 million in June 2023.

China disbursed \$128.03 million during the fiscal year, however, no amount was received in June against the budgeted \$49.02 million for the entire fiscal year. Saudi Arabia disbursed \$1.182 billion against the budgeted \$800 million under the head of oil facility during the fiscal year 2022-23. The USA disbursed \$31.13 million during the period under review against the budgeted \$32.49 million for the fiscal year. Korea disbursed \$27.42 million and France \$33.81 million during the fiscal year 2022-23.

The IDA disbursed \$1.907 billion against the budgeted \$1.388 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23 including \$429.33 million in June, IBRD \$290.06 million against the

budgeted \$1.246 billion and Islamic Development Bank disbursed \$16.81 million against the budgeted \$3.38 million for the financial year. The IsDB (short-term) disbursed \$161 million in the fiscal year 2022-23. AIIB disbursed \$558.96 million, while ECO (Trade Bank) disbursed \$64.59 million in 2022-23. (Business Recorder, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **7.1 # Countries**

### **KSA, UAE showing keen interest in IT, agriculture: minister**

Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadiq Malik said that Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates are taking keen interest in Pakistani information technology agriculture and mining sectors. KSA has planned to fix funds of 24 billion dollars for investment purposes, while UAE allocated 22 billion dollars funds for exploring opportunities in three sectors of Pakistan.

The heavy investment in three major sectors of Pakistan would open many job opportunities for young people. To a question about IMF, he said a nine-month relief through an agreement has been made to run the economic affairs in a proper manner. He hoped that heavy investment from the Gulf region would boost business activities besides open job opportunities in Pakistan. (Business Recorder, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **Pakistan gets \$2bn in financial support from Saudi Arabia**

Pakistan has received \$2 billion in financial support from Saudi Arabia, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said, a day before the International Monetary Fund's board is expected to give final approval for a much needed \$3bn bailout. Saudi Arabia has deposited the funds with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Mr Dar said, boosting foreign exchange reserves, which stood at around \$9.7 billion, according to the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan. Under the nine-month arrangement, Pakistan will receive about \$1.1bn upfront and the IMF will stagger disbursements of the rest. (Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **After Saudi inflow, UAE deposits \$1bn with SBP**

Pakistan received a much-needed inflow of \$1 billion from the United Arab Emirates, hours before the formal approval of the \$3 billion nine-month Stand-By Arrangement by the executive board of the IMF. The SBP reserves were \$4.462bn as of June 30. Mr Dar said funds received from Saudi Arabia and the UAE this week had collectively increased the country's reserves by \$3bn in two days. This would reflect in the weekly update of foreign exchange reserves due to be issued on July 14, he added. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **NA body informed: Arab countries keen to invest in various sectors**

Secretary Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) Jameel Ahmed Qureshi informed the National Assembly Standing Committee on Board of Investment (BoI) that Arab countries have shown significant interest in investment in different sectors. While briefing the Standing Committee of the Assembly he contended that the SIFC is focused on investments from Arab countries including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE. “A lot of investment proposals have come from Arab countries. Saudi Arabia is looking to invest in minerals. Qatar and UAE are interested in investing in agriculture whereas Chinese companies are also looking to invest in Pakistan in other sectors including seeds”. (Business Recorder, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

## **France gives 3m euros aid for refugees**

The French government has announced a financial contribution of three million euros to support UNHCR and its critical programmes for Afghans in Pakistan and Iran. The funding will enable the UN refugee agency to intensify the provisions of lifesaving assistance and protection for some of the most vulnerable refugees and their local host communities, UNHCR announced. In Pakistan, 2m euros will enable UNHCR to boost primary and secondary level education, strengthen skills and vocational training, and reinforce access to public health care in host communities in 2023.

A particular focus of the French government’s support will be on empowering women and girls. In Iran, France has allocated 1m euros to support UNHCR programmes in 2023. The contribution will help strengthen ongoing efforts to provide lifesaving assistance to Afghans and host communities, including access to essential healthcare, education, and protection services. (Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **UK to provide 41.5m pounds for family planning, girls` education**

The UK will provide £41.5 million in bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Pakistan for the year 2023-24 for family planning, girls’ education, investment and trade, a statement from the British High Commission said. The new Pakistan Country Development Partnership Summary (CDPS), published by UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, showed an indicative ODA budget of £133 million for the financial year 2024-25. (Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **7.2 # China**

### **CPEC projects, direct investment worth \$25.4bn attracted from China in 10 years**

The projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are flourishing all across Pakistan and have attracted US\$25.4 billion of direct investment from China during the last 10 years. (Business Recorder, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

## **SEZs to facilitate Chinese investment: govt**

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal has said that Special Economic Zones (SEZs) will facilitate Chinese investment in Pakistan. The launch of other economic zones is at the advanced stages in Sindh, Punjab, and Balochistan, he said. Pakistan, he said, has a great advantage in low cost of labour. “As in China, many industries are experiencing high costs of production due to increased levels of cost and are now moving to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Pakistan also has a great advantage in terms of low cost of production”. The minister said Pakistan has a very good infrastructure and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework. He said several Chinese companies intend to start businesses in Pakistan and many Chinese companies have invested in Gwadar Free Zone. (Business Recorder, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **Premier announces \$600m rollover from China**

China has rolled over a \$600 million loan to Pakistan, helping shore up Islamabad’s foreign exchange reserves after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a long-awaited deal earlier this month, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said. China had already rolled over more than \$5 billion in loans to Pakistan in the last three months as the country struggled to revive a stalled loan programme with the IMF. The government finally secured a \$3bn bailout on June 30 from the IMF, whose board green-lighted the deal last week. The Fund later disbursed an initial instalment of about \$1.2bn. (Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **China rolls over \$2.4bn loan for two years**

China has rolled over \$2.4 billion in loans to Pakistan for two years that were up for repayment in FY24 and FY25, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar announced. “Chinese EXIM Bank has rolled over for two years principal amounts of following loans totalling \$2.4bn — which are due for repayment \$1.2bn each in FY24 and FY25,” he said, adding that Pakistan will make interest payments only in both years. Informed sources said the loans had been extended to power projects, mostly two Karachi-based nuclear power plants (K2&K3) of 1,100MW each now supplying electricity to the national grid and some repayments were due in the first quarter of the current fiscal year. Now, the principal loans would remain paused for repayment while interest payments would continue.

The federal cabinet has already approved the revised terms of the grace period of all 31 loan agreements, contracted with China EXIM Bank which are now stand extended by two years from July 21, 2023 to June 30, 2025. The government of Pakistan is obliged to pay interests accrued on the amount outstanding, during the 2-year grace period at the same interest rate as set in the original loan agreements; and after the end of the 2-year grace period, GoP is obligated to pay all the principal amount outstanding, all the interest accrued thereon and such other amount payable by Pakistan under the terms and conditions of the original loan agreements. (Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **8 # INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (IFIS)**

### **Country receives \$4.4bn from WB, ADB in FY2022-23**

Pakistan received \$ 4.4 billion from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the fiscal year 2022-23, against the budgeted estimates of \$ 5.836 billion, witnessing a shortfall of \$ 1.436 billion, official data of the Economic Affairs Division revealed. The government had budgeted \$ 3.202 billion from ADB for the fiscal year 2022-23, however, the country received \$ 2.266 billion during the period under review. The government had budgeted \$ 1.271 billion from IBRD for 2022-23, however, the country received \$ 290.06 million. Further, \$ 1.363 billion from IDA for 2022-23, however, the country received \$ 1.807 billion during the period under review. (Business Recorder, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **8.1 # Asian Development Bank (ADB)**

#### **Pakistan is market with highest potential: ADB lists factors stifling ‘SCF’ growth**

Pakistan is the market with the highest potential in the region, however, several factors including legal framework as well as the current tax law restrict the full development of Supply Chain Finance (SCF), says Asian Development Bank (ADB). The bank in its report, “Supply Chain Finance in Central Asia and Caucasus”, noted that Pakistan is the market with the highest potential in the region. Pakistan’s GDP in 2022 was \$376.5 billion. If factoring volume reached a penetration rate of 2.4 per cent (the average in similar markets), the potential factoring volume could be as high as \$9 billion. (Business Recorder, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 7)

#### **ADB, IsDB to provide \$665m for flood protection project**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) have agreed to provide about \$665 million to Pakistan to finance Rs195bn Flood Protection Sector Project-III (FPSP) to build resilience in the country against climate change impacts for improvement of country-wide comprehensive flood management approaches both through structural and non-structural interventions on integrated and innovative basis.

Official record suggests that the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) has reported to the ministries and authorities concerned that ADB and IsDB had agreed to finance FPSP with an amount of \$400 million and \$265 million, respectively, while the contribution of \$100m Chinese grant was also expected. Based on EAD’s confirmation, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) has recently cleared the project documents of FPSP-III with a total estimated cost of Rs194.63bn for formal loan agreements and project implementation in all the four provinces, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. (Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)



## ***ADB's report identifies major economic challenges***

To date, the ADB has committed 740 public sector loans, grants, and technical assistance totaling \$39.7 billion to Pakistan. Cumulative loan and grant disbursements to Pakistan amount to \$30.76 billion. These were financed by regular and concessional ordinary capital resources, the Asian Development Fund, and other special funds.

ADB's ongoing sovereign portfolio in Pakistan includes 53 loans and three grants worth \$9.59 billion. In 2022, ADB's loan and grant disbursements to Pakistan amounted to \$2.49 billion. This includes \$1.8 billion in programme lending, \$680 million from project lending, and \$4.6 million from grants. ADB provided \$1.5 billion to help Pakistan boost social protection, promote food security, and support employment for people. To help the country improve governance and regulatory capacity, the ADB approved a \$300-million loan for structural reforms within the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP).

The ADB acted swiftly to provide support following the mid-2022 flood in Pakistan that affected 33 million people, immediately disbursing a \$3 million grant under the Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund for the purchase of emergency supplies. This was followed by a \$554 million financing package to support flood recovery and reconstruction efforts and to strengthen the country's disaster and climate resilience.

The financing, which includes a \$475 million loan, a \$3 million technical assistance grant, and a \$5 million grant from the Government of Japan, will support the restoration of irrigation, drainage, flood risk management, on-farm water management, and transport infrastructure in the flood-affected provinces of Balochistan, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, and Sindh. Total outstanding balances and undisbursed commitments of the ADB's non-sovereign transactions in Pakistan as of 31 December 2022 was \$242.48 million representing 1.9 percent of the ADB's total private sector portfolio. (Business Recorder, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

## **Outstanding ADB transactions in Pakistan amount to \$242m**

The total outstanding balances and undisbursed commitments of the non-sovereign transactions of Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Pakistan amounts to \$242.48 million by the end of 2022. The latest fact sheet on Pakistan released by ADB showed total commitments in non-sovereign loans, equity investments and guarantees from ADB's own funds in 2022 amounted to \$1.1 billion for 37 transactions in economic and social infrastructure, finance sector and agribusiness. Non-sovereign co-financing amounted to \$13.38bn for 24 investment projects since 1993, and sovereign co-financing of \$5.13bn for 54 investment projects and \$107.87m for 65 technical assistance projects was provided since 1973. (Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **GDP growth weighed down by tighter monetary, fiscal policies: ADB**

GDP growth in Pakistan in fiscal year 2023 (ended 30 June 2023) was weighed down by tighter monetary and fiscal policies to safeguard macroeconomic stability, pervasive inflation, and significant damage from flooding, says the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The bank in its latest report, “Asian Development Outlook, robust growth with moderating inflation” stated that South Asia is on course to achieve ADO April 2023 growth forecasts. Downward revisions for Nepal and Pakistan in 2023 reflect mainly tighter monetary and fiscal policies and are offset by an upward revision for Bangladesh as net exports performed better than expected. Growth projections elsewhere in South Asia are largely maintained. (Business Recorder, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **8.2 # International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

### ***IMF deal not a ‘silver bullet’, says Shehbaz***

Soon after the government secured a much-needed \$3 billion short-term financial package from IMF, Shehbaz Sharif said the new deal is not a silver bullet and expressed the hope that the new programme will be the last one. “I am pleased to announce that the IMF team has reached a staff-level agreement with the Pakistani authorities on a nine-month standby arrangement in the amount of SDR 2,250 million (about \$3bn),” IMF’s mission chief to Pakistan, Nathan Porter, said. The deal will need to be approved by the IMF’s executive board and will be considered by mid-July. The deal will also unlock other bilateral and multilateral financing. (Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **9-month \$3bn SBA reached with IMF**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Pakistan have reached a 3 billion dollars nine-month Stand-By Arrangement (SBA). The country failed to complete yet another IMF Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme of 6.5 billion dollars, which ended on June 30, 2023 unsuccessfully. (Business Recorder, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **US helps Pakistan secure IMF package**

US played a key behind-the-scenes role to help Pakistan secure a \$3 billion bailout package with the IMF. The recent staff-level agreement (SLA) came after an 8-month delay in releasing funds from a 2019, \$6 billion loan. (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

### **Fingers crossed as govt assures IMF no new tax amnesty on the cards**

The planning minister described the short-term financial package of the IMF as a much-needed respite that restored investor confidence. He stressed the need for structural reforms to ensure long-term sustainability and to capitalise on this breathing space. Need for implementing structural reforms to guide the country onto a sustainable path and achieve desired results in the long term. (Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **IMF board green-lights long-awaited \$3bn loan**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said that its executive board had approved a \$3 billion loan agreement for Pakistan, unlocking crucial funding for the troubled economy. In a statement, the IMF said its executive board green-lit the nine-month standby arrangement (SBA) in order “to support the authorities’ economic stabilisation programme”. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **IMF projects \$28.361bn gross external financing needs**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected Pakistan’s gross external financing needs at \$28.361 billion for the fiscal year 2023-24 which is eight percent of the GDP. The IMF in its report titled, “Country report, Request For A Stand-By Arrangement,” noted that the country’s external financing need would be \$30.4 billion in the fiscal year 2024-25.

The Fund stated that the SBA programme is fully financed but with exceptionally high risks. Financing commitments from bilateral and multilateral partners will help cover public gross external financing needs in the fiscal year 2024 and the reserve position at end-fiscal year 2024 is consistent with programme objectives.

