

# ***HAAL AHWAL***

Monthly News Reviews on Food and Agriculture

**July, 2024**

**Roots for Equity**



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**July, 2024**

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**Roots for Equity**



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1 Hectare = 2.471 Acres

1 Acre = 4,840 Square Yards

1 Ton = 25 Mann = 1000 Kg

1 Mann = 40 Kg

## 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.

1,000	1 Thousand	1 Thousand	ایک ہزار
10,000	10 Thousand	10 Thousand	دس ہزار
100,000	100 Thousand	1 Lac	ایک لاکھ
1,000,000	1 Million	10 Lac	دس لاکھ
10,000,000	10 Million	1 Crore	ایک کروڑ
100,000,000	100 Million	10 Crore	دس کروڑ
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

ACD	percent additional customs duty
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADP	Annual Development Programme
AIT	agriculture income tax
APTMA	All Pakistan Textile Mills Association
ATP	Agriculture Transformation Plan
BHUs	Basic Health Units
BOI	Board of Investment
BYC	Baloch Yakjehti Committee
C3S	Copernicus Climate Change Service
CATIC	Technology Import & Export Corporation
CCP	Competition Commission of Pakistan
CFAF	Climate Finance Action Fund
CKD	Completely Knocked Down
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
EAD	Economic Affairs Division
EFF	Extended Fund Facility
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FBR	Federal Board of Revenue
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FEA	Foreign Economic Assistance
FWBL	First Women Bank Limited
GDP	Gross Domestic Product GD
HRCPC	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan



ICT	Islamabad Capital Territory
IFIS	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPPs	Independent Power Producers
ITC	International Trade Centre
KPC	Karachi Press Club
KPT	Karachi Port Trust
MEA	Ministry of Economic Affairs
MEP	Minimum Export Price
MMT	Million Metric Tonnes
NLTA	Non -Lending Technical Assistance
NPCs	Naya Pakistan Certificates
NSR	Northern Sea Route
OGRA	Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority's
PAF	Pakistan Air Force
PAHF	Agricultural and Horticultural Forum
PARC	Pakistan Agricultural Research Council
PCGA	Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association
PDMA	Provincial Disaster Management Authority
PDWP	Provincial Development Working Party
PFD	Punjab Food Department
PFF	Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum
PFMA	Pakistan Flour Mills Association
PIBs	Pakistan Investment Bonds
PMDC	Pakistan Medical and Dental Council
PPDA	Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association

PSDP	Public Sector Development Programme
PSMA	Pakistan Sugar Mills Association
PTA	Preferential Trade Agreement
QWP	Qaumi Watan Party
RHCs	Rural Health Centres
SAB	Sugar Advisory Board
SAC	Swabi Action Committee
SBA	Stand-By Arrangement
SBP	State Bank of Pakistan
SCA	Sindh Chamber of Agriculture
SCB	Standard Chartered Bank
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDB	Small Industrial Development Board
SIUT	Sindh Institute of Urology & Transplantation
SLA	Staff-Level Agreement
SMBR	Senior Member Board of Revenue
SME	small and medium enterprises
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
STA	Sindh Tenancy Act
TDAP	Trade Development Authority of Pakistan
USF	Universal Service Fund
TPB	Tariff Policy Board
WASA	Water and Sanitation Agency
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

# NEWS EXCEPTS

## NATIONAL NEWS

### AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

- Peshawar High Court issued a notice to the provincial agriculture secretary to respond to a petition challenging non-extension of an agriculture development project under Agriculture Transformation Plan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- The petition is jointly filed by 171 agriculture officers of the project requesting the court to declare the government’s exclusion of the project in the Annual Development Programme (ADP) 2024-25 as illegal.
- Once again agri sector experts have warned as loudly as they could that climate change is taking such a heavy toll on horticultural and crop yields that if centuries-old ways of seeding and irrigation are not abandoned to make way for technologically advanced methods even now, then very soon we will face “serious food insecurity” and a water crisis we might never recover from.
- Agriculture is supposed to be Pakistan’s natural endowment, comparative advantage, largest employer, sector with the most number of Pakistani families associated with it, and of course the country’s bread basket.
- The World Resources Institute’s research finds Pakistan in a region where agricultural output “could go down to 50pc from 2015 to 2050 because of climate change and the impact on crop yields”.
- It’s a shame that the government has set up research centres and even a climate change ministry, yet experts and stakeholders continue to lament that these institutions have failed to benefit farmers at all.
- Samsons Agri Farm, a leading agri-business group has pioneered a new era of sustainable farming in Pakistan, as it has transformed arid and sandy land into lush green fields, revolutionizing Pakistan’s agricultural landscape.
- A team of local and international professionals manages the farm. Samsons Agri is cultivating Rhodes grass, alfalfa, canola, sesame, wheat, millet, besides fruit and vegetables, organic farming, and medicinal crops.
- One of the top cash crops of Pakistan is tobacco which generated over 10mn USD in exports last year.
- The farm has also entered into a contract with a large commercial organization for cultivating 500 acres of barley crop.
- The Senate Standing Committee on National Food Security & Research expressed concern that only 0.12 percent of the total allocated budget was allocated to research in the agriculture sector.

- For solarizing tube wells. It was disclosed that approximately Rs30 billion would be needed per province Pakistan had achieved a milestone in identifying a new variety of banana.
- The Sindh High Court has issued notices to chief secretary, administrator of the Defence Housing Authority and others in a petition filed against a provincial government’s plan to allot 6,000 acres of land to DHA.
- Nothing was mentioned in the correspondence between the respondents about payment to the Sindh government against the 6,000 acres of land.
- Peshawar High Court has directed KP government to resolve within six months the issue of establishing industrial estate in Swabi by Small Industrial Development Board and housing schemes on agricultural land in Charsadda.
- Damage to its (Sukkur Barrage) gates can not only impact eight million acres of direct command area of the barrage, but can have an effect on downstream Kotri Barrage and 80 per cent of agriculture in Sindh as well.
- The federal and Balochistan governments signed an agreement worth Rs55 billion to solarise (around 28,000) agriculture tube wells in the province within three months.
- The prime minister said “we are going for solarisation of one million agriculture tube wells across the country, saving \$3.5bn being spent on imported fuel every year”. (PDWP) approved chief minister’s programme for solarisation of agriculture tube wells in Punjab at an estimated cost of Rs9bn.
- The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has completed construction of 56 small dams at a cost of Rs26.7 billion. It added that 30 more small dams would be completed soon at a cost of Rs43.6 billion.

## **AGRICULTURAL INPUTS**

- President Asif Ali Zardari asked a delegation led by Group Chief Executive of the Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) Bill Winters to invest in agricultural sector as well as financing infrastructure projects in the country, especially small dams, barrages and power plants.
- President Zardari said banks should extend financial services and loans to farmers to increase their access to agricultural inputs.
- SBP has issued letters to all banks to develop and submit their five years Agriculture and SME finance expansion plans and strategies to significantly grow these portfolios over the next five years.
- As part of its Vision 2028, SBP aims to increase outstanding Agri-finance portfolio to Rs 1,000 billion with total disbursements exceeding Rs 3,000 billion by the end of June 2025.
- President Asif Ali Zardari said government was planning to tax agricultural income as per IMF’s conditions, He said that agro-farm and agro-industry were the future and big landowners would have to be taxed.

- Agriculture is one potential area that can produce sizable revenues. Nonetheless, the sector contributed less than 0.1pc of the direct tax collection of Rs3.7tr in the last fiscal year.
- Agriculture income tax remains a provincial subject because it suits interests of big landlords who enjoy substantial political clout in the assemblies.
- The highest slab on agricultural income is just 15pc in Sindh and Punjab, compared to nearly 39pc on salaried individuals.
- The four provincial governments have agreed to comply with IMF’s demand to align the taxation of agricultural incomes with the federal income tax system starting from January 1 2025.
- There is still uncertainty regarding the maximum rate of tax collection on agriculture income, with options ranging from 29 per cent, 35pc and 45pc.
- Currently, the minimum tax on agricultural income is 15pc in Sindh, while the maximum rate in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is 17.5pc.
- The total revenue collection under agriculture income tax (AIT) is between Rs3bn to Rs3.5bn per annum.
- IMF has announced reaching a staff-level agreement (SLA) with Pakistan for a USD 7 billion, 37-month EFF (Extended Fund Facility).
- SCA has rejected levying of income tax on agriculture sector, deploring that it is being imposed at the instance of IMF. This sector is already faced with multifaceted crisis and, therefore, such a decision should be rescinded.
- The All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (Aptma) condemns the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) and the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority’s (Ogra) “illegal imposition of Rs50 billion in cross subsidies to the fertiliser sector in ring-fenced RLNG tariffs from June 2024 onwards”.
- Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain directed the fertiliser companies to establish sales shop in every district to facilitate farmers.

## **AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS**

- The overall cotton production during the current season has dropped by almost half compared to the same period last year.
- Our cotton economy remains under stress due to use of low-quality seed, disease, erratic weather resulting in frequent floods and drought, higher cost of production, etc.
- Shehbaz Sharif government revoked its March order, banning the export of flour made from imported wheat amid a nationwide strike by millers. At the same time, a ban on wheat imports was imposed.
- The International Trade Centre (ITC) of the United Nations has said the olive oil sector in Pakistan has witnessed a significant expansion from a fledging 19kg production in 2016 to 121,000kg by 2023, with a cultivation area now reaching almost 3,800 hectares.

## **SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

- Fresh figures mirror a gloomy state of the country’s seafood export, falling by 17.36 percent to \$410 million in the fiscal year 2023-24.
- The fiscal year 2022-2023 saw a record seafood export growth to 214,367 metric tons valuing \$496.31 million but the country failed to sustain the uptrend, nose diving to 200,709 metric tons or \$410.27 million last fiscal year.

## **TRADE**

- Pakistan is losing Rs10bn annually in duties and taxes because of illicit tea trade.
- Pakistan’s trade deficit with nine regional countries swelled by 49% to \$9.506 billion in FY24 from \$6.382bn in preceding fiscal year due to a sharp increase in imports from China and India, causing major concerns for policymakers.
- Pakistan’s trade imbalance with the Middle East has significantly improved, narrowing by 20.47% to \$13.014bn in 2023-24 from \$16.365bn preceding year
- Pakistan’s exports to the Middle East rose 35.23% to \$3.155bn between July June FY24 compared to \$2.33bn in the corresponding period last year. Imports dipped 13.53% to \$16.16bn in FY24, compared to \$18.69bn in same period last year.
- The ECC of Federal Cabinet had allowed export of 150,000 tonnes of sugar on June 13. Of this, 64pc quota or 96,000 tonnes was given to the mills located in Punjab, 30pc for Sindh and 6pc for those in KP.
- Pakistan’s merchandise exports rose 10.54pc to \$30.64bn in 2023-24 from \$27.72bn in the preceding year.
- According to the PBS data, imports fell 0.84pc to \$54.73bn in FY24 compared to \$55.19bn in FY23.
- The trade deficit widened by 30.39pc to \$2.39bn in June from \$1.83bn in corresponding month last year.
- For the first time in the history, Pakistan’s rice sector has achieved a historic milestone of \$ 3.88 billion exports, up by 78 percent, during the last fiscal year 2023-24 (FY24) due to the ban on the export of Indian rice.
- Pakistan exported some 6 million metric tons of rice.
- Pakistan has witnessed a remarkable surge in the exports of agro and food products during the financial year 2023-2024.
- Agro export has reached to \$8bn, in previous year agro export was \$5.8 billion.
- Pakistan’s exports to European countries shrank 3.57pc in the first 11 months of FY24 despite its GSP+ status.
- Pakistan’s merchandise exports to the United States fell 10.65 per cent to \$4.989 billion in the first 11 months of outgoing 2023-24 from \$5.484bn over the corresponding period last year.
- Pakistan’s exports to China increased by 42pc to \$2.553bn in July-May FY24 from \$1.889bn over the corresponding period last year.

- Rice exporters warn of a drastic drop in exports if government sticks to its decision to shift sector from the Final Tax Regime to Hybrid Tax Regime.
- Textile and clothing exports up 0.93pc to \$16.55bn in FY24 from \$16.50bn in the corresponding period of last year.
- Exports of non-textile products increased by 24.95 per cent to \$14.02 billion in 2023-24 from \$11.22bn in the preceding year.
- Rice exports in FY2023-24 reached a record high, with a significant jump of 62% in volume and 83% in value (in dollars) compared to the previous year.
- Rice exports increased to 6 million tonnes from 3.72 tonnes in volume, and to \$3.93 billion from \$2.15 billion in value.
- Sugar export to Afghanistan has resumed after a four-year suspension, Pakistan recently allowed the export of 150,000 tons of sugar to Afghanistan.
- 100-115 vehicles with fruits & vegetables were reaching Pakistan from Afghanistan daily.
- Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif asked authorities to take proactive measures to ensure the country's annual exports reach \$60 billion within three years.
- Exports of meat and its products hit a record high of \$512 million in FY24, marking a 20 per cent increase from \$426m in the preceding year.
- Pakistan's exports to European countries fell 3.12 per cent in FY24 despite its GSP+ status. Pakistan's exports to the EU dipped to \$8.240bn in FY24 from \$8.505bn in the preceding year.
- Pakistan's exports to US have experienced a continuous decline for the second year in a row, contracting 8.42% in 2023-24 compared to the preceding year.
- Pakistan's merchandise exports to the US fell 8.42pc to \$5.432 billion in outgoing fiscal year 2023-24 from \$5.93bn over the same period last year.
- Pakistan's exports to China rose 33.68pc to \$2.707bn in FY24 from \$2.025bn over the same time last year. Imports from US also dropped 15.34pc to \$1.876bn during FY24 from \$2.216bn a year ago.
- The Federal Board of Revenue has imposed 2 percent additional customs duty (ACD) on the import of 2,200 items and increased/imposed regulatory duties (RD) on the import of 657 luxury and non-essential items from July 1, 2024.

## **CORPORATE SECTOR**

- In the throes of Pakistan's worst economic crisis, a Karachi-based textile unit has announced to lock its doors, signaling a larger collapse in the country's export industry as other companies brace for a similar fortune.
- Fatima Fertilizer, a leading name in Pakistan's agriculture sector, and JazzCash, Pakistan's largest digital wallet, have signed a MOU to revolutionize the agri-sector payment ecosystem.

## **INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN / INVESTMENT**

- Pakistan received only about \$11.7bn in foreign loans and grants in the first 11 months (July-May) of outgoing FY24, far behind the annual target of \$17.4bn.
- Country received about \$403 million in foreign assistance in May, up from \$237m in April.
- Companies from oil and gas exploration and production sector informed that during the next three years, around 240 potential reserves sites would be excavated with an investment of \$5bn to explore petroleum and gas.
- FDI inflows during FY24 reached \$1.9bn, up from \$1.62bn in FY23. Inflows for June alone were \$168.7m, compared to \$122.4m in same month a year ago.
- The country borrowed \$9.811 billion from multiple financing sources during the fiscal year 2023-24, far behind the annual target of \$17.619 billion. If IMF and UAE inflows are added, the total inflows would reach \$13.804 billion during the fiscal year 2023-24
- China and Saudi Arabia are likely to roll over \$9 billion in loans to Pakistan in current fiscal year 2024-25, Pakistan faces a total repayment of over \$20.8 billion this fiscal year.
- Geneva Donor Conference, which was held in January 2023, pledged \$10.7 billion in project financing, of which Pakistan has received just \$3 billion, mostly in form of debt instead of grants.
- Pakistan will likely receive \$1 billion from World Bank for Dasu Hydropower Project, Pakistan and Azerbaijan agreed to enhance bilateral investment level of up to \$2 billion
- Abu Dhabi will invest \$250m in 10 years in the Karachi Port to upgrade it.
- The government has hired an American consultancy firm, Kearney, to help attract foreign investment in the country.
- The US administration has sought a budget of \$101 million for Pakistan to “strengthen democracy, fight terrorism, and stabilise the country’s economy”,

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

- ADB has approved a \$400 million concessional loan for reconstruction of houses and infrastructure damaged by floods of 2022 in Sindh.
- Pakistan and the IMF reached a three-year, \$7 billion aid package deal, the Washington-based institution said.
- Currency experts fear that new IMF agreement may lead to a significant depreciation of the local currency.
- Some independent economists believe that the new agreement with the IMF will lead to a depreciation of the local currency by 10-15pc in FY25.
- IMF maintained Pakistan’s growth forecast at 3.5% for the current fiscal year.



- Pakistan has sought the re-profiling of more than \$27 billion in debt and liabilities with friendly nations — China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE — to secure a 37-month IMF bailout package and ease energy sector foreign exchange outflows and consumer tariffs.

## **POLICY**

- Privatization Commission (PC) has selected 10 state-owned entities for privatisation within a year.
- 10 entities which would be privatised within a year are PIACL, RHC, FWBL, HBFC, ZTBL, PECO, SEL, IESCO, FESCO and GEPCO, out of total of 24 to be privatised.
- WB has agreed to facilitate private sector participation in privatisation of Discos.
- PM Shehbaz Sharif in a meeting called for devising a plan to privatise Passco.
- The ministry directed the Ogra chairman to convene a meeting today to discuss analysis, implications, and way forward for deregulating petroleum products.
- Privatisation Minister Abdul Aleem Khan announced that three power firms will be privatized.

## **SOCIO – ECONOMICAL CONDITION**

- Country’s total liquid foreign exchange reserves rose to \$14.573 billion mark as of June 28, 2024 compared to \$9.160 billion as of June 28, 2023, showing an increase of \$ 5.413b in FY24.
- Pakistan’s external debt and liabilities have soared to \$130.179 billion by May 2024, up from \$124.296 billion by end June 2023, showing an increase of around \$5.883 billion in the first 11 months of the fiscal year 2023-24.
- Total external public debt stood at \$86.287 billion by end May 2024 including \$8.665bn from IMF.
- The government borrowed Rs3.2tr from scheduled banks from May 15 to June 28 of the fiscal year 2023-24, despite a 30% growth in revenue generation.
- Government borrowed Rs71.8bn per day during the period, reflecting the government’s massive spending of the government.
- Government borrowing from scheduled banks reached a record high of Rs8.564tr during FY24, more than twice the Rs3.716tr it borrowed during FY23. The borrowing for the last 45 days of FY24 — Rs3.2tr — was incidentally close to entire borrowing in FY23.
- Federal government has planned to borrow Rs 3.97tr from domestic banking sector during the first quarter of this fiscal year (FY25) to finance fiscal deficit.
- Fruit and Vegetable exporters urged federal government for resumption of the fixed tax regime to support the farmers and ensure food security in the country.

- PFVA has proposed that a new “advance tax” shall be abolished and the fixed tax regime shall continue to support the export sector.
- The government announced that the annual inflation for 2023-24 exceeded its budgetary target, reaching a staggering 23.41 per cent owing to an increase in electricity, gas, and essential kitchen items.
- Food inflation for June stood at 2.6pc in urban areas and 1.3pc in rural areas, whereas non-food inflation was 24.3pc in urban areas and 17.9pc in rural areas.
- The country is confronting its highest-ever inflation, but the Ministry of Commerce said that raw food exports increased by 37 per cent in FY24 over the preceding fiscal year.
- Milk producers have passed on 18pc increase in GST to consumers.
- Commodities importers and wholesalers see the withholding tax as “reign of taxation” to unleash the storm of food inflation in the country amid growing world market prices.
- The CPI inflation stood at 11.8pc in May 2024 and 29.4pc in June 2023. The average annual inflation fell to 23.4pc in FY24 from 29.2pc in FY23.

## ENVIRONMENT

- The presence of second-hand smoke in an alarming 95pc of children in Pakistan and Bangladesh, putting them at an increased risk of respiratory tract infections and, in cases of babies with hereditary disorders, death.
- PDWP has approved Rs30 billion for the revamp of 1,033 Basic Health Units (BHUs) and 220 Rural Health Centres (RHCs) in province (Punjab).
- Pakistan faces a shortage of about one million nurses and as many as 30,000 to 40,000 doctors.
- Since 2012 over 100 cases of Naegleria fowleri have been reported in Karachi. Of them, only one patient survived for three months.
- According to the PRC, total number of new cancer cases reported from 2017 to 2022 were 185,748, while the related deaths stood at 118,631 in Pakistan.
- Cervical cancer which is detected in over 5,000 women every year in Pakistan. more than 3,000 women of the 5,000 plus died of cervical cancer.
- Pakistan had a population of 68.6 million women aged 15 years and older who were at risk of developing cervical cancer.
- As many as 68,100 children under the age of five years died in Pakistan in 2021 due to high exposure to air pollution.
- Moreover Pakistan had experienced increases of more than 10pc in ambient ozone exposures in last decade, and had the highest average ozone exposure in 2020.
- Pakistan has the largest burden of disease linked to air pollution after India and China at 256,000 deaths per annum.
- 30pc of all deaths in the first month after birth are linked to exposure to air pollution in South Asia, including Pakistan.

- Pakistan ranked as second most polluted country, and Lahore was the fourth most polluted city in the world during 2023.
- Ministry of Climate Change stated that each person in Pakistan inhaled approximately 31 out of every 1,000 plastic particles daily.
- A study recently has found that city’s air remains heavily laden with hazardous pollutants throughout the year, posing serious threat to public health.
- Citing WHO data, ambient (outdoor) air pollution was estimated to have caused 4.2 million premature deaths worldwide in 2019 and that some 89% of those premature deaths occurred in low-and middle-income countries.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- Agriculture being biggest employing sector supports Pakistan’s economy and addresses food security challenges. However, this sector has not improved in the last three decades and has adversely been impacted by climate change, urbanisation and population growth.
- An average Pakistani household spends around 50 per cent of their monthly income on food, making them particularly vulnerable to shocks such as high food prices. Pakistan had the highest rate of malnutrition in South Asia.

### **13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS**

- Growers and their representative organisations fear that severe shortage of irrigation water arising out of recent damage to Sukkur Barrage gates may lead to drought, large scale migration, economic depression and a law and order situation across the rice cultivation belt.
- Flash floods triggered by melting glacier have damaged over two dozen homes, hundreds of kanals of land, crops and trees along the Burgi nullah in Skardu, forcing the evacuation of dozens of households to safe areas.
- A record of last 30 years was broken when the city of Lahore witnessed 315 millimeter.
- In order to understand the alarming rise in deaths due to lightning, the Sindh government ordered an inquiry and approached the federal ministry of science and technology and the NED University of Engineering and Technology to know the reasons behind this ‘natural disaster’.
- Crops over thousands of acres were destroyed, mud houses damaged and several cattle heads were killed because of hill torrents caused by the recent torrential rains over the mountains surrounding Isakhel tehsil.
- More than 30 bodies were found from different parts of Karachi over past two days, when mercury crossed 40.5 degrees Celsius, with extremely high levels of humidity, taking “feels-like temperature” beyond 50 degrees in metropolis.

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

- The Israeli government has seized a total of 23.7 square kilometres in the West Bank since the start of the year, it said. When land is declared “state property”, Palestinians lose private ownership rights and are barred from using it.

## AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

- Algeria and Italy signed a €420 million (\$455m) deal for an agricultural project in the North African country.
- The deal came months after Algeria signed a \$3.5 billion agreement with Qatar’s largest dairy producer Baladna to establish a vast cow-breeding facility for the production of powdered milk.

## AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS

- Indian farmers have accelerated the planting of summer-sown crops, such as paddy, soybean, cotton, and corn, following above-average monsoon rainfall in July that came after a deficit in June.
- In the first half of July there was 9% more rainfall than normal which helped farmers to plant summer crops on 57.5 million hectares (142 million acres) by July 12, a tenth higher than last year.

## SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS

- A small dairy in Tasmania is stocking supermarket shelves with what it says is the world’s first branded milk produced by cows fed with a seaweed that makes them emit lower levels of environmentally damaging methane gas. The livestock industry accounts for around 30 percent of global methane emissions.
- Countries and environmental groups voiced concern and disappointment after a draft treaty to cut fishing subsidies failed to pass, with China calling for major changes in how countries negotiate at the World Trade Organization.
- Denmark will introduce the world’s first carbon tax on livestock, a unique measure designed to bring the Scandinavian country closer to its goal of carbon neutrality by 2045.

## TRADE

- Iran is selling crude oil to 17 countries, indicating some states may not be honouring US sanctions.

