

# ***HAAL AHWAL***

Monthly News Reviews on Food and Agriculture

**August, 2025**

**Roots for Equity**



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Monthly News Reviews on Food and Agriculture

**August, 2025**

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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

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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 “Daily The 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

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**ADB:** Asian Development Bank

**ADP:** Annual Development Programme

**AGEGA:** All Government Employees Grand Alliance

**AGI:** Ashraf Group of Industries

**AIT:** Agricultural Income Tax

**AIK:** Azad Jammu and Kashmir

**APSEA:** All Pakistan Solvent Extractors' Association

**APTMA:** All Pakistan Textile Mills Association

**ASLAC:** All-Sindh Lawyers Action Committee

**BIDE:** Baqai Institute of Diabetology and Endocrinology

**BoP:** Bank of Punjab

**BYC:** Baloch Yekjehti Committee's

**CAT:** Competition Appellate Tribunal

**CCP:** Competition Commission of Pakistan

**CCRI:** Central Cotton Research Institute

**CDWP:** Central Development Working Party

**CEA:** Controlled Environment Agriculture

**CIS:** Commonwealth of Independent States

**CPP:** Communist Party of Pakistan

**CRS:** Crop Reporting Service

**DAP:** Di-Ammonium Phosphate

**DHO:** District Health Officer

**ECC:** Economic Coordination Committee

**ECNEC:** Executive Committee of the National Economic Council

**EFF:** Extended Fund Facility

**EFFIS:** European Forest Fire Information System

**FAVS:** Faculty of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences

**FBR:** Federal Board of Revenue

**FDI:** Foreign Direct Investment

**FPI:** Foreign Portfolio Investment

**GACC:** General Administration of Customs of China

**GAIN:** Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

**GBDMA:** Gilgit-Baltistan Disaster Management Authority

**GHF:** Gaza Humanitarian Foundation

**GLOF:** Glacial Lake Outburst Flood

**GMOs:** Genetically Modified Organisms

**HCBA:** High Court Bar Association



**HDBA:** Hyderabad District Bar Association

**HEC:** Higher Education Commission

**HRCP:** Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

**ICCBS:** International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences

**ICE:** Immigration and Customs Enforcement

**ICT:** Islamabad Capital Territory

**IDPs:** Internally Displaced Persons

**IFIs:** International Financial Institutions

**IHC:** Islamabad High Court

**IHRA:** Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority

**IMF:** International Monetary Fund

**IPC:** Integrated Food Security Phase Classification

**ITC:** International Trade Centre

**JUI-F:** Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl

**KIP:** Kisan Ittehad Pakistan

**KKH:** Karakoram Highway

**KMC:** Karachi Metropolitan Corporation

**KPK:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

**LIMS:** Land Information and Management System

**LOFF:** List of Foreign Fisheries

**MDR:** Multidrug-Resistant

**MMPA:** Marine Mammal Protection Act

**MoU:** Memorandum of Understanding

**NBP:** National Bank of Pakistan

**NDMA:** National Disaster Management Authority

**NEML:** National Essential Medicines List

**NHSR&C:** Health Services, Regulations and Coordination

**NICVD:** National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases

**NIH:** National Institute of Health

**NOAA:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**NSDRA:** National Seed Development and Regulatory Authority

**PAC:** Public Accounts Committee

**PBS:** Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

**PCGA:** Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association

**PCRWR:** Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources

**PDMA:** Provincial Disaster Management Authority

**PDWP:** Provincial Development Working Party

**PFMA:** Pakistan Flour Mills Association

**PIACL:** Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Ltd

**PIM:** Public Investment Management

**PKBC:** Pakistan-Kenya Business Council

**PKNC:** Pak-Korea Nutrition Centre

**PMD:** Pakistan Meteorological Department

**PPPs:** Public-Private Partnerships

**PSDP:** Public Sector Development Programme

**PSHCMA:** Pakistan Second Hand Clothing Merchants Association

**PSQCA:** Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority

**PTM:** Pashtun Tahafuz Movement

**QAT:** Qaumi Awami Tehreek

**REAP:** Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan

**SAB:** Sindh Abadgar Board

**SAI:** Sindh Abadgar Ittehad

**SAU:** Sindh Agriculture University

**SBA:** Stand-By Agreement

**SBP:** State Bank of Pakistan

**SCF:** Sindh Community Foundation

**SCO:** Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

**SIFC:** Special Investment Facilitation Council

**SIREN:** Sindh Innovation, Research, and Education Network

**SMEs:** Small and Medium Enterprises

**SRB:** Sindh Revenue Board

**SUC:** Shia Ulema Council

**SUPARCO:** Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission

**TCP:** Trading Corporation of Pakistan

**TDAP:** Trade Development Authority of Pakistan

**TED:** Turtle Excluder Device

**TOMCL:** The Organic Meat Company Ltd

**UBL:** United Bank Ltd

**USC:** Utility Stores Corporation

**WASA:** Water and Sanitation Agency

**WB:** World Bank

**WHA:** Breast-Milk Substitutes and World Health Assembly

**WHO:** World Health Organisation's

**WMC:** World Meteorological Centre

**WTI:** West Texas Intermediate

**WTO:** World Trade Organization

**WWTP:** Wastewater Treatment Plant

**ZTBL:** Zarai Taraqiati Bank Limited

# NEWS EXCEPTS

## NATIONAL NEWS

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### AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

- The Standing Committee on National Food Security and Research has been informed the government has finalised the national ‘biotechnology policy’, which is ready for submission to the cabinet for approval.
- Experts told the committee the government’s reluctance to embrace GMOs was one of the impediments to the progress in sustainable farming.
- The meeting highlighted the seed policy had been pending before the Ministry of National Food Security and Research for a long time.
- On the issue of taxing cotton, the Federal Board of Revenue informed the committee that GST will be imposed on imported cotton from August 15.
- The Pakistan Army and the Houbara Foundation International Pakistan jointly broadcast seeds of desert plants over Cholistan desert for the 27th consecutive year, aiming to improve vegetation and animal and bird populations.
- The number of farm households in Pakistan surged to 11.7 million in 2024, up from 8.3 million in 2010 — indicating a 40pc increase in rural engagement with agriculture, according to the 7th Digital Agriculture Census Report.
- The livestock population rose to 251.3 million in 2024 from 143 million in 2006, registering a steady compound annual growth rate of 3.18pc.
- Pakistan’s agri-lending sector, HBL Microfinance Bank (HBL MfB) and the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission, have signed a MoU to introduce satellite-based agricultural analytics into lending ecosystem.

### AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

- Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed the authorities to simplify and expand access to low-cost agricultural loans for small- and medium-scale farmers and take measures for boosting of Small and Medium Enterprises in the country.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is mapping out a project on low carbon agriculture mechanism worth USD 3 million in Pakistan in order to address the agriculture and environmental issues for a better future.
- Sindh government has notified that every owner of agricultural land by whom any tax is payable, in respect of any agricultural income year, shall obtain his registration from the Sindh Revenue Board (SRB). In this regard, the Sindh government has issued Sindh Agricultural Income Tax Rules 2025.

- Pakistan’s urea sales for July totalled 608,000 tonnes, a slight decrease of 1pc compared to 612,000 tonnes in the same month last year.
- Provincial Seed Council in its meeting has approved 38 new varieties of fruits, vegetables, oilseeds, tea, and other essential crops in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- During the meeting, 53 seed variety proposals were presented, out of which 38 were approved for cultivation.
- The Board of Governors of the National Seed Development and Regulatory Authority (NSDRA) has approved key reforms in the seed sector, including the pilot launch of a ‘Truth-in-Labeling System’ for cotton, aimed at protecting farmers from substandard seeds.
- A Singapore-based hybrid seed company has shown keen interest in introducing climate-resilient hybrid corn seeds in Pakistan, finding the country having the potential to get high yields.

## AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT

- India has released water into the Sutlej River, triggering a flood situation as rising water levels have submerged vast areas of crops across Punjab.
- In an effort to settle disputes over crop data, especially in Punjab, a new programme aims to use satellite technology to obtain accurate crop cultivation figures.
- The new satellite-based system, set to be launched next year, this initiative, a brainchild of the SIFC, will involve a collaboration between China and the country’s Land Information and Management System (LIMS).
- Sajid Mahmood, Head of the Technology Transfer Department at the Central Cotton Research Institute (CCRI) Multan, revealed that this year, cotton arrivals have declined by over 30 percent.
- Sindh has recorded less sugarcane and sugar production in the 2024-25 season.
- Cotton arrivals in Pakistan dropped 17 per cent year-on-year to 887,400 bales as of Aug 15, primarily due to a sharp decline in Punjab’s output.
- Rice farmers in Punjab have surpassed the provincial agriculture department’s sowing target of 5 million acres by cultivating rice on 5.8 million acres so far—registering an increase of 0.8 million acres.
- A complete ban has been imposed on the use of prohibited agrochemicals (pesticides) on paddy crops.
- Pakistan Kisan Ittehad (PKI) President Khalid Mahmood Khokhar claimed that wheat growers suffered Rs2,200 billion losses during the last two seasons, while their maize, rice and cotton crops could also not get their dues rates in the market.