Bilateral creditors are expected to maintain their exposure to Pakistan in line with program commitments and there are commitments for \$3.7 billion of additional financing expected from Saudi Arabia and the UAE. These together with commitments from multilateral institutions, including the Islamic Development Bank, and other pledges at the Geneva conference provide the necessary financing assurances. (Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **8.3 # World Bank**

### **WB urges govt to mull leveraging private sector investments**

The World Bank (WB) is said to have advised the government to consider leveraging private sector investments in the transmission sector and focus on Category-III Renewable Energy (ER) projects after “disinterest” of investors in 600-MW wind project. (Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **WB approves \$46m for KP citizen-centred service delivery project**

The World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors has approved \$46 million in financing for the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Citizen-Centred Service Delivery Project, which will support both supply and demand side interventions to improve health service delivery in the province, as well as the operations of citizen-centric administrative facilitation centres in the newly-merged districts. (Business Recorder, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### ***WB terms implementation progress of Sindh Resilience Project ‘satisfactory’***

The World Bank has rated the implementation progress of “Sindh Resilience Project” satisfactory with completely disbursed at \$292.24 million. The objectives of the project are to mitigate flood and drought risks in selected areas and strengthen Sindh’s capacity to manage natural disasters and public health emergencies. The project has benefited around 5.3 million people, approximately 48 per cent of whom are women. The project is completely disbursed at \$292.24 million. Under the SID component, 60 small dams have been constructed, while eight small dams are expected to be completed by July 2023. The dams effectively performed during the 2022 flooding, benefiting local communities through groundwater recharge and the infiltration enabled by the weirs through ponding. No structural damage was reported. (Business Recorder, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

## **9 # POLICY**

### **9.1 # Developmental Policy**

#### **Ecneec approves seven projects worth Rs446bn**

Ahead of the completion of the constitutional term of the government, the Executive Committee of the Economic Council (Eenec) continued approving seven more projects worth Rs446 billion and revised another Rs377bn worth of solarisation project for countrywide tube wells. Last week too, Ecneec approved six projects with an estimated cost of Rs1.077 trillion. Ecneec also approved a summary of the Ministry of National Food Security & Research for revision of the Prime Minister’s National Programme for Solarisation Agriculture Tube Wells in Punjab, Sindh, KP and Balochistan and allowed inclusion of existing pumping systems on small dams, ponds, and river/ stream/nullah ponds, serving the same purpose as tube wells. (Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

#### **Govt approves billions for development schemes**

With the government nearing the end of its term in a couple of weeks, the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet has approved the immediate disbursement of Rs51 billion for the parliamentarians’ scheme for the poor ahead of the general elections under the Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Programme (SAP).

Four supplementary grants worth over Rs61bn were also approved, and all of them are likely to attract public support. The government allocated Rs90bn for SAP for the current fiscal year, and has now approved Rs51bn for immediate disbursement. This is the highest ever disbursement for any single programme before completion of even the first quarter, for which 20-25pc of the allocations are generally disbursed. (Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **Pakistan urges consensus among all sides to restore grain deal**

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari talked with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov by phone and discussed with him the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI). A day earlier, Mr Bhutto-Zardari had a telephone conversation with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and discussed with him BSGI and bilateral matters. Pakistan sees the Black Sea grain deal as vital for the world and has vowed to work for its restoration after the Russian decision to withdraw from it. He informed Mr Lavrov about his discussions on the BSGI with the foreign ministers of Ukraine and Turkiye, the US Secretary of State and the EU high representative. Foreign Minister Lavrov shared Russia's perspective on the issue. The two agreed to remain in close contact on the matter. (Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

## **Rs1.22trn Projects as it nears end of term**

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) approved eight development projects of around Rs1.22 trillion. (Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **9.2 # Neo-Liberal Policy**

### **Islamabad airport to be outsourced by Aug 12**

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has told the stakeholders to finalise formalities to outsource the operations of Islamabad International Airport (IIA) by August 12, the final day of the incumbent government's term, according to sources. An official announcement issued after the meeting said World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC), the transaction adviser for the outsourcing, briefed the meeting on the progress. (Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Private sector wants to sign MoU with SAU**

Private sector has expressed interest in agriculture related industrial raw material of textile industry and agreed to sign a MoU with SAU on different projects especially on quality production of cotton, banana fiber and Banana powder. Vice Chancellor Dr. Fateh Marri said that experts in SAU are engaged in researching the quality seed of various cotton commodities, while work is being done on liquid and composite fertilizer technology from banana. (Business Recorder, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 16)

### **Islamabad airport to be outsourced for 15 years: govt**

Federal Minister for Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique informed National Assembly that Islamabad International Airport would be outsourced for 15 years within three to four months, and it would have no impact on its employees. Speaking in the house, he said that the navigational services and runway operations will not be outsourced, adding the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) will continue to do it. He added that the International

Finance Corporation (IFC), a World Bank offshoot, is the government's consultant on the matter. "This will be Pakistan's first airport that we are outsourcing. In it, the best international practices will be implemented...once it's done, Lahore and Karachi airports will be outsourced".

"The whole world including India has done this. India has outsourced eight of its airports. We must decide if we want to remain in the Stone Age or follow what the world is doing," he added. He said that the world's best airport operating practices are through private operators, adding besides India, Istanbul airport in Turkiye and Prince Mohammad Bin Abdulaziz International Airport (Medina Airport) are also run on an outsourced basis. "There are countless such examples and what we are planning to do is nothing new," he maintained. He clarified that there is a need to understand that outsourcing does not mean that the airport is being sold out or mortgaged or that any of the airport employees will be left jobless.

The minister also spoke about the privatisation of the national flag carrier – Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) – and said that the airline will stop working completely if it is not privatised within the next one-and-a-half-year. "All my colleagues here know me that I'm strongly against privatization. But even a person like me has realised that if PIA — whose deficit is Rs80 billion this year — remains as is, its deficit will balloon to Rs259bn by 2030," he added. (Business Recorder, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **Outsourcing airports: UAE, Qatar, Turkey, China, KSA show interest**

United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Turkey, China and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have expressed special interest in outsourcing of Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore airports. Sources claimed that Saudi Arabia's Bin Laden group also making efforts to take on airports outsourcing while Qatar government has shown more interest in taking over the cargo sector of the airports. "A subsidiary of World Bank is acting as Financial Advisors for airports outsourcing." (Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

## **9.3 # Agricultural Policy**

### **PM optimistic about country's agri prospects**

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has termed the agriculture sector as backbone of the country, saying, it is the duty of the federal government to utilise all available resources to facilitate this sector. "Farmers would be remembered in history as builders of Pakistan". The event saw the launch of Green Pakistan Initiative aimed at enhancing food security of Pakistan, and increase exports and reduce the agriculture- related imports. PM Sharif said the Green Pakistan Initiative would bring about the second agriculture revolution in the country and would create four million jobs. Government increased the support price of wheat which led to record production of the commodity. He was hopeful that production of cotton would rise. He said it was the responsibility

of every government to provide better seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to the farmers and equip them with latest technology. He showed concern over the adulterated pesticides given to farmers and warned of action against the culprits.

The PM said state-owned enterprises were losing Rs600b every year and thus bleeding the economy. Pakistan imported \$4.5b of palm oil, which is a burden. The PM said gulf countries were ready to invest in the agriculture sector and bring modern machinery to boost crops production. Pakistan needs political stability to attract investment as unstable environment discourages investment. Pakistan could attract investment of \$40 to \$50b and it could make food exports to the gulf countries presently importing food products worth \$40b. (Business Recorder, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **Green Pakistan Initiative gets mixed response**

The federal government's Green Pakistan Initiative aimed at introducing the latest farming on 4.4 million acres of land across the country has elicited a mixed reaction from various walks of life. The government is eyeing to fetch around \$40bn during the next five years through the agricultural initiative and hopes to create four million jobs through this process.

A group of farmers believes that the government should have, instead, distributed the cultivable waste lands among the local landless people instead of offering the same to foreign investors. However, traders welcome it as a positive development. The Pakistan Kisan Rabita Committee says it is the same corporate farming initiative the government has been trying to introduce since the Gen Pervez Musharraf regime but with new terminology like attracting foreign investment and creating millions of jobs. Lamenting that instead of introducing land reforms, the government is attempting to strengthen the feudal system through corporate farming, PKRC General Secretary terms the policy anti-smallholders and landless peasants. He claims that notwithstanding LHC orders, many tracts of land, like those in Khusab district, have already been undertaken under the so-called Green Revolution Initiative which, he says, is bound to fail like the one introduced in the 1960s. The Ayub era initiative had damaged lands and their productivity in the long-term by introducing chemical fertilisers and pesticides. He demands the government give these lands to landless peasants for improving national food security. (Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

### **Cabinet okays policy to manage water resources, rehabilitate Indus Delta**

The provincial cabinet approved the Sindh Water Policy to provide clear directions for use of surface water and groundwater to meet the demands of the province. The cabinet was informed that industries consuming water shall be provided a framework to deliberate and get allocated the water for their production needs. The water allocations to the canal system protected under the Water Apportionment Accord 1991 will have the priority. (Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

## **9.4 # Research & Technology**

### **Deepening Pak-China collaboration to have transformative impact: PARC**

A delegation, led by Wu Yuelang, Department of Science and Technology, Hubei Province, China visited the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) in Islamabad. Wu Yuelang highlighted the significant expertise of the Hubei Agriculture Research Institute in areas such as hybrid rice, soybean, citrus, and animal vaccination. He stressed the institute's exceptional competence in carrying out scientific research activities. During their visit, the delegation had the opportunity to explore the research laboratories at the National Institute of Genomics and Agricultural Biotechnology (NIGAB) and the Plant Genetic Resources Institute (PGRI), expressed their admiration for the ongoing research activities. (Business Recorder, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 7)

## **10 # ENVIRONMENT**

### **Economist ranks Karachi among 'least livable cities'**

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has ranked Pakistan's largest city among the top five 'least livable' urban centres in the world. On the EIU's Global Livability Index 2023, Karachi is ranked 169th out of a total of 173 cities. Only Lagos, Algiers, Tripoli and Damascus are ranked lower than Karachi. Karachi is the only city in Pakistan ranked on the index. The index focuses on the post-Covid recovery of cities across the world, and rates living conditions based on five categories; stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education, and infrastructure. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

## **10.1 # Health**

### **Low-income people: Governor announces issuance of health cards**

The Sindh Governor announced the issuance of free-of-cost health cards to the people with low income up to Rs0.5 million, who had Rs30000 to Rs40000 income. (Business Recorder, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **15 of 19 outsourced KP hospitals get funds after lapse of six months**

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has released funds to all outsourced hospitals, except four health facilities, after lapse of six months. They said that the employees of the outsourced hospitals would start getting salaries after six months following release of funds by the government last week. They said that government had been contracting out its underperforming health centres in the province to private organisations for management under Public-Private Partnership Act, 2016, to improve patient care. So far, 19 hospitals had been handed over to private parties in the province, they added. Sources said that eight of the hospitals were outsourced in 2019 and 11 in 2022, mostly in erstwhile tribal areas, because doctors, paramedics and nurses were not willing to be



posted in the remote and insecure localities. It prompted the government to introduce public-private partnership and improve patient care, they said. Sources said that those hospitals required Rs2.6 billion per year from the government and would receive the same amount in quarterly instalments. (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Plan to build 100-bed hospital in Baldia Town**

A dilapidated hospital building in Baldia Town's Dawood Goth will be completely revamped and turned into a 100bed healthcare facility in less than seven months, said Federal Health Minister Abdul Qadir Patel. (Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 14)

### **Pakistan saw 3rd highest maternal deaths in 2020**

Pakistan ranked third among the top 10 countries with the largest number of maternal deaths, neonatal mortality and stillbirths in 2020. The latest estimates, published jointly by WHO, Unicef and UNFPA in the report titled, 'Improving maternal and newborn health and survival and reducing stillbirth -- the progress report 2023' show there were a combined 4.5 million deaths; maternal deaths (0.29 million), stillbirths (1.9 million), and newborn deaths (2.3 million). The top 10 countries with the highest burden account for 60 per cent of global maternal deaths, stillbirths, and newborn deaths, and 51 per cent of the world's live births. India leads the top 10 countries followed by Nigeria, Pakistan, Congo, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Afghanistan and Tanzania. The estimates were published ahead of the World Population Day. In Pakistan in 2020, the total maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths were 474,000. The share of total maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths was 10 per cent, while the share of total live births was 5 per cent. There were 10,000 maternal deaths during the year, with 207,000 stillbirths and 257,000 neonatal deaths. (Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

### **KP health dept awaits funds to resume free dialysis, cancer treatment**

Health department is awaiting full release of outstanding amount to insurance company by the government to resume free dialysis and treatment of cancer patients along with liver and kidney transplants under Shat Card Plus programme. The caretaker government stopped provision of free medication to patients, whose treatment required more than Rs400,000, on Sehat Card plus (SCP). The patients requiring more money for their treatment were referred to a committee, which approved the amount from the reserved funds of the programme. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### **Health experts discourage use of sugar substitutes**

While international bodies consider a certain amount of daily use of artificial sweetener aspartame as safe, health experts called for discouraging use of all kinds of sugar substitutes in a country like Pakistan where regulatory bodies are persistently failing to deliver. They were speaking against the backdrop of a recently released assessment of aspartame sweetener by the International Agency for Research on Cancer IARC, WHO.