- Brazil has put into effect a free trade agreement with the Palestinian Authority that has been waiting for ratification for more than decade, in a show of support for the Palestinian people.
- Higher quality Black Sea wheat with 11.5% protein content for making flour traded around \$265 to \$270 per metric ton, compared with around \$300 to \$310 quoted in May.
- Asia is a net importer of wheat, accounting for about 30% of the grain shipped worldwide.
- Egypt’s Suez Canal reported a 23.4 per cent drop in revenues attributed to disruptions in Red Sea shipping over the past year, marked by attacks from Yemen’s Houthi rebels on Israeli-linked vessels.
- The canal recorded “during the financial year 2023/24 the passage of 20,148 ships, generating revenues of \$7.2 billion, compared with 25,911 ships during the financial year 2022/23, with revenues of \$9.4 billion,”

## **CORPORATE SECTOR**

- McDonald’s reported a surprise drop in sales worldwide, its first decline in 13 quarters, as deal-seeking consumers shy away from higher priced menu items, including Big Macs.

## **INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN / INVESTMENT**

- South Asia, with its vast market potential and growing economies, presents a promising destination for Chinese investors and businesses seeking to expand their footprint in the region.”

## **INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (IFIs)**

- The IMF held its global growth expectations for 2024 steady in a report even as it cut forecasts for the United States and Japan, while warning of inflation risks and trade tensions ahead.
- IMF expects world economy to grow 3.2 percent this year, unchanged from its April forecast.
- The World Bank will grant Togo \$200 million for energy infrastructure projects to help tackle the West African country’s devastating electricity crisis.

## **SOCIO – ECONOMICAL CONDITIONS**

- Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva kicked off a global effort to end hunger and extreme poverty, aiming to make it a hallmark of Brazil’s G20 presidency as he seeks to restore the country’s soft power on the world stage.

- Conflict, economic turbulence and extreme weather scuppered efforts to curb hunger last year, with around nine percent of the world’s population affected, About 733 million people may have faced hunger in 2023.
- Moderate or severe food insecurity, which forces people to occasionally skip meals, hit 2.33 billion people last year, almost 29 percent of the global population.
- A healthy diet was unaffordable for more than one third of the world’s population in 2022. more than 71 percent of people in low-income countries could not afford healthy diets, compared with just over six percent in high-income nations.
- Between \$176 billion and \$3,975 billion are needed to eradicate hunger by 2030.
- The world’s richest one percent increased their fortunes by a total of \$42 trillion over the past decade.
- Oxfam said that the \$42 trillion figure was nearly 36 times more than the wealth accumulated by the poorer half of the world’s population.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- Fossil fuel-driven climate change is driving extreme heat waves across the world and will continue to deliver dangerous weather for decades to come.
- Last month was the hottest June on record across the globe, every month since June 2023 has eclipsed its own temperature record in a 13-month streak of unprecedented global heat.
- Climate change is thought to be the biggest long-term and unmitigated external risk to water security in Pakistan, and it is a key reason why staple crop yields and livestock production are projected to decrease by up to 20 and 30 percent, respectively.
- Climate change will push between 5.7 million and 9.0 million additional people into poverty in Pakistan, and Bangladesh will have roughly 13.3 million internal climate change migrants by 2050.
- The bank stated that in Pakistan, the devastating 2022 floods - a direct result of the country’s vulnerability to climate change - left between 8.4 million and 9.1 million more people in poverty.
- Punjab is home to almost half of the country’s poor. The poverty belt is concentrated in southern Punjab, where the poverty rate (39 percent) is almost twice as high as the provincial average (21 percent).
- Average per capita economic growth in South Asia declined from 3.9 percent in 2017 to 3.6 percent and 3.2 percent in 2018 and 2019, respectively.
- The Asia-Pacific region is faltering on decades of progress in reducing poverty and hunger.

- The burden of climate impacts is unevenly distributed. Poorer countries and communities are far more vulnerable and less able to adapt.
- Azerbaijan has announced a \$1bn fund to invest in climate action projects in the developing world, to help vulnerable nations build resilience to climate change risks, including floods and droughts.
- The Climate Finance Action Fund (CFAF) will be capitalised with contributions from fossil fuel-producing countries and companies across oil, gas and coal, and Azerbaijan will be a founding contributor.
- “Billions of people are facing an extreme heat epidemic — wilting under increasingly deadly heat waves, with temperatures topping 50 degrees Celsius around the world”.
- July 21, 22 and 23 were the three hottest days ever recorded worldwide, with July 22 holding the absolute record of 17.16°C.

## **CLIMATE DISASTERS**

- A record drought that has devastated crops across southern Africa, causing millions of people to go hungry and pushing five countries to declare a national disaster, is entering its worst stage.
- “People haven’t been able to pick anything and the problem is the next harvest is only in April 2025.” Drought is the worst to hit the region in 100 years.

# NATIONAL NEWS

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Agriculture emergency? [1]

Samsons agri farm pioneers new era of sustainable farming [2]

Seventh Agricultural Census 2024 inaugurated [2]

Climate-resilient agri practices: PFVA signs MoU with CVF-V20 to boost co-op [2]

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# NATIONAL NEWS

## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

### ***KP gov't's response sought to plea against non-extension of agriculture project***

Peshawar High Court issued a notice to the provincial agriculture secretary to respond to a petition challenging the non-extension of an agriculture development project under Agriculture Transformation Plan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A bench also fixed July 4 for hearing of interim relief plea of the employees of the project, requesting for issuance of a stay order in the matter and also to direct the government not to take any adverse action against them. The petition is jointly filed by 171 agriculture officers of the project requesting the court to declare the government's exclusion of the project in the Annual Development Programme 2024-25 as illegal. They sought directives from the court for government to extend project, as 70% of its budget was still unutilised & it could easily be extended for a year. They requested that court stop government from taking any action against petitioners till final disposal of petition. (*Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Agriculture emergency?***

Once again agri sector experts have warned as loudly as they could that climate change is taking such a heavy toll on horticultural and crop yields that if centuries-old ways of seeding and irrigation are not abandoned to make way for technologically advanced methods even now, then very soon we will face "serious food insecurity" and a water crisis we might never recover from. It turns out that a two-degree rise in hot weather cuts overall agricultural produce by 20pc, which if you've not planned for it means last-minute imports at top dollar with no guarantee of securing enough supply in time.

And that, of course, means small farmers will eventually get crushed and big ones will suffer large losses just because there's no way to make the government wake up, declare an agriculture emergency, and ensure full-scale adoption of modern seeding and irrigation technologies. Agriculture is supposed to be Pakistan's natural endowment, comparative advantage, largest employer, sector with the most number of Pakistani families associated with it, and of course the country's bread basket. Yet we've fallen from net exporter to chronic importer largely because we still want to run this sector on ancient knowhow and technology even when undeniable effects of climate change have prompted the entire world to improvise. The World Resources Institute's research finds Pakistan in a region where agricultural output "could go down to 50pc from 2015 to 2050 because of climate change and the impact on crop yields". Add to that our own selective blindness, biases and resistance to modern technology and it's not too hard to figure out how and why we've dropped from being one of the world's most water abundant countries, once upon a time, to one of its most water scarce ones now. It's a shame that the government has set up research centres and even a climate change ministry, yet experts and stakeholders continue to lament that these institutions have failed to benefit farmers at all. (*Business Recorder, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Samsons agri farm pioneers new era of sustainable farming***

Samsons Agri Farm, a leading agri-business group has pioneered a new era of sustainable farming in Pakistan, as it has transformed arid and sandy land into lush green fields, revolutionizing Pakistan's agricultural landscape. Executive Director Samsons Agri Farm told that the group has employed modern technology including installation of central pivot irrigation system which ensures efficient water utilization and helps in turning barren lands into productive agricultural fields. A team of local and international professionals manages the farm. Samsons Agri is cultivating Rhodes grass, alfalfa, canola, sesame, wheat, millet, besides fruit and vegetables, organic farming, and medicinal crops. One of the top cash crops of Pakistan is tobacco which generated over 10mn USD in exports last year. It is now being cultivated successfully on this land. The initiative has created numerous employment opportunities, with more than 90% of workforce being female. Samsons Agri is also keeping a large herd of animals (cows, buffalo, and sheep), which will soon increase to 10,000 animals. Farm is engaged in fattening and breeding of animals for export of meat & dairy products. Farm has also entered into a contract with a large commercial organization for cultivating 500 acres of barley crop. (*Business Recorder, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Seventh Agricultural Census 2024 inaugurated***

Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal inaugurated Seventh Agricultural Census 2024 envisaging facilitating decision-making based on reliable data, helping to enhance agricultural productivity in line with the growing population. Minister emphasized significant achievement of conducting a highly transparent digital census with the consensus of all provinces using advanced technology. He highlighted the importance of agricultural statistics for a predominantly agrarian country like Pakistan and praised PBS for introducing an automated local system. (*Business Recorder, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Climate-resilient agri practices: PFVA signs MoU with CVF-V20 to boost co-op***

All Pakistan Fruit & Vegetable Exporters, Importers & Merchants Association and the Climate Vulnerable Forum - V20 Group of Finance Ministers signed a MoU to enhance cooperation in promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices, seed innovation, conservation efforts, and sustainable development in agriculture sector. This strategic partnership aims to leverage the strengths and resources of both organizations to jointly tackle climate change challenges while ensuring climate prosperity and competitiveness of Pakistan's horticultural industry. MoU signifies a commitment to joint efforts in advocacy, research, innovation, and capacity acceleration activities that will benefit growers, traders, and exporters. (*Business Recorder, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Agri research: Senate body concerned at 'insufficient' allocation***

The Senate Standing Committee on National Food Security & Research expressed concern that only 0.12 percent of the total allocated budget was allocated to research in the agriculture sector. The inaugural session included a comprehensive briefing on the

roles, functions, and performance of the Ministry of National Food Security & Research and its affiliated departments. Detailed discussions ensued regarding the operations and performance of PARC, noting insufficient budgetary support for research resulting in continued reliance on seed imports. The committee expressed dismay that only 0.12% of total budget was allocated to research. Budgetary allocations were also a focal point, with a total of Rs.43,809,325,000 earmarked for FY2024-25. It was disclosed that approximately Rs30 billion would be needed per province for this purpose. The committee was informed that Pakistan had achieved a milestone in identifying a new variety of banana. Further inquiries were made regarding shrimp production, with plans disclosed for establishing shrimp hatcheries. Concerning cotton production, which constitutes 60% of Pakistan's agricultural economy, the committee noted the absence of specific measures or plans to adapt to changing climate conditions. It was emphasized that dedicated research and oversight by the Cotton Committee were essential in addressing these challenges. It was also noted that 1 million potato seed variants would be imported from Holland. (*Business Recorder, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **1.1 # Farmers**

### ***HWA provides skills, enterprises training to 500 female farmers***

Hari Welfare Association provided skills and enterprises development training to the 500 peasants women of three districts including Shaheed Benazirabad, Matiari and Sanghar. The press statement said that HWA has trained 200 rural women in the Matiari district on how to start their small businesses and connected them with major markets in city. The statement also said that through BISP, government is making rural women beggars and dependents instead. HWA is providing this training with the cooperation of the Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad. (*Business Recorder, 1<sup>st</sup>, July, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***36 bonded peasants freed***

They were recovered by police from a farmland in Samaro taluka on the orders of the court, which received an application from Neemo Bheel a few days ago about illegal detention of 36 of his relatives on a farmland. He complained that his relatives were denied due share in harvest and wages and they were subjected to forced labour by their landlord. They were deprived of proper medical treatment and not allowed free movement or meeting with their relatives, appealing to the court to order their release from illegal confinement. Subsequently, police received orders to raid the farmland and liberate the bonded peasants. (*Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***HRCP stresses review of Sindh Tenancy Act***

Participants of a consultation have called for bringing Sindh Tenancy Act in conformity with present conditions and said Sindh government should do away with pre-requisite for offering 'Hari Card' to those having 16 acres of land. The card should be given to genuine farm workers. The consultation titled 'Challenges faced by landless tenants and farmers in Sindh' was organised by HRCP. (*Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

## 1.2 # Land

### ***Notices issued on plea against plan to allot 6,000 acres in Hawkesbay to DHA***

The Sindh High Court has issued notices to chief secretary, administrator of the Defence Housing Authority and others in a petition filed against a provincial government's plan to allot 6,000 acres of land to DHA. A division bench took up the petition along with an application seeking urgent hearing of the matter. After a preliminary hearing, bench allowed the urgency application and issued notices on the main petition. Advocate Ashfaque Ali Panhwar moved SHC and stated that DHA had submitted an application to the Sindh chief minister in August last year for allotment of 5,000 to 6,000 acres of land in the vicinity of Hawkesbay for its expansion. He alleged that nothing was mentioned in the correspondence between the respondents about payment to the Sindh government against the 6,000 acres of land. (*Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Peshawar High Court shows concern over use of agricultural land for housing schemes***

Peshawar High Court has directed KP government to resolve within six months the issue of establishing industrial estate in Swabi by Small Industrial Development Board and housing schemes on agricultural land in Charsadda. Bench directed chief secretary to convene high level meeting of officers including senior member board of revenue, secretaries of food, agriculture and industries departments and director general of Environmental Protection Agency to ponder over issues and to make policy decision so as to address grievances of petitioners with approval of provincial cabinet. (*Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

## 1.3 # Water

### ***Damage to Sukkur Barrage attributed mainly to neglect, lack of maintenance***

Considering paramount importance of Sukkur Barrage for the irrigation and overall agriculture sector, the June 20 heavy damage to its seven gates must have forced government to bring its operations into safer limits that have seemingly been eluded. While the ongoing 'technical inquiry' into the damage is yet to come up with its findings, some indicators tend to suggest that the barrage is hit by deferred maintenance and serious operational issues like pond level raising. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Growers want use of modern technology to protect barrages***

A Sindh Abadgar Board (SAB) meeting has questioned the lack of maintenance and transparency in development work on barrages. It appreciated that Sukkur Barrage was made operational within nine days after the June 20 damage to its gates, but observed that it didn't happen without losses to the farm sector. Growers were deeply concerned about the damage to a number of gates of Sukkur Barrage. Damage to its (Sukkur Barrage) gates can not only impact eight million acres of direct command area of the barrage, but can have an effect on downstream Kotri Barrage and 80 per cent of agriculture in Sindh as well. Such a situation would have a negative impact on industry and exports, which included largest manufacturing sector of Pakistan that was related to cotton and rice export and sugar production etc. (*Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Accord signed to `solarise` tube wells in Balochistan***

The federal and Balochistan governments signed an agreement worth Rs55 billion to solarise (around 28,000) agriculture tube wells in the province within three months. PM said that the federal government, in cooperation with the Balochistan government, will shift around 28,000 agriculture tube wells of province from electricity to solar energy. He said total cost of this project is Rs55bn, of which 70 per cent will be provided by federal government, initiative will help save around Rs90bn annually. He added that in the next phase, “we are going for solarisation of one million agriculture tube wells across the country, saving \$3.5bn being spent on imported fuel every year”. Meanwhile, PDWP approved chief minister’s programme for solarisation of agriculture tube wells in Punjab at an estimated cost of Rs9bn. PDWP also approved seven development schemes worth over Rs24bn. (*Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***KP Irrigation Dept urged to ensure uninterrupted water supply***

Farmers from KP requested provincial Irrigation Department of KP to develop a system to ensure un-interrupted water supply to farmers downstream of the canal. Farmers belonging to various villages of tail-end areas complained about the continuous water stealing from the Baizai Irrigation Channel, fearing that if the problem persists, about thousands of acres would become unproductive. (*Business Recorder, 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Balochistan getting full share from Indus: minister***

Balochistan Minister for Irrigation Mir Sadiq Umrani has said that Balochistan is getting its full share of water from the Indus River through the Pat Feeder canal and it is for the first time over the last 15 years that the province is getting its full quota of water. Mr Umrani said that an amount of Rs64 billion has been approved by the provincial government for cleaning (Bhalsafai) of the Pat Feeder canal for increasing Balochistan’s water share from the Indus River. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Armed clash over irrigation water leaves man dead***

An armed clash between two groups over irrigation water left one man dead and seven others critically wounded in Mohammed Moosa Lashari village near Kandiaro town of Naushahro Feroze district. (*Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Sindh to ensure equitable water supply for Balochistan***

Sindh will ensure a proper water supply from the Indus River to Balochistan as per its due share and conduct third-party analysis to ensure transparency. Balochistan, which is mostly arid, depends upon Sindh to meet its water needs from human consumption and irrigation. (*Dawn, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, page 5*)

### ***56 small dams built at cost of over Rs26 billion***

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has completed construction of 56 small dams at a cost of Rs26.7 billion having a storage capacity of 281,410 acre feet. 0.3 Million acres of agricultural land would be irrigated by those dams. It added that 30 more small dams would be completed soon at a cost of Rs43.6 billion. (*Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)



## **2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS**

### **2.1 # Agricultural Loan & Finances**

#### ***Zardari urges SCB's Group CE to invest in agri sector***

President Asif Ali Zardari asked a delegation led by Group Chief Executive of Standard Chartered Bank Bill Winters to invest in agricultural sector as well as financing infrastructure projects in the country, especially small dams, barrages and power plants. While talking to the delegation, President said banks should extend financial services and loans to farmers to increase their access to agricultural inputs. President highlighted that Pakistan had taken steps to protect environment and promote forestation. He informed that Government of Sindh had planted mangrove forests and earned millions of dollars by trading carbon credits in international market. He suggested that investing in climate sector would help protect environment. (*Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

#### ***Agriculture and SME finance expansion: SBP issues letters to banks to develop five-year plans***

Governor, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), chaired second Steering Committee meeting on July 4 on initiatives aimed at boosting agriculture, small and medium enterprises (SME), and digital & technology sectors within banking industry. SBP has issued letters to all banks to develop and submit their five years Agriculture and SME finance expansion plans and strategies to significantly grow these portfolios over next five years. As part of its Vision 2028, SBP aims to increase outstanding Agri-finance portfolio to Rs 1,000 billion with total disbursements exceeding Rs 3,000 billion by end of June 2025. SBP is working closely with PBA to support commercial banks to enhance their lending in both sectors to stimulate entrepreneurship, create jobs, help farmers improve productivity, invest in modern equipment, expand their operations and drive economic development. (*Business Recorder, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

#### ***Kissan cards in Punjab from Aug 10***

Chief Minister Punjab Kissan cards will be available in the branches of Bank of Punjab from August 10 as the printing of 250,000 cards is underway. Kissan card holders would be able to purchase fertilisers, seeds and pesticides at discounted prices from October 15. 275,000 growers have so far applied for it. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### **2.2 # Agricultural Taxes**

#### ***President Zardari `apprehensive of agricultural tax***

President Asif Ali Zardari has called for adopting a holistic approach and prudent financial policies to put the country on path of development. President said government was planning to tax agricultural income as per IMF's conditions, but the provincial governments would be leading initiative to tax large land-holding farmers in accordance with their profitability and expenditures. He said that agro-farm and agro-industry were the future and big landowners would have to be taxed. (*Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Taxing agriculture***

Our inability to collect sufficient tax revenue is resulting in persistently high fiscal deficits, forcing successive governments to accumulate an unsustainably high debt — domestic and external to finance their budgets year after year. Current administration has now pledged to raise tax-to-GDP ratio by over 3pc from the existing 9.5pc to 13pc in next three years as it negotiates another IMF bailout to avert an economic meltdown. However, few believe it can do so without taxing every sector of the economy equitably. Agriculture is one potential area that can produce sizable revenues. Nonetheless, the sector contributed less than 0.1pc of the direct tax collection of Rs3.7tr in last fiscal year, despite comprising nearly a quarter of national economy. Why is this so? One reason is that agriculture income tax remains a provincial subject because it suits the interests of big landlords who enjoy substantial political clout in assemblies. Besides, provinces have limited capacity to assess farm incomes and collect tax accordingly. More importantly, tax rates on farm income are much lower than federal rates applicable to income derived from other sources. The highest slab on agricultural income is just 15pc in Sindh and Punjab, compared to nearly 39pc on salaried individuals.

The abysmally low rates on farm incomes have in effect turned agriculture income tax into a ‘tax haven’ for tax cheats. An IMF paper has indicated that tax exemption on agricultural income makes this sector a legal, and sometimes illegal, tax shelter for other forms of income. Transfers from other sectors of the economy to agriculture are commonplace to avoid income taxes. It means application of federal tax rates on agricultural income could yield substantial revenues for the budget and reduce the growing burden on the rest of the economy. But this is not possible unless agriculture income tax is transferred to centre for assessment and collection under normal income tax laws. That will require a consensus at the NFC forum and then a constitutional amendment. Until we get there, the provinces must bring agriculture income tax rates on a par with normal income tax rates and transfer it to FBR. The revenues from farm incomes can be distributed amongst the provinces till an agreement is reached to make it part of the divisible tax pool. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 6*)

### ***Provinces agree to align agri tax system with centre***

The four provincial governments have agreed to comply with IMF’s demand to align the taxation of agricultural incomes with the federal income tax system starting from January 1 2025. The provinces have also indicated their agreement to have the legislation prepared by the end of October. However, there is still uncertainty regarding the maximum rate of tax collection on agriculture income, with options ranging from 29 per cent, 35pc and 45pc. One prerequisite for the new IMF programme is a shift in the tax policy on agricultural income. Official sources told that the draft of the tax regime change on agriculture income had already been shared with the IMF.

In the negotiations on agricultural income before budget, the maximum income tax on individual incomes was 35pc. However, rate was increased to 45pc in budget. “We are

not clear whether maximum rate will now be 35pc or 45pc for agriculture incomes of provinces”. Corporate income tax rate is 29pc. According to sources, farmers can also start their corporations to benefit from lower tax rates. Currently, minimum tax on agricultural income is 15pc in Sindh, while maximum rate in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is 17.5pc. In Sindh & Punjab, annual farm revenue up to Rs1.2m is tax-exempt. However, this exemption limit will now be Rs600,000. Total revenue collection under agriculture income tax is between Rs3bn to Rs3.5bn per annum. (*Dawn, July 12, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Taxing agriculture, finally?***

At last, IMF has announced reaching a staff-level agreement with Pakistan for a USD 7 billion, 37-month EFF, putting an end to mystery about bailout facility that we were first told was going to begin with new fiscal year. Now all that’s left is approval by the Fund’s executive board and rollovers and disbursements from friendly countries – UAE, Saudi Arabia, China – will also follow. (*Business Recorder, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 6*)

### ***Growers’ body rejects move to levy income tax on agriculture***

Sindh Chamber of Agriculture (SCA) has rejected levying of income tax on agriculture sector, deploring that it is being imposed at the instance of IMF. This sector is already faced with multifaceted crisis and, therefore, such a decision should be rescinded. The meeting decided to coordinate with other organisations of growers in the country to launch a campaign against this decision. The cost of all sorts of agricultural inputs, including machinery, seed and fertiliser, as well as diesel, were skyrocketing with result that growers were facing a financial crisis. Besides yields had considerably declined. It said that agriculture sector was suffering heavy losses and under these circumstances, growers could not pay income tax. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 19*)

## **2.3 # Fertilizer**

### ***Illegal fertiliser cross-subsidies***

Aptma condemns Ministry of Energy and Ogra “illegal imposition of Rs50 billion in cross subsidies to fertiliser sector in ring-fenced RLNG tariffs from June 2024 onwards”. Association said that subsidies will have a destructive impact on country’s exports, employment, and overall economy. The association opined that decision violates Articles 6 and 7 of Ogra Ordinance 2002, which were designed to protect consumer interests. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page Business & Finance 3*)

### ***Fertiliser cos told to set up ‘sales shops’***

Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain directed the fertiliser companies to establish sales shop in every district to facilitate farmers and agriculture development. The meeting was informed that total stock of urea as on 22nd July 2024 was 426.312 million tonnes which included Agritech Limited 43.818 million tonnes, Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited 56.522 million tonnes, Engro Fertiliser Limited 77.377 million tonnes, and Fatima Fertilizer Company Limited 258.599 million tonnes. (*Business Recorder, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS**

### **3.1 # Cash Crop**

#### ***Cotton output `halved` by climate change, inefficiency***

The overall cotton production during the current season has dropped by almost half compared to the same period last year, according to the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association. Experts have said the dip in bale availability was due to erratic weather patterns and the government's failure to ensure that farmers got good prices for their produce. Estimated that total harvest would be around 7.7m bales, significantly lower than government's target of 10.2m bales this year. (*Dawn, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

#### ***Stressed cotton economy***

Decreasing cotton production should be a worry for the government because of its socioeconomic implications. Early arrivals for the current period show that the crop's output has almost halved from the same time last year. Cotton traders are expecting the next harvest to be around 7.7m bales, which is significantly lower than the government target of 10.2m and last year's 8.2m bales when the crop bounced back after the flood losses of the preceding year.