- He said that 1.3 million tonnes of urea fertilizer, mostly used for wheat crop, remained unsold this year, unlike the past year when the government had to import 200,000 tonnes.
- Wheat has climbed to Rs 3,100 per maund after a steep rise over the past month, flour is more expensive by Rs 500 for a 20kg bag, and the official price cap announced by Punjab is being openly ignored.

## **SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION**

- Veterinary and agricultural experts have said that climate change is no longer an environmental concern alone, it is threatening the country's livestock sector, food security and rural livelihoods. Indigenous animal and bird species are declining.
- Despite possessing rich resources and valuable indigenous breeds, Pakistan annually imports over 500,000 cattle and one million semen doses.
- Pakistan's livestock sector with over 60pc share in agricultural value-addition and nearly 12pc of GDP is at "severe risk" due to the climate change.
- After a four-year ban, the United States has lifted its restriction on fish and seafood imports from Pakistan.
- During the last fiscal year (2024-25), Pakistan exported 242,484 tonnes of fish and related products, valued at \$489.2 million, at an average price of \$2 per kg. If the same export volume continues, the minister anticipates that exports could generate nearly \$600m in the coming year.

## **TRADE**

- A day after signing an agreement with the United States to develop "massive oil deposits" in Pakistani territory, Pakistani officials said the two nations had concluded a trade deal, establishing a uniform tariff rate for bilateral trade. "The agreement will result in a reduction of reciprocal tariffs, especially on Pakistani exports to the United States,"
- However, diplomatic sources said the United States has agreed to charge a 15 to 20 per cent tariff on goods from Pakistan.
- Trade deficit in the first month of financial year 2025-26 swelled by 44.16 per cent on year-on-year basis.
- Pakistan's merchandise exports to North America grew by 9.97 per cent in FY25, reaching \$6.415bn compared to \$5.833bn in the previous year.
- Pakistan's exports to European countries posted a year-on-year increase of 7.44 per cent in FY25.

- Export earnings from the European Union (EU) rose to \$8.863bn in FY25, up from \$8.249bn in the preceding fiscal year.
- The country's textile exports have posted a growth of 33.7 percent to \$ 1.69 billion in the first month of FY 2025-26 as compared to \$ 1.27 billion during the corresponding month of FY 2024-25.
- Pakistan's merchandise exports posted a recovery in the first month of the current fiscal year, rising by 16.91 per cent — a sharp turnaround from the negative growth recorded in the previous month.
- The Ashraf Group of Industries (AGI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China's Shandong Dayi Biotechnology Group Co., Ltd. (SDBG) to foster strategic collaboration aimed at advancing Pakistan's organic fertilizer sector.
- Exports to nine regional countries grew by 5.10 per cent in the first month of the current fiscal year compared to the same period last year, driven largely by increases in shipments to China, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh.
- Pakistan's textile and clothing exports saw a strong start to the current fiscal year, rising by 32 per cent in July.
- Pakistan's raw food exports saw a 10.25 per cent decline in July 2025, primarily due to a significant drop in rice shipments.
- Pakistan's food import bill rose to a record \$8.14bn in FY25, up 3pc from \$7.90bn in FY24, as imports of palm oil, soybean oil, pulses and dry fruits reached all-time highs, driven by rising demand and population growth.
- Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal informed the Senate that the government has approved sweeping import tariff reductions on around 300 products, aiming to spur industrial growth, cut consumer costs, and boost export competitiveness.

## **CORPORATE SECTOR**

- Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources declared 23 brands unsafe for human consumption due to microbiological or chemical contamination.
- The Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) has reduced the penalty imposed by the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) on the Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA) for its involvement in wheat flour price-fixing, cutting the fine from Rs75 million to Rs35 million.

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

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Pakistan rose by 7 percent in the first month of this fiscal year (FY26).

- Pakistan began the new fiscal year with foreign inflows of \$695 million in July, a 59 per cent increase compared to the same month last year. This boost came from \$675m in foreign loans and \$19m in grants, reflecting a significant rise from last year's \$426m in loans and \$10.5m in grants.

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

- The Asian Development Bank will provide a \$410 million financing package to help develop Pakistan's Reko Diq copper mine.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has announced a \$3 million grant from the Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund to support emergency relief efforts following massive flooding in Pakistan.
- ADB is poised to finance a climate-resilient and low-carbon agriculture mechanisation project in Punjab, designed to enhance access to modern farming equipment for small farmers while reducing the sector's environmental footprint.
- The agriculture sector currently accounts for 174.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, with a significant portion stemming from rice paddy flooding, crop residue burning, excessive fertiliser use, and livestock management. Of these emissions, 89.8 tonnes are methane, and 83.7 tonnes are nitrous oxide.
- Punjab, the country's agricultural powerhouse, contributes 76 per cent of the national wheat, 62pc of rice, and 91pc of maize production.
- The model will also involve strategic private-sector engagement to promote sustainable biomass utilisation and off-farm rice residue management.
- A total of 55 development projects are currently being implemented across the country with financial support from the World Bank.

## **POLICY**

- The government's decision to close all utility stores across the country has not only left thousands of employees in a state of shock, but has also triggered deep concern among low-income consumers.
- Government has decided to deregulate the sugar sector in a move aimed at stabilising the market, deregulation of the sugar sector includes prices, export and import.
- Under the deregulation, the government will not intervene in pricing, procurement, or supply mechanisms, allowing the private sector to operate freely.

- The federal cabinet unanimously approved the dissolution of state-run Utility Stores Corporation, weeks after its nationwide operations were suspended.

## **SOCIO – ECONOMIC CONDITION**

- Pakistan’s real GDP growth to accelerate to 3.5 percent by 2027 from 2.5 per cent in 2024, says Fitch Ratings.
- At a time when fewer than 2,000 newborn infants in Pakistan genuinely require breast milk substitutes due to maternal death, critical illness or rare metabolic disorders, the country consumes formula milk and baby food worth over Rs110 billion every year.
- With approximately six million births annually, and a maternal mortality ratio of 186 per 100,000 live births, only a small proportion of newborns are unable to receive breast milk immediately after birth.
- Despite this, the formula milk industry continues to expand, largely fuelled by unregulated marketing, promotions in health facilities, and distribution practices that blur the line between medical necessity and consumer convenience.
- Seven multinational companies currently dominate Pakistan’s infant formula market. These firms are lobbying the Sindh government to soften the Sindh Protection and Promotion of Breastfeeding and Young Child Nutrition Act, 2023, while pushing to prevent similar laws at federal and provincial levels.
- The non-implementation of the Gazette Notification has resulted in flour wastage valued at approximately Rs 594 billion annually. This represents the wheat cultivated on 752,941 acres of land and 1,014,239 cubic feet of water consumed to grow it each year since 2017.
- 45 percent of people living below the poverty line, as per World Bank estimates, and the 11 million facing acute food insecurity, as reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization,”
- A severe food shortage is expected in Ghizer district of Gilgit-Baltistan as the region was still disconnected from other areas days after floods damaged the Gilgit-Shandoor road.
- 82.8pc of the population could not afford a healthy diet and 37pc face moderate to severe food insecurity.
- Pakistan’s food system was under immense strain, with an estimated 20m tonnes of food wasted annually including up to 50pc of fruits and vegetables after the harvest.
- 46pc children under five suffer from stunting, 41pc are underweight and 23pc face wasting while anaemia in pregnant women reached 45pc.



- Headline consumer inflation rose to 4.1 per cent in July, up from 3.2pc a month earlier, driven by a rebound in fuel and food prices.
- Food inflation in July increased by 2.2pc in urban areas & 1.5pc in rural areas, while non-food inflation reached 5.9pc in urban areas & 5.4pc in rural regions.
- In July, core inflation — excluding volatile food and energy components — stood at 7pc in urban areas and 8.1pc in rural areas.
- The prices of a broad spectrum of medicines have surged sharply in recent months, threatening to put essential treatments beyond reach of many citizens.
- Medicine prices have risen between eight and 35pc over the past four months.
- The caretaker government of Anwaarul Haq Kakar had approved the deregulation policy in February 2024 after the Ministry of National Health recommended it, allowing pharmaceutical companies to independently raise prices for non-essential drugs excluded from the National Essential Medicines List (NEML).
- Pakistan’s imports of second-hand clothing have surged to an all-time high of 1.137 million tonnes worth \$511 million in the previous fiscal year.
- According to the World Bank’s latest report, nearly 45 per cent of Pakistan’s population now lives below the poverty line, with the new threshold set at \$4.20 per person per day, up from \$3.65. This increase has pushed the poverty ratio for lower-middle-income groups to 44.7pc, up from 39.8pc under the previous threshold.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

- The 18 percent decline in Pakistan’s forest cover is exposing the environment, economy, and national security to serious threats.
- In Pakistan, forest cover has dropped from 3.78 million hectares in 1992 to 3.09 million hectares in 2025 — an 18 percent reduction. Annual deforestation, which was on peaked at about 40,000 hectares in 1992, has declined due to government intervention to 11,000 hectares in 2025
- The Punjab forest department has taken up an ambitious plan of doubling forest area in the province in next five years.
- Pakistan is among the hardest-hit countries in the world for anaemia in women of reproductive age.
- Health department has documented 380 cases of communicable diseases among children under five in flood-affected districts including acute respiratory infections and acute watery diarrhoea besides damage to health facilities.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- Pakistan, one of the countries least prepared to deal with the impact of climate change, was hit particularly hard this year as it received 15 per cent more rainfall than average.
- Gilgit-Baltistan's (GB) glaciers, rivers and forests generate an estimated Rs2.7 trillion (US \$9 billion) annually.