Aspartame has been used in multiple food and beverage products since the 1980s, including diet drinks, chewing gum, ice cream and other dairy products such as yoghurt; breakfast cereals, toothpaste, and medications such as cough drops and chewable vitamins. The IARC has classified aspartame as “possibly carcinogenic to humans”; although another UN committee reaffirmed the acceptable daily intake of 40mg/kg body weight. The joint assessment from IARC, and the Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), which is part of WHO and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), represents the first public intervention by the UN health agency on the widely used sweetener. (Dawn, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

### **10.1.1 #Wide-spread Diseases**

#### **Over 300 gastroenteritis cases reported in a day in Malir village**

Amid government efforts to control the outbreak of gastroenteritis in a Malir village, the number of patients affected by the illness rose to over 300. The health department had earlier stated that 259 people had reported complaints of acute watery diarrhoea at health facilities from Sheedi Goth since June 28. According to authorities, the water samples collected from the area have been found to be contaminated with E.coli (a large and diverse group of bacteria) and Vibrio cholera (the bacteria causing the highly contagious diarrheal disease of cholera). Official data showed that only three out of the 259 patients, who reported with complaints of acute diarrhoea from June 28 till July 3, were tested positive for cholera. The rest seemed to be infected by harmful E.coli causing acute diarrhoea, vomiting and stomach cramps. (Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

#### **As if poverty, despair weren't enough, diarrhoea also hits Sheedi Goth**

Plagued by extreme poverty and mass illiteracy, the Sheedi Goth area in Malir district has all the ingredients for a simmering health crisis that can erupt anytime. The village, part of the union council Darsano Channo of Gadap town, has recently been in the spotlight due to an outbreak of gastroenteritis, affecting hundreds of residents. Officials have blamed contaminated water being used by the residents responsible for the disease outbreak, though they are yet to identify the causative agent(s). According to hospital officials, the total number of patients who reported at the hospital from June 28 till July 7 was around 500. Contrary to the provincial health department's data, which has only one death on record, villagers say at least four people, including an infant, have died during the disease outbreak. (Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

#### **Another 103 hepatitis cases detected in Pindi union council**

Another 103 hepatitis cases were detected in Khayaban-i-Sir Syed Union Council of the garrison city, taking the tally to 206. A total of 10,116 people were screened in the last six days and 61 of them tested positive for hepatitis B and 145 for C. A hepatitis-free programme has been launched in Rawalpindi district by District Health Authority in

collaboration with Coalition for Global Hepatitis Elimination (CGHE). Regional Director Health Dr Anser Ishaq said 15 to 20 million people were affected by hepatitis in the country and every year 500,000 more patients were added to the total. He said the Local Hepatitis Elimination and Prevention (LHEAP) programme had been started in the four union councils of Rawalpindi with the support of the US organisation, Task Force for Global Health, under which hepatitis tests were being conducted at their doorsteps. (Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

## **11 # SOCIO-ECONOMICAL CONDITION**

### **Domestic debt goes up by Rs6tr in FY23**

The domestic debt of the central government increased by Rs6 trillion in the first 11 months of the outgoing FY 23. According to the SBP data, the domestic debt of the central government rose to Rs37.054tr in May from Rs31.085tr, showing an increase of 19.2 per cent or Rs5.969tr. An unprecedented increase in debt servicing due to extensive borrowings has created serious imbalances in the budget for FY 24. The government will spend around Rs7.302tr on debt servicing, more than half of the total budget outlay of Rs14.460tr for the current fiscal year. In the outgoing fiscal year, the government allocated Rs3.95tr, which was later revised to Rs5.520tr.

The SBP data showed that the external debt of the central government increased by 30.8pc during the 11 months of FY 23. In terms of rupees, the external debt increased by Rs5.161tr to Rs21.908tr during the 11 months. During the current fiscal year, the foreign debt servicing will be more than FY 23. According to the budget document, the country will spend Rs872.219bn against Rs510.972bn budgeted for FY 23. It was later revised upward to Rs725.3bn. The central government's total debt increased by Rs11.13tr or 23.3pc to Rs58.962tr during the 11 months of FY 23. The highest amount of Rs4.592tr was borrowed through the auction of Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIBs). The stock of PIBs reached Rs22.279tr till May. (Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **No agri revolution without population control: experts**

While Pakistan has been considering leasing out 4.4m acres of land for corporate farming, experts warned Pakistan would not be able to overcome food security or boost the agri economy without taking measures to control its burgeoning population. The Population and Housing Census 2017 revealed numerous challenges, including 40pc of the population living below the poverty line, 22.8 million children out of school, 9.5 million (38pc) stunted children and around 10,000 maternal deaths per year. Moreover, the rapidly growing population has posed many environmental challenges such as the scarcity and depletion of natural resources such as water, forests, green gases, clean air etc. It is also impacting the social and development sectors, including education, employment, national savings and finances. (Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

## 11.1 # Food

### **The muddled affairs of the food department**

Wheat production in Sindh missed its target by 100,000 tonnes. The procurement target was missed by 0.5 million tonnes in 2022-23. As the Sindh food department was supposed to procure 1.4m tonnes of wheat, the Sindh government imported 0.5m tonnes of grain to maintain consumer reserves for food security. It announced it would approach the federal government to import wheat. The provincial agriculture department's figures showed this year's production at 3.9m tones against a target of 4m ton, but acreage has increased.

The department believed increased acreage is due to impressive support prices and subsidies for rain-hit farmers. Against the wheat sowing target of 2.8m acres, wheat cultivation stood at around 2.9m acres, according to figures. After the 2022 floods, the Sindh government raised the support price for 2022-23 considerably, increasing it from Rs2,200 in 2021-22 to Rs4,000 in 2022-23. Government paid a subsidy of Rs5,000 acre to small- and medium-sized farmers with landholdings of 0-12 acres and 12-25 acres, thus increasing acreage. (Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Business & Finance, Page 2)

### **Rs8.5bn plan launched to combat stunting, malnutrition**

The Ministry of Planning Development and Special Initiatives has launched the “National Multisectoral Nutrition to Reduce Stunting and other forms of Malnutrition” worth Rs8.5 billion under the Pakistan Nutrition Initiatives (PANI). This multisectoral programme is for highly-burdened stunted, calamity-hit and less privileged districts, including 12 districts in Balochistan, 10 in Sindh, five in Gilgit-Baltistan, and two each in Punjab and Azad Kashmir.

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan is a country with a high level of food insecurity as per the National Nutrition Survey (NNS) of 2018, nearly 37 per cent of households are food insecure, with regions like Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's newly merged districts being even worse. Furthermore, 40.2pc of children under the age of five suffer from stunted growth, 29pc are underweight, and 18pc are wasted, and these figures have remained stagnant for over three decades which is why under-nutrition accounts for nearly half of all deaths in children under five.

The most common deficiencies in Pakistan are those of iron, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, zinc, and folic acid. Iron deficiency, leading to issues like anaemia, low birth weight and poor weight gain, affects children the most in the first two years of life. The NNS confirms that 49.1pc of children in the country are iron deficient. He further added that the future of our children is at risk as 40pc are stunted hence, PANI has been launched. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## 11.2 # Food Scarcity

### ***Tonnes of wheat found ‘missing’ in raid on food dept godown***

Over 7,000 wheat bags were found filled only with straws and loose earth at a government godown near Hussain bypass in Khairpur during a jointly conducted raid by officials of the food department and intelligence agency. The food officials said that the raiding team found all 7,785 bags filled with things other than wheat while the godown staff managed to flee during the raid. The town’s residents demanded stern action against the go-down staff and said they had committed a serious crime by misappropriating the grain, which was meant to provide affordable flour to people. (Dawn, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

### ***‘No wheat in Mirpurkhas godowns’***

The Mirpurkhas food department has failed to achieve its target of the procurement of wheat and its godowns are mostly lying empty, said Chakki Flour Association Mirpurkhas. They urged higher authorities to ensure availability of wheat bags in local godowns to stabilise flour price in the market. (Dawn, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

### **Blame game on flour price spike begins**

Millers and Punjab Food Department blame each other for the increase in prices of wheat and its products. Pakistan Flour Mills Association Chairman Asim Raza claims that the ban on storing more than 200 maunds of wheat has led to Rs75 per 40kg further hike in wheat price as its rate in the open market has reached Rs4,725 per 40kg, while the rate of 20kg flour bag has touched the mark of Rs2,800 per bag. If the situation persists for some more days, he fears a ‘further’ shortage of wheat and consequently, the flour becoming more expensive. (Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Crackdown on wheat hoarders ordered**

In a bid to control the rising prices of wheat and flour, Punjab Food Secretary Muhammad Zaman Wattoo has ordered a crackdown on grain hoarders in the province and decided to himself join the department’s raiding teams. The department will pay Rs3,900 per maund, the minimum support price announced for the farmers this season, for the confiscated wheat, which will be used to make flour to be sold at Rs115.8 per kg. (Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

### **Pakistan ranked 99th on Hunger Index**

The Global Hunger Index (GHI-2022) has ranked Pakistan at 99th position out of the 121 countries. The report’s Pakistan chapter reveals the country’s score has dropped from 38.1 in 2006 to 26.1 in 2022, yet the hunger level is considered serious. Zero score indicates a country has no issue of hunger. “The current edition of the GHI reveals that

armed conflicts, climate change, and the coronavirus pandemic are intensifying each other; as a result, up to 828 million people were forced to go hungry. As things stand, 46 countries will not even achieve a low level of hunger by 2030, much less eliminate hunger entirely. In Africa, South of the Sahara and South Asia are once again the regions with the highest rates of hunger. South Asia, the region with the world's highest hunger level, has the highest child stunting rate and by far the highest child wasting rate of any world region". In the latest GHI, Pakistan has ranked 99th out of the 121 countries with sufficient data to calculate 2022 GHI scores. With a score of 26.1, Pakistan has a level of hunger that is serious. (Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **11.3 # Inflation**

### **Eid days witness rise in vegetable prices**

At a time when the masses continue to reel under the highest-ever inflation in the country's 75 years of history, the ongoing Eid holidays resulted in bringing about another wave of inflation as vegetable prices have experienced high volatility thanks to the apathy and indifferent attitude of the local administration. It has been observed that the absence of price control committees, assistant commissioners and other government officials also contributed to the upward spiral in the prices of edibles, especially vegetables. (Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

### **Dwindling incomes, inflation `slashed sacrificial animals sale by 30pc`**

Nearly 781,435 sacrificial animals of all kinds were sold for about Rs100 billion in all 118 regular cattle markets (Mandis) operated by the Punjab Cattle Market Management & Development Company (PCMDC), a subsidiary of the Local Government & Community Development Department, from June 19 to June 29. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Tanneries Association's former chairman Agha Syeddain claims that as many as 6.30 million sacrificial animals worth Rs367 billion approximately were brought for sale. However, a 30pc decline in the sale has also brought down the volume of hide collection. (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

### **Annual inflation exceeds budgetary target**

The government announced that the annual inflation surpassed its budgetary target and remained at 29.18 per cent for 2022-23 owing to the unprecedented rupee depreciation, increase in domestic taxes and rising global commodity prices. The inflation target was projected at 11.5pc for the outgoing fiscal year. It was recorded at 12.15pc in FY 22, according to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Consumer inflation was recorded at 29.4pc in June, easing from the unprecedented 38pc in May. This deceleration was mainly due to a slight reduction in food prices and a high base effect. Inflation had stayed above 20pc from June last year to January. It then hit 31.6pc in February, crossed 35pc in March, escalated to 36.4pc in April and 37.97pc in May now

eased to 29.4pc in June. The reading was 12.15pc in June. Core inflation, which strips out food and energy, stood at 18.5pc in urban areas and 25.2pc in rural areas. The government has increased the interest rate to the highest level of 22pc in the country's history.

High fuel prices have increased production and transportation costs, making food more expensive. The costly fertiliser has also made it difficult for farmers to afford essential inputs. The poultry industry is facing a crisis due to high import costs and restrictions on soybean imports. Although international prices for agriculture-related commodities began decreasing in the third quarter, currency depreciation and high fuel prices have prevented this from being reflected in domestic markets. (Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Sugar retail price soars**

Sugar price within the past three months registered an increase of Rs40 per kg in the retail market, while in the wholesale market, the commodity price has jumped from Rs4,500 per 50-kg bag to Rs6,500 per bag, reflecting an increase of Rs2,000 per bag. In the past three months, the commodity prices kept on steadily increasing in the range of Rs100 per bag to Rs200 per bag weekly which now reached to the highest level of Rs6,500 per 50-kg bag. (Business Recorder, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **Surge in vegetable prices shocks consumers**

After a steep rise in wheat flour and sugar rates, consumers brave another challenge of paying more than double for various vegetables, while pulses despite a drop in wholesale rates being retailed at higher prices. The country's overall vegetable exports in terms of quantity swelled to 1.276m tonnes (\$283m) in 11MFY23. Pakistan's potato production rose by 4.8pc in FY 23 to 8,319,000 tonnes from 7,937,000 tonnes in FY 22, while onion production had dropped by 18pc to 1,684,000 tonnes from 2,062,000 tonnes in FY 22. Wholesale prices of various pulses have fallen by Rs10-25 per kg due to excessive imports. Retailers continued to sell the products at higher rates. The country's pulses import rose to 1.252m tonnes (\$887mn) in 11MFY 23. The average per tonne price of pulses in 11MFY 23 stood higher at \$708. (Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Sugar exports push retail price to Rs150 per kilogram**

Amid the lack of any government interest towards rising commodity prices, the sugar price in Jodia Bazaar, further surged to Rs136-137 per kg from Rs131-132 a few days back mainly due to an export-driven spike in demand. In less than 20 days, the wholesale rates have swelled by Rs19 per kg as speculators and hoarders have taken over the market. According to the data of Large-Scale Manufacturing, sugar production during 11MFY 23 fell by 15pc to 6.7m tonnes from 7.907m tonnes in the same period last fiscal year. Pakistan exported sugar at an average rate of \$484 per tonne. Export from February till to date stood at 214,789 tonnes (\$104m). (Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **Wheat flour prices rise sharply**

Flour prices in Karachi have scaled a new peak of Rs3200 per 20-kilogramme bag, data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) stated. According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 1kg of flour in Karachi now costs Rs320, more than the price of the commodity in Islamabad and Punjab. The data shows that in the last week, Karachi has witnessed a surge of Rs200 in the price of a 20kg bag of flour, increasing the rates to Rs3,200. In Hyderabad, the 20kg bag was available at Rs3,040. (Business Recorder, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **Govt asked to take steps for controlling inflation**

Traders have expressed grave concerns over persistent economic slowdown and asked the government to take prompt and effective steps to overcome the growing inflation. According to a statement, SCCI acting president said that business community had pinned high hopes about economic improvement and stability in the currency rates on a staff level agreement between the government of Pakistan and IMF. However, there was no improvement and stability in the national economy even after getting loan from IMF. (Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

## **Citizens may pay up to Rs50 per unit after power tariff hike**

The federal cabinet has approved the power regulator's request to increase the national average tariff, which will see some residential consumers paying up to Rs7.50 more per unit. (Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **Nepra all set to approve increase of up to Rs7.50 per unit**

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) is all set to accord final approval for massive raise in electricity base rates up to Rs 7.50 per unit (27 percent) for already under financial stress domestic consumers for FY 2023-24, to be effective from July 1, 2023. (Business Recorder, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **11.3.1 # Weekly Inflation Report**

### **Food spikes fuel weekly inflation to 28.5pc**

The short-term inflation, based on the Sensitive Price Index (SPI), posted a year-on-year increase of 28.55 per cent for the week ending on July 6, showed the official data. The short-term inflation decelerated in the past eight weeks in the wake of a slight decrease in petroleum prices. The short-term inflation remained over 45pc for three weeks in May. It reached an all-time high at 48.35pc for the week ending on May 4. On a week-on-week basis, the SPI increased by 0.7pc. (Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)