Ginners and traders attribute the current dip in output to erratic weather patterns and market conditions where growers have struggled to recover their costs. The heatwave this year is said to have delayed early cotton sowing. Overall, cotton production appears to have stagnated at 7-9m bales a year after hitting a peak of 14.1m in 2004 and 13.5m in 2012. Our cotton economy remains under stress due to use of low-quality seed, disease, erratic weather resulting in frequent floods and drought, higher cost of production, etc. (*Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 6*)

#### ***Sharp fall in cotton prices worries ginners, growers***

The recent "unusual" drop in lint and raw cotton prices has resulted in the 'insolvency' of ginners and growers. The rates of lint and raw cotton have registered a drop of Rs2,000 and Rs1,000 per 40kg, respectively, in outgoing week. PCGA data reveals that up until July 15, around 442,000 bales of raw cotton were brought to ginning factories, about 48pc less than during same period last year. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### **3.2 # Food Crop**

#### ***In a first, Punjab notifies prices of privately bought wheat, its products***

In an unprecedented move to curb the price hike of food staple, the Punjab government notified prices of privately bought wheat and products made out of it. The director Food Punjab issued three notifications in this regard, elaborating maximum price of indigenous wheat, whole meal wheat flour (atta) and fortified wheat flour for each 38 districts of the province. The new rates would come into effect forthwith and remain in force until altered/withdrawn. (*The News, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Flour export policy reversed amid millers` strike***

In a sudden policy shift, Shehbaz Sharif government revoked its March order, banning the export of flour made from imported wheat amid a nationwide strike by millers. At the same time, a ban on wheat imports was imposed, which came too late for the country, particularly for farmers in Punjab who were protesting against unnecessary wheat imports despite a bumper crop. Out of 65 total wheat importers, 17 were flour mills that also imported wheat. The government had previously formed a committee to investigate the issue, but it took two months to impose a ban on wheat imports, which was officially notified on July 12. According to PBS data, wheat imports continued through April, but no imports were reported in May.

Since July 11, over 1,800 wheat flour mills have gone on strike to protest tax measures that they claim would increase their burden as they would have to work as FBR's tax agents, collecting around Rs40 in advance tax from non-filer retailers on a 15kg sack of wheat flour. More than 90 per cent of wheat retailers are non-filers. The Punjab government initially told millers that they could acquire wheat for Rs4,700 per 40kg. Millers began purchasing wheat on the open market at a substantially lower price. Some millers also imported wheat directly during caretaker government. Similar trends were observed in KP and Balochistan, where millers bought wheat from both the private sector and farmers directly at cheaper prices. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Ban imposed on import of wheat***

Federal Government has imposed ban on import of wheat. In an SRO issued Commerce Ministry has clearly stated that ban on import of wheat will remain in place in all circumstances. (*Business Recorder, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Wheat most important food commodity, govt told***

S. M. Tanveer, patron-in-chief of UBG, has appraised that, in order to broaden the tax base and bring the flour mills under the tax net, the government should revert the illogical, impractical and regressive withholding tax imposed in the federal budget 2024–25. (*Business Recorder, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Page 2*)

## **3.3 # Fruit**

### ***Olive oil sector sees significant expansion***

The International Trade Centre (ITC) of the United Nations has said the olive oil sector in Pakistan has witnessed a significant expansion from a fledging 19kg production in 2016 to 121,000kg by 2023, with a cultivation area now reaching almost 3,800 hectares. The report launched by the ITC provides an in-depth analysis of the current landscape, consumer preferences, and growth opportunities in Pakistan's olive market. The EU-funded project, Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP), implemented by the ITC, prepared the report in collaboration with the Italian Agency for Cooperation and Development. (*Dawn, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

## **4 # SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

### **4.1 # Fisheries**

#### ***Expert explains potential of aquaculture sector***

Aquaculture sector has potential to generate billions of dollars through export beside provision of support of employment to the youth of rural areas in the country and source of income for the investors. Omar Hayat Khan, an expert on the aquaculture and environment stressed need for diverting political attention of both federal and provincial governments towards aquaculture and fisheries to attract investment through providing enabling environment to investors. (*Business Recorder, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

#### ***'Blue economy' fails; seafood exports down 17pc***

Hopes for the country's seafood export growth to reach multi-billion-dollar were dashed in the just-ended fiscal year, nose diving over 17 percent, exporters said. Fresh figures mirror a gloomy state of the country's seafood export, falling by 17.36 percent to \$410 million in the fiscal year 2023-24, exporters cited the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. The entire sector's hopes, which exporters had pinned on the new government's "blue economy", completely fell apart with dismal growth prospects for one more year. The blue economy envisaged to enable the fisheries sector as a major export contributor. The towering claims about a new legislation to help export the aquaculture products from April 2024 to the world markets has highly failed to grow the entire sector with a multi-billion-dollar global trade. Not a single shipment of the aquaculture products was made since the announcement, whereas country drastically lost its traditional seafood export. The fiscal year 2022-2023 saw a record seafood export growth to 214,367 metric tons valuing \$496.31 million but the country failed to sustain the uptrend, nose diving to 200,709 metric tons or \$410.27 million last fiscal year. Decrease in average unit price from \$2.32 a kilogram to \$2.04 is seen as a devastating factor to pull down country's seafood export in 2023-24. Seafood products like squid a major export to Chinese market have lost their value over years; he said that an average price would range between \$6 and \$7 a kg in 2022-2023, which slumped to \$2 to \$3 a kg this year. (*Business Recorder, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### **4.2 # Livestock**

#### ***Livestock Dept: adviser to CM briefed about reform process***

Advisor to CM Sindh for Livestock, Fisheries and Human Settlement Authority Syed Najmi Alam presided over meeting in which the provincial adviser was given a detailed briefing about all the ongoing projects of the department and all the development projects coming in the new financial year. It was also informed in the meeting that this time we are starting a three-year diploma course at the Artificial Insemination Training Center in Tondojam under the Animal Breeding Wing of the Livestock Department. (*Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

## 5 # TRADE

### ***PM seeks more bilateral trade with Dushanbe***

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasised the need to expand bilateral trade between Pakistan and Tajikistan, saying that the current trade volume does not reflect the strong relationship between the two nations. PM Shehbaz is in Dushanbe for a two-day visit. Addressing a presser alongside President Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan, he said the two countries have signed several MoUs. The premier assured the Tajik president that he would work closely with him to further cement the brotherly ties not only in the fields of agriculture, education, health and promotion of investment, but also in expansion of bilateral trade. He said Pakistan would be keen to be a part of China-Tajikistan-Afghanistan trade corridor project, adding that it would be another opportunity to broaden the multilateral trade in the region. (*Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***PM wants `barter system` to push trade with Russia***

PM Shehbaz Sharif met Russian President Vladimir Putin, his Tajik counterpart Qohir Rasulzoda and Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, seeking to expand bilateral ties, especially economic cooperation, with the three countries. While PM Shehbaz called President Putin to boost trade ties with Pakistan, he offered the Tajik leader to use Karachi port for the purpose. The prime minister is on a two-day visit to Astana to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council, Heads of State and SCO Plus summits. Mr Putin said both countries could enhance their cooperation in energy and agriculture and expressed his readiness to promote cooperation with Pakistan in the field of food security. Premier called for overcoming financial and banking issues between Pakistan and Russia by renewing and expanding trade under a barter system. He called for enhancing trade between the two countries, noting it was currently touching \$1 billion.

### **Ties with Tajikistan**

Emphasising the need for establishing road and rail links between Pakistan and Tajikistan, PM Shehbaz invited Tajik PM Rasulzoda to use Karachi Port for the transit trade. The PM suggested Pakistan host a regional connectivity summit to provide trade corridors to Central Asian countries and promote regional trade.

### **Talks with Uzbek leader**

In their meeting at Astana, PM Shehbaz and President Mirziyoyev expressed confidence that operationalisation of the preferential trade agreement and Pakistan-Uzbekistan transit trade agreement would further enhance bilateral trade and economic relations. The Karachi Port's connectivity to Tirmez was also discussed to enhance bilateral trade.

### **Tripartite mechanisms**

PM Shehbaz proposed to establish tripartite institutional mechanisms, particularly in economic and investment areas, to strengthen Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan economic and commercial cooperation. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***PM pushes for port reforms to boost trade with Central Asia***

In an immediate response to Central Asian countries' interests in using Pakistan ports as their trade channel, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed local authorities to pull their socks up to enhance the efficiency of ports by installing advanced scanning machinery and ensuring uninterrupted cargo delivery, targeting "billions of dollars" in revenue against such services. (*Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***KPT cargo handling jumps 23pc***

The Karachi Port Trust (KPT) recorded a notable rise of 23.43pc in cargo handling operations in FY24. (*Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***Pakistan, Azerbaijan agree to enhance bilateral trade, investment***

Pakistan and Azerbaijan affirmed their commitment to further expand mutually beneficial cooperation in energy, trade, connectivity, defence and people-to-people linkages. These topics were discussed during a meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari and visiting Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev. Mr Zardari welcomed signing of MoUs between Pakistan and Azerbaijan, adding MoUs would give a new impetus to bilateral cooperation in the fields of trade, commerce, tourism, mines and minerals, science and technology, law and justice, and culture. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***'Pakistan loses Rs10bn annually due to illicit tea trade'***

Pakistan is losing Rs10 billion annually in duties and taxes because of the illicit tea trade. Illegal trade is not only causing losses to the government but also creating health issues. Pakistan is one of the largest tea-consuming countries globally, with an annual consumption exceeding 200,000 tonnes. However, the growing illicit tea market, now constituting around 30 per cent of the total tea market in Pakistan, is a major concern. The country faces an annual revenue loss of approximately Rs10 billion due to the avoidance of import duties and taxes. (*The News, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 17*)

### ***Different modules of trade, business with Russia under study***

Pakistan reportedly studying different modules of trade and business with Russia being adopted by regional countries, aimed "good deal" with Moscow at a high-level meeting to be held within a couple of weeks. (*Business Recorder, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Pakistan, Turkmenistan to develop closer ties in trade, investment***

Pakistan and Turkmenistan have agreed to develop closer economic engagement in the priority areas of trade and investment, energy, connectivity and information technology, and also emphasized the need for early finalization of transit trade agreement and a liberal visa policy to facilitate greater contacts between businessmen of two countries. This was agreed during the third round of Pakistan-Turkmenistan Bilateral Political Consultations. (*Business Recorder, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)



### ***Trade gap widens 49pc with nine regional countries***

Pakistan's trade deficit with nine regional countries swelled by 49 per cent to \$9.506 billion in FY24 from \$6.382bn in the preceding fiscal year due to a sharp increase in imports from China and India, causing major concerns for policymakers. Exports to regional countries, especially China, experienced significant growth during the review period. The value of Pakistan's exports to nine regional countries Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Iran, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives rose 20.02pc to \$4.334bn in July-June (2023-24) from \$3.611bn in the corresponding period last year. Contrary to this, imports surged 38.49pc to \$13.840bn in FY24 from \$9.993bn over the corresponding period of last year. This shows an increase in trade deficit with maximum countries in FY24. Imports from China also increased by 39.78pc to \$13.506bn in FY24 from \$9.662bn in the corresponding months of last year. The bulk of imports in the region are also sourced from China, followed by India. (*Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Trade gap with ME narrows***

Pakistan's trade imbalance with the Middle East has significantly improved, narrowing by 20.47% to \$13.014bn in 2023-24 from \$16.365bn preceding year, owing primarily to lower petroleum imports from region. In absolute terms, Pakistan's exports to the Middle East rose 35.23% to \$3.155bn between July June FY24 compared to \$2.33bn in corresponding period last year. At the same time, imports dipped 13.53% to \$16.16bn in FY24, compared to \$18.69bn in same period last year. Pakistan witnessed a 7.24% decline in imports totalling \$17.49bn in FY23, down from \$18.85bn in preceding year. (*Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Omani trade delegation visits Pakistan under SIFC auspices***

High-level delegation from the Sultanate of Oman, representing Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion, recently visited Pakistan under the auspices of SIFC. Notably, the delegation expressed keen interest in the Green Pakistan Initiative, operated under SIFC. (*Business Recorder, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Trade via Khunjerab Pass suspended due to traders` demo***

The trade between Pakistan and China through Khunjerab Pass has been suspended for the past three days due to a sit-in organised by the Gilgit-Baltistan traders at Sost dry port against non-implementation of the GB chief court's decision that had restrained the collection of taxes on goods imported from China. (*Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Surging imports keep trade balance in China`s favour***

Exports to China have remained stuck around \$2.7 billion for the last five years as exporters find it hard to penetrate the Chinese market. Imports from China increased by \$3.843bn to \$13.506bn in FY24, but exports remained stuck up for the last five years to \$2.7bn. China is now Pakistan's largest trade partner as it has replaced the United Arab Emirates and the United States during the last five years. The rapid growth in imports from China reached its peak in FY22, when the figure soared to \$17.3bn while exports stood at \$2.783bn. Exporters said Pakistan had limited products to sell in the Chinese market. Imports from China declined sharply in FY23 to \$9.663bn, against exports of

\$2.025bn. Before this fall imports recorded a high of \$17.3bn in FY22. Imports from China were \$15.527bn in FY21 while exports amounted to \$2.33bn. From FY20 to FY24, exports to China ranged between \$1.7bn and \$2.7bn. However, imports have kept rising from \$12bn in FY21 to \$13.5bn now. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Indonesian envoy calls for increasing volume of bilateral trade***

Charge d'affaires of Indonesia to Pakistan Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma has said that the current annual trade of \$45m between two countries is much less than its potential which needs to be further increased. He said economic diplomacy and people-to-people contact is main priority of the Indonesian government and "our arrival in Balochistan is a part of this agenda". He said his visit to Balochistan aimed to increase relations with the local business community and private sector. (*Dawn, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

## **5.1 # Export**

### ***Sugar export quota***

The Punjab cane commissioner has allocated sugar export quotas as per cane crushed by each mill in the province. Distribution of export quota on the basis of sugar produced tantamount to 'double whammy', for those whose sucrose content was lower, adding that it was deemed judicious and equitable to allocate quota on the basis of sugarcane crushed by each mill. The ECC of Federal Cabinet had allowed export of 150,000 tonnes of sugar on June 13. Of this, 64pc quota or 96,000 tonnes was given to the mills located in Punjab, 30pc for Sindh and 6pc for those in KP. (*Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Exports increase to \$30.7bn in 2023-24***

Pakistan's merchandise exports rose 10.54pc to \$30.64bn in 2023-24 from \$27.72bn in the preceding year, according to PBS. Exports increased steadily from July 2023 until they turned negative in January. This negative trend persisted until April. After a temporary setback, growth regained momentum in May and continued into June. The country witnessed its highest-ever exports in 2021-22, reaching a staggering \$31.78bn. However, the following year saw a decline, with exports dropping to \$27.54bn. In June, exports reached \$2.53bn, up from \$2.35bn in the same month last year, indicating a growth of 7.34pc. However, they saw a decline of 10.92pc month-on-month. Exports have witnessed a negative growth of 8.38pc, 0.39pc, 7.49pc and 1.06 in April, March, February and January, respectively. However, it recorded an increase of 19pc in May. Projected export target for FY25 is \$32.3bn, representing a modest increase of 6.6pc. According to the PBS data, imports fell 0.84pc to \$54.73bn in FY24 compared to \$55.19bn in FY23. However, in June, imports stood at \$4.91bn as against \$4.18bn over the corresponding month of last year, indicating a growth of 17.43pc. The trade deficit widened by 30.39pc to \$2.39bn in June from \$1.83bn in corresponding month last year. However, the trade gap narrowed to \$24.08bn in FY24 from \$27.47bn over the previous year. The IMF's target appears more realistic as exports recorded an average monthly growth of 3.03pc during the outgoing fiscal year. (*Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Rice exports hit historic high of \$3.88bn in FY24***

For the first time in the history, Pakistan's rice sector has achieved a historic milestone of \$ 3.88 billion exports, up by 78 percent, during the last fiscal year 2023-24 (FY24) due to the ban on the export of Indian rice. Pakistan's rice exports posted a 60 percent growth in quantity and 78 percent increase in value in the last fiscal year compared to the previous year (FY23). Pakistan exported some 6 million metric tons of rice, valued at approximately \$ 3.88 billion during FY24 as against 3.56 million metric tons were exported, worth \$ 2.15 billion. (*Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Export of agro and food products soars to \$8bn***

Pakistan has witnessed a remarkable surge in the exports of agro and food products during the financial year 2023-2024. For the first time in history agro export has reached to \$8bn, in previous year agro export was \$5.8bn. Compared to the corresponding period in 2022-2023, exports in this sector have increased by a notable 37 percent. This surge underscores the growing significance of Pakistan's agricultural sector in global market.

### **Rice Exports**

Pakistan's rice exports have experienced a substantial increase, totaling \$3.8bn during July –June 2023- 2024, compared to \$2.179bn in same period of previous year showing growth of 78.26 percent. This surge is attributed to Pakistan's strong performance in the European Union, Africa & ASEAN region, and GACC countries, coupled with fixation of Minimum Export Price and enhanced compliance with Sanitary and Phytosanitary standards.

### **Sesame Seed Exports**

The export of sesame seeds has seen remarkable growth, reaching \$410 million during July –June 2023- 2024, compared to \$151 million in the corresponding period of the previous year, marking a positive growth of 171%. Increased production in 2023 and higher demand from countries like China, Korea, and Japan have been key factors driving this growth.

### **Maize Exports**

Pakistan's maize exports have surged to US\$ 421 million during July –June 2023- 2024 compared to US\$ 190 million in the same period of the previous year, showing a positive growth of 121%. The surge in global food commodity prices following the outbreak of the Russian-Ukraine war has contributed to this significant increase. Major markets for Pakistani maize include Vietnam, Malaysia, Korea, and Oman.

### **Meat Exports**

Meat exports have witnessed a positive growth of 17.66 percent, totaling \$507 million during July –June 2023- 2024, compared to US\$ 431 million in the corresponding period of the previous year. Opening of new markets and the participation of new companies in meat exports, along with approvals for additional slaughterhouses, have contributed to this growth.

## **Fruits, Vegetables, and Other Exports**

Pakistan's exports of fruits and vegetables have increased manifolds. Major performer in the sector were Onion showing a growth of 4024pc and exports were \$224m during July –June 2023-2024, compared to \$5.4m in same period of previous year, Export of Mangoes also increased by 12.74%. Additionally exports of spices were increased by 7.8% respectively during same period. (*Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Fruits, vegetables: Exports may face downward trend due to load taxes: PAHF***

In a letter to Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Shaikh Imtiaz Hussain President Pakistan Agricultural and Horticultural Forum (PAHF) has called for immediate withdrawal of new additional taxes imposed on exports in the budget FY25 and restoration of fixed tax regime to compete in the world market. He said taxing export income at corporate tax of 29 percent and applicable super tax will directly hit the exports of the country. Previously, exporters were paying one percent of export processed and it was full and final tax for the exporters. The new tax regime will have adverse effects of the new additional taxes on export and will further burden the already struggling exporters of fresh fruits and vegetables. (*Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Exports to Europe shrink***

Pakistan's exports to European countries shrank 3.57pc in the first 11 months of FY24 despite its GSP+ status data released by State Bank of Pakistan. Pakistan's exports to EU dipped to \$7.737bn in 11MFY24 from \$8.024bn in the corresponding months of the preceding year. In FY23, exports to the EU dropped 4.41pc to \$8.188bn from \$8.566bn in preceding fiscal year. However, exports to this region have significantly decreased by 8.66pc. The export value stood at \$3.826bn in the first 11 months of FY24, down from \$4.189bn during the same period last year. (*Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***NA clears SOEs bill; PM says no wheat exports yet***

Prime Minister assured National Assembly that government has not decided to export wheat from the country, even as State-Owned Enterprises (Governance and Operations) Bill, 2024 was rushed through legislature. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Exports to US dive on poor performance by textile sector***

Pakistan's merchandise exports to the United States fell 10.65 per cent to \$4.989 billion in the first 11 months of outgoing 2023-24 from \$5.484bn over the corresponding period last year. The fall is mainly attributed to a dip in exports of textiles and clothing to North America. Contrary to this, Pakistan's exports to China increased by 42pc to \$2.553bn in July-May FY24 from \$1.889bn over corresponding period last year. It is estimated that during FY24, Pakistan's exports to China will reach \$3bn by end of June this year. Pakistan's exports to US stood at \$5.17bn in FY23, down 23.28pc from \$6.74bn in the previous fiscal year. In FY24, Pakistan's exports to China stood at \$2.22bn, down 30pc from \$3.18bn in FY22. The US remained Pakistan's biggest export destination in FY23.