## **CLIMATE DISASTERS**

- Chairman of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lt-Gen Inam Haider Malik informed the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of a projected 22 percent increase in natural disasters in Pakistan for the coming year.
- Since June 26, torrential rains and floods have claimed 788 lives, injured 1,018 people, damaged 6,630 houses and killed 5,548 livestock across the country.

# **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

## **SOCIO – ECONOMIC CONDITION**

- One in four people in 2024, or 2.1 billion people globally, still lack access to safely managed drinking water, including 106 million who drink directly from untreated surface sources.

## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

National biotech policy finalised, NA panel told [P. 1]

Aerial broadcast of plant seeds in Cholistan desert [P. 1]

Number of farm households jumps [P. 2]

Satellite-based agricultural analytics: HBL MfB, SUPARCO sign MoU [P. 2]

### 1.1 # Farmers

Women cotton workers demand justice, fair wages [P. 3]

Flood-affected farmers seek compensation for damages [P. 3]

### 1.2 # Land

Old land dispute claims two lives [P. 4]

## 2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

### 2.1 # Agricultural Loan & Finances

PM calls for expanding low-cost loans for farmers, SMEs [P. 4]

Farmers in Balochistan slam govt for not releasing solarisation funds [P. 4]

Small farmers, underserved areas: ECC urges SBP to notify risk coverage scheme [P.5]

### 2.2 # Agricultural Technology

ADB mapping out project on low carbon agri mechanism in Pakistan [P. 5]

### 2.3 # Agricultural Taxes

Sindh Agricultural Income Tax Rules 2025 issued: SRB registration now a must for agri income holders [P. 6]

SRB launches online portal for agri taxpayers [P. 6]

### 2.4 # Fertilizer

Sindh plans action against fake fertilisers, agro-medicines [P. 6]

Over 5,000 bags of 'fake' agro medicines, fertilisers seized [P. 7]

Urea sales decline in July, meat exports surge [P. 7]

Fertilizer sector: CCP targets cartelisation [P. 7]

CCP report: Fertilizer sector cites multiple flaws [P. 7]

Govt mulls action as fertiliser prices strain farmers [P. 8]

Govt pledges uninterrupted fertiliser supply for Kharif season [P. 8]

### 2.5 # Seed

Seed Council approves 38 new varieties in KP [P. 8]

Labelling system for cotton seeds gets green light [P. 8]

Foreign firm shows interest in introducing hybrid corn seeds [P. 9]

### **3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT**

Water released into Sutlej by India causes crop losses in Pakistani Punjab [P. 9]

Crop data to be augmented using satellite technology [P. 10]

Agricultural loss [P. 10]

Villages, crops inundated in katcha areas of Kashmir [P. 11]

#### **3.1 # Cash Crop**

Cotton arrivals decline by over 30pc: CCRI Multan [P. 11]

Punjab's cotton harvest reaches 609,000 bales [P. 11]

Sindh records low yield of sugar cane, less production of sweetener [P. 12]

Cotton output falls 17pc amid Punjab slump [P. 12]

#### **3.2 # Food Crop**

Rice-sowing target surpassed [P. 13]

'Low prices of crops': PKI head warns of looming wheat crisis in the country [P. 13]

Wheat crisis after sugar shock [P. 14]

### **4 # SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION**

Climate change a direct threat to livestock sector, national economy: experts [P. 14]

#### **4.1 # Fisheries**

US lifts ban on seafood import from Pakistan [P. 14]

Seafood exporters see no trade growth with US sans implementing TED rules [P. 15]

US export approval: Seafood industry set for growth: minister [P. 15]

### **5 # TRADE**

Pakistan secures 'landmark' tariff deal as US attitude shifts [P. 15]

Pakistan secures 19pc tariff, but many not so lucky [P. 16]

Pakistan, Iran set \$10bn trade target [P. 16]

July trade deficit swells 44.16pc YoY [P. 16]

'Pak-Kenya bilateral trade rises to \$950m' [P. 17]

Trade with North America rebounds in FY25 [P. 17]

Pakistan, Iran set \$3bn target for agri-trade in two years [P. 17]

#### **5.1 # Exports**

Exports to EU rebound, hit \$8.86bn in FY25 [P. 17]

TOMCL expands exports [P. 17]

July textile exports grow 33.7pc to \$1.69bn YoY [P. 18]

Exports rise 17pc in July [P. 18]

AGI to export sugarcane by-products to China [P. 19]  
TDAP organises series of seminars to boost maize exports [P. 19]  
Exports to nine regional states rise [P. 19]  
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Raw food exports decline 10.25pc in July [P. 20]  
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## **5.2 # Import**

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Record food imports, skyrocketing prices hit masses [P.21]  
TCP buys more sugar [P. 22]  
Import tariff cut on 300 products approved, Jam tells Senate [P. 22]  
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APSEA delegation signs \$500m US soybean import deal in Washington [P. 22]  
Solar push sparks 68% rise in lithium battery imports [P. 23]

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

Listed banks post Rs168bn profit [P. 23]

### **6.1 # Food Companies**

Over 20 brands of drinking water unsafe for human consumption [P. 23]  
Competition Appellate Tribunal cuts fine on flour mills to Rs35m [P. 23]

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

July FDI up 7pc to \$208m YoY [P. 24]  
Flows from abroad surge 59pc in July [P. 24]

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### **7.2 # China**

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Chinese team assured of full cooperation in agriculture collaboration [P. 26]

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

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

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ADB support [P. 27]  
ADB commits \$3 million grant for flood relief [P. 28]

Asian Development Bank to fund climate-resilient agriculture project [P. 28]

## **8.2 # World Bank (WB)**

NA panel told: 55 active projects being implemented through World Bank financing

## **9 # POLICY**

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Better policies needed to salvage agriculture sector, says SAB [P. 29]

Karachi needs vertical farming for fresh food production, moot told [P. 30]

### **9.2 # Developmental Policy**

Ministry okays Rs141bn PSDP for first quarter [P. 30]

CDWP clears 15 projects worth Rs520bn [P. 30]

Murad approves Rs55bn for district ADP funds [P. 31]

New PSDP projects limited to 2pc under IMF programme [P. 31]

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## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

### ***National biotech policy finalised, NA panel told***

The Standing Committee on National Food Security and Research has been informed the government has finalised the national ‘biotechnology policy’, which is ready for submission to the cabinet for approval. The meeting, chaired by MNA Syed Tariq Hussain discussed agri sector’s challenges and other food security issues. Experts told the committee the government’s reluctance to embrace genetically modified organisms (GMOs) was one of the impediments to the progress in sustainable farming. The officials of CropLife Pakistan, an agency tasked with promoting modern farming technologies and sustainable agriculture, briefed the committee on research and development in the seed sector, as well as challenges and potential solutions.

As per the briefing, the farming sector faced significant obstacles, including insufficient research and development, restrictive import policies, delays in import permits and a lack of access to advanced genetics and biotechnology. Also, the government’s hesitation to embrace GMOs over potential health concerns further slowed progress. According to CropLife officials, integrated pest management, robotics and digital farming, gene editing, seed and biotechnology policies, improved soil and water management, crop protection and climate-resilient seeds were solutions to overcome the agri sector’s challenges. These innovations were crucial to boost productivity, ensuring food security, and building resilience against climate change.

The meeting highlighted the seed policy had been pending before the Ministry of National Food Security and Research for a long time. It urged the officials to forward the policy to the Prime Minister’s Office for approval. On the issue of taxing cotton, the Federal Board of Revenue informed the committee that GST will be imposed on imported cotton from August 15. This long-awaited step, recommended by the committee, aimed to create parity between imported and locally produced cotton. The move is expected to stabilise domestic cotton prices and support local growers, according to FBR. A Statutory Regulatory Order notifying the new tax would be issued next Tuesday, the committee was told.

The meeting was told a fund of Rs949 million allocated for research and development in the tobacco sector remains unutilised as the position of the PTB director was vacant. A representative of tobacco growers said farmers were facing difficulties in selling their crops. The committee directed food secretary to implement meaningful reform and consult growers on issues related to tobacco sector. (*Dawn, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

### ***Aerial broadcast of plant seeds in Cholistan desert***

The Pakistan Army and the Houbara Foundation International Pakistan jointly broadcast seeds of desert plants over the Cholistan desert for the 27th consecutive year,

aiming to improve vegetation and animal and bird populations. Wildlife habitats are being degraded the world over because of wood-cutting by local communities and over-grazing by their livestock. Consequently, wild animals and birds are unable to find their favourite foods in sufficient quantities, resulting in a rapid decline in their numbers and ecological imbalance. According to a press release, in 1998, Houbara Foundation, in collaboration with the Pakistan Army, undertook to reinforce the diminishing vegetation through aerial broadcast of seeds of desert plants in the Cholistan desert, which is the prime wintering habitat of Houbara bustard and other bird species. This year, 200kg of seeds from local plants and grasses were broadcast, bringing the total seeds broadcast over the last 27 years to over 3,327kg, it says. The press release states that regular monitoring of the habitat has yielded encouraging results, with higher germination yields expected. (*Dawn, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Number of farm households jumps***

In what marks a significant transformation in the agrarian landscape, the number of farm households in Pakistan surged to 11.7 million in 2024, up from 8.3 million in 2010 — indicating a 40pc increase in rural engagement with agriculture, according to the 7th Digital Agriculture Census Report. Simultaneously, the livestock population rose to 251.3 million in 2024 from 143 million in 2006, registering a steady compound annual growth rate of 3.18pc. These parallel increases underline the continued centrality of agriculture as both a livelihood and a critical pillar of the national economy. Federal Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal officially launched the results of the census, which was conducted using a fully integrated digital methodology for the first time. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) employed real-time mapping, geo-tagging, and automated data systems to ensure accurate and efficient data collection at the field level.