### **Weekly inflation stays above 28pc**

The short-term inflation, based on the Sensitive Price Index (SPI), posted a year-on-year increase of 28.96 per cent for the week ending on July 13, showed the official data. The inflation stayed above 28pc for the past two weeks, but it decelerated a bit in the past eight weeks because the petroleum price went down a little. In May, the short-term inflation remained over 45pc for three weeks after hitting an all-time high at 48.35pc on May 4. On a week-on-week basis, SPI rose 0.33pc. (Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Weekly inflation rises 29.16pc**

The short-term inflation witnessed a year-on-year increase of 29.16 per cent for the week ending on July 20 mainly due to a sharp increase in the retail price of sugar across the country. In May, the SPI stayed above 45pc for three weeks after hitting an all-time high at 48.35pc on May 4. According to the latest IMF forecast, the average Consumer Price Index (CPI) for FY 24 is projected to be 25.9pc, a notable decrease from the previous year's 29.6pc. The government has been taking harsh measures — hikes in fuel and power tariffs, withdrawal of subsidies, market-based exchange rate and higher taxation — under the IMF programme to generate revenue for bridging the fiscal deficit, which may result in slow economic growth and higher inflation in coming months. (Dawn, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **Weekly inflation stays above 29pc on costly food, energy**

The short-term inflation experienced a notable year-on-year surge of 29.21 per cent for the week ending on July 26. On a week-on-week basis, the short-term inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Index (SPI), rose 3.73pc, the highest increase in the past two months. The IMF has projected that the average Consumer Price Index (CPI) will be 25.9pc in FY24, a notable decrease from the previous year's 29.6pc. However, it's worth noting that it is expected to ease below 20pc only in the fourth quarter of the current fiscal year. Despite this positive outlook, price pressures are still expected to remain high, mainly due to the delayed implementation of monetary tightening and elevated inflation expectations. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **12 #CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **12.1 #Climate Crisis**

#### **Climate change: report says Punjab on list of most vulnerable regions**

Over the past 30 years (1975–2005), the minimum temperature of Punjab has increased by 0.97°C and the maximum temperature by 1.14°C, putting it on the list of most vulnerable regions to climate change. Increased intensity of floods, droughts and heat waves are the direct outcomes of climate change and it is also making the national food security vulnerable. In 2022, Punjab experienced torrential rains and severe floods

damaging over 438,000 acres of crops/orchards, 733,000 livestock and up to 50% of water systems. Cost of loss and damages from 2022 floods in Southern Punjab was estimated to be 566 and 515 million USD respectively. This has been claimed in the Punjab State of Environment Report 2022 published recently by the Environment Protection Department (EPD) and released to media. Monitoring of the ambient air quality of Lahore in the year 2022 revealed that there were only 17 days of good or satisfactory AQI (PM2.5) out of the total 309 monitored days.

Long-term exposure to particulate matter puts serious health implications on public health such as exacerbation of respiratory infections, allergies, eye infections and cardiac diseases. World Bank estimates Pakistan's annual burden of disease from outdoor air pollution to be responsible for around 22,000 premature adult deaths. Avoidable deaths attributed to ischemic heart disease and lung cancer in Pakistan accounts to over 2 million people and the total cost related to this mortality is 1 billion USD. WHO reports that the exceeding levels of air pollution have resulted in the loss of 5.3 and 4.8 years of life expectancy from 1998-2016 among populations of Lahore and Faisalabad cities respectively. Water scarcity and water pollution are the other key issues in the Province. Poor agricultural and industrial practices are leading to resource wastage thereby affecting per capita water availability. (Business Recorder, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

### **Alarm as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa records temperature rise**

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa meteorological department has said that the temperature has increased by 2-4 degree Celsius in the plains of the province and 2-6 degree Celsius in its northern areas. It also revealed that massive tree felling led to the increase in heat index, while cyclones in the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea also had a bad impact on the weather. He said that rains were caused by winds from the East Bay of Bengal and the South Arabian Sea after they mixed up with the westerly weather system mostly crossing into Pakistan from northern Afghanistan. The official said that the impact of climate change could be a decline in the water table because water evaporated in high temperatures. He added that energy consumption increased in hot weather, especially in urban areas due to the heat generated by air conditioners. "When there is heat, the people in urban areas turn on air conditioners, which produce more heat".

Experts believe that unplanned development activities and uncontrolled population are some of the major causes of the rising temperature in the province. Environmentalist Adil Zareef told that carbon emission, deforestation, unplanned infrastructure development, industry and uncontrolled population were chiefly to blame for the rising temperature in the region. He said that nobody could deny climate change, but authorities hadn't developed a climate change action plan. The expert said that when it came to climate change, Pakistan was the fourth or fifth high-risk country but authorities were doing nothing to check massive deforestation. (Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

## **Mountains facing real risk as glaciers are melting faster than average: Sherry**

Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman said the book underscoring the beauty of northern Pakistan reminded what was at stakes in the highly glaciated region due to climate change. The GLOF-II was a joint initiative of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, United Nations Development Programme-Pakistan (UNDP) supported by the Green Climate Fund. Pakistan has the largest glaciers outside the polar region and the experience of watching Indus River passing by the mountains in the north is a humbling feeling. She added that the mountains were facing real risk as glaciers were melting faster than average. She said the glacial melt was probably beyond 300 per cent. The minister noted that there was no data available on the pace of melting glaciers. (Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

## **12.2 # Climate Policy**

### **`Reset financial system to fight climate change`**

Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman has said developing countries like Pakistan need a global reset of the financial system to meet their growing climate resilience needs. Ms Rehman met with a delegation led by Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, the president-designate of COP28 and UAE Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology. The focus on finance was particularly emphasised, aiming to ensure its availability, accessibility, and affordability, especially for countries that require it. Ms Rehman emphasised the need to bridge the gap between action and ambition, with specific priorities to reduce the growing gaps between the global north and south. (Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

### **Pakistan gets \$66m GCF grant to fight climate change**

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has announced \$66 million in funding to support the government of Pakistan's efforts to reduce the twin climate impacts of flooding and drought. The investment will improve the resilience of some of the country's most vulnerable communities affected by the impacts of climate change, including catastrophic flooding. The seven-year project titled Recharge Pakistan: Building Pakistan's Resilience to Climate Change through Ecosystem-Based Adaptation for Integrated Flood Risk Management is the largest investment at the national level to date in an ecosystem-based approach to flood and water resources management.

The project — a collaboration between the ministry of climate change, the federal flood commission under the ministry of water resources and the World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-P) — will demonstrate the effectiveness of ecosystem-based adaptation and green infrastructure as an innovative addition to the nation's traditional grey infrastructure solutions to flood and drought. This will be achieved through restoration and reforestation of forests and wetlands; rehabilitation of water flow paths and

channels; development of recharge basins and retention areas; and strengthening the climate resilience of local businesses in the agriculture and forests sectors. In addition to the GCF funding, the project is supported through a collective \$12 million investment and technical support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Coca-Cola Foundation and WWF-Pakistan. Collectively, the project's interventions will directly benefit over 600,000 people and will indirectly benefit close to 7,000,000 people. (Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 14)

### **Project launched to foster climate-smart practices in Balochistan**

The Balochistan government has joined hands with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations to mobilise policy support for driving sectoral development and fostering climate-smart practices in agriculture and fisheries in the province. FAO Representative in Pakistan Florence Rolle and Gwadar-Lasbela Livelihood Support Project (GLLSP-II) Director Rehmat Dashti signed a Unilateral Trust Fund (UTF) agreement. The collaboration will be implemented through GLLSP-II, a project financed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The six-year project aims to promote climate-resilient agriculture and livestock farming systems, empower smallholders with knowledge and skills and enable them to build better resilience (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

### **Adaptation plan to battle climate change**

With the country seemingly at the mercy of the elements, the federal cabinet approved the Ministry of Climate Change's National Adaptation Plan (NAP), in a bid to put Pakistan on the road to climate resilience. Aimed at facilitating collaboration among different stakeholders, the NAP would serve as an effective tool for climate finance mobilisation. According to the plan, a conservative estimate of the investment needs for a comprehensive response to Pakistan's climate and development challenges between 2023 and 2030 amounts to approximately \$348 billion, or 10.7 percent of the cumulative GDP for the same period. As per a retrospective review of funding levels in recent years, NAP suggests that approximately \$39 billion of public finances and \$9 billion from public-private partnerships for infrastructure will be available for this purpose over the next decade.

NAP is a framework that will identify who needs to implement what part of the overall plan, outlining what federal ministries need to do, what part the provinces will play and what duties fall to local bodies. NAP is governed by 10 essential guidelines — include integrating climate adaptation, strategic thinking, evidence-based decision-making, promoting nature-based solutions, acting locally, leaving no one behind, thinking ahead and staying flexible, addressing inequity, fostering coordination and collaboration, and building capacity and knowledge. These guidelines govern priorities, which include the agriculture-water nexus, natural and human capital, urban resilience, disaster risk management, and gender, youth and social inclusion.

The plan also outlines potential challenges to their accomplishment. For example, regulatory barriers, limited institutional capacity, a lack of awareness, financial resources and adequate data for decision-making are all taken into account. The document also outlines the responsibilities of various governments, as well as highlighting the role of the Pakistan Climate Change Council, which will be the apex advisory body that will provide strategic advice on the implementation framework. (Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

## **13 #CLIMATE DISASTERS**

### **Switzerland to help improve response to natural disasters**

Pakistan and Switzerland signed a MoU aimed at preventing natural disasters and improving response to them in Pakistan, envisaged bilateral cooperation in disaster risk management including preparedness, response and recovery aimed at reducing the adverse impact on people and national economy. (Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **13.1 # Flood**

#### **Man, two children electrocuted**

Hill torrents from Balochistan have started flooding the Sim Nullah across the Kirthar mountain range disconnecting many villages of Dadu districts from the taluka headquarters, Johi. The mountains and parts of adjoining Dadu district received heavy spells of rains. A man and two children were electrocuted during the downpour, which led to an angry demonstration held by local residents against Hesco. Flooding of the Sim Nullah has disconnected the land communication between Johi and some 20 villages. (Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

#### **95 evacuated as water from India floods rivers**

At least 95 people, including five Rangers personnel, stranded near Ravi and Tawi rivers were rescued as water in the rivers rose to dangerous levels due to increased inflows from India, officials confirmed. A state of emergency was imposed in Narowal, approximately 15km west of the international border, as authorities expect high water flows in Ravi river. (Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

#### **300 families relocated as Sutlej flows in `moderate` flood**

At least 300 families from more than 20 villages in Pakpattan and Arifwala tehsils were evacuated as River Sutlej experienced a “moderate” flood, inundating farmlands and nearby areas, prompting the authorities to deploy hundreds of rescuers. According to authorities, water flow at Sulemanki Headworks was at 87,583 cusecs downstream and in case of more influx, the intensity of flood could increase from moderate to high.

In Pakpattan district, several villagers complained that the district administration and rescue personnel were not helping the locals stranded in tiny settlements on the floodplain on both sides of Sutlej. They also claimed the administration was not providing them with food in the emergency camps established at 12 safe spots. Due to flooding, many crops, including cotton, maize and rice, cultivated on hundreds of acres of land, have been destroyed. A number of mud houses also crumbled after river water entered the localities. The relief commissioner stated that 26,248 individuals have been safely relocated along the Sutlej belt. (Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **River Sutlej inundates localities, destroys crops**

Several localities were submerged and crops sown over several acres of land were destroyed after 76, 000 cusecs of water passing through River Sutlej at Arifwala burst its banks. (Business Recorder, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

### **Eight months on, flood victims still await relief: SHRC final report**

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has urged the government to form a special committee tasked with launching relief and rehabilitation operation for the victims of last year's devastating flood in the worst hit talukas in Khairpur district, who are still awaiting relief eight months after the disaster. (Dawn, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

### **Flash floods continue to wreak havoc in GB**

Flash floods triggered by glacial lake outbursts continued to wreak havoc across Gilgit-Baltistan, damaging at least 10 houses and two shops in Ghizer district. Link roads to the valley have also been disconnected. The floods also swept away standing crops and corn fields, cherry and apricot orchards, and damaged three water channels that are the sources of irrigation and drinking water for many residents. Earlier, the Juglot-Skardu Road was blocked after landslides in the Roundu area. Heavy floods in nullahs at Duro Kariko of Skardu damaged thousands of trees, cultivated land and crops. Residents have urged the government to immediately provide financial relief as they depend on agriculture for their livelihood. (Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **Hundreds of villages submerged as low to medium floods hit Punjab**

Hundreds of villages in various areas of the province were submerged under water due to the low to medium floods in the Ravi, Sutlej, and Indus rivers. In Chiniot and other districts, several dozen people have been displaced, and several small dams along the banks of River Sutlej in Arifwala have been washed away. Evacuations have also begun in the katcha areas of South Punjab as the water level rises in Chenab and Indus rivers in Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan, and Rahim Yar Khan. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority has reported low to medium-level flooding at Tarbela, Kalabagh, Taunsa, and Chashma in the Indus River. (Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

## **Indus River in medium flood after rise in temperatures, torrential rains**

With the Indus River receiving increased flows due to different factors including rise in temperature in upper reaches, torrential rains and eastern river flows, Guddu barrage records medium flood followed by low flood at Sukkur barrage and normal flows at Kotri barrage. (Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

## **Child swept away in Swabi flash flood**

With rain lashing Gadoon Amazai area of Swabi district, a five-year-old child was killed there after being swept away in the flash flood. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

## **Guddu, Sukkur barrages in medium flood as peak arrives**

Guddu Barrage started receiving peak of the current floods which would reach Sukkur Barrage. Both the barrages have now attained a state of 'medium floods'. (Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

## **13.2 # Lightning**

### **Lightning kills three as downpour batters many districts in Sindh**

Many districts of Sindh received long spells of heavy rainfall followed by more intermittent spells evening badly affecting civic infrastructure and power supply network, besides causing flooding in urban areas. Lightning killed at least three persons and injured two others in three different incidents in Jamshoro and Badin districts. (Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

### **Lightning injures two, flash floods damage dozen homes in GB**

At least two workers were struck by lightning and injured in Gilgit-Baltistan, where flash floods also damaged over a dozen homes and a powerhouse and temporarily blocked key roads like the Karakoram Highway (KKH) and the Juglot-Skardu Road. Besides, a flash flood in Muthat Nallah in Diamer damaged eight houses, 100 kanals of land, 10 cattle sheds, trees, and water channels. The flood also damaged a two-megawatt powerhouse near Raikot. A flash flood from Supetar Nallah damaged 100 kanals of cultivated land in Tokorkot village in Nagar Khas. It also damaged a reinforced cement concrete (RCC) bridge in Tokorkot village. Some 113 disaster events last year resulted in the loss of 23 lives across the region. (Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **Lightning kills man in Thar**