According to finance ministry report on top export destinations, US remained Pakistan's most significant market in 9MFY24. Exports to USA moderately decreased to 17pc in 9MFY24, compared to 19pc last year. Similarly, Chinese export share increased to 9pc during period under review. Export share to the United Kingdom stood at 7pc, followed by 5pc in Germany, the UAE and Spain during the months under review. The share in export proceeds remained relatively stable for these countries during the months under review compared to previous year. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Govt warned of drop in rice exports***

Rice exporters warn of a drastic drop in exports if government sticks to its decision to shift sector from the Final Tax Regime to Hybrid Tax Regime. They warned that exports might drop to \$2.5 billion in current fiscal year from \$3.88bn in FY24 if government does not withdraw tax regime change decision. (*Dawn, July 12, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***KP CM's aide lauds decision not to export sugar***

Adviser to Chief Minister on Finance Muzammil Aslam lauded the decision of the provincial cabinet that it would allow the export of sugar from the sugar mills of KP after the start of crushing season. (*The News, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 3*)

### ***Move to achieve \$60bn export target: Talks begin on import tariff rationalization***

A high-level committee headed by Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal has started deliberations on rationalization of import tariffs to achieve export target of \$ 60 billion. On July 3, 2024, during maiden meeting of Senate Standing Committee, Commerce Ministry showed its wrath against the Finance Ministry and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for not making its export growth-related recommendations part of the federal budget 2024-25, despite the fact that those already sailed through Tariff Policy Board (TPB), an inter-ministerial body which takes decisions on revision of tariffs on goods. (*Business Recorder, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Textile exports post paltry growth in FY24***

Textile and clothing exports posted a modest growth of 0.93 per cent in FY24, indicating that the sector may not be able to compete with regional rivals due to the implementation of harsh taxation measures in the current fiscal year. The impact of the highest-ever energy cost is evident in the export results for June, which fell 3.91pc from the previous year, according to PBS data. In absolute terms, textile and clothing exports up 0.93pc to \$16.55bn in FY24 from \$16.50bn in the corresponding period of last year. In June, the export proceeds of textile and clothing fell to \$1.41bn, a decline of 3.91pc from \$1.47bn over the corresponding month of last year. On a month-on-month basis, exports dipped 9.23pc. (*Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Fruit exports from Afghanistan `stopped`***

The Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce has claimed that the export of fresh fruits and vegetables to Pakistan has been suspended for two weeks after "high increase" in customs tariffs by Islamabad. (*Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Non-textile exports surge 25pc in FY24***

Exports of non-textile products increased by 24.95 per cent to \$14.02 billion in 2023-24 from \$11.22bn in the preceding year. According to PBS, main driver of non-textile product exports was raw food items and a few value-added products in FY24, up from a year ago. According to PBS data, raw food exports increased by 46.77 per cent in FY24 over preceding fiscal year. The value of raw food exports reached \$7.37 billion in 2023-24, up from \$5.02bn over period last year. (*Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***At nearly \$4bn, rice exports see 62pc jump in FY24***

Rice exports in FY2023-24 reached a record high, with a significant jump of 62 per cent in volume and 83 per cent in value (in dollars) compared to the previous year. According to PBS, rice exports increased to 6 million tonnes from 3.72 tonnes in volume, and to \$3.93 billion from \$2.15 billion in value. This growth is primarily attributed to a surge in domestic rice production, which hit an all-time high of 9.9 million metric tonnes (MMT). (*The News, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 17*)

### ***Sugar export to Afghanistan resumes after four years***

Sugar export to Afghanistan has resumed after a four-year suspension, with over 400 vehicles crossing the Torkham border in the last four days. Pakistan recently allowed the export of 150,000 tons of sugar to Afghanistan, setting August 15 deadline for completion of shipment process. Customs clearing agents at Torkham told that around 100 vehicles, each carrying 33 tons of sugar, crossed into Afghanistan four days ago and more thereafter. Customs clearing agents and fruit importers at Torkham told that 100-115 vehicles with fruits & vegetables were reaching Pakistan from Afghanistan daily, contradicting Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce's statement about Taliban government's ban on their supply to Pakistan after a recent import duty hike by Pakistan. Fruits and vegetables were being imported from Afghanistan, with no notices of a ban received. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***PM calls for steps towards \$60bn exports in three years***

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif asked authorities to take proactive measures to ensure the country's annual exports reach \$60 billion within three years. He said the country's exports crossed the \$30bn mark during the previous fiscal year, and the government's policies also took the IT exports to over \$3.2bn. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Meat exports hit record \$512m amid high demand***

Exports of meat and its products hit a record high of \$512 million in FY24, marking a 20 per cent increase from \$426m in the preceding year. This growth is attributed to a 24pc rise in export volume, which reached 123,515 tonnes from 99,892 tonnes in the previous fiscal year, driven by strong international demand and competitive pricing following a significant devaluation of the rupee. (*Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Exports to Europe dip in FY24 despite GSP+***

In what appears to be a big concern for policymakers, Pakistan's exports to European countries fell 3.12 per cent in FY24 despite its GSP+ status, which allows duty-free entry into most European markets. In absolute terms, Pakistan's exports to the EU dipped to \$8.240bn in FY24 from \$8.505bn in the preceding year. Exports to this region have significantly decreased by 8.33pc. The export value stood at \$3.983bn in FY24, down from \$4.345bn during same period last year. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Millers again urge govt to allow export of surplus sugar***

Pakistan Sugar Mills Association, PSMA (Punjab Zone) says that in a recent meeting of Sugar Advisory Board (SAB), PSMA has reiterated its request to the government to allow 1.5 million metric tons of surplus sugar valuing one billion dollars in foreign exchange earnings for the country. (*Business Recorder, July 29<sup>th</sup>, Page 11*)

### ***Exports to US decline***

Pakistan's exports to the United States have experienced a continuous decline for the second year in a row, contracting 8.42 per cent in 2023-24 compared to the preceding year. The decline in exports of textiles and clothing to the US is the primary reason for fall. Pakistan's merchandise exports to the US fell 8.42pc to \$5.432 billion in outgoing fiscal year 2023-24 from \$5.93bn over the same period last year. Pakistan's exports to US stood at \$5.17bn in FY23, down 23.28pc from \$6.74bn in the previous fiscal year. Contrary to this, Pakistan's exports to China rose 33.68pc to \$2.707bn in FY24 from \$2.025bn over the same time last year. However, US remained Pakistan's biggest export destination in FY24. Imports from US also dropped 15.34pc to \$1.876bn during FY24 from \$2.216bn a year ago. In FY23, imports from US also dipped 30.73pc to \$2.11bn compared to \$3.05bn in same months last year. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## **5.2 # Import**

### ***RD slapped on 657 luxury goods: 2pc ACD imposed on import of 2,200 items***

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has imposed 2 percent additional customs duty (ACD) on the import of 2,200 items and increased/imposed regulatory duties (RD) on the import of 657 luxury and non-essential items from July 1, 2024. The 2 percent ACD has been imposed on the import of items which were earlier subjected to zero percent duty. (*Business Recorder, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Surging steel imports hit local production***

The import of finished steel products significantly increased in FY24, leading to inflated prices due to dollar appreciation and reducing local production. The import of iron and steel scrap surged 46.5 per cent to \$1.556bn during the first 11 months (July-May) FY24 compared to \$1.062bn in the entire FY23. Similarly, the import of finished iron and steel products increased by 22pc to \$2.062bn during July-May FY24, compared to \$1.686 bn in FY23. (*Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***GB court stops FBR, Customs from taxing imports through Khunjerab***

The income tax, sales tax and additional sales tax collected by revenue authorities on goods imported from China through Khunjerab Pass is illegal, the Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Court declared. The court stopped FBR and Customs from collecting these taxes. Earlier in June, GB Assembly also passed a resolution demanding federal government stop collecting taxes on goods imported from China. (*Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***FBR's `wrong decision` halts gold imports***

The country's official gold import remained suspended in the last quarter (March-June) of outgoing 2023-24 due to a policy change in February. According to data from PBS, gold imports during July-February FY24 stood at 262 kg (\$17 million), compared to 342 kg (\$21 million) in FY23. (*Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Imports of CKD kits flourish in FY24***

Unrestricted imports from February onwards increased arrival of completely knocked down (CKD) kits to \$779 million in FY24 from \$750m in FY23 amid sales fluctuations and plant shutdowns. (*Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

### ***Karachi-based textile unit announces closure***

In the throes of Pakistan's worst economic crisis, a Karachi-based textile unit has announced to lock its doors, signaling a larger collapse in the country's export industry as other companies brace for a similar fortune. In an official handout issued on July 1, 2024, Naz Textiles (Pvt.) Ltd informed its workers to find jobs somewhere else as the company is facing huge losses from lack of orders. "Till July 31 will be your last day and all your dues will be paid by Aug 10". (*Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Engro Corp business restructuring gets CCP approval***

The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved a merger for capital allocation and resilience portfolio of M/s Dawood Hercules Corporation Ltd, M/s Engro Corporation Ltd and M/s DH Partners Ltd. (*The News, July 14th, 2024, page 2*)

### ***Big industry output grows for 6th straight month in May***

Large-Scale Manufacturing sector grew for sixth consecutive month, with a 7.33% increase in May. For outgoing fiscal year's first 11 months (July to May), LSM shows a paltry growth of 0.99% year-on-year to 116.48 points. (*Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Factory fire rages on***

A devastating fire broke out in a pesticide factory's chemical warehouse in Multan's industrial estate. The inferno spread rapidly, fueled by drums containing petroleum products, and quickly engulfed neighbouring factories, causing widespread destruction. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)



### ***Tractor industry faces crisis due to 10pc ST***

The tractor manufacturing and parts industry faces a significant crisis, threatening the stability and future of a sector that plays a crucial role in the national economy. With a substantial export value of \$20 million, a robust vendor base of 200 and an employment figure reaching 200,000 the industry has achieved an impressive 95% localization. The imposition of a 10% sales tax on tractors, effective from the budget announcement in June 2024, has exacerbated the situation. Previously, tractors were exempt from sales tax until June 2024, ensuring smooth operations and financial stability for manufacturers like Millat Tractors Limited. (*Business Recorder, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

## **6.1 # Fertilizer Companies**

### ***Agri-sector payment ecosystem: Fatima Fertilizer sign MoU with JazzCash***

Fatima Fertilizer, a leading name in Pakistan's agriculture sector, and JazzCash, Pakistan's largest digital wallet, have signed a MOU to revolutionize the agri-sector payment ecosystem. This collaboration aims to drive financial inclusion and economic empowerment for farmers, who are predominantly unbanked, enabling them to actively participate in the formal economy. It will also enable our Sarsabz Pakistan Farmer App for digital payments. (*Business Recorder, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

## **6.2 # Food Company**

### ***'Action taken against three flour mills'***

The Punjab Food Department (PFD) during its ongoing crackdown against the flour mills, dealers and retailers involved in hoarding or artificial price hike, checked 647 such points across the province during the last 24 hours. Action has been taken against three mills in Lahore for involvement in fraud and artificial price hike. Fines of Rs 3 lakh have been imposed for violations of laws, and one flour mill's license has been suspended. (*Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

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

### ***Loan inflows remain \$11.7bn in July-May, far below target***

Pakistan received only about \$11.7 billion in foreign loans and grants in the first 11 months (July-May) of outgoing FY24, far behind the annual target of \$17.4bn. This is amid major slippages in raising international financial support, although it has met the revised target. According to official data released by the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MEA), country received about \$403 million in foreign assistance in May, up from \$237m in April. It said government could materialise about \$7.547bn in foreign economic assistance (FEA) in the first 11 months of current fiscal year, almost 44pc of the annual budget target, amid limited borrowing avenues. This is in wake of poor credit ratings and adverse conditions in global financial markets despite the support of IMF. This FEA is in addition to \$3bn released by IMF under Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and \$1bn by the UAEs, which is separately accounted for by the SBP. Thus, total foreign inflows, including IMF and UAE, amounted to \$11.7bn in 11 months. This

generally works out to be almost 67pc of the full-year targeted inflows. However, the authorities claim that better debt and trade management have reduced the current year's foreign assistance requirements. Thus, its target for FEA is now tentatively revised to around \$11bn instead of \$17.62bn set in the 2023-24 budget based on a lower current account deficit than budget estimates. For FY24, EAD budgeted \$2.4bn from IMF, which later committed and disbursed \$3bn after signing a 9-month SBA that expired in April. Bulk \$2.66bn of foreign loans reported by the EAD in 11MFY24 came from Saudi Arabia as a time deposit and oil facility, followed by \$1.714bn from World Bank, \$766m from ADB, and a \$508m guaranteed loan to PAF by China National Aero-Technology Import & Export Corporation. Total inflows from multilaterals, excluding IMF, stood at \$3.135bn in 11MFY24, compared to \$4.45bn in same period last year. Inflows from all bilateral lenders, excluding Saudi Arabia's \$2bn time deposit, stood at \$889m in 11 months. Another \$1.015bn flowed in from overseas Pakistanis in Naya Pakistan Certificates. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***\$5bn investment pledged for oil, gas exploration***

Local and international firms have announced an investment of \$5 billion during the next three years in Pakistan's oil & gas exploration and production (E&P) sector. A delegation of companies from oil and gas exploration and production sector informed that during the next three years, around 240 potential reserves sites would be excavated with an investment of \$5bn to explore petroleum and gas. The meeting was informed that currently Pakistan's domestic oil and gas production stood at 70,998 barrels and 3,131 million standard cubic feet per day, respectively. (*Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***FDI jumps 17pc to \$1.9bn***

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) increased by 17 per cent in FY24 compared to the preceding year, though the amount remained lowest in the region of developing economies. According to data released by State Bank of Pakistan, FDI inflows during FY24 reached \$1.9 billion, up from \$1.62bn in FY23. The inflows for June alone were \$168.7m, compared to \$122.4m in the same month a year ago. Chinese investments led way, amounting to \$568m. However, this figure marked a decline from \$692m in FY23. China has been Pakistan's largest investor and trade partner for several years. Hong Kong was second-largest contributor, with FDI inflows rising to \$358.5m in FY24, up from \$250m the previous year. Other significant inflows included \$268m from UK, \$137m from US, and \$100m from Singapore. (*Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Far behind \$17.619bn annual target: \$9.811bn borrowed from multiple financing sources in FY24***

The country borrowed \$9.811 billion from multiple financing sources during the fiscal year 2023-24, far behind the annual target of \$17.619 billion. If IMF and UAE inflows are added, the total inflows would reach \$13.804 billion during the fiscal year 2023-24 against the target of \$17.619 billion for the entire fiscal year of 2023-24. The country had borrowed \$10.844 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23. The data further shows

that the country received \$2.257 billion in June 2024 compared to \$2.231 billion in June 2023, including \$999.04 million from foreign commercial banks. The \$9.811 billion included \$2 billion received from Saudi Arabia under the head of time deposit.

The data further showed that the government had budgeted estimates of \$4.5 billion from the foreign commercial banks for the fiscal year 2023-24; however, the country received only \$999.04 million in fiscal year 2023-24 from the China Development Bank. The government had budgeted \$1.5 billion from the issuance of bonds; however, as the country did not issue the bonds, hence no amount was received during 2023-24. The government had budgeted \$17.619 billion from multiple financing sources for the fiscal year 2023-24 including \$17.384 billion in loans and \$234.60 million grants. The country received \$1.104 billion under the head of the “Naya Pakistan Certificate” during the fiscal year 2023-24.

The country received \$4.279 billion from multilaterals and \$919.43 million from bilateral during 2023-24. The non-project aid was \$6.777 billion including \$5.583 billion for budgetary support and project aid was \$3.033 billion. China disbursed \$508.34 million under head guaranteed for JF-17 B project funded by China National Aero-technology Import and Export Corporation (CATIC). China further disbursed 69.14 million against the government budgeted of \$18.54 million for FY 2023-24. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) disbursed \$1.327 billion during the period under review compared to the budgeted \$2.086 billion for FY2023-24. Saudi Arabia disbursed \$595.18 million against the budgeted \$600 million under the head of oil facility during 2023-24. Saudi Arabia disbursed another \$66.29 million in FY2023-24. USA disbursed \$40.18 million against the budgeted \$21.60 million for the fiscal year 2023-24. Korea disbursed \$35.64 million and France \$49.57 million during the fiscal year 2023-24. The IDA disbursed \$1.922 million against the budgeted \$1.489 billion for FY 2023-24 and IBRD \$295.87 million against budgeted \$840.36 million. The IsDB (Short-term) disbursed \$250 million against budgeted \$500 million for fiscal year 2023-24 and AIIB disbursed \$344.99 million, while IFAD disbursed \$42.43 million against the budgeted \$42.68 million for FY 2023-24. (*Business Recorder, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

***NA panel told: China, KSA likely to roll over \$9bn loans***

China and Saudi Arabia are likely to roll over \$9 billion in loans to Pakistan in current fiscal year 2024-25, officials of the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) revealed before the National Assembly Standing Committee on Economic Affairs. Officials briefed the committee that EAD is in contact with the Arab Coordination Group and the Qatar Fund for Development to secure funding for the Diamer-Bhasha Dam within this financial year. Pakistan faces a total repayment of over \$20.8 billion this fiscal year.

The EAD expects to receive \$500 million from the Islamic Development Bank for oil and commodity loans. Saudi Arabia is currently not in favour of giving Pakistan another loan oil facility. Committee was briefed that Geneva Donor Conference, which was held

in January 2023, pledged \$10.7 billion in project financing, of which Pakistan has received just \$3 billion, mostly in form of debt instead of grants. Pakistan will likely receive \$1 billion from World Bank for Dasu Hydropower Project, with first phase of project expected to be completed by 2027. AIIB will be awarded construction contract for the N5 project. (*Business Recorder, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **7.1 # Countries**

### ***Saudi Group acquires majority stake in Shell Pakistan***

Saudi Group Asyad Holding through UAE-based Wafi Energy Holding Limited has acquired 77.42 percent shareholdings and control of Shell Pakistan Limited. (*Business Recorder, 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Pakistan, Azerbaijan to expand investment up to \$2bn***

Pakistan and Azerbaijan agreed to enhance bilateral investment level of up to \$2 billion in areas of mutual beneficial projects. The bilateral investment volume of less than \$100 million does not reflect the strength of our brotherhood and friendship in field of joint investment in areas which are mutually beneficial. (*Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Abu Dhabi to invest \$250m in Karachi port***

Abu Dhabi will invest \$250 million in 10 years in the Karachi Port to upgrade it for boosting economic activities. Abu Dhabi Ports Pakistan CEO Khurram Aziz Khan called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and informed him that company would invest \$250m in port during next 10 years. (*Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **7.2 # America**

### ***US firm hired to boost investment***

The government has hired an American consultancy firm, Kearney, to help attract foreign investment in the country. The firm has so far consulted with 15 institutions of the federal government while 97 priority projects have been identified during this consultation process. The Kearney officials said consultancy firm would develop a plan of action for sustainable development in consultation with the government and provide assistance regarding privatisation of SOEs, improving regulatory framework of public sector enterprises, and attracting more investors. (*Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***US seeks \$101m to help Pakistan fight terror, strengthen economy***

The US administration has sought a budget of \$101 million for Pakistan to “strengthen democracy, fight terrorism, and stabilise the country’s economy”, US Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu told a congressional panel in Washington. Lu’s statement came as he presented a written budget request for South and Central Asian Affairs to House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee. (*Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

## 7.3 # China

### ***Chinese investors call on Gandapur***

A delegation of Chinese private sector Investment Company called on CM KP Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur at CM's House Peshawar the other day and discussed with him matters related to investment in different sectors of province. While highlighting the extensive investment opportunities in the different potential sectors of the province, CM offered them investment in agriculture, livestock, solar energy and other important sectors, adding that we will not only encourage foreign investment but also provide all possible facilities to the investors. (*Business Recorder, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***JVs strategy evolved: Chinese cos will be invited to invest in 7 major sectors***

Strategy for joint ventures among various companies and business organisations of China and Pakistan has been evolved, and Chinese companies will be invited here to invest in 7 major and important sectors of Pakistan. Moreover, 78 business organisations from China and 167 from Pakistan will participate in this gigantic session which is expected to make great progress in investment sector. Federal Secretary for Board of Investment said that the seven major sectors of Pakistan include medical and surgical equipments, plastics, clothing, leather industry, edible meat, fruits and vegetables and waste and fodder sectors are included. (*Business Recorder, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Aleem briefs Chinese envoy about investment potential***

Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong was given a high-level briefing at the Board of Investment (BOI) for investment in Pakistan. Details of establishment of industries from China to Pakistan under Matchmaking Industry were presented. 7 major sectors were finalized, which include medical equipment, plastic industry, textile, leather, edible meat, fruit and vegetables and waste. (*Business Recorder, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 3*)

## 8 # INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (IFIS)

### 8.1 # Asian Development Bank (ADB)

#### ***Complaints about different projects: ADB decides to dispatch mission***

ADB has decided to dispatch an Accountability Mission to Pakistan in September to verify complaints about different projects. (*Business Recorder, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

#### ***Interest payments to devour 62pc of revenues: ADB***

Pakistan's interest payments are expected to require staggering 62pc of fiscal revenues, up from 41pc in 2022-23, says ADB. The bank in its "Asian Development Outlook" stated that in Pakistan, public debt is forecast to decline by 7 percentage points to 70pc of GDP in 2024–2025. Still, interest payments are expected to require a staggering 62per cent of fiscal revenues, up from 41pc in 2022-23. The bank further stated that Pakistan also cut policy rates as inflation fell to 11.8pc in May, down from 38pc in the same period last year (*Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***ADB okays \$400m for rebuilding flood-hit homes***

ADB has approved a \$400 million concessional loan for reconstruction of houses and infrastructure damaged by floods of 2022 in Sindh. Project is included in overall support of \$1.5b, which bank would provide to Pakistan from 2023 to 2025. Loan is part of portfolio jointly funded by ADB and World Bank for Sindh's housing reconstruction. According to assessments, \$16.3b is needed for rehabilitation and reconstruction, including \$7.9b for Sindh & \$2.345bn for Balochistan. (*Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

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

### ***Aurangzeb hopeful of deal with IMF this month on \$6bn package***

Claiming completion of almost all prior action before time and reaching an agreement, in principle, with all provinces over agricultural income tax, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb sounded hopeful that talks with IMF would yield a deal on a \$6bn Extended Fund Facility (EFF) this month. (*Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Economy gets shot in the arm as \$7bn IMF deal clinched***

Pakistan and IMF reached a three-year, \$7bn aid package deal, Washington-based institution said, giving much-needed respite to nation. New programme, which needs to be validated by Fund's Executive Board, should enable Pakistan to "cement macroeconomic stability and create conditions for stronger, more inclusive & resilient growth," according to a statement, coming to Pakistan in form of loans, follows a commitment by govt to implement reforms, including a major effort to broaden country's tax base. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***IMF scepticism forces govt to impose new taxes***

The government has failed to convince IMF about its enforcement capabilities for increasing revenues due to a poor track record and trust deficit, leading to enhanced taxation on the already overburdened salaried class and new taxes, including on milk. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Sharp rupee depreciation feared after new IMF deal***

Currency experts fear that new IMF agreement may lead to a significant depreciation of the local currency, as the global lender considers the current exchange rate as a managed exchange rate, which could prompt a downward adjustment. They said the finance minister has announced that a \$6 billion loan agreement with the IMF is likely to be finalised next month, adding that this development was highly encouraging for currency market, as the expected inflows from IMF would further bolster the exchange rate.

However, some experts fear that the country would have to pay around \$25bn in debt servicing during the current fiscal year which may destabilise the exchange rate. They said the balance between inflows and outflows, particularly for debt servicing, looks hard to achieve despite a very low current account deficit in FY24. Some independent economists believe that the new agreement with the IMF will lead to a depreciation of the local currency by 10-15pc in FY25. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***IMF sees Pakistan economy expanding at 3.5pc in FY25***

IMF maintained Pakistan's growth forecast at 3.5 per cent for the current fiscal year but indicated slower global disinflation to keep pressure on the masses amid higher for even longer interest rates. IMF's unchanged growth forecast at 3.5pc previously made in April this year has been reinforced almost a week after its staff reached an agreement with Pakistan authorities on \$7bn worth of a 37-month bailout based on detailed deliberations and exchange of financial and economic data including 2024-25 budget. (*Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***\$27bn re-profiling needed to secure IMF bailout***

Pakistan has sought the re-profiling of more than \$27 billion in debt and liabilities with friendly nations — China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE — to secure a 37-month IMF bailout package and ease energy sector foreign exchange outflows and consumer tariffs. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said Islamabad had already asked the friendly bilateral trio of lenders to roll over its more than \$12bn annual debt portfolio by three to five years to secure the IMF board's approval for a \$7bn economic bailout by next month. This is on top of Islamabad's request to Beijing to convert imported coal-based projects to local coal and re-profile more than \$15bn in energy sector liabilities to create fiscal space amid difficulties in timely repayments. Pakistan has now requested the maturity period of these loans — \$5bn from China, \$4bn from Saudi Arabia, and \$3bn from the UAE — to be extended to at least three years, offering greater predictability under the IMF programme. (*Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **8.3 # World Bank**

### ***Various social sectors: KP CM, World Bank officials discuss cooperation***

A consultative meeting of the high ups of provincial government and the World Bank was held here with CM KP Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair to deliberate on the expansion and enhancement of cooperation and collaboration in various social sectors of the province. Meeting discussed threadbare venues of enhanced collaboration in various potential sectors including Health, Education, Agriculture, Live Stock, Irrigation, Green Energy, Road Infrastructure and Tourism etc., and it was agreed in principle to enhance collaboration to boost these sector with the aim to improve social sector service delivery, create maximum employment opportunities and strengthen the economy of the province. The concerned departments were directed for necessary actions to this end on priority basis. (*Business Recorder, 1<sup>st</sup>, July, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***CM, WB team review long-term projects***

A World Bank delegation met Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Safaraz Bugti to discuss the ongoing 10-year development programme and the progress of work on it. The meeting also discussed progress on ongoing support projects in province, specifically in the mines and mineral, fisheries, and agriculture sectors, as well as rehabilitation projects initiated in the flood-affected areas. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Murad seeks WB help for \$300m plan to expand Keenjhar Lake storage capacity***

The Sindh government has planned a mega project to increase the storage capacity of Keenjhar Lake in district Thatta to meet the ever-increasing water demand of Karachi and approached World Bank for its financing, it has emerged. A press statement issued from CM House said that World Bank expressed support for project, which was estimated to cost around \$300m. CM & WB team also discussed a 10-year engagement strategy — Country Partnership Framework 2025-34 — to achieve reduced child stunting, reduced learning poverty, more resilience to climate change, decarbonisation of economy and more inclusive job opportunities. (*Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 13*)

## **9 # POLICY**

### **9.1 # Development Policy**

#### ***Wasa to start civil work on 65 schemes soon***

Water and Sanitation Agency (Wasa) is all set to launch civil work on as many as 65 development schemes worth over Rs80 billion in Lahore. As the 65 schemes include 55 and 10 to be executed under Annual Development Programme (ADP) and the Chief Minister's Initiative respectively, the agency will start receiving funds in tranches from next month. (*Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