According to the report, Punjab accounts for the highest share of agricultural households at 43.3pc, followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (35.67pc), Sindh (15.61pc), and Balochistan (5.41pc). The area under cultivation also expanded significantly — from 42.6 million acres in 2010 to 52.8 million acres in 2024 — a 24pc increase. Punjab holds the largest share of cultivated land at 56.25pc, followed by Sindh (15.36pc), Balochistan (14.68pc), and KP (13.71pc). The report highlights that 79pc of cultivated land is irrigated through canals and tube-wells, underscoring Pakistan's heavy reliance on managed water systems. The livestock census records 95.8m goats, 55.8 million cattle, 47.7 million buffaloes, 44.5 million sheep, 4.8 million asses, and 1.5 million camels — reflecting consistent growth in the sector since 2006. (*Dawn, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Satellite-based agricultural analytics: HBL MfB, SUPARCO sign MoU***

Pakistan's agri-lending sector, HBL Microfinance Bank (HBL MfB) and the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to introduce satellite-based agricultural analytics into the lending ecosystem. Under this initiative, the two organisations will jointly execute a pilot project in Okara District, one of Punjab's key agricultural zones.

The pilot will involve remote pre-loan assessments using high-resolution satellite imagery, crop health analytics, yield estimation, risk profiling, and a scoring engine to assess farm-level creditworthiness. A secure API and dashboard interface will enable HBL MfB to integrate this data into its loan decision-making processes, eliminating the need for manual field verification. (*Business Recorder, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### **1.1 # Farmers**

#### ***Women cotton workers demand justice, fair wages***

More than 90 participants including women cotton workers, trade union leaders, progressive growers, civil society representatives, and officials from the labor, social welfare, health, and environment departments gathered in Hyderabad to demand justice, fair wages, safe working conditions, and climate resilience for over one million women cotton workers across Sindh. Organized by the Sindh Community Foundation (SCF) in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation, the day-long event featured a powerful Women's Assembly held at Indus Hotel under the theme "Claiming Safe Working Conditions and Climate Justice."

Opening the assembly, Javed Hussain, Executive Director of SCF, highlighted the lack of enforcement of the Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act (2019), which mandates ensure minimum wage healthcare, maternity benefits, and social security, but remains slowly unimplemented in rural districts. Nadeem Shah, representing Sindh Abadgar Board, noted that over 70% of agricultural labor in Sindh is performed by women, who are still not formally recognized under labor laws. He called for the legal classification of agriculture as an industry to ensure enforceable labor protections. Dr. Muhammad Ismail Kumbhar, an agricultural and climate expert, warned that only 65% of the expected cotton yield was produced this year due to water shortages, with women workers suffering the most when productivity falls. Dr. Muhammad Aslam Memon, of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council raised alarms over harmful agro-chemical use, urging a shift toward sustainable farming, tree plantation, and training for women in food preservation. (*Business Recorder, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

#### ***Flood-affected farmers seek compensation for damages***

Kisan Ittehad Pakistan (KIP) has demanded immediate compensation for flood-affected farmers to enable them continue work on their lands for the next crop. "Farmers affected by the monsoon rains and floods should be provided financial assistance, and taxes, dues imposed on them be waived off immediately. Subsidies should also be provided on fertilizers, seeds so that they grow their next crops," KIP Central Chairman Khalid Hussain Bath told reporters at the National Press Club. He demanded that independent investigations should be conducted into the wheat, cotton and sugar scandals so that farmers can get justice. Farmers are the backbone of Pakistan, and if they are weak, the country's economy can never be strong, he said. Mr Bath said that due to the shortage of wheat, its prices were increasing in the country. "The price of wheat has increased by Rs1,000 in a week," he said. (*Dawn, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

## 1.2 # Land

### ***Old land dispute claims two lives***

Two men were killed in an armed clash between rival groups of Brohi and Sahar communities over a longstanding land dispute in the jurisdiction of Radhan police station near Dadu Canal. (*Dawn, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

## 2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

### 2.1 # Agricultural Loan & Finances

#### ***PM calls for expanding low-cost loans for farmers, SMEs***

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed the authorities to simplify and expand access to low-cost agricultural loans for small- and medium-scale farmers and take measures for boosting of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the country. Presiding over a review meeting, the PM called it a critical step for boosting agricultural productivity and ensuring economic dignity for the country's rural backbone. The PM emphasised that small farmers must be treated with respect and given due facilitation, particularly when it comes to acquiring low-interest loans for their agricultural needs, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. During the meeting, PM Shehbaz instructed authorities concerned to the accelerate reforms within the Zarai Taraqati Bank Limited (ZTBL), and encourage private banks to step forward in offering concessional loans to the agricultural sector on easier terms.

The prime minister announced that he will chair review meetings every three weeks to monitor the implementation of loan facilitation initiatives and reforms at ZTBL. The PM reiterated his government's commitment to agricultural development and the empowerment of small farmers through institutional support, financial inclusion, and practical reforms. Officials briefed the prime minister on the ongoing reform efforts at ZTBL, the bank's performance, and proposed strategies to improve agricultural lending. The meeting also reviewed the role of private banks in supporting the agri-sector through credit disbursement. (*Dawn, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

#### ***Farmers in Balochistan slam govt for not releasing solarisation funds***

Kissan Ittehad Pakistan (KIP) Chairman Khalid Hussain Bathh while criticising the provincial government said that despite its promises, it has failed to provide funds to the farmers of Nasirabad Division—the only green belt of the province—for converting agricultural tube wells to solar energy. Speaking at a press conference he said that due to disconnection of electricity supply, tube wells have become non-functional, crops are drying up, and farmers are suffering huge financial losses. He said that although funds for solarisation had been promised to farmers, the approved amount has not been released so far. Before the payments were made, electricity connections were cut, and supply was shifted from three-phase to two-phase. As a result, tube wells remain shut, and with no water flowing in Rabi Canal, agriculture, livestock, and local communities are badly suffering.

The KIP chairman said that crops were destroyed due to the unavailability of irrigation water, and even drinking water is becoming scarce. Farmers, on the assurance of the provincial irrigation minister, had sown crops, but the seeds went to waste due to water shortage. “No developmental initiatives, such as skill development centres, agricultural workshops, or projects for women farmers—who work alongside men in the fields—have been launched for their capacity building,” Mr Bathh said, urging the government to announce a solar energy programme for farmers in Rabi Canal, Nari, and Bolan areas who currently rely on diesel generators for irrigation. (*Dawn, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Small farmers, underserved areas: ECC urges SBP to notify risk coverage scheme***

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet has urged the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to notify approved risk coverage scheme for small farmers and underserved areas as currently their share is far less than the large farmers. Last week, the Finance Division briefed the ECC that to improve the access of small farmers to agricultural credit, particularly those operating in remote and underserved regions, a Risk Coverage Scheme for small Farmers and underserved areas was developed by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The scheme was presented to ECC on June 27, 2025.

Accordingly, the SBP gave a presentation to the ECC, stating that currently 97 percent of the agri-credit disbursements are made in Punjab and Sindh and the remaining 3 percent in unserved and underserved areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. In terms of agricultural borrowers, large farmers, who constitute only 7 percent of the total borrowers, received 68 percent of the total disbursements, whereas small famers (ranging landholding of up to 12.5 acres), who make 93% of the total borrowers, received 32 percent of the total disbursements. Thus, the unserved and underserved areas and small farmers (over 85 percent of the total farms) have extremely low share in the disbursements. The said scheme has been designed to incentivise banks and financial institutions to lend in underserved areas and to small farmers.

The scheme would provide coverage to the small and subsistence farmers in Punjab and Sindh, whereas all farmers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan will be covered due to their extremely low share in the current agri-credit disbursements. The scheme is expected to add over 750,000 new borrowers in next 3 years. After brief discussion on the proposal, ECC approved risk coverage scheme for small farmers and underserved areas and directed the SBP to notify the scheme without any further delay. (*Business Recorder, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **2.2 # Agricultural Technology**

### ***ADB mapping out project on low carbon agri mechanism in Pakistan***

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is mapping out a project on low carbon agriculture mechanism worth USD 3 million in Pakistan in order to address the agriculture and environmental issues for a better future. The blueprint of the projects

was being designed in collaboration with UAF. The meeting disused the different projects and lauded and paid homage to the unmatched services of Noriko Sato especially for the agriculture sector of Pakistan. Noriko Sato said that project will cover seed breeding, Greenhouse Gas Emissions mechanism and high tech operations. She said that ADB supports Pakistan's inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient development through investments in the country's economic management, energy, food security, institutional capacities, private sector, public finance, social services, transportation, and urban services. (*Business Recorder, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### **2.3 # Agricultural Taxes**

#### ***Sindh Agricultural Income Tax Rules 2025 issued: SRB registration now a must for agri income holders***

Sindh government has notified that every owner of agricultural land by whom any tax is payable, in respect of any agricultural income year, shall obtain his registration from the Sindh Revenue Board (SRB). In this regard, the Sindh government has issued Sindh Agricultural Income Tax Rules 2025. According to the rules, the application form (AIT-01) for individuals/companies has also been notified by the Finance Department (Sindh) for registration of Agricultural Income Tax with the Board.