A man died after lightning struck his house in Walji Colony of Islamkot town during light to moderate showers across the Tharparkar region. Several areas of Nagaparkar, Chhachhro, Dahli, Islamkot, Mithi, Diplo and Kaloi taluka were again blessed with bounteous showers. (Dawn, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

## **13.3 # Rainfall**

### **50 lives lost to rains in two weeks**

Since the start of monsoon rains almost two weeks ago, at least 50 people have lost their lives in various rain-related incidents — including landslides — across Pakistan, as a fresh spell of rain in Gilgit-Baltistan caused mudslides on Karakoram Highway, marooning thousands of travellers on the highway. Meanwhile, after up to two inches of snowfall on Babusar Top and adjacent hills the road has been closed for traffic. (Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **63 people die in rain-related incidents since Jun 26: NDMA**

At least 63 people have lost their lives and 87 were injured owing to flash floods triggered by pre-monsoon rains across the country since June 26, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) revealed. Owing to the various rain-related incidents over the past 10 days, 62 houses were also damaged. Moreover, 15 livestock also died owing to the flooding. At least eight children died owing to a landslide in district Shangla of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. (Business Recorder, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **Heavy rain lashes several areas in country**

Heavy rain lashed Rawalpindi, Islamabad and other parts of upper Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Islamabad and Rawalpindi received the heaviest of rainfall for the second consecutive day where the administration had to declare rain emergency, forcing the use of machinery to pump out water from the submerged roads and localities. (The News, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

### **14,000 evacuated during monsoon rains**

More than 14,000 people and their cattle were evacuated from villages in eastern Pakistan. The summer monsoon brings South Asia 70-80 percent of its annual rainfall between June and September and is vital for the livelihoods of millions of farmers in a region of around two billion people. But it also brings landslides and floods, and scientists have said climate change is making seasonal rains heavier and more unpredictable. (Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **12 killed, 181 injured in rain-related incidents: NDMA**

The death toll from the monsoon rains in Pakistan has reached 111 as authorities reported 12 more deaths in rain-related incidents in the past 24 hours while nationwide injuries stood at 181 people. According to the NDMA's daily situation report, owing to the various rain-related incidents, at least 130 houses are also damaged, of which, 113 partially and 17 fully destroyed. Moreover, 170 livestock also perished owing to the flooding. (Business Recorder, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 14)



### ***Death toll rises to 168 in country's monsoon mayhem***

In Sindh province, 342 houses were damaged in the past 24 hours, of which 18 were fully destroyed and 324 partially. In Balochistan, 280 houses were damaged of which 80 were fully destroyed and 200 were partially damaged. In KPK, three houses were partially damaged and one house apiece was damaged in the AJK and Punjab. The floods have also killed 44 livestock in the past 24 hours, of which, 25 in the Punjab, 16 in Sindh, and three in Balochistan.

The NDMA has warned of about urban flooding and landslides during the current weekend days as well as next week as torrential rains coupled with severe weather conditions have wreaked havoc across several parts of the country, resulting in the loss of at least 168 lives, injuring 254, killing 374 livestock, damaging 1,270 houses and damage to infrastructure across the country especially in AJK, Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan (G-B) and the KPK. According to the NDMA daily situation report owing to the various rain-related incidents, at least, 1,270 houses are also damaged.

According to the NDMA's data, the majority of the deaths are reported in Punjab and mainly caused by electrocution and building collapse. In Punjab, a total of 67 people including 30 men, 11 women, and 26 children have lost their lives, while another 158 people including 70 men, 49 women, and 39 children have sustained injuries. Moreover, 78 houses are also damaged in Punjab and three livestock lost.

In KPK, 46 people including nine men, eight women, and 29 children have lost their lives. In KPK, 60 people including 17 men, 15 women, and 28 children have been injured. A total of 299 houses, of which, 251 were partially and 48 were totally destroyed in KPK as well as 125 livestock killed.

In Sindh province, 21 people including eight men, three women, and 10 children died owing to rain-related incidents. The NDMA, so far reported 10 injuries from Sindh, of which, five men, four women and one child. According to official data, 213 livestock losses are reported from Sindh province, wherein, a total of 342 houses are damaged of which 18 fully and 324 partially.

In Balochistan province, a total of 10 people including six men, two women and two children lost their lives, wherein, 13 people including five men, two women, and six children sustained injuries. Moreover, 302 houses are also damaged in Balochistan, of which, 86 were fully and 216 were partially and two livestock were also killed by floodwaters.

In Islamabad Capital Territory 11 men have lost their lives owing to the floodwaters and five men sustained injuries, no house has been damaged in Islamabad and no cattle loss is reported from the federal capital.

In G-B region floodwaters have killed five people including one man, three women and one child, while two men sustained injuries in G-B region, wherein, a total 22 houses are also damaged of which eight fully and 14 partially. Moreover, 15 livestock losses are also reported in the G-B region.

The authorities have reported eight deaths in the AJK region, including three men, four women and one child. In AJK, six people including two men and four women also sustained injuries. Some 227 houses are also damaged in the AJK while floodwaters have killed 16 cattle in the AJK region.

The NDMA said that heavy rains might increase the flow of water in rivers, therefore, rains and flooding were likely to inundate low-lying areas. NDMA, issued instructions to the concerned institutions and said they should continue to monitor the release of water in rivers from Indian dams. (Business Recorder, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **14 # NATURAL DISASTER**

### **Eight children buried alive in Shangla landslide**

At least eight children were buried alive in a landslide in the Kuz Kalay area of Martung tehsil. Locals and rescuers said that the children were playing cricket at an open space along a hill in Kuz Kalay area when the landslide struck, burying them alive. (Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### **Landslide kills two children in Swat**

Two children were killed and two others seriously injured after a massive landslide buried them alive. “Four children from the neighbouring houses were playing near the construction area when a huge landslide buried them,” she said, adding a rescue team retrieved the children from the debris, and shifted them to Hospital, where two children, Subhan and Manal were declared dead. (Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

## **15 # RESISTANCE**

### **Power protesters storm Peshawar grid station on Eid day**

Hundreds of people from the outskirts of the provincial capital stormed a grid station and shut down feeders complaining about prolonged power suspension amid hot and humid weather. The protesters complained that the prolonged power outages in the pre-monsoon weather had spoiled Eid festivity and forced them into staging street protests and storming the grid station. The protesters said that authorities had promised them power supply on alternate hours. (Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### **BNP-M strike paralyses life in Balochistan**

Balochistan remained cut off from the rest of the country due to a wheel-jam strike observed across the province on the call of opposition Balochistan National Party (BNP-

Mengal) against the worsening law and order situation in the Wadh area of Khuzdar district. Hundreds of BNP-M workers and leaders, including members of the provincial and national assemblies gathered at various points of different towns and cities and blocked highways. (Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

### **Power riots erupt in Lyari as police fire tear gas at protesters**

Residents of Lyari staged a violent protest against prolonged loadshedding in their area and blocked both tracks of Mauripur Road, stopping vehicular traffic and forcing police to fire tear gas shells and baton charge the protesters. A large number of people, including women and children, staged a sit-in on Mauripur Road near Dua Hotel. (Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

### **Rally held in Mirpurkhas for official rate of cotton**

Sindh United Party (SUP) activists, along with members of several other nationalist groups and cotton growers organised a rally from State Life Building to the DC Office over government's inaction with regard to the implementation of its notification fixing the cotton procurement rate at Rs8,500 per 40kgs. Their leaders claimed that ginners, factory owners and traders were offering an extremely low rates to the growers, who had no option but to dispose of their produce at these rates and suffer heavy losses. Cost of cotton production had already increased due to inflation and an unprecedented hike in the prices of all agricultural inputs (Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

### **BNP-M holds march against poor law, order**

A large number of workers of the Balochistan National-Party staged rallies in Quetta and other towns of the province to protest against what they called the worsening law and order and free movement of armed groups in Wadh town. Participants said the issue of Wadh is being painted as tribal when it is political. They said that BNP-M had waged a struggle against injustice, human rights violations, forced disappearances of workers and lamented that the government. (Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

### **Salaried class launches drive against tax hike**

Salaried class has launched a campaign against the substantial increase in the incidence of tax on individuals under the Finance Act 2023. In this connection, the salaried class under the banner of "Save the Salaried Class" has launched a country-wide campaign. (Business Recorder, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **Displaced families stage big rally against govt's apathy**

With monsoon clouds looming over the city, the desperate affectees of Gujjar and Orangi Nullahs, Mujahid Colony, the Karachi Circular Railway and other areas, which saw swift and insensitive demolitions and forced evictions in the name of 'clean-up

operations’, are once again reminding the authorities of their plight, their basic right as human beings to having a roof over their heads. The Ghar Bahali Rally organised by the Karachi Bachao Tehreek comprised thousands of affectees, including women, children, the elderly and the disabled, all demanding immediate resettlement and rehabilitation. (Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

### **Highway blocked over protest for recovery of missing person**

Traffic between Quetta and Karachi remained suspended for several hours after the relatives of a missing person blocked N-25 highway. (Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

### **Abbasi Shaheed doctors protest non-payment of salaries**

A large number of house officers and postgraduate trainees protested at the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital (ASH) over non-payment of salaries. Condemning the “government’s discriminatory attitude”, they demanded the same salary structure as currently being offered to their counterparts working at other public sector healthcare facilities. About the government’s “discrimination”, doctors explained that the house officers received Rs45,000 and postgraduate trainees Rs75,000 at the ASH. The house officers at other public sector hospitals, including Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) and National Institute of Child Health (NICH), they pointed out, were getting Rs65,000 and postgraduate trainees over Rs100,000. (Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

### **Protesting employees lock govt offices**

The Punjab government employees locked government offices, including deputy commissioner (DC) office on the second day of their protest. The protesters are demanding 35pc increase in their salaries. The employees set up a protest camp and locked the deputy commissioner’s office for the first time. A protest was organised by the District Coordination Council Rawalpindi. The protesters chanted slogans in favour of their demands and also brought out a rally from the Deputy Commissioner’s Office to Kutchery Chowk.

Employees in Taxila also staged a protest, locking doors of various government offices, especially municipal committees, education, health, buildings, roads, social welfare and public health engineering.

The Punjab government employees also observed a pen-down strike and staged a sit-in. On the call of all Pakistan Municipal Employees Federation, Punjab Teachers Union, Pakistan Allied Health Professionals Association and All Pakistan Clerks Association (APCA), officials staged a peaceful sit-in in front of their respective offices to register their protest against the Punjab government for not giving 35pc raise in salaries as given to the federal government employees. (Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 4)

## **Activists seek end to `ruthless` felling of Kabal forests**

Youth and civil society activists demanded an end to the 'ruthless' cutting of precious trees in Dukat village of Kabal tehsil. Talking to reporters, they said illegal cutting of trees had been continuing in the mountains of Kabal tehsil for last past few months, but the forest department officials did not take action against the timber mafia despite public complaints. They said forest department officials and guards did not perform their duty. They threatened to take to the streets if the illegal practice was not stopped forthwith. The relevant officials didn't pick calls or responded to the text messages to know their version on the matter. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

## **19 held as law enforcers baton-charge protesting teachers**

Police and Rangers fired water cannons, tear-gas shells and baton-charged government schoolteachers, including women, to prevent them from moving towards the Chief Minister House to stage a demonstration for fulfilment of their demands. The protesting Primary School Teachers (PSTs) have been protesting for regularisation of their services, provision of basic facilities at schools, etc. South SSP Syed Asad Raza said that 19 protesting teachers were taken into custody. He said around 200-300 schoolteachers gathered in front of the Karachi Press Club (KPC) for fulfilment of their demands. Later, the protestors gathered at the KPC and gave a call for protest on Thursday (today) at CM House if their demands were not fulfilled and their colleagues were not released. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

## **Clerks and teachers stick to their guns as protest enters sixth day**

As the protest by clerks and teachers entered the fifth day across Punjab, the protesters announced to remain determined and continue their struggle till acceptance of their demands for a raise in salary and other benefits in line with the package announced for the federal government employees. They also vowed to intensify the protest drive by taking out processions and blocking roads. According to the protesters, all provinces, except Punjab, followed the pattern of raise in salary and other benefits as per the announcement made in the federal budget for the central government employees. (Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 2)

## **Kohat women block road against power, gas outages**

Women of Junglkhel blocked the old Indus highway against electricity loadshedding of 18 hours and 11 hours of gas suspension, raising slogans against the Peshawar Electric Supply Company and the SNGPL. The women protesters scuffled with the police at Gulla Bera square when the latter tried to open the road. The protesters said they along with their children had sleepless nights due to power outages amid hot and humid weather. They also complained about extremely low voltage, damaging their home appliances. (Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

## **Climate March demands urgent steps to save fast degrading environment**

The Climate March 2023, which saw a large number of individuals, communities and organisations walking from Frere Hall to the Karachi Press Club, was all about committed people joining forces to amplify their message and bring attention to the urgent need for doing something for climate change and environmental preservation. It was not just about holding up placards and chanting slogans, though there was plenty of that as well. The participants in the march tried to raise awareness and inspire action by talking sense and opening eyes. (Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 13)

## **CAA employees protest against outsourcing of major airports**

The Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority employees staged a protest by putting on black armbands at several airports against the government's decision to outsource the operations and land assets of three significant airports. The government has kicked off the outsourcing of operations and land assets at three major airports to be run through a public-private partnership, a move to generate foreign exchange reserves. The Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) had also informed the National Assembly Standing Committee on Aviation that the government started a process to outsource the management and operations of the airports in Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore to generate foreign exchange reserves for its faltering economy. The committee, however, clarified that PCCA was not selling the airports; they were only handing over the operation and management controls for a period of time. CAA employees staged protests at the airports of Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Sukkur, Gilgit, Multan, Rahim Yar Khan, and Skardu. (Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

## **Prolonged power breakdown after rain sparks protests**

Prolonged power breakdown amid high levels of temperature and humidity in the wake of heavy rain brought normal life to a grinding halt and sparked protest in Mirprukhas and Badin districts. Enraged protesters wielding sticks raised slogans against the power utility outside the main entrance to the Hesco office, which was closed during the protest. The protesters demanded restoration of power supply and immediate repair of faulty transformers. (Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

## **Hundreds stage *peace rally in KP's Tirah valley***

Slogans against the growing terrorist attacks and calls for restoration of peace reverberated during a rally organised by the Bara Siyasi Ittehad in Tirah valley. Hundreds of tribesmen, mostly youth, converged on the valley's main business centre Bagh-Maidan Markaz to participate in the "peace rally". Most of them wore white as a symbol of peace. The speakers called for an immediate end to the rising targeted killing and extortion incidents and "free" movement of militants in parts of the Khyber tribal district. They urged authorities, especially the security establishment, to check the

killing of innocent tribesmen as well as the “second phase of proxy war imposed in tribal districts to attract foreign aid.” (Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### **Charsadda residents protest delay in bridge reconstruction**

The residents of Tangi tehsil blocked the road in Abazai area to protest the delay in reconstruction of the Munda headworks and a bridge, which were washed away in the last year`s flash floods. The protesters chanted slogans against the irrigation department. The protesters dispersed after irrigation department`s sub-divisional officer Mr Manan held talks with them, assuring that the department`s executive engineer would finalise the bridge`s reconstruction in a week. (Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### **Wapda union warns of province-wide protest**

The All Pakistan Wapda Hydro Electric Workers Union Larkana chapter has warned that it may opt for a province-wide protest and disconnect power supply to the Sindh government offices and departments to force it to cancel plan for taking over the control of Hesco and Sepco. Outsourcing the power utilities was a step against the collective interests of the country. Department of water and power was a federal subject and the Sindh government`s attempts of takeover were in contravention of the constitution and violation of the laws. (Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 15)

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# 1 #AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

## Global agriculture to rise at a slower pace: report

Global agricultural and food production are projected to continue to increase over the next 10 years, but at a slower pace of growth than the previous decade due to demographic trends, says a report jointly released by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The report titled, 'ECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2023-2032', being the key global reference for medium-term prospects for agricultural commodity markets, says while uncertainty has risen due to geopolitical tensions, adverse climate trends, animal and plant diseases and increased price volatility for key agricultural inputs, global production of crops, livestock products and fish are projected to grow at an average annual rate of 1.1 per cent during the period, half the pace recorded in the decade ending in 2015.

Greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture are expected to increase by 7.5 per cent in the next decade – just less than half the projected output growth – indicating a significant fall in the carbon intensity of agricultural production. The livestock sector is projected to account for 86 per cent of the increased emissions. The report estimates that the total food consumption is expected to rise by 1.3 per cent per annum to 2032, indicating an increase in the share of agricultural commodities used as food.

In a special assessment of key farming input prices, which have risen significantly in the past two years, the outlook calculates that every 10 per cent increase in fertilizer prices leads to a 2 per cent increase in food costs, with the burden falling mainly on the poor, who spend a larger share of their budget on food.

Findings of the report say the demand for growth in cereals production is projected to slow, in part as per capita food consumption of most cereals is reaching saturation levels in many countries. In 2032, it is estimated that 41 per cent of all cereals will be directly consumed by humans, 37 per cent will be used for animal feeds, and biofuels and other industrial uses will account for the rest.

Global crop production growth will be mainly driven by continued progress in plant breeding and a transition to more intensive production systems. Yield improvements are projected to account for 79 per cent of global crop production growth, cropland expansion for 15 per cent, and higher cropping intensity for 6 per cent over the Outlook period. Global production of livestock and fish is projected to expand by 1.3 per cent annually over the next decade, slower than seen in the recent past. Poultry meat is projected to account for almost half the increase in total meat production through 2032. (Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

## **Hague court rules against India in row over dams**

In a major win for Pakistan, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague rejected India's objections to its assumption of jurisdiction in a dispute between the neighbouring countries over the Kishanganga and Ratle Hydroelectric projects, pursuant to the Indus Waters Treaty. Deciding in favour of Pakistan, the PCA ruled that it was indeed the competent authority to determine the Kishanganga dispute between Pakistan and India. The dispute pertains to concerns raised by Pakistan over India's construction of the 330-megawatt Kishanganga hydroelectric project on the River Jhelum and plans to construct the 850MW Ratle hydroelectric project on the Chenab in Indian-held Jammu & Kashmir. (Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **2 #AGRICULTURAL INPUTS**

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## **4 #NON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

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## **5 #TRADE**

### **India ties up with UAE to settle trade in rupees**

India has signed an agreement with the United Arab Emirates that will allow it to settle trade in rupees instead of dollars, boosting India's efforts to cut transaction costs by eliminating dollar conversions. The two countries also agreed to set up a real-time payment link to facilitate easier cross-border money transfers. Bilateral trade between the two countries was \$84.5 billion in the year from April 2022 to March 2023. (Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 9)

### **India bans most rice shipments as monsoon hits crops**

India has prohibited the export of non-basmati white rice with immediate effect, after a late start to seasonal monsoon rains hurt the crop and raised fears of a production shortfall. The late arrival of the monsoon led to a large rain deficit up to mid-June. And while heavy rains since the last week of June have erased the shortfall, they have caused significant damage to crops. India accounts for more than 40% of world rice exports. Rice is a staple for more than 3 billion people, and nearly 90% of the water-intensive crop is produced in Asia. Global prices are already hovering at their highest level in 11 years. (Business Recorder, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **6 #CORPORATE SECTOR**

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## **7 #INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN**

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## **8 #INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

### **Developing Asia on track to grow faster in 2023: ADB**

Developing Asia is on track to grow faster in 2023 from a year earlier as strong consumption and investment offset the impact of weak global demand, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said. In an update to its regional economic outlook, the ADB kept its 2023 growth forecast for developing Asia at 4.8%, but revised a tad lower its estimate for next year to 4.7% from 4.8% in April. Developing Asia consists of 46 economies in the Asia-Pacific and excludes Japan, Australia and New Zealand. The ADB maintained its growth projections for subregions East Asia and South Asia, with China and India still expected to expand 5.0% and 6.4% this year, respectively, and 4.5% and 6.7% in 2024, but trimmed slightly its outlook for Southeast Asia. Growth in Southeast Asia is now expected at 4.6% this year and 4.9% next year, down from 4.7% and 5.0% previously, the ADB said, due mainly to weaker global demand for exports. An upside risk to the growth outlook of developing Asia is slower inflation, which has allowed most central banks in the region to hold off tightening, helping underpin domestic consumption. The region's inflation is forecast to slow to 3.6% this year from its previous forecast of 4.2%, with the rate expected to decelerate further to 3.4% in 2024. (Business Recorder, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

## **9 #POLICY**

### **Scientists engineer fruit flies capable of `virgin birth`**

Scientists said they have genetically engineered female fruit flies that can have offspring without needing a male, marking the first time “virgin birth” has been induced in an animal. The offspring of the flies were also able to give birth without mating, the trait could be passed down generations. Virgin birth, also called parthenogenesis, is rare but not unheard of in the animal kingdom. The fly (*Drosophila melanogaster*) is one of the most studied animals for genetic research. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

## **10 #ENVIRONMENT**

### **Over 50 pilot whales die after mass stranding on Scottish beach**

More than 50 pilot whales have died in Scotland after being stranded on a beach on the Isle of Lewis — the largest mass stranding in the country in decades. Rescuers later decided to euthanise the remaining stranded whales on welfare grounds. In total 55 whales died and one is believed to have survived. The Scottish Marine Animal

Stranding Scheme (SMASS) said it would begin examining the bodies of the mammals to determine the cause of the stranding. (Dawn, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

## **Polluting shipping to face climate reckoning**

The hefty carbon footprint of global shipping networks that crisscross our oceans and keep the world's economy afloat will come under scrutiny next week, as countries wrestle over measures to slash planet-heating pollution. Nations are under pressure to agree ambitious emission reduction targets and consider a tax on pollution by the sector at a key meeting of the International Maritime Organisation. Currently shipping belches out roughly the same level of greenhouse gases as aviation. The IMO Marine Environment Protection Commission (MEPC) meeting, held in London, is likely to pit climate-vulnerable nations — particularly Pacific islands — and some richer countries against big exporters such as China. Shipping, which is responsible for around two per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, is judged to be off course in the fight against climate change.

Efforts to decarbonise so far centre around a 2018 IMO decision that instructed shipping firms to reduce CO2 emissions by 50pc by 2050, from 2008 levels. But that target is considered insufficient given the level of global emissions and compared to other industries, including aviation, which is aiming for net zero by the same mid-century deadline. Nations in support of more ambitious cuts want the IMO to align its goals with the Paris Agreement's global warming limit of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times. Some 45 countries — including the European Union, the United States, Britain, Fiji, the Marshall Islands and Norway — support a net zero target for the sector by 2050. Most also support an intermediate target for 2030. But emerging market exporters, particularly Brazil and China, have strongly resisted a change, according to observers at talks that started in late June ahead of the decision-making MEPC meeting.

A briefing note circulated by China framed the proposals as “unrealistic” and an effort by developed countries to boost their economic competitiveness by increasing shipping costs. Ships transport 90pc of the world's goods, and the sector emits around a billion tonnes of greenhouse gases every year, the equivalent of Germany or Japan. (Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

## **11 #SOCIO-ECONOMICAL CONDITION**

### **Global public debt surges to record \$92tr: UN report**

Global public debt surged to a record \$92 trillion in 2022 as governments borrowed to counter crises, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, with the burden being felt acutely by developing countries, a United Nations report said. Domestic and external debt worldwide has increased more than five times in the last two decades, outstripping the rate of economic growth, with gross domestic product only tripling since 2002, released in the run up to a G20 finance ministers and central bank governors' meeting on July

14-18. Developing countries owe almost 30 per cent of the global public debt, of which 70pc is represented by China, India and Brazil. Fifty-nine developing countries face a debt-to-GDP ratio above 60pc — a threshold indicating high levels of debt.

Furthermore, the international financial architecture made access to financing for developing countries both inadequate and expensive, the UN said, pointing to net interest debt payments exceeding 10pc of revenues for 50 emerging economies worldwide. “In Africa, the amount spent on interest payments is higher than spending on either education or health,” with 3.3 billion people living in countries that spend more on debt interest payments than on health or education. Private creditors, such as bondholders and banks, represent 62pc of developing countries’ total external public debt. In Africa, this creditor participation grew from 30pc in 2010 to 44pc in 2021, while Latin America has the highest ratio of private creditors holding external government debt for any region at 74pc. The debt treatment framework was adopted by the Group of 20 major economies and official creditors in October 2020, and aims to include non-Paris club members such as China in debt relief. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

## **11.1 # Food**

### **International food commodity prices witness fall, says FAO**

The benchmark index of international food commodity prices declined again in June, led by price decreases for major cereals and most types of vegetable oils, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reported. The ‘FAO Food Price Index’, which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of commonly-traded commodities, averaged 122.3 points in June, down 1.4 per cent from May and 23.4pc from its peak in March 2022. International wheat prices dropped by 1.3pc. (Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **Putin pledges free grain for African nations**

Russian President Vladimir Putin told African leaders he would gift them tens of thousands of tonnes of grain within months despite Western sanctions, which he said made it harder for Moscow to export its grain and fertilisers. Mr Putin said Russia was expecting a record grain harvest and was ready to replace Ukrainian grain exports to Africa on both a commercial and aid basis to honour what he said was Moscow’s critical role in global food security. “We will be ready to provide Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Mali, Somalia, Central African Republic and Eritrea with 25-50,000 tonnes of free grain each in the next 3-4 months,” Mr Putin told the summit. “We will also provide free delivery of these products to consumers.” Last year, Russia exported a total of 60 million tonnes of grain, of which 48m tonnes was wheat, he said. Mr Putin listed numerous sectors — such as energy, media, transport, trade, financial services, medicine, agriculture and car manufacturing — where Moscow was ready to share its expertise or do business. He also said Russia was ready to welcome more African students. (Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

## 11.2 # Food Scarcity

### **Hunger has stopped rising, but remains elevated: UN**

World hunger stopped rising in 2022 after growing for seven years but remains above pre-pandemic levels and far off track to be eradicated by 2030, UN agencies said. Between 691 million and 783m people faced hunger last year, with a midrange of 735m, the five agencies said in a report. The proportion of people facing chronic hunger rose from 7.9 per cent of the world population in 2019 — before the pandemic — to 9.2pc in 2022. The annual rise “has stalled”, however, with the total falling by about 3.8m people between 2021 and 2022, according to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report. “There is no room for complacency though, as hunger is still on the rise throughout Africa, Western Asia and the Caribbean,” they warned.

The report was prepared by the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, UNICEF, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organisation. The UN agencies warned that if the world fails to redouble and better target its efforts, the “goal of ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms by 2030 will remain out of reach.” If the pace of progress does not pick up, nearly 600m people could still suffer from hunger in 2030, mostly in Africa. The worst drought in four decades in the Horn of Africa region threatens to create a famine affecting more than 23m people in Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia, the World Food Programme warned in May. Some 2.4 billion people — three out of 10 people on the planet — suffered from moderate or severe food insecurity in 2022. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **UN seeks to fix `broken global food system**

A three-day United Nations summit opened in Rome aimed at tackling a “broken” global food system where millions are starving, two billion are overweight or obese and the planet is suffering. The food systems summit comes amid growing food insecurity around the world, with UN agencies warning of an increasing number of people suffering from chronic hunger. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said at the opening of the meeting, “Global food systems are broken — and billions of people are paying the price.” More than 780 million people go hungry around the globe, even as nearly one-third of the world’s food is wasted or lost. And while 462m people are underweight, two billion are overweight or obese, he added. Guterres called for at least \$500bn per year to help needy countries scale up long-term financing to invest in higher performing food systems.

Doing nothing amounts to \$12 trillion annually in social and economic costs, according to IFAD. It compared the needed funds with the “\$10tn in revenue generated by the global food industry or the \$700bn paid in agricultural subsidies by wealthy countries”. Unsustainable practices in food production, packaging and consumption are also fueling



climate change, Guterres said, “generating one-third of all greenhouse gas emissions, using 70 per cent of the world’s freshwater, and driving biodiversity loss on an epic scale”. (Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

## **11.3 # Inflation**

### **Inflation eases sharply in bankrupt Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka’s inflation eased to 12 percent in June, the lowest figures since the island nation careened into an unprecedented economic crisis last year. Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$46 billion foreign debt in April 2022 and the public endured months of food, fuel and medicine shortages. The crisis has eased since, with the government securing a \$2.9 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund in March. June inflation was the lowest since the 9.9 percent figure recorded in November 2021. It is down from 25.2 percent in May and a peak of 69.8 percent in September. “Inflation is expected to reach single-digit levels by early third quarter 2023,” the Central Bank of Sri Lanka said. (Business Recorder, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### ***India’s rice restrictions could fuel food price Inflation: IMF***

India’s move to restrict exports of certain types of rice could help exacerbate food price inflation and should be reversed, International Monetary Fund chief economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas said. (Business Recorder, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## **11.4 # Poverty**

### **25 nations reduce poverty by 50pc in 15 years: UNDP**

The latest update of the global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) demonstrates that poverty reduction was achievable as 25 countries have successfully halved their global MPI values within 15 years, showing that rapid progress is attainable. The latest estimates for 110 countries were released by UNDP and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). According to estimates based on surveys for 2017-22, 21.5 per cent population in Pakistan is in severe multidimensional poverty, while 12.9pc is vulnerable to multidimensional poverty. The analysis of trends from 2000 to 2022, focused on 81 countries with comparable data over time. India saw a remarkable reduction in poverty, with 415 million people exiting poverty within a span of just 15 years. Large numbers of people (69m) were lifted out of poverty in China, and Indonesia (8m).