#### ***Development cuts, windfalls curb fiscal deficit at 6.8pc***

A last-minute massive cut in development expenditure and heavy windfalls from petroleum levy and central bank profits helped the government contain fiscal deficit at 6.8 per cent of GDP, according to the Fiscal Operations report for 2023-24 released by Ministry of Finance. PSDP was slashed by 33pc to just Rs635bn at close of year against Rs950bn allocation and was even lower than previous year's Rs652bn expenditure on federal development schemes. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### **9.2 # Neo – Liberal Policies**

#### ***Private sector participation in Discos' sell-off: Govt approaches World Bank for NLTA***

The government has approached the World Bank (WB) for Non - Lending Technical Assistance to facilitate private sector participation in privatisation of power Distribution Companies (Discos). (*Business Recorder, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2024, Page 1*)

#### ***PIA, HBFCL, others: sell-off timeline issued***

Privatization Commission has selected 10 state-owned entities for privatisation within a year. This includes PIA and House Building Finance Company Limited which transactions are expected to be finalised in first quarter of current FY. The privatisation process for Roosevelt Hotel in New York City and First Women Bank Limited is also in advanced stages. 10 entities which would be privatised within a year are PIACL, RHC, FWBL, HBFC, ZTBL, PECO, SEL, IESCO, FESCO and GEPCO, out of total of 24 to be privatised. Privatization Commission in June 2024, pre-qualified six parties as bidders for PIACL privatisation. (*Business Recorder, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)



### ***22 trains to operate on public-private model***

In a major development, Pakistan Railways (PR) has decided to operate 22 passenger trains on the public-private partnership model. (*Dawn, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***All Discos to be privatised, says energy minister***

Federal Minister for Power Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari said that all power distribution companies (Discos) would be privatised in one and a half years. “We had to face Rs600 billion losses due to distribution companies”. (*Dawn, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***WB agrees to extend financial support under NLTA***

World Bank (WB) has agreed to extend financial support to the government to facilitate private sector participation in privatisation of power Distribution Companies (Discos). (*Business Recorder, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Passco privatisation***

PM Shehbaz Sharif in a meeting called for devising a plan to privatise Passco. The premier directed the authorities concerned to prepare an action plan for Passco’s privatisation and instructed the restructuring of the Wheat Board. PM Shehbaz said the restructured Wheat Board should include representatives of farmers, the Land Information Management System, and Passco. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Energy ministry calls for framework to deregulate fuel prices***

The Ministry of Energy has instructed the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) to finalise the framework for transferring the responsibility of determining petroleum prices to the oil industry. The ministry directed the Ogra chairman to convene a meeting today to discuss the analysis, implications, and way forward for deregulating petroleum products. (*Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Three power firms to be privatised***

Privatisation Minister Abdul Aleem Khan announced that three power firms will be privatised and directed the transparent and timely completion of transactions. Minister issued these directions while presiding over a meeting of the Privatisation Commission Board, which discussed issues related to the privatisation of Discos and other state-run companies, including Pakistan International Airline. Meeting unanimously decided that three power generation companies would be privatised in first phase and that all legal matters would be completed by January next year. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

## **9.3 # Research & Technology**

### ***US, Pakistani varsities plan research on climate change impact***

To combat the escalating climate crisis, a team of scientists from North Carolina State University (NCSU), joined hands with Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU), to conduct a joint research project on ‘climate change impacts on glaciers, rivers, and oceans’. (*Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

## 10 # SOCIO – ECONOMICAL CONDITION

### ***Tax exemption on POL products: FBR suffers massive revenue loss in 2022-23***

FBR has suffered revenue loss of Rs 1.25 trillion during 2022-23 on account of sales tax exemption granted to the petroleum products, according to the new Tax Expenditure Report-2024. (*Business Recorder, 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***FY24: forex reserves record increase of over \$5bn on foreign inflows***

The country's total liquid foreign exchange reserves recorded an increase of over \$5 billion during the last fiscal year (FY24). According to the State Bank of Pakistan's statistics, Pakistan's foreign exchange position has improved during the last fiscal year supported by arrival of inflows from the international financial and multilateral agencies. According to SBP, the country's total liquid foreign exchange reserves rose to \$14.573 billion mark as of June 28, 2024 compared to \$9.160 billion as of June 28, 2023, showing an increase of \$ 5.413bn in FY24. (*Business Recorder, 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***External debt, liabilities soar to \$130.179bn by May***

Pakistan's external debt & Z liabilities have soared to \$130.179bn by May 2024, up from \$124.296bn by end June 2023, showing an increase of around \$5.883bn in first 11 months of fiscal year 2023-24. External debt servicing is estimated at \$20.833bn for 2024-25 against revised \$12.399bn in 2023-24. These include \$3.705bn as servicing of foreign debt, \$17.027bn as foreign loan repayment and \$100m repayment of short-term foreign credit. Total external public debt stood at \$86.287bn by end May 2024 including \$8.665bn from IMF. External debt and liabilities also included loans of private sector. Total external debt stands at \$118.36bn while total liabilities at \$11.818bn. (*Business Recorder, July 6, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Government borrows Rs3.2tr in 45 days***

The government borrowed Rs3.2 trillion from scheduled banks from May 15 to June 28 of the fiscal year 2023-24, despite a 30 per cent growth in revenue generation. The latest State Bank data shows that government borrowed Rs71.8bn per day during the period, reflecting the government's massive spending of the government. In budget for FY25, government has resorted to heavy taxation in order to generate 40pc more revenue than what it did the previous fiscal year. Government borrowing from scheduled banks reached a record high of Rs8.564tr during FY24, more than twice the Rs3.716tr it borrowed during FY23. The borrowing for the last 45 days of FY24 — Rs3.2tr — was incidentally close to entire borrowing in FY23. These borrowings come at a staggering cost since interest rate is as high as 22pc. The data shows that the government borrowed Rs6.55tr for domestic debt servicing during the year. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Govt to borrow Rs3.97trn in Q1 FY24***

The federal government has planned to borrow Rs 3.97 trillion from domestic banking sector during the first quarter of this fiscal year (FY25) to finance the fiscal deficit. SBP has issued calendars for auction of Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIBs) and Government of Pakistan Market Treasury Bills (MTBs) for July-September of FY25. According to

auction calendar, major financing requirements will be made through sale of long-term government papers. The federal government is intended to raise some Rs 2.36 trillion through sale of PIBs during the first quarter of this fiscal year. Some Rs 440 billion will be borrowed through sale of PIB (Fixed Rate), Rs 1.8 trillion through PIB (Floating Rate) Semi-Annual auction and Rs 120 against PIB (Floating Rate) Quarterly Auction. (*Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Govt gradually returning Rs60bn `borrowed` from USF***

The government has started to return the Rs60 billion, taken from the account of the Universal Service Fund (USF) in 2013-14 to clear its circular debt, the Senate Standing Committee on IT and Telecom was informed. (*Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

## **10.1 # Food**

### ***CM rebukes officials over flour price data***

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz reprimanded food department officials for presenting incorrect data about flour prices in the market. She expressed her displeasure at the discrepancy between the food department's data and actual market rates. She directed that the price of flour be determined according to the categories set by the Pakistan Standards & Quality Control Authority. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Dealers, merchants to stop selling wheat flour in Rawalpindi from today***

The Wheat Flour Dealers Association, All Pakistan Naanbai Association and Karyana Merchants Association will stop selling flour in Rawalpindi Division to protest imposition of withholding tax on flour mills and the subsequent increase in the price of the commodity. (*Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***PFVA demands resumption of FTR for food security***

Fruit and Vegetable exporters urged federal government for resumption of the fixed tax regime to support the farmers and ensure food security in the country. In the letter to PM, Patron-in-Chief Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA) Waheed Ahmed pointed out that the supply chain of Fruits and Vegetables is highly disorganized and it would be impossible for the exporters to provide money trail, while submitting Income Tax returns. Therefore, PFVA has proposed that a new "advance tax" shall be abolished and the fixed tax regime shall continue to support the export sector. (*Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Most of milk samples in KP found substandard***

KP Food Safety and Halal Food Authority has found 93 per cent of 541 samples of milk collected in different parts of the province to be adulterated, substandard, and harmful to human health. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **10.2 # Food Scarcity**

### ***Dysfunctional water filtration plants leave Lahorites high and dry***

The residents of provincial capital are grappling with shortage of clean drinking water as many of water filtration plants installed in various parts of the city by civic agencies are either lying dysfunctional or not working at all. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **10.3 # Inflation**

### ***Gas rates for industry hiked to meet IMF demand***

To meet a “prior action” of IMF, government notified an increase of about 9 per cent in gas rates for industrial captive power units with effect from July 1 (today) but blocked about 15pc (Rs133 billion) relief in average gas rates accruing from lower international oil prices for all other consumers. (*Dawn, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Inflation remains elevated at 23.41pc***

The government announced that the annual inflation for 2023-24 exceeded its budgetary target, reaching a staggering 23.41 per cent owing to an increase in electricity, gas, and essential kitchen items. The projected target was 21pc for the outgoing fiscal year. According to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the average monthly inflation fluctuated over the year. The headline consumer inflation was 28.3pc in July 2023, peaked at 31.4pc in September, and then started to decline in January. It reached its lowest level of 11.8pc in May but reversed upward to 12.6pc in June. Food inflation for June stood at 2.6pc in urban areas and 1.3pc in rural areas, whereas non-food inflation was 24.3pc in urban areas and 17.9pc in rural areas. Core inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, was recorded at 12.2pc in urban areas and 17pc in rural areas. (*Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Unbridled food exports force domestic consumers to pay record prices for essential items***

The country is confronting its highest-ever inflation, but the Ministry of Commerce said that raw food exports increased by 37 per cent in FY24 over the preceding fiscal year. The value of raw food exports reached \$8 billion in 2023-24, up from \$5.8bn over the corresponding period last year, according to the data compiled by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP). As a result, consumers across the country are paying higher prices for food items because of supply and demand gaps. Raw food exports have climbed for 11 consecutive months in the outgoing fiscal year despite the highest food inflation in history. (*Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Packaged milk, infant formula get costlier***

Milk producers have passed on 18pc increase in GST to consumers, while flour millers will raise prices shortly. “The overall increase in the price of infant formula, fortified milk products and packaged milk items comes to 25pc after implementation of new taxation measures relating to general sales tax and tax on filers and non-filers,” an official at a milk-producing company told. (*Dawn, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Commodity traders say WHT to further fuel food inflation***

Commodities importers and wholesalers see the withholding tax as “reign of taxation” to unleash the storm of food inflation in the country amid growing world market prices. They also signalled to go for an all-out shutter-down strike across country in first phase of protest following with a closure of businesses in subsequent phases against the higher taxation. Importers warned that the withholding tax will unfold its impact from import stage of commodities through retail end, fearing that relentless taxation will eventually bury the poor under the unbridled inflation. (*Business Recorder, July 29<sup>th</sup>, Page 3*)

### ***Govt sees single-digit inflation on the horizon***

The government claimed that the inflation rate is moving towards single-digit territory, and all macroeconomic indicators are showing signs of enhanced stability, which is expected to be further bolstered by the new IMF bailout in the coming months. “In June 2024, CPI inflation reached the cusp of the single-digit range (at 12.6 per cent) ... is heading towards single digits,” said the Ministry of Finance in its Monthly Economic Update & Outlook (July 2024). The CPI inflation stood at 11.8pc in May 2024 and 29.4pc in June 2023. The average annual inflation fell to 23.4pc in FY24 from 29.2pc in FY23. The significant contributors to inflation were housing, water, electricity, gas and fuel (35.3pc), perishable food items (20.8pc), health (19.8pc), and clothing and footwear (17.8pc). The ministry estimated the inflation to be in the range of 12-13pc in July 2024 and 11-12pc in August 2024. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **10.4 # Poverty**

### ***Indebted cop torches himself to get rid of moneylender***

A desperate policeman attempted to immolate himself at his house in Luhar Colony to get rid of a moneylender from whom he had obtained a loan on prohibitively high interest rate five years ago. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

## **11 # ENVIRONMENT**

### ***99.4pc children in Karachi found to be exposed to passive smoking: study***

A study, co-authored by researchers from three countries, has discovered the presence of second-hand smoke in an alarming 95pc of children in Pakistan and Bangladesh, putting them at an increased risk of respiratory tract infections and, in cases of babies with hereditary disorders, death. The study, published in the *Nicotine and Tobacco Research* journal, was conducted by researchers at Department of Community Health Sciences and Medicine at Aga Khan University (AKU), University of York, UK, and ARK Foundation, Bangladesh. The study provides evidence of extremely high levels of SHS exposure in Karachi, where nearly all (99.4pc) of children were found to be exposed to second-hand smoke. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Experts call for conserving mangroves to help mitigate worsening climate***

Speakers at a seminar highlighted that mangroves are facing severe threats due to water and silt diversion, over-exploitation and heavy grazing and it is necessary to take practical steps for their conservation as they are crucial for not just environment but also in mitigating worsening temperatures along with providing protection against cyclones and tsunamis among other things. Seminar, “Importance of Mangrove Conservation”, was organised by the Muhammad Ajmal Khan Institute of Sustainable Halophyte Utilisation at University of Karachi”. (*Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

## **11.1 # Health**

### ***Experts say Pakistan budget massively negative for struggling healthcare sector***

Pharmaceutical industry experts have expressed concerns regarding the recent taxation changes in Pakistan, specifically addition of taxes on the already struggling healthcare sector. (*Business Recorder, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

### ***Pharma, healthcare sectors also reeling amid economic crisis***

Pakistan’s economy and its people are facing a health crisis. With an economy burdened by high debt and riddled with taxation measures that target the paying sectors, policymaking is seen as being crucial to guide the country out of its perilous path. In Pakistan, life expectancy is hovering around 67 years, according to the latest Economic Survey, lower than almost all of its peer nations. The average in South Asia stands at 71.6. (*Business Recorder, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

### ***Pak-China healthcare collaboration***

Health professionals representing Pakistan recently participated in the 4th China-Pakistan Medical Conference held in Shanghai where they discussed opportunities for cooperation in healthcare. (*Dawn, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Rs30 billion approved for BHUs, RHCs***

The Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) has approved Rs30 billion for the revamp of 1,033 Basic Health Units (BHUs) and 220 Rural Health Centres (RHCs) in province (Punjab). The PDWP also approved Rs10bn for the provision of equipment, furniture and fixtures of BHUs and RHCs. The PDWP’s second meeting approved eight development schemes at an estimated cost of Rs47bn. (*Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 2*)

### ***Regent Plaza Hotel building handed over to SIUT***

The Regent Plaza Hotel’s building has been handed over to the Sindh Institute of Urology & Transplantation (SIUT). Now a big hotel in Karachi will work as a major hospital, but SIUT has not yet issued any statement regarding the start of the facilities at the hospital. (*The News, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Pakistan faces shortage of 1m nurses, 40,000 doctors don’t practice, Senate panel told***

Pakistan faces a shortage of about one million nurses and as many as 30,000 to 40,000 doctors registered with the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) are not

practising medicine, as per a briefing provided to the Senate Standing Committee on Health. The meeting discussed the state of healthcare, and anti-polio efforts, and took stock of the programmes launched by health ministry. (*Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Brain-eating amoeba claims life of another young man***

A young man, who was being treated for infection with *Naegleria fowleri*, commonly called brain-eating amoeba, died. He was the third victim of the deadly infection this year in the city. Source said last year at least 10 people died of *Naegleria fowleri*. The infection is fatal in 98 per cent of the cases. Since 2012 over 100 cases of *Naegleria fowleri* have been reported in Karachi. Of them, only one patient survived for three months. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Ban imposed on non-iodised salt***

Deputy Commissioner Yasir Bhatti has imposed a ban on the manufacturing and sale of non-iodised salt across the district (Badin) on the ground that it is not fit for human consumption. (*Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 17*)

### ***Health professionals assail trade of illicit, sub-standard tea***

Terming health risks associated with the illicit and sub-standard tea, health professionals said that smuggled tea often undergoes adulteration with harmful substances such as dyes, sawdust and even pigeon blood. These unsafe practices in the informal sector pose significant health hazards to consumers, who may be unaware of the contamination in the tea they purchase. (*Business Recorder, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***SKMCH&RC registry data Breast cancer `most prevalent cancer` among women***

The data collected and compiled by the Punjab Cancer Registry (PCR) at the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital & Research Centre (SKMCH&RC) shows breast cancer is emerging as the most prevalent cancer in women in Pakistan. According to the PRC, the total number of new cancer cases reported from 2017 to 2022 were 185,748, while the related deaths stood at 118,631 in Pakistan. It shows that five leading and frequent cancers diagnosed among the males are of lip oral cavity, lungs, colorectal, prostate and oesophagus, while in women those of breast, lip oral cavity, ovary, cervix uteri and Oesophagus. (*Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***`Over 3,000 women die of cervical cancer in Pakistan every year`***

Medical experts have suggested that boosting public awareness and access to information and services, including vaccination, are key to the prevention of cervical cancer which is detected in over 5,000 women every year in Pakistan. At a meeting held to discuss the strategic rollout of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine in Sindh, experts shared that more than 3,000 women of the 5,000 plus died of cervical cancer. Cervical cancer ranked as the third most frequent cancer among women in Pakistan and the second most frequent cancer among women between 15 and 44 years of age. Pakistan had a population of 68.6 million women aged 15 years and older who were at risk of developing cervical cancer. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Shortage of nursery beds hits Peshawar hospital***

A shortage of nursery beds at Khyber Teaching Hospital here is hindering specialised treatment for newborn babies. The doctors have informed the administration that they can't admit more patients due to a lack of space. Paediatricians insisted that bed shortages had become a chronic issue in province with multiple neonates admitted to single beds increasing their vulnerability to infections. (*Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Pakistan's healthcare sector struggling with R&D deficiencies, medicine shortages***

Pakistan's healthcare sector is facing severe challenges due to a lack of research and development (R&D) and the poor accessibility of quality medicines, say startup founders currently involved in resolving the country's healthcare problems. Dr Saira Siddique, general manager and founder of medIQ Solutions, emphasised the critical state of R&D in the country. (*Business Recorder, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, page 2*)

## **11.2 # Pollution**

### ***Over 68,000 children under five died due to air pollution in 2021: report***

As many as 68,100 children under the age of five years died in Pakistan in 2021 due to high exposure to air pollution. This figure was revealed in a report titled 'Latest State of Global Air 2024', released in partnership with Unicef. It stated that air pollution was the second leading risk factor for death among children under five. Moreover Pakistan had experienced increases of more than 10pc in ambient ozone exposures in the last decade, and had the highest average ozone exposure in 2020.

Pakistan has the largest burden of disease linked to air pollution after India and China at 256,000 deaths per annum. Early exposure to high levels of PM 2.5, ozone, nitrogen oxides begins in the womb and increases children's susceptibility to pre-term births, respiratory infections, stunting, cancers and cognitive development. 30pc of all deaths in the first month after birth are linked to exposure to air pollution in South Asia, including Pakistan. Unicef estimates children who live in polluted environments can have their lung capacity reduced by 20pc. It also results in higher risk for chronic diseases later in life which may cause economic losses due to high disease burden and loss of productivity. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Punjab govt to treat smog as `year-round epidemic`***

The Punjab government is embarking upon a policy shift from treating smog as a seasonal issue to a year-round epidemic requiring urgent interventions. The Punjab government is attributing constant decline in air quality in the province, particularly in Lahore, to the previous strategy that treated smog as a seasonal issue. Pakistan ranked as second most polluted country, and Lahore was the fourth most polluted city in the world during 2023. (*Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)



### ***Each person inhales plastic particles daily: report***

Ministry of Climate Change stated that each person in Pakistan inhaled approximately 31 out of every 1,000 plastic particles daily. Microplastics, defined as plastic fragments smaller than five millimetres, could originate from industrial waste, beauty products, or breakdown of larger plastic items. Studies have linked human uptake of microplastics to serious health issues such as endocrine disruption, weight gain, insulin resistance, decreased reproductive health and cancer. (*Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Karachiites breathe toxic air throughout the year: study***

A study recently conducted by Karachi University's Institute of Environmental Studies has found that the city's air remains heavily laden with hazardous pollutants throughout the year, posing serious threat to public health. It studied levels of PM2.5 and PM10 — both inhalable microscopic particles suspended in the air that can induce adverse health effects — at 22 locations in the seven districts daily for 10 hours for 12 months last year. Citing WHO data, ambient (outdoor) air pollution was estimated to have caused 4.2 million premature deaths worldwide in 2019 and that some 89% of those premature deaths occurred in low-and middle-income countries. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 17*)

## **12 # CLIMATE CHANGE**

### ***Karachi endures 'hottest' period after 2015 heatwave***

The city remained in grip of sweltering weather conditions for the eighth consecutive day on account of continued disruption of the sea breeze caused by a low atmospheric pressure area prevailing over southeast of Karachi. Current weather conditions were the hottest since the 2015 heatwave during which the maximum temperature surged to 44.8°C. This week, humidity has remained 50 per cent or above 50pc. The ever-highest temperature of the month of June in Karachi was 47°C, recorded on June 18 1979. The highest temperature of the month of May was 48°C, which was recorded on May 9, 1938. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Karachi's feels-like temperature surges to 55°C***

The city continued to experience hot and humid weather conditions as maximum temperature reached to 37.1° Celsius with 65pc relative humidity. Officials said that the feels-like temperature surged to 55°C in the city. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Experts urge govt to impose `climate emergency` in country***

Speakers at a seminar held to discuss the challenges Pakistan faces on account of fast growing population amidst rapidly changing weather patterns called upon government to impose 'climate emergency' in the country to protect people's lives and livelihoods. Seminar was jointly organised by Karachi Press Club's Skills Development Committee and Global Awareness and Empowerment Network. (*Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Climate change, urbanisation adversely affect agriculture: report***

Agriculture being biggest employing sector supports Pakistan's economy and addresses food security challenges. However, this sector has not improved in the last three decades and has adversely been impacted by climate change, urbanisation and population growth. This was stated in the report, 'Solving the great puzzle: Pakistan', which was launched at a national multi-stakeholder dialogue on food systems, event was organised by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Pakistan in Islamabad. An average Pakistani household spends around 50 per cent of their monthly income on food, making them particularly vulnerable to shocks such as high food prices. It also indicated that Pakistan had the highest rate of malnutrition in South Asia.