Every owner, who is liable to pay Agricultural Income Tax, will also e-filing his income tax return form by the prescribed due date. The due date for filing of return means, in case of company, with a tax year ending on any day between January 1 and June 30;- the December 31 following the end of the tax year to which the return relates. In any other case, the due date would be September 30 next following the end of tax year to which the return relates. (*Business Recorder, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

#### ***SRB launches online portal for agri taxpayers***

Sindh Revenue Board has launched an online registration and payment portal for the facilitation of Agricultural Income Tax (AIT) payers in province of Sindh. According to the details, online portal streamlines the registration and payment process, making it simple, fast and user friendly. (*Business Recorder, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### **2.4 # Fertilizer**

#### ***Sindh plans action against fake fertilisers, agro-medicines***

The Sindh government has decided to launch a province-wide crackdown against fake fertilisers and agricultural medicines. The meeting discussed in detail important matters such as the effective implementation of the Sindh Seed Act, certified cotton varieties, shortage of 3G fertilisers and continuous supply of agricultural commodities. According to a spokesperson for the Sindh agriculture department, issues related to the cultivation of tomato, mango and banana in Tando Allahyar, price control and supply were also discussed, besides availability of beneficial plants like isabgol (psyllium husk) and certified onion seeds in Thar regions. (*Dawn, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)



### ***Over 5,000 bags of ‘fake’ agro medicines, fertilisers seized***

A team of the Sindh agriculture department has seized 5,318 bags of fake agricultural medicines and fertilizers amid a major crackdown against sellers of counterfeit agricultural medicines and fertilizers in Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar, Golarchi and Sajawal. (*Dawn, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Urea sales decline in July, meat exports surge***

Pakistan’s urea sales for July totalled 608,000 tonnes, a slight decrease of 1pc compared to 612,000 tonnes in the same month last year. The decline was attributed to weak farm economics and the impact of the monsoon season. Month-on-month, urea sales saw a sharp drop of 19pc, mainly due to the conclusion of the Rabi season. For the seven-month period from January to July (7MCY25), total urea offtake amounted to 2.96 million tonnes, down 19pc from 3.65 million tonnes during the same period in 2024, reflecting the ongoing challenges in the agricultural sector.

Deepak Kishore of Topline Securities noted that the closing inventory of urea was expected to be around 1.28m tonnes in July, a slight decrease from 1.32m tonnes in June. Meanwhile, total DAP (diammonium phosphate) sales in July stood at 109,000 tonnes, a 33pc year-on-year decline, though it saw a marginal 1pc increase compared to June. For the first seven months of 2025, DAP offtake reached 557,000 tonnes, a drop of 21pc year-on-year. The closing inventory for DAP was projected to be around 276,000 tonnes in July, down from 323,000 tonnes in June, but higher than 166,000 tonnes in July 2024. (*Dawn, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Fertilizer sector: CCP targets cartelisation***

Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) will strictly monitor the fertilizer sector as fertilizer industry is prone to cartelization and behavior of the fertilizer manufacturers may attract certain provisions of the Competition Act, 2010. The CCP has released a draft report titled “Competition Assessment of the Fertilizer Industry in Pakistan”, exposing the probability of cartel formation is higher for products that are homogenous like various types of fertilizers. (*Business Recorder, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***CCP report: Fertilizer sector cites multiple flaws***

Pakistan’s fertilizer sector has raised serious concerns over the recently published Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) report on the fertilizer industry, citing multiple analytical flaws and omissions. According to stakeholders, the report presents a narrowly framed, competition-focused evaluation that overlooks fundamental structural, strategic, and national security issues—particularly regarding natural gas allocation, which underpins the entire viability of urea production in country. However, the industry argues it fails to address the core challenge of natural gas allocation, which is essential for urea production. “Urea is a gas-based product—its economics, viability, and even existence depend on the allocation of indigenous gas at viable tariffs,” industry representatives stated. (*Business Recorder, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)



### ***Govt mulls action as fertiliser prices strain farmers***

Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain expressed deep concern over the recent surge in di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) fertiliser prices and urged manufacturers to immediately lower rates to protect farmers and safeguard national food security. Mr Hussain warned that if companies failed to cooperate in ensuring fair and affordable prices, the government would explore and implement alternative measures to facilitate growers.

He noted that rising input costs had become a serious obstacle for farmers, particularly small-scale growers who form the backbone of the agriculture sector. Weakening purchasing power would not only reduce productivity but also hurt the fertiliser industry itself. The minister called on manufacturers to urgently review pricing structures, adopt cost-cutting measures and work with the government to bring DAP prices down to reasonable levels without compromising quality. (*Dawn, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Govt pledges uninterrupted fertiliser supply for Kharif season***

The government will ensure an uninterrupted supply of fertiliser ahead of the Kharif season to farmers, says Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain. Minister stated this during a meeting with Engro Fertilisers Chief Executive Officer Ali Rathore. The discussion centred on guaranteeing consistent fertiliser supply nationwide, stabilising prices for farmers, and introducing forward-looking measures to strengthen agriculture sector's resilience. Mr Hussain stressed that timely and affordable access to fertiliser is not merely a commercial matter but a critical pillar of Pakistan's food security and economic stability. (*Dawn, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

## **2.5 # Seed**

### ***Seed Council approves 38 new varieties in KP***

The Provincial Seed Council in its meeting has approved 38 new varieties of fruits, vegetables, oilseeds, tea, and other essential crops in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The meeting was chaired by Minister for Agriculture Major Sajjad Barakwal (retd) in chair, in which approved new varieties. During the meeting, 53 seed variety proposals were presented, out of which 38 were approved for cultivation. These include four new varieties of maize, and one new variety each of rice and wheat. In fruit category, two new varieties each of kiwi, apricot, orange, and grapes were approved, along with one new variety each of plum, pecan nut, fig, and ber. In vegetable category, two new varieties of okra, three of tomato, and one variety each of onion and spinach were approved. In oilseeds category, ten new varieties received approval, while two new varieties of tea were also endorsed by council. (*Business Recorder, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Labelling system for cotton seeds gets green light***

The Board of Governors of the National Seed Development and Regulatory Authority (NSDRA) has approved key reforms in the seed sector, including the pilot launch of a 'Truth-in-Labelling System' for cotton, aimed at protecting farmers from substandard

seeds. The initiative will be underpinned by clear eligibility criteria and climate-smart protocols, ensuring seed quality and traceability. The move marks the revival of the Seeds (Truth-in-Labeling) Rules 1991, notified by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, which mandate that all seed offered for sale or export must carry a label reflecting its quality and meet minimum purity standards. (*Dawn, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Foreign firm shows interest in introducing hybrid corn seeds***

A Singapore-based hybrid seed company has shown keen interest in introducing climate-resilient hybrid corn seeds in Pakistan, finding the country having the potential to get high yields. “Our latest hybrid corn seed technology has shown the potential to increase yields by up to 32 per cent, offering farmers higher productivity and improved profitability,” said Commercial Director for Southeast Asian Markets of Corteva Agriscience (Singapore), Mr Bryce Sturgess, during a meeting with Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain in Islamabad. Mr Sturgess informed the minister that by introducing climate-resilient hybrid corn seeds in Pakistan, “we aim to support farmers in overcoming challenges such as water scarcity and changing weather patterns”. Corteva is committed to working alongside the Pakistan government to strengthen food security through innovative corn hybrids that are both sustainable and farmer-friendly, Mr Sturgess maintained.

The Singaporean delegation head said with the adoption of advanced hybrid corn seeds, Pakistan’s farming community would not only achieve higher yields but also contribute to the country’s long-term agricultural sustainability. He also shared details of initiatives and investment plans in Pakistan’s agriculture sector. Mr Hussain said that Pakistan’s agriculture sector requires modernisation and innovative approaches to meet challenges. He emphasised hybrid seed technology, along with improved agronomic practices, can substantially increase farmers’ income, reduce crop losses, and improve national food self-sufficiency. (*Dawn, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

## **3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT**

### ***Water released into Sutlej by India causes crop losses in Pakistani Punjab***

India has released water into the Sutlej River, triggering a flood situation as rising water levels have submerged vast areas of crops across Punjab. The water level has risen significantly at Head Sulaimanki and Head Islam following the release of additional water. In Bahawalpur, thousands of acres of standing crops have been inundated, while increasing pressure has also been reported on the Empress Bridge. In Kasur, floodwater entered villages near Ganda Singhwala, badly damaging crops, while precautionary measures have been initiated in Pakpattan and Arifwala amid the flood threat. Meanwhile, the Indus River is also experiencing high flood levels at Taunsa, where over 60 settlements have been submerged. Water has entered the unpaved areas of Taunsa, Darahma, and Ghazi Ghat, prompting the administration to instruct residents to evacuate to safer locations. (*Business Recorder, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Crop data to be augmented using satellite technology***

In an effort to settle disputes over crop data, especially in Punjab, a new programme aims to use satellite technology to obtain accurate crop cultivation figures. Unreliable figures on total acreage and production of a specific crop have remained a persistent issue for the country. The lack of accurate information makes it difficult for stakeholders, including government departments, to frame import and export strategies to meet national needs. The new satellite-based system, set to be launched next year, is expected to resolve this long-standing problem. This initiative, a brainchild of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), will involve a collaboration between China and the country's Land Information and Management System (LIMS), launched in 2023 to optimise agricultural production through innovative technologies, and sustainable agricultural practices. (*Dawn, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Agricultural loss***

The current wave of floods has ravaged vast tracts of farmland across the plains of central Punjab. Hundreds of thousands of mostly smallholders have been displaced, with floodwaters sweeping away their food and other crops. More agricultural land will be swallowed by the raging waters, surging southwards to converge with the Indus in the coming days. A major economic upheaval is already emerging, along with a humanitarian crisis. Though it is still too early for a full assessment of the damage wreaked on crops and livestock, initial reports suggest that farmers' losses are already running into billions.