According to the 2023 release, 1.1 billion out of 6.1bn people (just over 18pc) live in acute multidimensional poverty across 110 countries. Sub-Saharan Africa (534m) and South Asia (389m) are home to approximately five out of every six poor people. Nearly two-thirds of all poor people (730m) live in middle-income countries, making action in these countries vital for reducing global poverty. (Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **165m people fell into poverty in 3 years of crisis: UN**

The Covid-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and the war in Ukraine have pushed 165 million people into poverty since 2020, the United Nations said, calling for a pause in debt repayments for developing countries. Because of these shocks, 75 million people will have fallen into extreme poverty, defined as living on less than \$2.15 a day, between 2020 and the end of 2023 — and 90 million more will fall below the poverty line of \$3.65 a day, according to a study published by the United Nations Development Program. “The poorest suffer the most and their incomes in 2023 are projected to remain below pre-pandemic levels,” the report said.

According to another UN report, some 3.3 billion people, nearly half of humanity, live in countries that spend more on paying interest on debt than on education and health. And developing countries, despite having lower levels of debt, are paying more interest, partly because of higher rates. According to the report, the annual cost of lifting the 165 million newly poor people out of poverty would be over US\$14 billion, or 0.009 percent of global output and a little less than 4 percent of total public external debt service in 2022 for developing economies. (Business Recorder, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

## ***Rich-poor split could tighten ‘grip of poverty’: WB chief***

The new head of the World Bank said that growing divides between rich and poor nations risked deepening poverty in the developing world, at a meeting of G20 finance ministers in India. Many countries are still recovering from the double blow of the coronavirus pandemic and fallout from Russia’s war in Ukraine — which hit global fuel and commodity prices.

Climate change, meanwhile, is most painfully affecting some of the poorest countries least able to cope. The G20 talks come after Russia refused to extend a deal allowing critical Ukrainian grain exports through the Black Sea, sparking outrage from the United Nations, which has warned millions of the world’s poorest would “pay the price”. (Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

## **12 #CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **World’s war on greenhouse gas emissions has a military blind spot**

When it comes to taking stock of global emissions, there’s an elephant in the room: the world’s armed forces. As temperatures hit new highs, scientists and environmental groups are stepping up pressure on the UN to force armies to disclose all their emissions and end a long-standing exemption that has kept some of their climate pollution off the books. Among the world’s biggest consumers of fuel, militaries account for 5.5 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, But defence forces are not bound by international climate agreements to report or cut their carbon emissions, and the data that is published by some militaries is unreliable or incomplete at best, scientists and academics say.

That’s because military emissions abroad, from flying jets to sailing ships to training exercises, were left out of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on reducing greenhouse gases — and exempted again from the 2015 Paris accords — on the grounds that data about energy use by armies could undermine national security. In the first five months of 2023, for example, at least 17 peer reviewed papers have been published, three times the number for all of 2022 and more than the previous nine years combined, according to one campaigner who tracks the research. The groups also wrote in February to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) calling on the United Nation’s climate body to include all military emissions given their significance for comprehensive global carbon accounting. (Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **People increasingly turning to courts for climate rights**

As the impacts of climate change are getting more intense, people are increasingly turning to courts to combat the crisis. The “ Global Climate Litigation Report, 2023 Status Review”, published by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), said 2,180 climate-related cases have been filed in a year — reflecting a steady increase from 884 cases in 2017 and from 1,550 cases in 2020. The cases have been filed in 65 jurisdictions, including international and regional courts, tribunals, quasi-judicial bodies, or other adjudicatory bodies such as Special Procedures at the United Nations and arbitration tribunals.

The report highlighted challenges to whether courts have the power to resolve the dispute, identifying the source of an enforceable climate-related right or obligation, crafting a remedy that will lessen the plaintiffs’ injuries, and, importantly, marshalling the science of climate attribution. It said there were countries where there was limited information about the extent of climate litigation, and it was likely that more cases in jurisdictions not yet represented will be brought to light in the near future.

By the end of last year, about 34 cases based on human rights have been brought by and on behalf of children and youth, as the plaintiffs argued that due to their young age, they would endure the effects of climate change for longer. Children and youth, women’s groups, local communities and Indigenous Peoples, among others, are taking a prominent role in bringing these cases and driving climate change governance reform in more and more countries around the world, UNEP said.

The report identified a series of future trends in global climate litigation, indicating the direction in which it may head. It is predicted that the number of cases dealing with migrants, internally displaced people and asylum seekers seeking temporary or permanent relocation, owing at least in part to climate change, will continue to grow. Despite numerous corporate pledges to achieve net-zero emissions in the future, the international community is still a long way from achieving the goals and objectives of the Paris Agreement. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 3)

## **12.1 # Carbon Emission**

### **G20 meeting yields no accord on emissions**

Environment ministers from G20 nations failed to agree on peaking global emissions by 2025 and other crucial issues to address the global climate crisis. No breakthrough was possible on several key points ahead of this year's COP28, with negotiations also failing to reach a consensus on tripling renewable energy use. "Europe and North Africa are burning, Asia is ravaged with floods yet G20 climate ministers have failed to agree on a shared direction to halt the climate crisis which is escalating day by day," said Alex Scott of climate change think-tank E3G. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

## **12.2 # Climate Crisis**

### **World hits record temperatures as climate change fuels extremes**

The target of keeping long-term global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius is moving out of reach, with nations failing to set more ambitious goals despite months of record-breaking heat on land and sea, climate experts said. Parts of North America were some 10°C above the seasonal average this June, and smoke from forest fires blanketed Canada and the US East Coast in hazardous haze, with carbon emissions estimated at a record 160 million metric tons. In India, one of the most climate vulnerable regions, deaths were reported to have spiked as a result of sustained high temperatures, and extreme heat has been recorded in Spain, Iran and Vietnam, raising fears that last year's deadly summer could become routine.

Though mean temperatures had temporarily breached the 1.5°C threshold before, this was the first time they had done so in the northern hemisphere summer that starts on June 1. Sea temperatures also broke April and May records. As climate envoys from the two biggest greenhouse gas emitters prepare to meet next month, temperatures broke June records in the Chinese capital Beijing, and extreme heatwaves have hit the United States. Global average sea surface temperatures hit 21°C in late March and have remained at record levels for the time of year throughout April and May. Australia's weather agency warned that Pacific and Indian ocean sea temperatures could be 3°C warmer than normal by October. Climate experts say the extent and frequency of extreme weather is increasing, and this year has also seen punishing droughts across the world, as well as a rare and deadly cyclone in Africa.

"Countries agreed in Paris in 2015 to try to keep long-term average temperature rises within 1.5°C, but there is now a 66 per cent likelihood the annual mean will cross the 1.5°C threshold for at least one whole year between now and 2027," the World Meteorological Organization predicted in May. The Worldwide Fund for Nature warned of a "worrying lack of momentum" during climate talks in Bonn this month, with little

progress made on key issues like fossil fuels and finance ahead of November's COP28 climate talks in Dubai. (Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **UK braves hottest June in 140 years**

Last month was the hottest June on record in Britain, the country's national weather service said, warning that human-induced climate change was making such temperature records increasingly likely. Britain's Met Office said the average mean temperature of 16 degrees Celsius in June was the highest in a series going back almost 140 years, beating a previous record of 14.9°C set in 1940 and 1976. The Met Office also said a marine heatwave affecting the North Atlantic had played an underlying role in raising land temperatures in Britain and said rainfall during June had been 68pc of its average level. (Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **Climate change, El Nino drive hottest June on record**

The world saw its hottest June on record last month. It's the latest in a series of records halfway through a year that has already seen a drought in Spain and fierce heat waves in China as well the United States. "The month was the warmest June globally at just over 0.5 degrees Celsius above the 1991-2020 average, exceeding June 2019 — the previous record — by a substantial margin". Temperatures reached June records across northwest Europe while parts of Canada, the United States, Mexico, Asia and eastern Australia "were significantly warmer than normal", Copernicus noted. On the other hand it was cooler than normal in western Australia, the western US and western Russia. The tumbling records reflect the impact of global warming driven by greenhouse gases released from human activity. (Business Recorder, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

### **Climate change is altering colour of oceans, say experts**

Over the past 20 years huge swathes of the world's oceans have changed colour, displaying a subtle greening towards the tropics that researchers say points to the effect of climate change on life in the world's seas. Scientists said they had detected shifts in colours across more than half of the world's oceans — an expanse bigger than Earth's total land area. "Colour reflects the state of the ecosystem, so colour changes mean ecosystem changes," lead author B.B. Cael, of Britain's National Oceanography Centre, said. A deep blue would tell you that there is not much life, while if the water is greener it is likely to have more activity, specifically from the photosynthesising phytoplankton, which like plants contain the green pigment chlorophyll. These produce a significant amount of the oxygen we breathe, are a crucial part of the global carbon cycle and are a foundational part of the ocean food web. (Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

### **UAE and India vow COP28 success as record heatwaves sweep world**

As record heat is forecast around the world from the United States to Europe and Japan, the UAE and India vowed to make this year's COP28 conference in Dubai a success.

The UAE will host the COP28 United Nations climate talks in Nov and Dec, but with global temperatures hitting record highs last week and countries buffeted by floods, storms and crop-withering heatwaves, the world remains far off track to meet its climate goals. (Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **G20 energy ministers fail to agree on fossil fuels roadmap**

Energy ministers from the group of 20 nations meeting in India failed to agree on a roadmap to phase down the use of fossil fuels in the global energy mix. A final statement after the meeting did not even mention coal, a major contributor to global warming. The dirty fuel is also a key energy source for many developing economies such as India — the world’s most-populous country — and China, the world’s second-largest economy. The failure to reach agreement in Goa comes despite G7 leaders agreeing in Hiroshima in May to “accelerate the phase-out of unabated fossil fuels” and with global temperatures hitting record highs, triggering floods, storms, and heatwaves. Explaining the stalemate, G20 president India said that some members had emphasised the importance of seeking a “phase down of unabated fossil fuels, in line with different national circumstances”. (Business Recorder, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### **‘Global boiling’ begins as July set to be hottest ever**

With the current month set to become the hottest ever on record, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has warned that extreme weather events caused by climate change – on the rise in Asia – are bound to affect food security and the continent’s ecosystems. “The era of global warming has ended; the era of global boiling has arrived,” UN chief Antonio Guterres told reporters in New York, adding that: “Climate change is here. It is terrifying. And it is just the beginning.” A fresh report by the WMO and Europe’s Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) says it is “extremely likely” that July 2023 will be the hottest month on records going back to the 1940s. According to the report, Asia is experiencing a faster rate of warming compared to the global average, with 81 weather, climate and water-related disasters recorded last year, the majority of which were floods and storms. It said these calamities had directly affected more than 50 million people and caused more than 5,000 deaths, along with more than \$36 billion in economic damages.

This included the 2022 floods, caused by record monsoon rains and glacial melt in Pakistan, which claimed hundreds of lives, inundating swathes of the country and washing away homes and transportation infrastructure, causing an estimated \$15bn in damages, the highest in the region. The country experienced significant loss of life and economic damage as it received 60 per cent of its normal total monsoon rainfall within just three weeks of the start of the monsoon season, WMO said. The report notes that of the country’s 7,000 glaciers and over 3,000 glacial lakes, 36 were recently considered to be at high risk for outburst. In addition, the report points out that an overall surface ocean warming trend has also been witnessed in the region since 1982, which includes

the north-western Arabian Sea. In fact, this is one of the areas where warming rates exceed 0.5°C per decade, about three times faster than the global average.

This month's mean global temperature is projected to be at least 0.2C (0.4F) warmer than July 2019, the former hottest in the 174-year observational record, according to EU data. The margin of difference between now and July 2019 is so substantial that we can already say with absolute certainty that it is going to be the warmest July, Leipzig climate scientist Karsten Haustein said. (Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

## **12.3 # Climate Policy**

### **UN chief urges concerted action to tackle climate change**

UN Secretary General António Guterres has urged the world to 'team up and speed up' to avoid a climate disaster as rains and rising temperatures cause havoc across the globe. 'I urge governments to hit fast forward on net-zero deadlines so that developed countries commit to reaching net-zero as close as possible to 2040 and emerging economies as close as possible to 2050'. He invited developed countries to 'finally make good on their financial commitments to developing nations', including by doubling adaptation finance and replenishing Green Climate Fund. (Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### ***COP28 chief says he has no 'magic' wand to banish fossil fuels***

Sultan Al Jaber, Emirates oil executive and president of the most important climate summit since the Paris Agreement in 2015, has a quick answer when asked when the world will stop burning fossil fuels: when there's enough clean energy to replace them. "We cannot shut down the energy system of today before we build the new energy system of tomorrow that is equipped with zero-carbon emission sources," said Jaber, head of the United Arab Emirates national oil company ADNOC and head of the upcoming COP28 climate summit. "We don't want to create an energy crisis." With global temperatures hitting record highs last week and countries buffeted by floods, storms and crop-withering heatwaves, the world remains far off track to meet its climate goals. But "I don't have a magic (wand)" as to when that will happen, he said in Brussels, after outlining his action plan and goals for the year-end summit to ministers from European Union nations and China. (Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

## **13 # CLIMATE DISASTER**

### ***China warns of 'multiple natural disasters' in July***

Chinese authorities have warned of extreme weather and "multiple natural disasters" in the coming month, as heavy rain damaged infrastructure and forced thousands to be evacuated. An alert was in place for rain-triggered disasters in large swathes of central and southwestern China. About 85,000 people have been evacuated from their homes as a result of the rain, officials said, with "flash floods in mountainous areas" and

“possible mudslides in some parts” expected this week. More than 10,000 people have also been evacuated after floods in the central Henan province damaged more than 2,000 homes, provincial officials said. And over the weekend, dozens of homes and roads were damaged in Shaanxi province during “once-in-fifty-years” torrential rains. Scientists say rising global temperatures — caused largely by burning fossil fuels — are aggravating extreme weather worldwide, and many countries in Asia have experienced deadly heat waves and record temperatures in recent weeks. (Business Recorder, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

### **Asia-Pacific faces disaster emergency, climate impacts intensify**

Asia and the Pacific region faces a disaster emergency, with risks surpassing resilience. It urgently needs to enhance its resilience to safeguard development gains from climate change impacts, Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2023 warned. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) report issued caution that without prompt action, a temperature increase of 1.5 and 2 degrees celsius will exceed resilience capabilities and endanger sustainable development. The projected scenario of 2-degree warming indicates annual losses of nearly \$1 trillion or three per cent of regional GDP in disaster-related deaths and economic impacts.