Report recommended steps to transform food system, which could be achieved through improvement of natural resource management, enhancement of governance models, promotion of scientific knowledge and increased public awareness and redirection of agriculture-related subsidies. It proposed that large improvements in supply chains and transportation systems were required to reduce food losses and waste which will help ensure food safety and improve production quality. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***President, C'wealth secy discuss climate challenges***

President Asif Ali Zardari stressed the need for stronger cooperation with the Commonwealth in the fields of climate change, education, parliamentary exchanges and disaster preparedness. The president expressed these views with a Commonwealth delegation led by its secretary-general, Patricia Scotland, at Aiwan-i-Sadr. The two sides exchanged views on the consequences of climate change for Pakistan, with President Zardari highlighting the damages suffered due to the impact of erratic weather patterns. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

## **13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS**

### **13.1 # Drought**

#### ***Growers fear drought, large-scale migration amid looming water crisis***

Growers and their representative organisations fear that severe shortage of irrigation water arising out of recent damage to Sukkur Barrage gates may lead to drought, large scale migration, economic depression and a law and order situation across the rice cultivation belt. (*Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### **13.2 # Flood**

#### ***PDMA declares 11 KP districts 'most vulnerable' to floods***

Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has declared 11 district of KP as the 'most vulnerable' to floods in its Monsoon Contingency Plan 2024 unveiled. The 11 districts declared as prone to high floods include Upper and Lower Chitral, Swat, Dera Ismail Khan, Charsadda, Nowshera, Shangla, Upper and Lower Dir, Tank and Peshawar. (*Dawn, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Melting glacier leaves hundreds homeless in Skardu***

Flash floods triggered by melting glacier have damaged over two dozen homes, hundreds of kanals of land, crops and trees along the Burgi nullah in Skardu, forcing the evacuation of dozens of households to safe areas. The flood in the nullah sparked panic and damaged a large number of private properties, but fortunately, no human loss has been reported. (*Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Three factory workers swept away by floodwaters in Dir***

Three factory workers were swept away by floodwaters in Katan Payeen area of Upper Dir district. They said the youths were working in an ice factory located on the bank of the Panjkora River when it was hit by floodwaters caused by torrential rains in the upper parts of Usheraidara area. (*Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## **13.3 # Rainfall**

### ***Eight people killed as heavy rains lash different parts of Balochistan***

At least 8 people were killed and over two dozen injured and 300 mud houses damaged as rains, lashing different areas of Balochistan. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Six die as rains, landslide wreak havoc in Koh-e-Sulaiman range***

Heavy rains in Koh-e-Sulaiman range of eastern Balochistan have triggered landslides, blocking major highways and stranding numerous vehicles. The death toll from five days of continuous rainfall in the province has risen to six, with 25 others injured. (*Business Recorder, 1<sup>st</sup>, July, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Two killed, 36 injured as rain, windstorm lash Bannu, Kohat, Waziristan***

Two people were killed and 36 others were injured when heavy downpours and windstorms lashed Bannu, Kohat and South Waziristan. At least 31 injured were also brought to hospitals from different areas. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Lahore faces urban flooding***

A record of last 30 years was broken when the city of Lahore witnessed 315 millimeter. Heavy rainfall increased inflows in local nullahs/streams and caused urban flooding in low lying areas. (*Business Recorder, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***12 die, 27 injured in Punjab rains in 24 hours***

Twelve people died and 27 others were injured while 14 houses collapsed due to heavy rains during the last 24 hours in various parts of the province. 21 people died, 64 were injured and 35 houses got damaged during the monsoon rains across the province since June 30. (*Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Monsoon rains, landslides hit parts of Balochistan***

Monsoon rains continued to lash the northeastern and central parts of Balochistan, while landslides were reported after downpour in the areas of Sulaiman Range, suspending traffic on the highway linking province with Punjab. (*Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***10 killed in Balochistan rains***

PDMA Balochistan, has announced that 10 people have been killed and 31 injured so far in monsoon rains which lashed several districts of the province since June 7. The rains also destroyed 89 houses and partially damaged 170 houses. Overall, the PDMA said, 1,799 people have been affected. The rains have also damaged 17 kilometers of roads and 310 acres of agriculture land in the province. (*Dawn, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, page 5*)

### ***10 of a family killed as rains wreak havoc across KP***

At least 22 persons, including 10 from a single family, were killed, with several reportedly injured in accidents caused by heavy rains across KP. Heavy rains triggered landslides and flash flooding in many areas. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Monsoon rains batter Punjab; six die, as many injured***

A child and five women were killed and six others injured due to heavy monsoon rains in various districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. 39 people died and 113 were injured due to the rains in the month of July while 61 houses were damaged and 39 animals were killed in the rainy season. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **13.4 # Lightning**

### ***Lightning kills two youths, dozens of animals in Thar***

Lightning killed two youths and several dozen animals during light to heavy rain in the desert district of Tharparkar. Three children, who were sitting nearby, fell unconscious due to the shock. As many as 140 goats and sheep also perished in lightning strikes. (*Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Lightning kills eight people in Thar villages***

Eight people died and a large number of cattle heads perished when they were hit by lightning in moderate to heavy rains which pounded several parts of the desert district. There were also reports of deaths of a large number of cattle heads in lightning strikes in several areas across the desert district. (*Dawn, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Sindh seeks experts` help to understand rise in lightning deaths***

In order to understand the alarming rise in deaths due to lightning, the Sindh government ordered an inquiry and approached the federal ministry of science and technology and the NED University of Engineering and Technology to know the reasons behind this ‘natural disaster’. In light of the experts’ reports, the Sindh government would start an awareness campaign for protection against lightning and adopting precautionary measures. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

## **13.5 # Torrents**

### ***Hill torrents destroy crops, houses***

Crops over thousands of acres were destroyed, mud houses damaged and several cattle heads were killed because of hill torrents caused by the recent torrential rains over the

mountains surrounding Isakhel tehsil. District administration and flood relief teams are visiting the affected area, including Barooch, Adiala and Kalabagh, to conduct relief and rescue operations. (*Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **13.6 # Heatwave**

### ***32 found dead over two swelteringly hot days***

More than 30 bodies were found from different parts of Karachi over the past two days, when the mercury crossed 40.5 degrees Celsius, with extremely high levels of humidity. Interestingly, the health department didn't sound too worried about the situation and said that only "two people" died due to heatstroke, while reporting no deaths related to heat. Over two days, a total of 118 people were brought to different hospitals of the city who had suffered heatstroke and all of them were discharged after proper medical treatment. The two major charities, Edhi Foundation and Chhipa Welfare Association, said that during past two days, at least "32 bodies presumably died of persisting extreme weather conditions" in the metropolis were found. (*Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Dozens faint as heatwave sweeps through Mirpurkhas***

Dozens of people, most of them labourers busy working outdoors, fell unconscious after suffering heatstroke in different areas of Mirpurkhas city. They were taken to the Mirpurkhas Civil Hospital and various other public and private health facilities for treatment. (*Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Heatwave kills man, makes children fall sick***

The ongoing hot and humid conditions in the province caused death of a man from heatstroke and led to rise of gastroenteritis, diarrhea and fever among children. Over 20 beds in ward were found occupied with children and a bed was shared by two patients each while many were sent home due to shortage of beds. (*Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Karachi vulnerable to urban flooding, heatwave disasters, moot told***

The city administration does not seem prepared to tackle issues like flooding during monsoon, heatwaves, tree felling and influx of population and, therefore, there is a need to rethink the entire master plan for Karachi to make it a liveable city. These were the views of speakers at Safe Karachi Conference: Strengthening Urban Resilience, organised at IBA City Campus. (*Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

## **14 # NATURAL DISASTERS**

### **14.1 # Earthquake**

#### ***Quake jolts Turbat, Kech***

A moderate earthquake struck Turbat town and parts of Kech district, forcing people to evacuate their homes. Officials said the quake lasted around 20 seconds. According to National Seismic Monitoring Centre, earthquake's magnitude was recorded at 4.2. The epicenter was located 24km northwest of Turbat town. (*Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

## 15 # RESISTANCE

### ***Rallies, jirgas in KP oppose Azm-i-Istehkam military offensive***

Rallies and jirgas were held in various cities to voice opposition to the government's plan to launch Azm-i-Istehkam military operation against militants. Scores of Shalobar youth activists in Bara tehsil of Khyber district took out a motorcycle rally against any possible military offensive. Organisers said law and order situation had deteriorated in Bara with incidents of targeted killing on the rise. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Controversial tax drives fuel dealers to strike***

A divided house of the Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) announced a countrywide strike for July 5 to protest the imposition of 0.5 per cent advance turnover tax in the budget, although the government has conceded its mistake and assured withdrawal of the controversial tax. (*Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***'Misuse' of blasphemy law decried by Christians, civil society***

Scores of people belonging to the Christian community and members of the civil society staged a protest demonstration in front of the Karachi Press Club (KPC) against the death sentence handed down to a Christian youth by an antiterrorism court in Punjab in a blasphemy case. Sahiwal ATC Special Judge Ziaullah Khan had sentenced the young accused to death on charges of circulating a social media post that led to riots in the town of Jaranwala in August last year. Dozens of Christian homes and around 20 churches were vandalised and ransacked by mobs in Jaranwala following allegations that a copy of the Holy Quran had been desecrated.

Scores of demonstrators gathered outside the KPC to decry what they called the "misuse of blasphemy laws". The participants in the demonstration include representatives of the Christian community, Minority Rights March, Aurat March and civil society. They were carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans like "Stop misuse of blasphemy law", "Pakistan is the Israel to religious minorities" and death sentence for those who burned churches, etc. (*Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Demo against journalist's killing at CM House***

A large number of journalists, rights activists and members of civil society marched from the Karachi Press Club to Chief Minister House, demanding arrest of killers of journalist Nasrullah Gadani, who was shot dead in Mirpur Mathelo in May. The participants in the protest march, which was organised by the Sindh Journalists Council, asked the ruling Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) to expel the "prime suspect", MNA Khalid Khan Loond, from the party and de-seat him from the National Assembly. The protest as well as the one organised by teachers outside the Sindh Assembly caused a traffic mess on the key roads and nearby streets in the vicinity of the so-called red zone. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

***SHO, others booked on terrorism charge for using force against protesting lawyers***

Police registered a criminal case under anti-terror law against SHO and other officials of the Gulistan-i-Jauhar police station for their involvement in manhandling lawyers by resorting to baton charge and aerial firing to disperse their protest demonstration. However, so far, no one has been arrested. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

***Fishermen accuse feudal lords of occupying lakes across province***

Hundreds of activists of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) staged a demonstration outside Aiwan-i-Sahafat in protest against illegal occupation of Kakaho lake in Sanghar district by Hingorjo community and other lakes by feudal lords in coastal belt of the province. These feudal lords continued to encroach upon lakes and snatching fishing rights from poor fishermen. They regretted that since the abolition of contract system and introduction of fishing license regime, fishermen had been facing massive difficulties in catching fish in lakes as influential landlords forcibly stopped them from fishing through their hired armed men.

They said that local fishermen were also threatened with implication in bogus cases. All the lakes in Kakaho area had been encroached upon by influential persons of Hingorjo community with the help of Hathungo police. They did not allow local fishermen to catch fish and thus deprive them of their livelihood. They accused police of taking away nets of the poor fishermen and said that there was no drinking water in coastal belt of Badin district and livestock, birds and wild animals were dying from thirst. The protesters demanded Sindh government end encroachment on all sweet water lakes and serve justice to marginalised fishing community. The protesters also observed a sit-in on Shah Latif Road for over two hours. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

***Petrol pumps partially shut in KP***

Likewise other parts of the country, petroleum dealers observed a partial strike in Peshawar and some other cities of the province against the imposition of the advance tax in the budget for next fiscal year 2024-25. Despite the call given by the petroleum dealers association for the strike, not all petrol pumps in Peshawar went closed. The petroleum dealers voiced concerns about the budget's 0.5% advance tax on turnover. (*Business Recorder, July 6, 2024, Page 3*)

***PFMA to shut flour mills from 11th against WHT***

The Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA) has declared a strike for an unspecified duration to protest against the imposition of withholding tax in budget 2024-25. This was announced at the PFMA's general body meeting. The general body unanimously announced the closure of flour mills starting from July 11 (Thursday), until their demands are addressed. The flour millers expressed strong reservations regarding the government's tax policies and collectively opposed the implementation of withholding tax through their respective businesses. (*Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***Thousands pour onto roads in Lakki Marwat for peace***

Thousands of tribesmen rallied for peace in Lakki Marwat, demanding of government to refrain from launching a military operation keeping in view its ‘negative impact’ on the lives of people of the region. The speakers opposed the operation, and asked the government to sort out the reasons for resurfacing of terrorism and direct security forces and law enforcement agencies to focus on targeted and intelligence-based operations.

Meanwhile, a large number of youth in Torghar district took out a rally against the proposed Azm-i-Istehkam military operation, saying the offensive would cause large-scale displacements of law-abiding citizens. Also, the people of Mohmand tribal district opposed the anticipated military operation Azm-i-Istehkam during a big rally. The protesters said the past military operations had brought misery on them and warned against launching a similar action. (*Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Protesters seeking FIR against police baton-charged to clear National Highway***

Police resorted to tear gas shelling and baton charge to get National Highway vacated from protesters, who had blocked the road on the second consecutive day in protest against the killing of a woman in an “encounter” two days earlier. The protesters were seeking registration of a case against policemen, particularly the SHO of Steel Town, over the killing of the woman and injuries to her daughter in “crossfire” during an encounter between police and fleeing suspects near Gulshan-i-Hadeed. The police took the action after several rounds of negotiations with the organisers of the demonstration and victims’ relatives failed. Police also registered the woman’s murder case against unidentified suspects. Protesters, who were joined by political parties’ workers, civil society members and influential people from Thatta had staged a sit-in on road that connects Karachi with Thatta and Hyderabad. (*Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***GB importers go on strike against trade suspension***

Gilgit-Baltistan traders have shut their businesses as they have gone on strike against the suspension of trade with China since April. The traders’ bodies, GB Importers and Exporters Association and GB Chamber of Commerce and Industries warned that they would block the Karakoram Highway at Sost if their demands were not met by Ashura. (*Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Relatives stage sit-in after suspect hurt in `encounter` dies of excessive bleeding***

Three policemen were suspended after relatives of a suspect killed in an alleged encounter earlier in the day staged a protest demonstration against the police for failing to take him to hospital on time. In the evening, relatives and area residents took coffin to main Daud Chowrangi and staged a sit-in there. (*Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 16*)

### ***Strike in Kotri***

Members of business community and general public observed a complete shutdown strike in Kotri SITE in protest against police’s failure to curb rising crime in industrial area. The traders staged a procession after shuttering their shops and trade centres. The



protesters' leaders said that police had utterly failed to stop incidents of looting, robbery and theft. They said that police were only busy in providing cover to drug trade worth millions of rupees that was carried on from Jamshoro daily through highway. Jamshoro police was involved in contraband substances' trade. (*Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 17*)

### ***Woman prevented from setting herself, daughter on fire during demonstration***

A woman doused herself and her young daughter with petrol and was about to torch both of them in front of Khairpur SSP office but police officials rushed to stop her from committing at self-immolation. Shabana Kalhoro later told media persons that she was compelled to take the extreme step in protest against officials posted at Shah Latif police station. They had picked up her husband Jameel Ahmed Kalhoro from her home in Mumtaz Colony five days ago after she refused to establish “friendship” with police constable Waheed Shaikh. She said that she had been making rounds of the police station since then, but police officials turned a deaf ear to her cries and complaints and often drove her out of the police station.

She said that the police official was threatening her that if she did not do his bidding he would implicate her husband in bogus cases and he would be “full-fried”, which meant he would be killed in an staged encounter. Moreover, she said that police were also demanding Rs40,000 bribe for releasing her husband. She said that if she did not get justice, she would commit suicide along with her young daughter and in that case, the constable Waheed Shaikh and SHO of Shah Latif police station would be responsible for their suicide. She appealed to Sukkur DIG and Khairpur SSP to intervene to get her husband freed and provide her family protection against police, especially the constable, Waheed Shaikh. Sources said that the woman might have lost all hope after and decided to take the extreme step after she saw little impact of her press conference against the police official at local press club a day ago. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***76 protesters booked for ‘blocking road’ during demonstration***

Police registered a case against 76 traders at Jamshoro police station for holding a protest in front of SSP's office a day ago against police failure to rein in streets crimes and curb sale of drugs across the town. The traders had observed a shutdown strike in Kotri SITE area, took out a procession and staged a demonstration before SSP office. In response, a case was registered against traders on charge of for blocking a road on a complaint lodged by ASI Mohammad Khan Solangi. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Flour millers announce nationwide shutdown***

The Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA) announced a strike against imposition of withholding tax by shutting down the mills for an indefinite period. PFMA Punjab Chairman Asim Raza announced the decision of closure of flour mills, saying imposing tax on flour was unfathomable and unacceptable as it was an essential edible item used in every household of the country. He said the flour millers would never become tax agents for FBR. (*Business Recorder, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Flour shortage feared as millers go on strike***

Urban consumers are bracing for a potential shortage of flour as the All-Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA) went on a nationwide strike in protest against the newly imposed withholding tax. Owners of atta chakkis (small wheat grinding units) and flour dealers in various towns have also joined the strike, leading to significant disruptions in flour supply across many urban centres. PFMA Chairman Asim Raza has vowed to continue strike until association's demands are met. (*Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Several hurt as police, BYC supporters clash***

Over a dozen people, including six policemen, were injured and 27 people, including five women, were arrested in clashes between supporters of Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) and police during a rally organised for the recovery of missing students. Over a dozen police vehicles were damaged as police lobbed tear gas and baton-charged BYC supporters. Firing was also reported during the clashes. The clashes began when police tried to push BYC supporters from the Red Zone area where the protesters wanted to stage a sit-in. Supporters of BYC had been protesting by staging a sit-in camp for over a week in Sariab area against Baloch missing persons. Protesters marched on several roads of Quetta and tried to move to Red Zone to stage their sit-in there which triggered clashes. (*Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***BYC sit-in enters third day after talks with govt fail***

Negotiations between the government team and leaders of Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) failed, prompting Dr Mahrang Baloch to declare that the protest will continue until the recovery of Zaheer Baloch and others. (*Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Cement dealers on strike against `heavy` taxes***

The cement dealers across the country went on a shutter-down strike in protest against imposition of heavy taxes, including withholding tax, coupled with placement of point of sales machines, by FBR in 2024-25 budget. (*Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***`TLP sit-in to continue till demands acceptance`***

Tehreeki-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) and the federal government have yet to reach an agreement to end the ongoing sit-in at the Faizabad interchange, Islamabad, which has entered its fifth day. The protest, organised by TLP, aims to express solidarity with the people of Palestine and pressure the government to address their demands concerning the ongoing war in Gaza. The TLP has presented three main demands to the government send food and medical aid to the oppressed Palestinians, officially boycott of all Israeli products and declare Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu a terrorist. The timing of the sit-in has sparked discussions on social media, with users questioning the decision to hold such a protest at Faizabad interchange. Civil society and human rights activists have previously held protests in various cities against Israel's actions, condemning the killing of innocent people, particularly women and children. (*Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Oghi residents protest illegal mining***

People protested illegal mining in the Jaga Bala area of Oghi tehsil. Holding banners and placards, the protesters complained that illegal mining in the area had deprived residents of employment and royalty. (*Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***One killed, scores hurt as violence mars Bannu rally***

At least four people lost their lives, and more than two dozen were wounded in a series of violent incidents and terrorist attacks in different parts of KP. In Bannu city, one person was killed and 22 others were injured when gunfire caused a stampede in a peace rally, attended by thousands who were demanding security in the southern district. The peace rally in Bannu, organised by local traders and political parties, saw participants waving white flags as symbols of peace. (*Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Police break up protest calling for recovery of Priya Kumari***

Police allegedly resorted to baton charge to disperse civil society activists at Teen Talwar in Clifton (Karachi), who were seeking recovery of seven-year-old Priya Kumari, who had gone missing in Sukkur three years ago. Civil society members showed up in big numbers to protest the failure of the Sindh government and police in recovering Priya Kumari. The protesters included representatives of NGOs, unions and groups such as the Pooj Hindu Panchayat Sukkur, Priya Kumari Bazyabi Committee, Women Democratic Front, Minority Rights March, Aurat March, All Lady Health Workers Program, etc. Many of the protesters had travelled from various parts of Sindh to participate in the demonstration. Simultaneously, a similar protest, organised by the Pooj Hindu Panchayat, was also held in Larkana where members of civil society gathered to observe a token hunger strike and sit-in. (*Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Protest sit-in in Bannu demands action against armed groups***

The people belonging to all walks of life started staging a protest sit-in at the Bannu Police Lines Chowk and demanded the government to take steps for tackling the worsening law and order. The people belonging to the rural areas of the district have also started arriving in the Bannu city to attend the protest. Holding white flags and placards, the participants of the sit-in chanted slogans demanding the restoration of peace. (*The News, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Wife's suicide after activist's death in 'encounter' sparks protest***

Relatives and supporters of an activist of a nationalist party held a sit-in on Hyderabad-Badin road in protest against the worker's killing allegedly in a 'staged encounter' with police on July 14 and the death of the activist's widow, who died by suicide in protest against his husband's extrajudicial death. (*Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Traffic chaos in Red Zone after roads blocked by protest, VIP security***

Thousands of motorists and commuters were stuck in a severe traffic jam for hours in the so-called 'Red Zone' in the metropolis due to security arrangements that led to blockade of key roads, causing gridlocks on major thoroughfares. It all began in the

afternoon when police authorities blocked some roads after government teachers, who were seeking permanent employment, staged a sit-in outside the Karachi Press Club and announced that they would march on CM House to put pressure on the government. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Thousands march in Bannu, Bajaur and Waziristan***

Tens of thousands of people participated in a big public meeting addressed by KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in Parati Gate Bazaar in the Bannu city. Tribesmen from across the district reached the venue of the gathering in large processions and rallies holding white flags as a symbol of peace. Meanwhile, a shutter-down strike was observed and a march was organised for restoration of peace in Wana, Lower South Waziristan district. The march was organised by Mutahida Sayasi Aman Pasoon, a conglomerate of nine political parties. During the peace march, all bazaars in Wana remained closed to express solidarity with the marchers. A large number of people, including tribal elders, ulema, lawyers and civil society activists, arrived in Wana from different areas to participate in the peace march. They carried white flags inscribed with slogans for peace. (*Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***14 injured as BYC convoy comes under fire in Mastung***

Fourteen people were injured when supporters of Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC), who were on their way to Gwadar to attend a rally today, came under fire in Mastung. BYC leader Bebag Baloch alleged that personnel of “a law enforcement agency opened fire on our supporters” in Mastung when they were heading towards the Quetta-Karachi highway. “At least 14 people were injured in the firing,” Bebag said. Five of the injured were in critical condition. The Quetta administration has imposed a ban on all types of gatherings, processions and rallies, sealing all roads leading to the Red Zone by parking containers on major roads. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Journalist Gadani's family not allowed into Bhuttos' mausoleum to register protest***

A caravan from Ghotki travelled to Bhuttos' mausoleum in Garhi Khuda Bakhsh Bhutto to register its symbolic protest on the grave of Benazir Bhutto over alleged slackness on the part of police in arresting suspects nominated in murder FIR of journalist Nasrullah Gaddani. Gadani's mother, his brother, and civil society activists were members of the caravan. All of them had to walk up to the mausoleum. Before reaching the mausoleum, they were again stopped by police near Panjodero village but somehow managed to reach the outer gate of the mausoleum. (*Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Balochistan lawmakers push for political dialogue***

Amid a lingering stalemate and exchange of blame, lawmakers from both sides of the political divide in the Balochistan Assembly called upon government and the leadership of Gwadar protests to resolve all issues through negotiations in a democratic manner. However, BYC leader Dr Mahrang Baloch claimed that hundreds of their supporters had been arrested over the past two days. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Road blocks, protests derail life across Balochistan***

Widespread protests, sit-ins, and roadblocks in various districts of Balochistan, sparked by a crackdown on a protest in Gwadar, severely disrupted normal life and isolated the province from the rest of the country. Protests continued in multiple towns and cities, including Gwadar, with reports of attacks on government officials, including a women's police station, resulting in injuries to cops. A large number of Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) supporters continued their sit-in on Gwadar's Marine Drive, where clashes with security forces have led to the deaths of at least one soldier and three protesters over the past three days. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Participants of mammoth rally vow to maintain peace in Bajaur***

The participants of a mammoth gathering pledged to play their role for maintenance of peace in the district. People from different walks of life including tribal elders, social workers, political activists, traders and transporters attended the rally in a large number. The gathering was planned a couple of weeks ago in the face of growing incidents of militancy in the district. The rally was dedicated to those 64 people, who were killed in a suicide attack on July 30 last year. The participants were carrying white flags with peace logo inscribed on them. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

## **15.1 # Resistance on Energy Crisis**

### ***Ginners call off 'indefinite strike' against taxes, power tariff after only a week in Punjab***

The Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) has faltered on its resolve to continue strike for an indefinite period only a week after its launch reportedly due to violations of the decision by a few ginning units in Punjab. Apparently the PCGA withdrew its strike call, given at an urgent general body meeting in Sukkur on June 23, to protest imposition of taxes on the textile sector in the recent budget and 'exorbitant increase' in power tariff, under pressure of the cotton growers. (*Dawn, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, page 2*)

### ***Strike observed in Swabi over power cuts***

A shutter-down and wheel-jam strike was observed across the district against the federal government's "utter failure" to take practical steps for ending the electric loadshedding and providing power to people at subsidised rates. The strike call was given by Swabi Action Committee (SAC). The strike was backed by all political and religious parties, Swabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Gadoon Estate Industrial Association, all unions of traders and shopkeepers, welfare bodies and youth organisations. The SAC members said they would soon announce their next line of action, and vowed to continue their peaceful protest for people's rights. (*Dawn, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Karachi residents stage rally against prolonged loadshedding in old city areas***

Citizens of Lyari who were joined by Edhi Foundation's Faisal Edhi, took out a protest rally against prolonged loadshedding in the old city areas. Mr Edhi said that several people had died of suspected heatstroke in metropolis as Edhi Foundation's mortuaries were filled with bodies. (*Dawn, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Over 300 booked for `attacking` KE office***

Police have registered a rioting case against more than 300 citizens who protested against prolonged loadshedding outside K-Electric office in Sharifabad and allegedly ransacked its properties. Central SSP Zeeshan Shafiq Siddiqi said the police were identifying such people through videos, after which action will be taken against them but no one had been arrested yet. (*Dawn, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Power consumers protest Hesco`s failure to repair faulty PMTs***