The deluge has wiped out standing rice, maize and other crops besides vegetables in more than 2,100 villages located along the Sutlej, Ravi and Chenab. The rushing waters are now expected to inflict further damage on croplands in Punjab's cotton-producing southern districts before cascading into Sindh. The agricultural losses will weigh heavily on both the economy and people. The destruction of crops and disruption of food supply chains have set the stage for spiralling food inflation. The 2022 floods offer a sobering reminder: food prices surged month after month. But the impact of flooding goes beyond food inflation.

For many of the affected farmers — mostly smallholders — the devastation is total: with crops, livestock, homes and livelihoods all swept away. Left with nothing to live on — let alone invest in the next crop — more people are likely to slip below the poverty line. The increase in the prices of essential foods will disproportionately affect low-income rural and urban households. Beyond the immediate impact, the economic costs are staggering. The agriculture losses will be felt across industries, and reduce automobile and fertiliser sales. More worrying is the impact on the fragile balance-of-payments situation, with the deluge likely to push up the import bill due to domestic shortages of food items. Exports, on the other hand, may suffer due to production losses in rice and cotton. Overall, the damage to farm output will keep GDP growth depressed. The farm sector, which forms nearly a quarter of the economy and employs almost 40pc

of the labour force, had grown marginally by 0.56pc — the lowest in a decade — last year against a five-year average of 3.38pc. Pakistan has suffered nearly 20 major flood disasters since 1950 — half of them in last two decades. Climate change is intensifying their frequency and severity, yet national preparedness remains inadequate. The lesson from the current disaster is clear: floods are no longer freak incidents but recurring economic shocks that depress GDP growth, widen deficits, wash away livelihoods and drag millions deeper into poverty. Unless we radically overhaul our disaster preparedness and invest in agricultural resilience, each new flood event will drown villages, devastate livelihoods and reduce growth. (*Dawn, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 6*)

### ***Villages, crops inundated in katcha areas of Kashmore***

The water level in the River Indus at Guddu Barrage rose further, inundating dozens of villages and crops in the katcha area of Kashmore. The situation prompted the authorities to declare that the river was in medium flood. The inflow of water at the site was recorded at over 389,000 cusecs, while the outflow at 356,000 cusecs till last reports came in. (*Business Recorder, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **3.1 # Cash Crop**

### ***Cotton arrivals decline by over 30pc: CCRI Multan***

Sajid Mahmood, Head of the Technology Transfer Department at the Central Cotton Research Institute (CCRI) Multan, revealed that this year, cotton arrivals have declined by over 30 percent, reflecting the deteriorating condition of the crop and growing hardships faced by farmers. Sajid Mahmood stated, “According to the report released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) as of August 1, 2025, only 593,821 bales of cotton have been recorded across the country, compared to 844,257 bales during the same period last year; a deeply concerning drop.” Sajid Mahmood noted that cotton arrivals in Sindh have fallen by 47 percent, with only 292,340 bales recorded this year compared to 551,702 bales last year. “The situation in Punjab is not much better, where 301,481 bales were reported, indicating a decline of nearly 24 percent from the previous year.” (*Business Recorder, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***Punjab’s cotton harvest reaches 609,000 bales***

The Agriculture Department of Punjab has reported a significantly higher cotton harvest for the ongoing crop year 2025-26, claiming that 609,000 bales were harvested by July 31. This figure is more than double the 301,000 bales reported by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA). Citing data from its Crop Reporting Service (CRS), a spokesperson for the department clarified that the 609,000 bales of seed cotton were recorded up to July 31. In contrast, the PCGA’s estimate reflects only the cotton arriving at operational ginning factories in Punjab, irrespective of its origin. The spokesperson emphasised that CRS figures are based on internationally recognised, scientifically proven methods. (*Dawn, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

### ***Sindh records low yield of sugar cane, less production of sweetener***

Sindh has recorded less sugarcane and sugar production in the 2024-25 season. The 2025-26 season is inching towards commencement of cane crushing. Besides, low sugarcane yield and sweetener production, sucrose recovery also remained lesser than it was reported in the 2023-24 season. The figures show that 16,404,673.911 tonnes of sugarcane was crushed in the 2024-25 season when 1,618,318.200 tonnes of sugar was produced. Sucrose recovery was recorded at 9.482pc. However, when compared with the 2023-24 season when sucrose recovery had stood at 10.37pc with 2,022,780.92 tonnes of sugar production and 19,279,206.41 tonnes of cane was crushed. This year so far, 0.268m hectares of sugarcane crop sowing was reported by agriculture department as per first estimate against a target of 0.29m hectares. In 2024-25, the statistics show, against target of 0.29m hectares the crop was sown on 0.285m hectares.

### **Cane crushing figures**

According to the 2024-25 cane crushing figures compiled by Sindh Cane Commissioner's office, sugar mills located in Ghotki district came up with the highest numbers. Some are owned by politicians like Jehangir Tareen, Makhdoom Khusr-o Bakhtiar and Mahar brothers.

A sugarcane tonnage of 1,744,724.62 was crushed by the JK Sugar Mills, Ghotki, followed by 1,716,782.985 by JDW Sugar Mills, Ghotki; 1,340,374.480 by the Daharki Sugar Mills; 1,210,106.185 by Alliance Sugar Mills (Ubaro) Ghotki; and 1,016,236.43 by SGM Sugar Mills, Ghotki. Another big tonnage of sugar cane was crushed by Habib Sugar Mills, Nawabshah, i.e. 839,004.804. Out of 38 sugar mills in Sindh, 33 had undertaken cane crushing.

### **Growth of sugar industry and sucrose**

Ghotki district has seen growth in sugar factories in the recent past. It was otherwise famous for cotton production. Sugarcane is grown in the riverine areas of upper Sindh as well by tycoons of the sugar industry. Sindh's cane usually has more sucrose content recovery than Punjab's and in view of this recovery indicative, the notified price for the crop always remained a few rupees up from Punjab's crop till fixing of sugar cane price had been done by government.

Only seven sugar mills have reported 10pc or above sucrose recovery. They included JK Sugar Mills (10.572pc); Mirpurkhas Sugar Mills (10.422pc); Mehran Sugar Mills, Tando Allahyar (10.22pc); Alliance Sugar Mills (10.2pc) Army Welfare Sugar Mills (10.168pc) and Matiari Sugar Mills (10pc). (*Dawn, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Cotton output falls 17pc amid Punjab slump***

Cotton arrivals in Pakistan dropped 17 per cent year-on-year to 887,400 bales as of Aug 15, primarily due to a sharp decline in Punjab's output, raising concerns over the country's domestic production outlook. According to data released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) Punjab — once showing a 3pc increase in arrivals by

July 31 — witnessed a reversal by mid-August, with arrivals now 6pc lower than the same period last year. In contrast, Sindh, which was lagging 47pc behind last year's figures at end-July, has narrowed its shortfall to 24pc.

Currently, 113 ginning units are active in Punjab, compared to 131 in Sindh. Between Aug 1 and 15, Punjab's ginning factories received just 68,000 bales, a sharp drop from 156,000 bales in the previous fortnight. Sindh, meanwhile, saw a surge from 140,000 bales to 226,000 bales during the same period. As of Aug 15, Punjab's total cotton arrivals stood at 370,000 bales, while Sindh led with 518,000 bales. Of the total 887,400 bales received nationwide, textile mills have purchased 806,000, with 81,000 bales still unsold. A glaring discrepancy exists between PCGA data and Punjab Crop Reporting Service, which claims cotton production in Punjab reached 809,000 bales by Aug 14 — 118pc higher than PCGA's recorded arrivals. (*Dawn, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### **3.2 # Food Crop**

#### ***Rice-sowing target surpassed***

Rice farmers in Punjab have surpassed the provincial agriculture department's sowing target of 5 million acres by cultivating rice on 5.8 million acres so far—registering an increase of 0.8 million acres. Improving both the quantity and quality of rice production is essential to boost rice exports to USD 5 billion, said Punjab Secretary for Agriculture, Iftikhar Ali Sahoo, while addressing a meeting of the Provincial Committee on Rice Crop Management at Agriculture House. He noted that the establishment of a Eurofins Laboratory would serve as a milestone in enhancing rice export potential. A complete ban has been imposed on the use of prohibited agrochemicals (pesticides) on paddy crops, he added. The Secretary also urged the Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan to play a more active role in promoting mechanized cultivation and harvesting practices. To support this effort, interest-free loans are being provided to farmers and service providers for the purchase of high-tech agricultural machinery. (*Business Recorder, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

#### ***'Low prices of crops': PKI head warns of looming wheat crisis in the country***

Pakistan Kisan Ittehad (PKI) President Khalid Mahmood Khokhar has warned of an impending wheat crisis in the country as the farmers are not ready to take risk of sowing the grain after they failed to get due prices of almost all the crops they had sown last season. Speaking at a press conference, he apprehended that wheat cultivation might see a big decline this sowing season starting in November because of the government's policy of 'partially' deregulating the wheat sector, only deregulating minimum price of grain, while maintaining its control on import and export of wheat and its products.