The two deadliest flooding events, in 2022, occurred in India and Pakistan, which alone accounted for almost 80pc of the total yearly mortality related to disasters. Flooding was also the disaster which affected the highest number of people in 2022, affecting 33 million people in Pakistan alone. In April and May 2022, an unprecedented, early, prolonged and dry heatwave affected large parts of North India and Pakistan. India recorded its warmest March on record, with an average maximum temperature of 33.1°C. This was 1.86°C above the long-term average. Pakistan also recorded its warmest March in 60 years.

Current annual losses from disasters such as droughts, floods, heat waves, cyclones, and earthquakes are projected to rise, impacting productivity and exacerbating inequality. The Asia-Pacific region faces a significant intersection between disaster risks, income inequalities, and poverty, with the highest share of economic losses as a percentage of GDP, followed by Africa. Disaster-related losses are particularly dangerous in both the agriculture and energy sectors. Drought, intense rainfall, and floods are already contributing to decreasing agricultural produce and surging food prices. Those most impacted by a decline in agricultural productivity will be the many farming communities living on the brink of poverty and the urban poor who are vulnerable to food price inflation.

Climate hazards will continue to drive environmental degradation and reduce biodiversity. The increase in hydro-meteorological hazards have already resulted in the loss of local species, increased diseases, and driven mass mortality of plants and animals, leading to the first climate-driven extinctions. Multi-hazard early warning



systems are one of the most effective ways to reduce mortality from natural hazards and protect people in multi-hazard risk hotspots. The share of people exposed to multi-hazard risk is forecast to increase to 85pc of the region's population under 1.5°C warming and 87pc under 2°C warming. Food and energy systems are exposed to increasingly intense and frequent shocks. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 5)

## **13.1 # Flood**

### **15 killed in India monsoon floods**

At least 15 people were killed in floods and landslides triggered by monsoon rains that battered northern India, with New Delhi receiving the most rainfall in decades. Roads in several parts of the capital were submerged in knee-deep water as it was inundated with 153 millimetres of rain, the highest precipitation in a single day in July in 40 years. (Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Page 10)

### **Floods force Delhi to shut schools and offices**

Flooding in parts of New Delhi forced the city government to close all education institutions in India's capital and advise people to work from home, while warning that there would be water rationing after the Yamuna river broke its banks. Since the rainy monsoon season began on June 1, Delhi has recorded 113 per cent above-average rainfall and the rains in the hilly states to the north have fed the river's floodwaters.

The states of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Uttarakhand have recorded 105pc, 91pc and 22pc more rain than average, respectively, since the monsoon season began. With pets on their shoulders and pots and pans in their hands, hundreds of people living on the banks of the river waded through flooded pathways to reach some of the 2,500 relief camps set up to provide temporary shelter. At least 88 people have died in Himachal Pradesh during the incessant rains since June 24. Flash floods in the state brought down a bridge and washed away several clusters of hutments. Roads have been washed away during heavy rains Uttarakhand state. (Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

### **Yamuna floods ancient city of Mathura**

Many parts of India's ancient holy cities of Vrindavan and Mathura have been flooded by the swollen Yamuna river, after heavy rainfall in northern India caused it to breach its banks. While thousands of residents have been evacuated to relief camps by the district administration or have moved to relatives' houses, some have found themselves trapped in their homes because of the muddy. (Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **Nearly half a million evacuated as typhoon batters China**

Typhoon Doksuri hit southeastern China, bringing high winds and battering rains to coastal areas after the deadly storm bypassed Taiwan on its way from the Philippines.

More than 416,000 people in Fujian had been evacuated to safe places. Doksuri pounded the northern Philippines, toppling trees and power pylons, and causing widespread electricity cuts as well as landslides and floods. The death toll in the Philippines has risen to 13, with another 21 missing. (Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

## **13.2 # Heatwave**

### **Heatwave threatens to bring new record temperatures to Europe**

Southern Europe sweltered under a fierce heatwave, with a warning that temperatures could hit record highs for the continent next week, raising fears about the impact on human health, crops and animals. Weather alerts were in place across Spain's Canary Islands, Italy, Cyprus and Greece, with the Greek authorities expecting temperatures to reach as high as 43 Celsius or 44 Celsius. The European Space Agency (ESA) said July could be a torrid month. "Italy, Spain, France, Germany and Poland are all facing a major heatwave with temperatures expected to climb to 48 Celsius on the islands of Sicily and Sardinia potentially the hottest temperatures ever recorded in Europe".

The impact of extreme summer heat has been brought into focus by research that said as many as 61,000 people may have died in Europe's sweltering heatwaves last summer. Images captured by the ESA's Sentinel 3 satellites had measured the land surface temperature at more than 60 Celsius in the western Spanish region of Extremadura. Weather forecasts and official records are based on the air temperature which is significantly lower than the land surface reading. The record European temperature of 48.8C was registered in Sicily in August 2021. (Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **Acropolis closes at hottest hours amid blistering heatwave in Greece**

The Acropolis, Greece's top tourist attraction in Athens, closed during the hottest hours as the country wilted under a heatwave. Access to the Unesco-listed archaeological site was suspended before reopening "to protect workers and visitors". A summer heatwave is hitting several Mediterranean countries, with the mercury soaring past 40C in parts of northern and western Greece. (Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **Savage heatwaves strike globe as wildfires rage**

Scorching weather gripped three continents, whipping up wildfires and threatening to topple temperature records as the dire consequences of global warming take shape. Predictions of historic heat hung over swathes of Asia, Europe and the United States. In Japan, authorities issued heatstroke alerts to tens of millions of people in 20 of its 47 prefectures as near-record high temperatures scorched large areas and torrential rain pummelled other regions. The United States National Weather Service reported that a powerful heatwave stretching from California to Texas was expected to peak during an "extremely hot and dangerous weekend".

Further north, the Canadian government said wildfires had burned a record-breaking 10 million hectares this year, with more damage expected as the summer drags on. In Europe, Italians were warned to prepare for “the most intense heatwave of the summer and also one of the most intense of all time”. Despite the heat, parts of Asia have also been battered by torrential rain. In South Korea, rescuers battled to reach people trapped in a flooded tunnel, after heavy rains for the last four days triggered floods and landslides that killed at least 37 people and left nine missing.

In northern Japan on Sunday, a man was found dead in a flooded car, a week after seven people were killed in similar weather in the country’s southwest. In northern India, relentless monsoon rains have reportedly killed at least 90 people, following burning heat. China issued several temperature alerts, warning of 40-45C in the partly desert region of Xinjiang, and 39C in southern Guangxi region. It can be difficult to attribute a particular weather event to climate change, but many scientists insist that global warming — linked to dependence on fossil fuels — is behind the intensification of heatwaves. (Business Recorder, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 1)

### **Scorching heatwaves set to break records around the globe**

Unforgiving heat scorched parts of the Northern Hemisphere, triggering health warnings and fanning wildfires in the latest stark reminder of the effects of global warming. From North America to Europe and Asia, people gulped water and sought shelter from the sweltering heat, as temperatures crept toward record highs. (Dawn, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **Unforgiving heatwaves torment globe; Europe braces for record highs**

Europe braced for record-smashing heat as withering heatwaves across the globe showed no signs of easing, and ongoing wildfires in Greece and the Canary Islands threatened homes while worsening air quality. Across vast swathes of the planet, from California to China, authorities have warned of the health dangers of the extreme heat, urging people to drink water and shelter from the burning sun. In a stark reminder of the effects of global warming, the UN’s World Meteorological Agency (WMO) said the trend of heatwaves “shows no signs of decreasing”. In the Canary Islands, some 400 firefighters battled a wildfire that has ravaged 3,500 hectares of forest and forced 4,000 residents to evacuate. (Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

## **13.3 # Rainfall**

### **Monsoon floods leave 29 dead in India**

Days of intense monsoon rains across northern India have left at least 29 people dead, rendering many areas inaccessible with bridges smashed and roads blocked. (Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

## **Heavy rains, flooding leave 22 dead in South Korea**

At least 22 people have died and 14 are missing after heavy rain caused flooding and landslides in South Korea with thousands more ordered to evacuate their homes. More than 6,400 residents in the central county were ordered to evacuate early as Dam began overflowing and submerging low-lying villages. (Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

## **India to face apple crunch as heavy rain hits production**

India's apple production is expected to nearly halve this year after heavy rains and flash floods wiped out about \$122 million worth of fruit in the main producing Himalayan region, officials and farmer unions said. (Business Recorder, 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 16)

## **13.4 # Storm**

### **Record-breaking storm batters Netherlands, kills two**

A record-breaking summer storm hammered the Netherlands and Germany, killing two people and throwing international air and rail travel into chaos. (Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **Storms kill three in Italy; fires near airport**

A 16-year-old girl on a camping trip was among two people who died after violent storms hit northern Italy, while in the south wildfires forced the closure of Sicily's Palermo airport. (Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

## **13.5 # Wildfire**

### **Washington state wildfire threatens homes, farms**

A fast-growing wildfire forced residents to evacuate a rural stretch of southern Washington state's Klickitat County after it burned over 30,000 acres in less than 24 hours. The Newell Road Wildfire has already destroyed several structures in the area and is threatening homes, farms, crops and livestock, solar and wind farms and a natural gas pipeline, county emergency officials said. (Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

### **Wildfires kill 34 in Algeria as heatwave sweeps north Africa**

Thirty-four people including 10 soldiers were killed in forest fires in Algeria, as a heatwave spreads across north Africa and southern Europe. Operations were underway to extinguish fires in six provinces. About 1,500 people have been evacuated so far. Fires regularly rage through forests and fields in Algeria in summer, and this year have been exacerbated by a heatwave that has seen several Mediterranean countries break temperature records. (Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 11)

## **14 # NATURAL DISASTER**

### **Indian landslide: Death toll rises to 26, dozens more feared trapped**

The death toll from a landslide in India's western state of Maharashtra rose to 26, with dozens still feared trapped under layers of mud and slush two days after the incident. (Business Recorder, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

## **15 # RESISTANCE**

### **Riots rock France ahead of funeral of teenager shot by police**

More than 1,300 people were arrested in France during a fourth night of rioting before the funeral of Nahel M, whose shooting by police sparked the unrest. The government deployed 45,000 police and several armoured vehicles overnight to tackle the worst crisis since the "Yellow Vest" protests which brought much of France to a standstill in late 2018. 1,311 people had been arrested overnight, compared with 875 the previous night. (Business Recorder, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Page 8)

### **Thousands rally in Australia to back pro-Indigenous drive**

Thousands rallied in Australia to back a campaign to recognise the country's Indigenous people in the constitution ahead of a referendum later this year, after a recent dip in support for the change. Indigenous Australians, who account for 3.8pc of the population, face disadvantages including discrimination, poor health and education outcomes and high incarceration rates. (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **Los Angeles hotel workers stop work over wages, housing**

Thousands of hotel workers in Los Angeles, California, went on strike as they pushed for better wages and benefits, kicking off what was expected to be one of the largest US hotel strikes in recent history. The union landed a deal with its biggest employer, the Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites in downtown L.A., with more than 600 workers. Union officials described the tentative agreement as a major win for workers. Bonaventure employees will receive higher wages, affordable health insurance and increases in pension contributions. The agreement also guarantees a restoration of cleaning staff to pre-pandemic levels. (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 Page 11)

### **Protesters ram car into mayor's house amid street clashes in France**

Rioters in France rammed a car into the home of the mayor of a town south of Paris, injuring his wife and one of his children on the fifth night of chaos across France after police shot dead a 17-year-old boy trying to flee a traffic stop as grandmother of teenager appealed for calm telling people to "stop and do not riot". (Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Page 12)

### **France protesters defy bans to rally against police violence**

Around 2,000 people defied a ban to join a memorial rally in central Paris for a young black man who died in police custody, while marches took place throughout France to denounce police brutality, as tensions run high after days of rioting engulfed the country. (Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **IAEA chief's S. Korea visit draws protests over Fukushima water release**

Hundreds of protesters took to the streets of Seoul during a visit to South Korea by the head of the UN nuclear watchdog aimed at calming fears over Japan's plan to discharge treated radioactive water from its tsunami-hit Fukushima plant. Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), arrived in the capital to meet the foreign minister and a top nuclear safety official. South Korea's government has said it respected the IAEA's report and that its own analysis had found the release will not have "any meaningful impact" on its waters. (Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 10)

### **Three killed in Kenya protests over tax increase**

The number of people killed in protests in Kenya rose to three, after opposition leader urged Kenyans to take to the streets against tax hikes. Police fired tear gas in the capital Nairobi. (Business Recorder, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Page 6)

## About Us

Roots for Equity was formed in 1997 and formally registered in 2000. The organization works with the most vulnerable, marginalized communities that include small and landless farmers, women and religious minorities in the rural and urban sector. The inequities in society are a result of the oppression and exploitative forces of feudalism, imperialist corporate hegemony often termed as globalization, and patriarchy.

We believe that a democratic base is essential for the social and economic development of the country. This is not possible without mobilization of communities themselves; no doubt only socially conscious and politically active communities can demand and achieve social justice. Roots remains committed to being an active part of communities' struggle to achieve political, social, environmental and economic justice.

### Our Mission

Our mission is to strengthen communities and movements for attaining political, economic, social and environmental justice.

### Our Vision

Our vision is a genuinely democratic society with its people free from inequities, marginalization and exploitation.

### Our Objectives

- (i) Organizing and mobilizing grass root communities and movements for attaining basic rights;
- (ii) Action research in collaboration with impacted vulnerable communities on issues and impacts of globalization, patriarchy, and feudalism;
- (iii) Capacity building of grass root leaders and creating a grass roots knowledge base for attaining social justice;
- (iv) Engaging with people's organizations and movements to amplify the voices of the most marginalized sectors of our society, locally, nationally and internationally.

## Roots for Equity

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