Power consumers held demonstrations in different localities against inefficiency, corruption and arrogance of officers towards people at the Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (Hesco). The protesters dispersed peacefully after Hesco officials assured them of restoring power supply soon. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***STP protest against Hesco***

Activists of Sindh Taraqqi-pasand Party staged a demonstration outside Hesco office in protest against unannounced loadshedding and prolonged discontinuation of power supply. They said that many areas in Nawabshah city had been without power for more than a week. They demanded registration of cases against corrupt officials, repair of transformers and shortening of loadshedding hours. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Protesters storm Sibi grid station against outages***

Hundreds of people attacked a grid station in Sibi town and ransacked it during a protest against prolonged loadshedding in area. Sibi is one of those towns where temperatures soared to high levels recently. Angry protesters carrying placards and banners gathered in front of the Sibi grid station after marching on various roads and chanted slogans against Qesco which allegedly stopped power supply for several hours during the hot weather. The protest then turned violent as demonstrators stormed grid station located on the outskirts of Sibi town and ransacked the furniture, equipment and damaged the building. (*Dawn, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***People block University Road against long power cuts***

Power protests rocked provincial capital (Peshawar) as residents of Tehkal blocked the University Road for several hours, while protesters elsewhere forcibly entered two grid stations and restarted feeders undergoing scheduled loadshedding. The protesters claimed Peshawar Electric Supply Company was carrying out hours long outages in their area. (*Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 8*)

### ***Hundreds storm Sibi power station over long outages***

Hundreds of people in one of hottest cities stormed a power station in protest against cuts lasting up to 20 hours a day. Protesters also ransacked the station`s neighbouring administrative office in rural Sibi, where temperatures peaked at 45 degrees Celsius (113 degrees Fahrenheit). Group numbered up to 800 people. Planned power cuts, also known as loadshedding, happen frequently in Pakistan due to fuel shortages, varying in length in different areas. (*Business Recorder, July 6, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Pasni residents protest against outages***

Amid a shutter-down strike in coastal town of Pasni, locals protesting against prolonged power outages blocked the coastal highway at Zero Point, suspending traffic between Makran and other areas of Balochistan as well as Karachi. The protesters, belonging to different political parties and civil society, chanted slogans against government and Quetta Electric Supply Company. (*Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Sit-in against inflated power bills, high taxes***

Scores of workers of Jamaat-i-Islami staged a protest demonstration in Gujrat against inflated bills of electricity and imposition of taxes. (*Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Jamaat workers stage rallies in KP against power cuts, excessive taxes***

Jamaat-i-Islami workers staged demonstrations across province (KP) to protest prolonged power cuts, backbreaking energy prices, excessive taxes and lawlessness. (*Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Public protest, MPC against power utility planned***

The Pakistan Sunni Tehreek has demanded removal of Hesco chief over prolonged loadshedding in city. They announced holding of a multi-party conference next week against Hesco's "excesses", and said that a siege would be laid outside its headquarters. They said they would hold a protest rally in the city. Lawyers and traders would be approached to join the protest. They also demanded that agreements with independent power producers (IPPs) should be revoked forthwith. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***QWP protests power outages, inflation***

The workers of Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) staged a demonstration to protest inflation, law and order situation, power loadshedding and a hike in the tariff of electricity. The protesters blocked roads in Tangi tehsil and chanted slogans against the provincial and federal governments. They said that both provincial and federal governments failed to provide relief to people. (*Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Bisham people storm grid station, restore power supply***

A large number of residents led by Bisham tehsil council chairman Sadeedur Rehman barged into the area's grid station and got restored power supply on two feeders, which were switched off for load management. The protesters, who also included political activists, were protesting against the Peshawar Electric Supply Company for issuing a new loadshedding schedule, increasing duration of outages to 19 hours. The protesters restored power supply on Maira and Bisham feeders. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***JI stages 20 sit-ins across Karachi to express solidarity with Pindi protesters***

The Karachi Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) organised 20 sit-ins across the city to show solidarity with the protest in Rawalpindi, which is calling for the abolition of contracts with independent power producers (IPPs), a rationalised tax regime, and relief for the salaried class. (*The News, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 16*)

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## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

### *Israel approves biggest West Bank land seizure in decades*

Israel has approved its biggest land seizure in the occupied West Bank in more than three decades, a move criticised by activists as detrimental to Palestinian peace hopes. The 12.7-square-kilometre of land in the Jordan Valley was officially declared “state property” in June, according to an official declaration revealed by the Peace Now group. “The size of the area designated for declaration is the largest since the (1993) Oslo Accords, and the year 2024 marks a peak in the extent of declarations of state land,” Peace Now said. The Israeli government has seized a total of 23.7 square kilometres in the West Bank since the start of the year, it said. When land is declared “state property”, Palestinians lose private ownership rights and are barred from using it, Peace Now said. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## 2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

### *Algeria, Italy sign \$455m agriculture deal*

Algeria and Italy signed a €420 million (\$455m) deal for an agricultural project in the North African country, the Algerian agriculture ministry said. The scheme, which Italian officials called their country’s largest agricultural investment in the southern Mediterranean, covers 36,000 hectares in Algeria’s Timimoune province. It will produce wheat, lentils and beans, among other foods, in the hopes of increasing Algerian non-hydrocarbon exports, officials said during the agreement ceremony. It is also expected to create 6,700 jobs.

The deal came months after Algeria signed a \$3.5 billion agreement with Qatar’s largest dairy producer Baladna to establish a vast cow-breeding facility for the production of powdered milk. Agreement was part of Algeria’s strategy to expand production areas in its desert south to 500,000 hectares, Algerian officials said. The project is also in line with the goals of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni’s “Mattei Plan”, which is aimed in part at reducing irregular migration from Africa via investment in the continent. (*Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

## 3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS

### *Indian farmers rush to plant summer crops as monsoon revives*

Indian farmers have accelerated the planting of summer-sown crops, such as paddy, soybean, cotton, and corn, following above-average monsoon rainfall in July that came after a deficit in June. Summer rains, critical for economic growth in Asia’s third-largest economy, usually begin in the south around June 1 before spreading nationwide by July 8, allowing farmers to plant summer crops. But in June India received 11% less rain than average, after the monsoon lost momentum in mid-June and delayed sowing.

In the first half of July there was 9% more rainfall than normal which helped farmers to plant summer crops on 57.5 million hectares (142 million acres) by July 12, a tenth higher than last year, according to Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare. The lifeblood of the nearly \$3.5 trillion economy, the monsoon brings nearly 70% of the rain India needs to water farms and refill reservoirs and aquifers. Without irrigation, nearly half of the farmland in the world's second-biggest producer of rice, wheat and sugar depends on the annual rains.

Farmers have planted 11.6 million hectares with paddy, up 20.7% on same period last year, as record high prices prompted farmers to expand the area. Higher rice planting could alleviate supply concerns in the world's second biggest producer and consumer of the grain. The world's largest exporter of the grain surprised buyers last year by imposing a ban on the export of widely consumed non-basmati white rice, following a ban on broken rice. Higher rice procurement by government agencies from last season's crop and expansion in paddy area could allow the government to ease restrictions on rice exports in October, said a New Delhi based dealer with a global trade house.

Farmers had planted 14 million hectares with oilseeds, including soybeans, against 11.5 million hectares a year earlier. Corn was planted on 5.88 million hectares, up from 4.38 million hectares a year earlier. The cotton area was slightly higher at 9.6 million hectares, while pulses planting jumped by 26% from a year ago to 6.23 million hectares. (*Business Recorder, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

## **4 # SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

### **4.1 # Dairy**

#### ***`Eco-Milk` shoppers` thirst for climate-friendly dairy***

A small dairy in Tasmania is stocking supermarket shelves with what it says is the world's first branded milk produced by cows fed with a seaweed that makes them emit lower levels of environmentally damaging methane gas. The livestock industry accounts for around 30 percent of global methane emissions, according to the United Nations. Seaweed and other feed additives for cattle could reduce these greenhouse gas emissions but have yet to be widely adopted due to cost. (*Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### **4.2 # Fisheries**

#### ***Fishing treaty fails at WTO, prompting US, Chinese concern***

Countries and environmental groups voiced concern and disappointment after a draft treaty to cut fishing subsidies failed to pass, with China calling for major changes in how countries negotiate at the World Trade Organization. The talks, seen as critical to helping over-fished stocks recover, have been going on for more than 20 years at the WTO with an initial package approved in 2022. The second phase tackling some of the toughest remaining issues had been drafted for approval at a WTO meeting this week but was blocked by India which criticised what it called the treaty's "significant

shortcomings” while seeking deeper carve-outs for developing countries. As a result, the talks were downgraded from being up for adoption to merely being “discussed” by the WTO’s 166 members, any one of which can block a deal under the body’s rules. (*Business Recorder, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### **4.3 # Livestock**

#### ***Denmark to introduce world’s first livestock carbon tax***

Denmark will introduce the world’s first carbon tax on livestock, a unique measure designed to bring the Scandinavian country closer to its goal of carbon neutrality by 2045. From 2030, methane emissions caused by flatulence from cattle and pigs will be taxed at a rate of 300 kroner (\$43) per tonne of CO2 equivalent. This amount will rise to 750 kroner in 2035 under the terms of an agreement reached at the end of June between the government, part of the opposition and representatives of livestock farmers, industry and trade unions. The text still has to be approved by parliament which will examine it after the summer.

For the Danish Association for Sustainable Agriculture, however, the agreement is “useless”. It is “a sad day for agriculture”, it said in a press release. “As a farmer, I feel uncomfortable because we are taking part in an uncertain experiment” that could threaten “the security of the food supply”, said the association’s president Peter Kiaer, recalling New Zealand’s abandonment of a similar proposal in the face of farmers protesting. To soften the bill for Danish farmers, the plan proposes a 60 per cent tax deduction. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### **5 # TRADE**

#### ***Iran is exporting crude oil to 17 countries***

Iran is selling crude oil to 17 countries, Oil Minister Javad Owji was quoted as saying by the semi-official Mehr News Agency, indicating some states may not be honouring US sanctions. “We sell our oil wherever we want to. In fact, we export to 17 countries, including (countries in) Europe”. Owji said he could not provide additional detail regarding the amounts sold or the identity of buyers due to the sensitivity of the subject. Washington re-imposed sanctions on Tehran in 2018, after exiting a 2015 nuclear pact that allowed Iran to sell its oil in exchange for constraints on its nuclear programme. (*Business Recorder, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

#### ***Afghan traders send first-ever onion shipment to India via Pakistan***

Afghan traders have sent their first-ever shipment of onions, costing 91 million Afghanis, to India through Pakistan. Traders from Kunar said that for the first time the process of exporting onions from this province to India has begun. They added that the first shipment of onions, costing 91 million Afghanis, will reach India in less than a month. Some farmers and residents of the province considered the start of onion exports to foreign countries to be beneficial. (*Business Recorder, 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Brazil to implement free trade accord with Palestinian Authority***

Brazil has put into effect a free trade agreement with the Palestinian Authority that has been waiting for ratification for more than decade, in a show of support for the Palestinian people. `The agreement is a concrete contribution to an economically viable Palestinian state, which can live peacefully and harmoniously with its neighbors,` Brazil`s foreign ministry said in a statement. It said Brazil, which recognises a Palestinian state and allowed a Palestinian embassy to be built in the Brazilian capital in 2010, ratified the agreement between the Mercosur trade bloc of South America and the Palestinian Authority that had been signed in 2011.

Uruguay has backed the Palestine deal, a foreign ministry source said, adding that there was little resistance since Mercosur has a similar agreement with Israel. It was not clear whether other Mercosur members would follow Brazil`s lead. Argentina`s right-wing government of President Javier Milei is not expected to do so. Paraguay`s foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Palestinian ambassador in Brasilia, Ibrahim Al Zeben, called Brazil`s decision `courageous, supportive and timely.` It is `the effective way to support peace in Palestine,` he said in a message, adding that he hopes Palestine trade with Mercosur, currently only \$32 million a year, will grow. (*Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Asian wheat importers snap up cargoes as global prices tumble***

Asian wheat buyers have stepped up purchases in recent weeks, taking cargoes from the Black Sea region as they returned to the market after a long gap, drawn by a fall in global prices to their lowest in four months. Regional millers producing flour and animal feed have signed deals to buy close to one million metric tons of wheat to be shipped from Bulgaria, Russia, Romania and Ukraine, during August to September, according to two Singapore-based traders. Wheat buyers had cut purchases and were running on thin supplies after global prices rallied earlier this year.

Global wheat prices jumped in April with expectations of lower output in Russia, the world`s No. 1 exporter, following fears of crop damage from frost and dryness in key growing months. While grain processors in Bangladesh and Indonesia are taking Black Sea wheat largely for milling into flour, importers in the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam have been booking feed wheat cargoes, traders say. China, the world`s biggest wheat importer, has been buying larger volumes during much of this year, but it typically sources the grain from Australia, Canada and Europe.

Higher quality Black Sea wheat with 11.5% protein content for making flour traded around \$265 to \$270 per metric ton, compared with around \$300 to \$310 quoted in May. Animal feed wheat is being traded at around \$255 to \$260 a ton. In the latest deals, Bangladesh bought four panamax cargoes, or about 200,000 metric tons, of Russian wheat this month for shipment in August and September. Asia is a net importer of wheat, accounting for about 30% of the grain shipped worldwide, data from US Department of

Agriculture shows. In June, market gave up much of its gains from earlier rally as better-than-expected yields in Russia and higher production in US weighed on prices. Chicago wheat futures have dropped by more than a fifth since beginning of June, wiping out almost all their gains of April and May. (*Business Recorder, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

### ***Egypt's income from Suez Canal falls amid Houthi attacks***

Egypt's Suez Canal reported a 23.4 per cent drop in revenues attributed to disruptions in Red Sea shipping over the past year, marked by attacks from Yemen's Houthi rebels on Israeli-linked vessels. The canal is a crucial source of foreign currency for Egypt, which is currently grappling with a severe financial crisis. Since November, the Houthis have launched numerous attacks on ships in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea.

The attacks have forced many major shipping firms to suspend passage through the Red Sea, which usually carries about 10pc of global trade, and divert their vessels thousands of miles around Africa. The canal recorded "during the financial year 2023/24 the passage of 20,148 ships, generating revenues of \$7.2 billion, compared with 25,911 ships during the financial year 2022/23, with revenues of \$9.4 billion," the Suez Canal Authority said in a statement. (*Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Russia opens 2024 Arctic route for shipping Urals crude to Asia***

Russian shipping company Sovcomflot has started this year's transportation of Urals crude oil to Asia via the Northern Sea Route, according to market sources and LSEG data, as melting ice opens the Arctic route for transit shipments. Russia wants alternative routes to Asia from its western ports as Western sanctions have made it increasingly difficult for its fleet to operate in waters close to EU countries. But Northern Sea Route (NSR), though significantly shorter than the Suez Canal alternative, is challenging and requires the assistance of icebreakers to help vessels to pass along the northern coast of Russia. It is normally opened for oil shipments from July to October. NSR runs for about 5,600 km and connects the port of Murmansk near Russia's border with Norway eastwards to the Bering Strait near Alaska. (*Business Recorder, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, page 5*)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

### **6.1 # Food Company**

#### ***McDonald's sales fall globally for first time in more than three years***

McDonald's reported a surprise drop in sales worldwide, its first decline in 13 quarters, as deal-seeking consumers shy away from higher priced menu items, including Big Macs. Persistent inflation has forced lower-income consumers to shift to more affordable food options at home. That has led fast food chains such as McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's and Taco Bell to lean on value meals to spark customer traffic. McDonald's shares, which are down 15% this year, rose 4% in early trading after company executives said the \$5 meal deal that was launched late in June sold above expectations. (*Business Recorder, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)



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

### ***‘South Asia with its vast market potential presents promising destination for Chinese investors’***

South Asia, with its vast market potential and growing economies, presents a promising destination for Chinese investors and businesses seeking to expand their footprint in the region.” This was stated by Chandi Raj Dhakal, Vice President, SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry who led a high-level business delegation from South Asia to participate in the 17th China-South Asia Business Forum, in Kunming, China. The 17th China-South Asia Business Forum convened under theme “Unblocking Supply Chains, Fostering New Development”, a cornerstone event fostering economic ties in Wyndham Yunnan Hotel, Kinming, China. (*Business Recorder, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

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

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

#### ***IMF maintains 2024 global growth forecast***

The IMF held its global growth expectations for 2024 steady in a report even as it cut forecasts for the United States and Japan, while warning of inflation risks and trade tensions ahead. IMF expects world economy to grow 3.2 percent this year, unchanged from its April forecast, according to its World Economic Outlook update. “Global activity and world trade firmed up at the turn of the year, with trade spurred by strong exports from Asia, particularly in the technology sector,” said the fund. For 2025, it expects global growth of 3.3 percent. But even as many countries saw better growth than anticipated in the first three months this year, the IMF flagged what it called notable surprises in Japan and the United States. (*Business Recorder, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### **8.2 # World Bank**

#### ***WB grants Togo \$200mn to tackle power cuts***

The World Bank will grant Togo \$200 million for energy infrastructure projects to help tackle the West African country’s devastating electricity crisis, according to agreements signed. In recent months, Togo has been battered by power cuts that have spurred rising discontent at a time of already febrile political tensions. “It will help to strengthen the supply of electrical energy to enable more than 1.5 million people to benefit from better access to electricity”. (*Business Recorder, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Page 8*)

## **9 # POLICY**

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month*

## **10 # SOCIO – ECONOMICAL CONDITIONS**

### ***Lula kicks off global effort to end hunger, poverty***

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva kicked off a global effort to end hunger and extreme poverty, aiming to make it a hallmark of Brazil’s G20 presidency as he

seeks to restore the country's soft power on the world stage. "Nothing is as absurd and unacceptable in the 21st century as the persistence of hunger and poverty, when we have so much abundance and so many scientific and technological resources at our disposal," Lula said. "No issue is more current and more challenging for humanity. We cannot normalise such disparities — hunger is the most degrading of human deprivations, an attack on life, an assault on freedom". (*Dawn, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***Hunger hit 9pc of world population in 2023: UN***

Conflict, economic turbulence and extreme weather scuppered efforts to curb hunger last year, with around nine percent of the world's population affected, UN agencies said. About 733 million people may have faced hunger in 2023, a level that has held steady for three years after a steep rise following the Covid-19 pandemic. But the picture is uneven. While hunger affected one in every five people in Africa, compared with a global average of one in 11, Latin America and the Caribbean progressed and Asia stalled in the goal of eliminating undernourishment. The broader goal of securing regular access to adequate food for everyone also stalled in that period. Moderate or severe food insecurity, which forces people to occasionally skip meals, hit 2.33 billion people last year, almost 29 percent of the global population.

The report by FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development, UNICEF, World Food Programme and World Health Organization suggests UN goal of a world without hunger by 2030 is fading further. Conflicts, climate chaos and economic downturns are already known as major drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition that combine with underlying factors including persistent inequality, the unaffordability of healthy diets and unhealthy food environments. But these major drivers are becoming more frequent and intense — and occurring concurrently more often — meaning more people are exposed to hunger and food insecurity. A healthy diet was unaffordable for more than one third of the world's population in 2022. Here too regional inequalities were stark: more than 71 percent of people in low-income countries could not afford healthy diets, compared with just over six percent in high-income nations.

The UN agencies' report, which was presented for a G20 summit in Brazil, suggested a major reform of financing food security and nutrition to alleviate the scourge. This would start with adopting common definitions putting all actors on the same page. According to current estimates, between \$176 billion and \$3,975 billion are needed to eradicate hunger by 2030. Yet the "highly fragmented" financial architecture "makes the scale-up and effective implementation of financing for food security and nutrition unfeasible". (*Business Recorder, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 1*)

### ***World's richest 1pc gained \$40trn in a decade: Oxfam***

The world's richest one percent increased their fortunes by a total of \$42 trillion over the past decade, Oxfam said, ahead of a G20 summit in Brazil where taxing the super-rich tops the agenda. Despite this windfall, taxes on the rich had plummeted to "historic

lows”, the NGO added, warning of “obscene levels” of inequality with the rest of the world “left to scrap for crumbs”. Brazil has made international cooperation on taxing the super-rich a priority of its presidency of the G20, a group of countries representing 80 percent of the world’s GDP. Oxfam said that the \$42 trillion figure was nearly 36 times more than the wealth accumulated by the poorer half of the world’s population. Despite this, billionaires “have been paying a tax rate equivalent to less than 0.5 percent of their wealth” across the globe. Nearly four out of five of the world’s billionaires call a G20 nation home. (*Business Recorder, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **11 # ENVIRONMENT**

### ***July 21 hottest day ever recorded globally***

July 21 was hottest day ever registered globally, according to preliminary data published by the EU’s climate monitor. The Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said global average surface air temperature of 17.09 degrees Celsius (62.7 degrees Fahrenheit) was warmest in their record books, which go back to 1940. It comes as heatwaves and wildfires ravage swathes of Europe and US. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Manila races to avoid environmental disaster after oil spill***

The Philippine coast guard raced to offload 1.4 million litres of industrial fuel oil from a sunken tanker and prevent an “environmental catastrophe” in Manila Bay. An oil slick stretching several kilometres was detected in waterway, which thousands of fishermen and tourism operators rely on for their livelihoods. (*Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

## **11.1 # Health**

### ***Fuel shortage to have `catastrophic` impact on hospitals in Gaza: WHO***

The World Health Organisation chief has warned that a dire lack of fuel could have a “catastrophic” impact on already devastated health services in the war-ravaged Gaza Strip. Desperate fuel shortages have been a constant problem in the besieged Palestinian territory. The UN health agency cautioned that only 90,000 litres of fuel entered Gaza. The health sector alone needs 80,000 litres daily. Gaza is completely sealed off and everything that enters it is controlled by the Israelis. (*Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 11*)

## **12 # CLIMATE CHANGE**

### ***Record temperatures scorch US West as Americans sweat through extreme heat***

A widespread heat wave is expected to deliver a fresh batch of record temperatures along the US West Coast, as millions of Americans sweat through a heat dome that is also hovering over Arizona and Nevada. About 36 million people — roughly 10% of the country — are under excessive heat warnings coming from the heat dome centered over California, the National Weather Service said. Fossil fuel-driven climate change is driving extreme heat waves across the world and will continue to deliver dangerous weather for decades to come.

In Death Valley National Park along the California-Nevada border, the NWS projects highs near 130 degrees Fahrenheit (54 degrees Celsius) through. Thermometer reached 128 degrees Fahrenheit there, breaking a 17-year record, and reached 115 degrees Fahrenheit in Las Vegas, which tied a record that was set in 2007. Temperatures are running as much as 20 degrees above normal this time of year in places like Redding, a city a northern California that hit an all-time high of 119 degrees Fahrenheit. (*Business Recorder, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

***June hottest on record, beating 2023 high, says EU climate monitor***

Last month was the hottest June on record across the globe, the EU's climate monitor said, capping half a year of wild and destructive weather from floods to heatwaves. Every month since June 2023 has eclipsed its own temperature record in a 13-month streak of unprecedented global heat. Scorching heat has blanketed swathes of the world from India to Saudi Arabia, US and Mexico in the first half of this year. Relentless rain caused extensive flooding in Kenya, China, Brazil, Afghanistan, Russia and France. Wildfires have torched land in Greece and Canada and last week, Hurricane Beryl became earliest category five Atlantic hurricane on record as it barrelled across several Caribbean islands. (*Dawn, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

***Climate change thought to be biggest external risk to water security: WB***

Climate change is thought to be the biggest long-term and unmitigated external risk to water security in Pakistan, and it is a key reason why staple crop yields and livestock production are projected to decrease by up to 20 and 30 percent, respectively, says the World Bank. The bank in its latest report "Rethinking Social Protection in South Asia: Toward Progressive Universalism," stated that climate change will push between 5.7 million and 9.0 million additional people into poverty in Pakistan, and Bangladesh will have roughly 13.3 million internal climate change migrants by 2050.