He claimed that wheat growers suffered Rs2,200 billion losses during the last two seasons, while their maize, rice and cotton crops could also not get their dues rates in the market. This has left the growers with little resources to sow the wheat crop, he said, cautioning that even the fields would give a below-average production because farmers

could not purchase urea and other fertilisers. He said that 1.3 million tonnes of urea fertilizer, mostly used for wheat crop, remained unsold this year, unlike the past year when the government had to import 200,000 tonnes. (*Dawn, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Wheat crisis after sugar shock***

The government's approach to food markets continues to betray a lack of understanding of the simplest demand and supply dynamics. Wheat has climbed to Rs 3,100 per maund after a steep rise over the past month, flour is more expensive by Rs 500 for a 20kg bag, and the official price cap announced by Punjab is being openly ignored. The result is another food market sliding out of control, just weeks after the sugar fiasco exposed similar weaknesses. The decision to withdraw from wheat market regulation without a transparent framework has proved reckless. Critics are right to argue that the sudden abdication of oversight created an opening for hoarders, who withheld stocks until prices crossed Rs 3,250 before releasing them into market. This is not a demonstration of supply discipline; it is a demonstration of speculation thriving where the state has no grip. (*Business Recorder, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

## **4 # SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION**

### ***Climate change a direct threat to livestock sector, national economy: experts***

Veterinary and agricultural experts have said that climate change is no longer an environmental concern alone, it is threatening country's livestock sector, food security and rural livelihoods. Indigenous animal and bird species are declining, they said, adding that despite possessing rich resources and valuable indigenous breeds, Pakistan annually imports over 500,000 cattle and one million semen doses which, according to them, is 'alarming'. They were speaking at the inaugural seminar on "Climate Change and its Impact on Animal Health" held under Green Veterinary Drive 2025 organised by the Veterinary Business and Entrepreneurship Society of the Faculty of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences, Sindh Agriculture University (SAU), Tandojam.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Altaf Ali Siyal said that that the crisis threatens millions of livestock, causing irreparable damage to rural livelihoods. Rising heat, water scarcity, fodder shortages and recurrent floods directly undermine animal health and productivity. Livestock health is not merely a veterinary issue, it is a national concern tied to food security, poverty reduction, and economic stability, he stressed. A noted veterinary scientist, Prof Dr Zaheer Ahmed Nizamani, while discussing 'Climate Change and Livestock Health/Production in Pakistan: from Physiology to Policy', cautioned that Pakistan's livestock sector with over 60pc share in agricultural value-addition and nearly 12pc of GDP is at "severe risk" due to the climate change. (*Dawn, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

## **4.1 # Fisheries**

### ***US lifts ban on seafood import from Pakistan***

After a four-year ban, the United States has lifted its restriction on fish and seafood imports from Pakistan, marking a significant milestone for the country's maritime



sector. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs welcomed the decision, calling it a recognition of Pakistan's high-quality seafood and an important step for the industry's global growth. In a statement issued, Minister Junaid Anwar highlighted that the resumption of seafood exports to the US would provide long-term stability to Pakistan's fishing sector. Currently, Pakistani seafood earns approximately \$2 per kg in the global market. With the US recognition, the price is expected to rise, which could open new markets in Europe and the Gulf. During the last fiscal year (2024-25), Pakistan exported 242,484 tonnes of fish and related products, valued at \$489.2m, at an average price of \$2 per kg. If same export volume continues, minister anticipates that exports could generate nearly \$600m in coming year. (*Dawn, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Seafood exporters see no trade growth with US sans implementing TED rules***

Pakistan's seafood exporters have dismissed hopes of trade growth with the United States, warning that without enforcing Turtle Excluder Device (TED) rules, Washington will not allow expansion of imports. They branded Islamabad's claims of progress as "unhelpful" and accused the government of ignoring a sector that could earn billions. Exporters said latest US announcement will not benefit Pakistan since only certain fish species involving whale or dolphin interaction are covered, and none are exported to America. Instead, they stressed, the real obstacle is the US ban on shrimp and Siluriformes (catfish), imposed in 2017 after local fishermen failed to adopt TEDs to protect endangered sea turtles. (*Business Recorder, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***US export approval: Seafood industry set for growth: minister***

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry announced that Pakistan has received authorisation to extend the export of fish and fish-related products to the United States for another four years. In a statement, the minister said the decision reflects international recognition of quality of Pakistan's seafood and will provide long-term stability to sector. The extension is expected to bolster our position in global seafood market, securing access to one of world's largest seafood importers.

He explained that the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has classified all Pakistani fisheries listed on its List of Foreign Fisheries (LOFF) as "comparable" under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). "This classification confirms that Pakistan's fisheries meet US standards for protecting marine mammals from incidental mortality and serious injury during fishing operations," Junaid Chaudhry said. The MMPA requires fisheries to minimize marine mammal bycatch, adopt conservation practices, and operate sustainably measures that also support healthier marine ecosystems. (*Business Recorder, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **5 # TRADE**

### ***Pakistan secures 'landmark' tariff deal as US attitude shifts***

A day after signing an agreement with the United States to develop "massive oil deposits" in Pakistani territory, Pakistani officials said the two nations had concluded a



trade deal, establishing a uniform tariff rate for bilateral trade. “The agreement will result in a reduction of reciprocal tariffs, especially on Pakistani exports to the United States,” said an official statement released by the Pakistan Embassy in Washington. In a statement issued in Islamabad, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif called it “a landmark deal, which will enhance our growing cooperation and expand the frontiers of our enduring partnership in the days to come”.

However, diplomatic sources said the United States has agreed to charge a 15 to 20 per cent tariff on goods from Pakistan. The sources noted that the deal gives Islamabad an edge over India, which has been slapped with a 25pc tariff rate and penalised for buying weapons and oil from Russia and Iran. The embassy noted that the deal marks the beginning of a new era of economic collaboration, especially in energy, mining and minerals, IT, cryptocurrency and other sectors. (*Dawn, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Pakistan secures 19pc tariff, but many not so lucky***

World markets teetered after US President Donald Trump unveiled tariffs on around 70 trading partners, ahead of a self-imposed deadline. While Pakistan celebrated the 19pc tariff for its goods — the second lowest among South Asian nations — and the Pakistan Stock Exchange surged, other countries were not so fortunate. India was still engaged in trade talks after being singled out for harsher conditions than its major peers. Afghanistan got hit with a 15pc levy; Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Vietnam with 20pc; and India with 25pc. Meanwhile, Brazil, Canada and Switzerland led the tariff list, with a rate of 50pc, 35pc and 39pc, respectively. But Trump’s announcement did not cover export giant China, which is currently in negotiations on a trade deal ahead of an August 12 deadline. (*Dawn, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Pakistan, Iran set \$10bn trade target***

Pakistan and Iran committed to significantly strengthening their economic partnership, setting a target to raise bilateral trade to \$10 billion. The announcement came during the official visit of Iranian President Dr Masoud Pezeshkian to Islamabad, where he held high-level talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister’s Office, the two countries signed 12 agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoUs) covering trade, energy, connectivity, and cultural cooperation. Both sides expressed determination to translate diplomatic goodwill into tangible outcomes and to accelerate progress towards the trade target. (*Business Recorder, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***July trade deficit swells 44.16pc YoY***

Trade deficit in the first month of financial year 2025-26 swelled by 44.16 per cent on year-on-year basis, despite showing double digit growth in merchandise exports. According to the figures released by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), in July FY26 the merchandise exports increased by 17 per cent to \$2.7 billion compared to \$2.31 billion in July FY25. However, the import bill of merchandise in July FY26 jumped by

29.25 per cent to \$5.45 billion compared to \$4.2 billion in the same month of previous year increasing by over \$1 billion in just one month. On month-on-month basis, exports increased by 8.9 per cent in July FY26 to \$2.7 billion compared to \$2.48 billion in June FY25. Whereas, imports remained \$5.45 billion in July FY06 compared to \$4.85 billion in June FY05 up by 16.02 per cent. It may be mentioned here that according to All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA), the textile exports have posted a growth of 33.7pc to \$1.69 billion in July FY 2025-26 as compared to \$ 1.27 billion during the corresponding month of FY 2024-25. (*Business Recorder, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***‘Pak-Kenya bilateral trade rises to \$950m’***