The bank stated that in Pakistan, the devastating 2022 floods - a direct result of the country's vulnerability to climate change - left between 8.4 million and 9.1 million more people in poverty. These impacts have been further amplified by the global fuel and food crises in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. And they hit hard those who are already the most vulnerable –women, youth and children. These challenges are compounded by the need to create jobs for South Asia's rapidly growing working age population, at a time when new technologies impact the world of work perhaps like never before. Punjab is home to almost half of the country's poor. The poverty belt is concentrated in southern Punjab, where the poverty rate (39 percent) is almost twice as high as the provincial average (21 percent).

The prevalence of underemployment (the share of employed workers who work at less than minimum wage) is significant in many countries, reaching 33 percent in Bangladesh, 32 percent in Maldives, 18 percent in Nepal, 14 percent in Bhutan, 13 percent in Pakistan, and 10 percent in India. The share of youth who were not in

education, employment, or training (NEET) increased sharply in South Asian countries, including in Pakistan, where an additional 1.6 million youth became idle. The poorest three quintiles of the population in the informal economy lost 9, 13, and 16 percent of their incomes in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, respectively.

Pakistan spends the most on social protection (4.8 percent of GDP), followed by Nepal (3.5 percent), Maldives (2.8 percent), and Sri Lanka (2.7 percent). Pakistan's relatively high social protection expenditure is driven by significant spending on explicit energy subsidies. Spending on public sector pensions is highest in Pakistan, at 2pc of GDP.

The countries of South Asia spend on average approximately 1.14 percent of GDP on social assistance, compared with the world's highest regional expenditure of two percent in Europe and Central Asia and other regional averages ranging from 1.8 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean to 0.8 percent in West Africa. Within South Asia, Nepal is the highest spender, at 2.1 percent, followed by Maldives at 1.6 percent. The lowest spenders in the region are Pakistan and Sri Lanka, at 0.3 and 0.6 percent, respectively. Pakistan is the country in South Asia with the lowest social assistance coverage of the richest quintile, followed by Bhutan.

Civil service pension spending as a share of GDP stands at 0.83 percent in South Asia and ranges between 0.4 percent in Bhutan and 2.0 percent in Pakistan. It is driven primarily by the generosity of public sector pension schemes. Individual replacement rates in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka are considerably higher than those for contributory private pensions.

In the last two decades, despite a recent downward trend, most countries in South Asia witnessed meaningful economic growth. Among the high achievers are Bangladesh and Bhutan, with average 5.7 and 4.6 percent real per capita growth in gross domestic product (GDP), respectively, between 2000 and 2018 and reached lower-middle-income status, as well as India and Sri Lanka, with average growth at 5.2 and 4.6 percent, respectively, during the same period.

In contrast, Maldives and Pakistan, with short spells of more rapid growth regularly followed by crises, have struggled to sustain economic growth. On average, their real per capita GDP growth rate was only 2.5 and 2.3 percent, respectively, during the same period, substantially below the performance of other countries in the region. Average per capita economic growth in South Asia declined from 3.9 percent in 2017 to 3.6 percent and 3.2 percent in 2018 and 2019, respectively. Spending on public sector pensions is highest in Pakistan, at two percent of GDP. As a share of total social protection spending, spending on public sector spending is highest in Sri Lanka, at almost 50 percent, the bank noted. (*Business Recorder, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Most cities to be 5-6 degrees Celsius warmer by 2080***

A web app created by a professor at the University of Maryland in the US predicts the future climate of the cities as it would be about six decades later and it does not paint a good picture. It would not be rather far-fetched if the future scenario is termed apocalyptic. The app shows the expected climate conditions of more than 40,000 cities across world, including many cities of Pakistan too. (*Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***We must accelerate transformative action against climate change, poverty, and hunger***

The Asia-Pacific region is faltering on decades of progress in reducing poverty and hunger. Increasingly, severe climate-related hazards are threatening food security and triggering human displacement on an unprecedented scale. The rapid rise in global temperatures is producing record-breaking heat in major cities around the region. We are getting our first glimpse of a future where global temperatures rise beyond the tipping point of 1.5°C.

The burden of climate impacts is unevenly distributed. Poorer countries and communities are far more vulnerable and less able to adapt. Droughts, floods, and heat-waves are straining socio-economic and environmental systems, resulting in more poverty, less food security, and failing levels of health and nutrition. Conflicts over land, water, and food are also rising. The dire situation leaves the most vulnerable – women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, and indigenous people – at even higher risk. We are falling significantly short of our Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets. Projections indicate that 90 per cent of the 116 measurable targets under the 17 Goals set for 2030 will be missed if current trends persist.

The inextricably entangled issues of climate change, poverty, and food security are the central theme of our new joint report. The impacts are seen across the region: In Indonesia, delayed monsoons are associated with greater chronic and acute malnutrition. In Papua New Guinea, frequent El Niño-related droughts resulted in increased food and water insecurity, particularly in the highlands and rural areas. In the Pacific, the effects of climate change on agriculture and fisheries are likely to drive up the reliance on imported foods of low nutritional quality, leading to a rising prevalence of obesity. Rising temperatures and altered precipitation patterns in the Hindu Kush Himalaya are causing glaciers to melt, disrupting water flows and agriculture and threatening the livelihoods of millions. (*Business Recorder, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

### ***Billion-dollar climate fund unveiled to help vulnerable nations***

Azerbaijan has announced a \$1bn fund to invest in climate action projects in the developing world, to help vulnerable nations build resilience to climate change risks, including floods and droughts. This was announced as a prelude to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) by COP29 President-Designate Mukhtar. The Climate Finance Action Fund (CFAF) will be capitalised with contributions from fossil fuel-producing countries and companies across oil, gas and coal, and Azerbaijan will be a

founding contributor. The fund will also have a focus on the food and agriculture sector as a priority to protect livelihoods and achieve net zero. CFAF will become operational at the conclusion of the initial fundraising round, which seeks to capitalise the fund with \$1 billion, and when 10 contributing countries committed as shareholders.

Half the capital will be directed towards climate projects in developing countries that rely on support, across mitigation, adaptation, and research and development. These will promote the adoption of clean energy technologies, improve energy efficiency, strengthen climate resilience of vulnerable populations, and facilitate the development of cutting-edge technologies. Meanwhile, 50 per cent of contributions will be allocated to helping meeting members' next generation of Nationally Determined Contributions to keep 1.5C temperature target within reach. Around 20pc of the revenues generated from investments will be deposited in a Rapid Response Funding Facility providing highly concessional and grant- based support. (*Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Humanity suffering from heat epidemic: UN chief***

Humanity is suffering from an “extreme heat epidemic,” UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned, calling for action to limit the impacts of heat waves intensified by climate change. “Billions of people are facing an extreme heat epidemic — wilting under increasingly deadly heat waves, with temperatures topping 50 degrees Celsius around the world”. “That’s 122 degrees Fahrenheit. And halfway to boiling.” According to the European Copernicus network, July 21, 22 and 23 were the three hottest days ever recorded worldwide, with July 22 holding the absolute record of 17.16°C. Guterres repeated his call for humanity to fight its “addiction” to fossil fuels. “Today, our focus is on impact of extreme heat. But let’s not forget that there are many other devastating symptoms of the climate crisis: ever-more fierce hurricanes. Floods. Droughts. Wildfires. Rising sea levels. And the list goes on”. (*Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

## **13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS**

### **13. 1 # Cyclone**

#### ***Five killed, six missing as typhoon batters Taiwan***

The strongest typhoon to hit Taiwan in eight years killed five people and flooded parts of the island’s second-biggest city, with rescuers searching for six sailors missing after their cargo ship sank in the storm. Typhoon Gaemi transformed streets in southern Kaohsiung city into rivers, with some households flooded by rainwater. Schools and offices were closed in several cities for a second day, with the stock market suspended and thousands of people evacuated. Gaemi also exacerbated seasonal rains in the Philippines on its path to Taiwan, triggering flooding and landslides that killed 20 people. A tanker carrying 1.4 million litres of oil sank off Manila, with authorities racing to contain a spill. (*Dawn, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Over 300,000 displaced as typhoon lashes China***

Typhoon Gaemi pummelled towns in China's coastal Fujian province with heavy rains and strong winds as the most powerful storm to hit the country this year began its widely watched trek into the populous interior. The storm has affected almost 630,000 people in China's Fujian so far, with almost half of them — over 300,000 people — having to be relocated. Earlier this week, it killed several people as it swept through Taiwan and worsened seasonal rains in the Philippines. (*Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

## **13.2 # Drought**

### ***Worst yet to come in southern Africa drought, UN says***

A record drought that has devastated crops across southern Africa, causing millions of people to go hungry and pushing five countries to declare a national disaster, is entering its worst stage, UN has warned. WFP said it expected the number of people struggling to put enough food on the table to increase as the lean season, period between harvests when food is scarcest, gets underway. "People haven't been able to pick anything and the problem is the next harvest is only in April 2025." The small kingdom of Lesotho became two weeks ago latest country to declare a state of national disaster over El Nino-induced dry spell, after Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Other countries, like Angola and Mozambique, might follow soon or signal a gap between the food they have and the food they need. Drought is the worst to hit the region in 100 years.

At least 27 million people have been affected in a region where many rely on agriculture to survive. The drought has wiped out 70 per cent of the harvest in Zambia and 8pc in Zimbabwe, severely reducing supply and pushing up food prices. It is encouraging farmers to plant more drought resistant crops like sorghum, millet and cassava to fend off future dry spells and has appealed for \$409 million to provide food, cash and other assistance, to about six million people in the region. It has so far received about \$200 million. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

## **13.3 # Flood**

### ***Six killed as floods inundate vast swathes of India, Bangladesh***

Six people have been killed in floods precipitated by torrential rains across northeast India and neighbouring Bangladesh that inundated homes of more than a million others. Climate change is shifting weather patterns and increasing the number of extreme weather events. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Eight killed, two million affected by floods in BD***

The death toll from floods in Bangladesh this week has risen to eight, leaving more than two million affected after heavy rains caused major rivers to burst their banks. South Asian nation of 170 million people, crisscrossed by hundreds of rivers, has seen more frequent floods in recent decades. Climate change has made rainfall more erratic and melting glaciers upstream in Himalayan mountains. (*Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)



### ***Floods and landslides kill 14 in Nepal, say police***

Lashing rains in Nepal causing flash floods and landslides have killed at least 14 people across the country, with disaster teams searching for nine missing. Flooding in India, as well as in downstream Bangladesh, has also caused widespread damage and impacted millions. Monsoon rains from June to September bring widespread death and destruction every year across South Asia, but the numbers of fatal floods and landslides have increased in recent years. (*Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Flash floods across China kill at least 20, dozens missing***

Flash floods in northern and southwest China have killed at least 20 people and left dozens missing, after a week of deadly downpours across the country. Several vehicles in northwestern Shaanxi province plunged into a swollen river after a bridge collapsed, with at least 12 people killed and over 30 missing. (*The News, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

## **13.4 # Rainfall**

### ***Eleven dead in Delhi after heavy rain, flight operations stutter***

Death toll from this week's heavy rain has climbed to 11 in New Delhi, including four citizens who drowned in submerged underpasses while flight operations stuttered. New Delhi, which endured one of its worst heatwaves in history earlier this month, faced biggest downpour in decades on June 28, with rainfall in a single day surpassing city's average for entire month. (*Business Recorder, 1<sup>st</sup>, July, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Heavy rains kill 35 in eastern Afghanistan***

At least 35 people were killed and 230 injured after heavy rain in eastern Afghanistan. The casualties were caused by heavy storms and rains that collapsed trees, walls and roofs of people's houses. The tragedy comes after flash floods killed hundreds of people in Afghanistan in May and swamped agricultural lands in the country, where 80 per cent of the population depends on farming to survive. Among poorest countries in the world, Afghanistan is particularly exposed to the effects of climate change. This year, it saw an unusually wet spring after an extremely dry winter. (*Dawn, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Rain, landslides kill 108 in Kerala***

Landslides in India triggered by pounding monsoon rains struck tea plantations and killed at least 108 people, with at least 250 others rescued from mud and debris. The southern coastal state of Kerala has been battered by torrential downpours, with blocked roads into disaster area in Wayanad district. (*Dawn, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **13.5 # Storm**

### ***Seven killed after storms lash France, Switzerland***

Ferocious storms and torrential rains that lashed France, Switzerland and Italy this weekend have left seven people dead. Three people in their 70s and 80s died in France's northeastern Aube region when a tree crushed car they were travelling in during fierce

winds. In Switzerland, four people have died and another is missing. Three were killed after torrential rains triggered a landslide in southeast. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Caribbean braces for 'extremely dangerous' category 4 hurricane***

Beryl, the first hurricane of the 2024 Atlantic season, strengthened into an “extremely dangerous” Category 4 storm as it threatened the southeast Caribbean with potentially life-threatening winds and storm surge, US trackers said. The US National Hurricane Centre warned residents that Beryl, currently churning in Atlantic Ocean about 350 miles east of Barbados, was creating a “very dangerous situation” and to heed local government and emergency management instructions. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***Seven killed as hurricane bears down on Jamaica***

Hurricane Beryl neared Jamaica as a powerful Category 4 storm, after flattening homes and devastating agriculture on smaller islands in the eastern Caribbean, killing at least seven people and creating “Armageddon-like” conditions on Grenada. Hurricane was about 300 km east-southeast of the Jamaican capital of Kingston, packing maximum sustained winds of 230 km per hour. (*Dawn, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

## **13.6 # Heatwave**

### ***Fires, heatwave torment California***

California firefighters battled multiple blazes in record heat, with a new fire breaking out near the famous Yosemite National Park even as a large inferno further north came under control. Temperatures up to 117 degrees Fahrenheit (47 degrees Celsius) had been forecast in the western US state, as the region’s latest heatwave nears its peak. The fire had burnt nearly 1,000 acres and was only five per cent contained. But there was better news in northern California, where earlier this week thousands of people were ordered to evacuate from the Thompson Fire near Oroville. (*Dawn, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 11*)

### ***Six die in Tokyo as Japan swelters in heatwave***

Six people have died of heatstroke in Tokyo as Japan swelters under a rare rainy season heatwave, prompting authorities to issue a flurry of health warnings. Over the weekend, central Shizuoka region became first in Japan to see mercury reach 40 degrees Celsius this year, far surpassing 35-degree threshold classified as “extremely hot”. Such severe heat in the middle of Japan’s rainy season is “rather rare”, caused in part by a strong South Pacific high-pressure system. (*Dawn, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **13.7 # Wildfires**

### ***9,000 evacuated in Canada due to wildfires***

Around 9,000 people have been evacuated in northeastern Canada because of raging wildfires. Canada is currently battling 575 active fires with more than 400 considered out of control. Many fires have broken out in recent days, particularly in the west of the country that has experienced a heat wave. (*Dawn, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

***News Makers: NEGOTINO (North Macedonia):***

Firefighters spray water on trees as wildfire burns in an attempt to extinguish and prevent further escalation. Seven wildfires swept across the country, which had prompted the government to declare a crisis situation. The fires spread mainly in the central and eastern parts, amid a gruelling heatwave. (*Dawn, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

***Blazes intensify in Russia, North America as wildfire season makes fierce start***

Extreme wildfires are spreading across Russia and North America and shrouding swathes of the region in smoke. Copernicus said unusually hot and dry conditions were causing blazes in Siberia, Canada and Alaska and a “remarkable intensification” of planet-heating gases as swathes of forest burn. A column of smoke containing ash and harmful particles from wildfires in eastern Russia had drifted 3,000 kilometres across parts of eastern Mongolia, northeastern China and northern Japan. The “anomalously high” levels of some airborne pollutants over that region were many times globally accepted safe limits. (*Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

***Rain helps rescuers battle fire in Canadian town***

Steady rain is helping firefighters working to contain a massive wildfire that has devastated parts of the western Canadian tourist town of Jasper, in province of Alberta. (*Dawn, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

***Thousands evacuate after wildfire in California***

A huge, fast-moving and rapidly growing wildfire in northern California has forced more than 4,000 people to evacuate as firefighters battle gusty winds and perilously dry conditions. Fueled by a crushing heatwave, the so-called Park Fire the most intense wildfire to hit the state this summer has rapidly devoured nearly 240,000 acres and is continuing to gain strength. This fire has been rapidly expanding 4,000 to 5,000 acres an hour. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

***California wildfire explodes, becomes largest in US***

The Park Fire had burned more than 350,000 acres (141,640 hectares) about 90 miles (144 km) north of the state capital city of Sacramento. Cooler temperatures and more humid air were expected in the region, potentially helping efforts to slow the spread of the fire, which was 10 per cent contained. The fire has destroyed 134 structures. Evacuation orders and warnings were issued for multiple communities in several counties, including a warning for Paradise, the town that was devastated by the 2018 Camp Fire, the deadliest in the state’s history. (*Dawn, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

## **14 # NATURAL DISASTER**

***Over 50 missing after landslide sweeps buses into river in Nepal***

Rescuers in Nepal have suspended their search for 51 passengers who are missing after a landslide swept the buses in which they were travelling into a swollen river. At least three passengers survived with minor injuries by jumping off the buses before the mass

of rocks and mud came down the slopes. But efforts by hundreds of security personnel and more than two dozen divers yielded no signs of the buses or their passengers. Landslides and floods triggered by torrential monsoon rains have killed at least 91 people in Nepal since mid-June. (*Dawn, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Ethiopia landslide kills 55***

At least 55 people were killed in a landslide in a remote area of southern Ethiopia warning that death toll could rise. The South Ethiopia regional state has been battered by the short seasonal rains between April and early May that have caused flooding and mass displacement. It said in May that “floods impacted over 19,000 people in several zones, displacing over a thousand and causing damage to livelihoods and infrastructure”. The southern region area has experienced tragic landslides previously, with at least 32 people killed in 2018 after two separate landslides within a week of each other. (*Dawn, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***Death toll from landslides in Ethiopia jumps to 229***

The death toll from two landslides in southern Ethiopia has jumped to 229 and could rise further as the search for survivors and casualties continued into a second day. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***Landslide from Typhoon Gaemi remnants kills 12 in southern China***

Continued heavy rainfall from Tropical Storm Gaemi triggered a landslide that killed 12 people in southern China, caused flash floods in the northeast and railway disruptions elsewhere. (*Business Recorder, July 29<sup>th</sup>, Page 9*)

## **15 # RESISTANCE**

### ***Istanbul Pride march leads to several arrests***

Several hundred people briefly participated in a LGBTQ Pride march in Istanbul that had been banned by local authorities, leading to some arrests. Waving rainbow flags and chanting various slogans, demonstrators managed to march for about ten minutes along Baghdad Avenue, a major artery on the Asian side of Turkiye’s largest city, before dispersing when police intervened. Several were arrested. The annual Pride march has been banned in Istanbul every year since 2015. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Tribute march held in Kenya after deadly anti-govt protests***

Hundreds of people marched in the Kenyan capital, in tribute to those who died in anti-government demonstrations this week. At least 30 people died in protests driven by a government drive to substantially raise taxes in the East African country, although the government has not given any official toll. The largely peaceful rallies turned violent when lawmakers passed the deeply unpopular tax increases following pressure from IMF. Police opened fire on protesters who stormed parliament complex and a fire broke out. (*Dawn, July 1st, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Airports, Wall Street and Olympics in crosshairs of climate activists***

Climate activists in US and Europe are planning protests at airports, banks and Olympic Games in a summer of stunts they have defended as necessary even if their tactics differ. From blocking highways to spray painting jets and the megaliths at Stonehenge and throwing food at artworks, some climate activists have turned to more provocative tactics since the Covid-19 pandemic put an abrupt end to the mass marches spurred by Greta Thunberg's Fridays for Future movement. (*Dawn, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***'Enough': Israeli protesters call for Gaza truce***

Israeli protesters chanting "we will not give up" marched in their thousands through Tel Aviv, the second consecutive day of stepped-up pressure for a deal to free prisoners in Gaza. The demonstrators want PM Benjamin Netanyahu to reach a truce and prisoner-release deal or else step down. They stopped traffic at an intersection in Tel Aviv, calling for the government to secure a deal for the prisoners. Israel says 116 people remain captive, including 42 the military says are dead. (*Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***Protests against reservoirs turn violent in France***

Environmental protesters clashed with police in France's western port of La Rochelle, as conservationists and small farmers mobilised against massive irrigation reservoirs under construction. A 2,000-strong march, one of two through the city, was turned back and broke up after being charged by police. Running battles erupted around barricades and burning rubbish bins as some threw projectiles and police fired tear gas grenades. (*Dawn, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***News Makers: Nairobi:***

Protesters flee from tear gas lobbed by police during nationwide demonstrations against Kenyan President William Ruto's government. Hundreds of protesters took to the streets across the country in defiance of a police ban, the latest in a series of demonstrations that have rocked the East African nation. (*Dawn, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Thousands protest Netanyahu outside US Capitol***

Thousands gathered in Washington to protest Benjamin Netanyahu and call for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war, as the Israeli premier prepared to address the US Congress. Crowds carrying Palestinian flags and signs ranging from left-wing slogans to Bible verses gathered outside the Capitol calling for a ceasefire and the arrest of Netanyahu, as prosecutors seek a warrant for him at the International Criminal Court. (*Business Recorder, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, page 5*)

### ***UK police arrest two men after assault on anti-fascism protester***

UK police arrested two men following an assault on a participant in an anti-fascism protest, held to counter another nearby demonstration organised by far-right agitator Tommy Robinson. London's Metropolitan Police said pair were arrested on suspicion of assaulting a "Stand Up To Racism" protester in Victoria Embankment Gardens in the city centre. (*Dawn, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Fresh protests loom in Venezuela in wake of disputed vote***

New demonstrations were expected in Venezuela, after four people died and dozens were injured when authorities broke up protests against President Nicolas Maduro's claim of victory in a disputed election. (*Business Recorder, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, page 5*)

## **15.1 # Bangladesh's Protests**

### ***Bangladeshi protesters demand end to job quotas***

Thousands of Bangladeshi university students threw roadblocks across key highways, demanding the end of "discriminatory" quotas for coveted government jobs, including reserving posts for children of liberation heroes. Students in almost all major universities took part, demanding a merit-based system for well-paid and massively over-subscribed civil service jobs. The current system reserves more than half of posts, totalling hundreds of thousands of government jobs. That includes 30 per cent reserved for children of those who fought to win Bangladeshi independence in 1971, 10 percent for women, and 10 percent set aside for specific districts. Students said only those quotas supporting ethnic minorities and disabled people — six percent of jobs — should remain. (*Dawn, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Bangladesh's top court suspends job quotas after student protests***

Bangladesh's top court temporarily suspended quotas for coveted government jobs after thousands of students staged nationwide protests against what they call a discriminatory system. (*Dawn, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Bangladesh police fire rubber bullets as students stick to their guns***

Police fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse university student protesters demanding the scrapping of quotas they say are rigged to support pro-government job candidates. (*Dawn, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***B`desh shuts schools after six die amid protests***

Bangladesh ordered schools across country to close indefinitely after six students were killed as protests over quotas for coveted government jobs turned into deadly clashes, prompting mobilisation of paramilitaries. (*Dawn, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Protesters set fire to state TV headquarters in BD***

Bangladeshi students set fire to the country's state broadcaster, a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina appeared on the network seeking to calm escalating clashes that have killed at least 32 people. Hundreds of protesters demanding reform of civil service hiring rules fought back and overwhelmed riot police who had fired at them with rubber bullets. (*Dawn, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Protesters storm jail as Dhaka police fail to quell unrest***

Bangladeshi student protesters stormed a prison and freed hundreds of inmates as police struggled to quell unrest, with huge rallies in Dhaka despite a police ban on public gatherings. This week's unrest has killed 75 people. (*Dawn, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***UAE arrests Bangladeshis for protests on Emirati soil***

UAE arrested several Bangladeshi for protesting against their government on UAE soil, where demonstrations are banned. The near-daily marches escalated this week into civil unrest which left more than 120 people dead. (*The News, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Bangladesh protests resume after govt ignores ultimatum***

Bangladeshi students held scattered street protests after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government ignored an ultimatum to release their leaders and apologise for those killed in deadly unrest. Student rallies against civil service job quotas this month sparked days of violence that killed at least 205 people including several police officers, according to a count of police and hospital data. The clashes were some of the worst of Hasina's 15-year tenure but her government has since largely restored order by deploying troops, imposing a curfew and shutting down the internet nationwide. At least half a dozen leaders of Students Against Discrimination, the group that organised the initial protests, are among thousands since taken into police custody. (*Dawn, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

## 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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