Bilateral trade between Pakistan and Kenya surged to \$950 million in the last fiscal year, reflecting steady growth in economic ties between the two countries. As the nation celebrates the 78th Independence Day, Rafiq Suleman, President of the Pakistan-Kenya Business Council (PKBC) and former Chairman of the Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP), has extended heartfelt congratulations to the people of Pakistan, emphasizing the country’s growing international presence particularly in Kenya through trade and diplomacy. Suleman disclosed that bilateral trade between Pakistan and Kenya climbed to \$950 million last year, comprising \$350m in exports from Pakistan and \$600 million in imports from Kenya. (*Business Recorder, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Trade with North America rebounds in FY25***

Pakistan’s merchandise exports to North America grew by 9.97 per cent in FY25, reaching \$6.415bn compared to \$5.833bn in the previous year, driven largely by a surge in shipments to the United States. Data compiled by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) attributes the rebound to increased exports of textiles and clothing to the US, which accounted for nearly 94pc of Pakistan’s total exports to the region. The remaining share was primarily directed towards Canada. In contrast, FY24 saw a contraction of 8.42pc in exports to North America, dropping to \$5.432bn from \$5.93bn in FY23. Exports to the US had declined significantly to \$5.17bn in FY23 — down 23.28pc from \$6.74bn a year earlier — but have since recovered. (*Dawn, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Pakistan, Iran set \$3bn target for agri-trade in two years***

Pakistan and Iran decided to boost bilateral agriculture trade to \$3 billion within two years. The two countries signed a joint communique at the end of the visit of a high-level ministerial delegation of Pakistan, led by Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, to Tehran. (*Dawn, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

## **5.1 # Exports**

### ***Exports to EU rebound, hit \$8.86bn in FY25***

Pakistan’s exports to European countries posted a year-on-year increase of 7.44 per cent in FY25, largely driven by improved demand in western and southern European markets. According to data compiled by the State Bank of Pakistan, export earnings from the European Union (EU) rose to \$8.863bn in FY25, up from \$8.249bn in the

preceding fiscal year. The rebound was attributed to a modest uptick in demand for Pakistani goods— especially textiles and clothing—across western, eastern and northern Europe. This marks a reversal from FY24, when exports to the EU had declined 3.12pc to \$8.240bn despite Pakistan’s continued access to the GSP+ facility, which grants duty-free entry into most European markets.

### **TOMCL expands exports**

In another significant development, The Organic Meat Company Ltd (TOMCL) has expanded its international presence by entering the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region, beginning with Tajikistan. In a stock filing, TOMCL announced that it had commenced the production and export of frozen boneless beef, specifically tailored to meet Tajikistan’s import requirements and regulatory standards. The company has secured export orders worth \$3.24 million, to be fulfilled over the course of the current financial year. According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), country’s total exports of meat and meat preparations declined during FY25, falling to 114,112 tonnes (\$495m) from 123,419 tonnes (\$512m) in FY24. However, TOMCL’s growing presence in the CIS market suggests the potential for new opportunities and growth in Pakistan’s meat export sector. (*Dawn, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### **July textile exports grow 33.7pc to \$1.69bn YoY**

The country’s textile exports have posted a growth of 33.7 percent to \$ 1.69 billion in the first month of FY 2025-26 as compared to \$ 1.27 billion during the corresponding month of FY 2024-25. According to All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA), textile exports were \$ 1.47 billion in July 2021-22, \$ 1.48 billion 2022-23, \$ 1.31 billion 2023-24 and \$ 1.27 billion in July 2024-25. Pakistan textile exports were recorded at \$ 19.30 billion in FY 22, \$ 16.51 billion in FY 23, \$ 16.68 billion 24, \$ 16.68 billion in FY 25. (*Business Recorder, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### **Exports rise 17pc in July**

Pakistan’s merchandise exports posted a recovery in the first month of the current fiscal year, rising by 16.91 per cent — a sharp turnaround from the negative growth recorded in the previous month, according to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The export proceeds had declined 0.59pc in June 2025, -10.07pc in May and -7.36pc in April. However, the recovery in export proceeds in the month of July shows that demand for Pakistan’s exports has witnessed an upward trend. In absolute term, the export proceeds reached to \$2.69 billion in July 2025 from \$2.31bn in the same month last year. On a month-on-month basis, the export proceeds grew by 8.88pc in July.

For the 12 months of FY25, export proceeds stood at \$32.106bn in July-June as against \$30.675bn during the same period last year, reflecting a 4.67pc increase. The export growth fell to a single digit in October and eventually turned negative in February 5.57pc, April 7.36pc, and May 10.07pc. Export growth seen in March, with a modest 3.08pc increase, but it fell back to negative growth in the subsequent months. Global

buyers have recently shifted clothing orders from Bangladesh and China to Pakistan, creating an opportunity for local exporters to capture greater market share. (*Dawn*, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

### ***AGI to export sugarcane by-products to China***

The Ashraf Group of Industries (AGI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China's Shandong Dayi Biotechnology Group Co., Ltd. (SDBG) to foster strategic collaboration aimed at advancing Pakistan's organic fertilizer sector. Under the agreement, Shandong Dayi Biotechnology Group will extend substantial support to AGI's organic fertilizer facility, including upgrading production lines, streamlining manufacturing processes, and providing expertise in branding and formula development. The two companies will jointly develop innovative bio-compound fertilizers tailored for Pakistan and regional markets, the company announced.

This partnership is expected to deliver significant benefits to Pakistani farmers by introducing advanced organic fertilizers that can boost crop yields and lower the costs of conventional fertilizers. AGI and SDBG will work closely with farmers to ensure the new products are both effective and competitive, in alignment with the Punjab Government's vision to strengthen agricultural community. In addition, AGI will serve as a key distributor for select SDBG products—such as fertilizers and animal feed—across multiple regions of Pakistan. (*Business Recorder*, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8)

### ***TDAP organises series of seminars to boost maize exports***

Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) announced a series of specialized seminars aimed at empowering local maize growers and exporters to capitalize on the newly finalized maize export protocol with the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC). (*Business Recorder*, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2)

### ***Exports to nine regional states rise***

Exports to nine regional countries grew by 5.10 per cent in the first month of the current fiscal year compared to the same period last year, driven largely by increases in shipments to China, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. This growth is attributed to recent shifts in the regional political landscape, though trade relations with these nations have been strained in recent years due to restrictive government policies. According to data compiled by the State Bank of Pakistan, exports to Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Iran, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives totalled \$357.01 million in July, up from \$339.68m in the corresponding month last year. For the FY25, exports to regional countries rose modestly by 1.49pc to \$4.401bn, up from \$4.336bn in FY24. (*Dawn*, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

### ***Textile exports surge by 32pc in July***

Pakistan's textile and clothing exports saw a strong start to the current fiscal year, rising by 32 per cent in July. This surge, driven by increased demand from North America, follows the imposition of higher tariffs on competitors in the sector. Export proceeds

for the month reached \$1.68 billion, compared to \$1.27bn in July 2024, according to data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The sector has shown a positive growth trend in recent months, with June recording a year-on-year increase of 7.59pc. This recovery comes after consecutive declines in April and May, when exports posted negative growth. Pakistan's textile and clothing exports grew by 7.39pc in FY25, totalling \$17.887bn, up from \$16.655bn the previous year. Despite a \$25bn installed capacity, the sector has faced stagnation over the past two years due to structural issues, according to industry players. (*Dawn, August 23<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Raw food exports decline 10.25pc in July***

Pakistan's raw food exports saw a 10.25 per cent decline in July 2025, primarily due to a significant drop in rice shipments, marking the first downturn after 19 consecutive months of growth. Despite persistent food inflation in the country, the demand for Pakistani raw food exports weakened, largely due to shifts in global supply dynamics. Official figures from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics revealed that rice exports were the main contributor to this decline. Shipments of rice dropped by 18.29pc year-on-year, largely due to reduced exports of both basmati and non-basmati varieties.

Specifically, the quantity of basmati rice exports fell by 42.72pc year-on-year, with its value decreasing by 39.74pc. On the other hand, exports of non-basmati rice recorded a slight decline of 0.76pc in value but saw a 34.11pc increase in quantity during the same period. Despite the drop in overall rice exports, new markets, including Bangladesh, have begun importing Pakistani rice, highlighting the sector's growth potential. The rice industry remains a major contributor to Pakistan's exports, especially to the European Union (EU) and the United Kingdom (UK). (*Dawn, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Govt finalising five-year policy to boost textile exports***

Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan said the government is finalising a five-year Textiles and Apparel Policy aimed at making the sector regionally competitive, removing trade barriers and ensuring sustainable export growth. He added that a National Industrial Policy was also in the works to strengthen long-term export prospects and position Pakistan's manufacturing sector for global integration. Both initiatives are designed to enhance competitiveness and address longstanding inefficiencies. (*Dawn, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## **5.2 # Import**

### ***Cnergyico seals import deal: Pakistan to get first US oil shipment***

Pakistan's largest refiner Cnergyico will import 1 million barrels of oil from Vitol in October, its vice chairman Usama Qureshi told, marking the country's first-ever purchase of US crude following a landmark trade deal. The West Texas Intermediate (WTI) light crude cargo will be loaded from Houston this month and is expected to arrive in Karachi the second half of October, Qureshi said. (*Business Recorder, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Govt receives offers in 100,000 MT white sugar tender***

The lowest price offered in the international tender to buy 100,000 metric tons of white refined sugar from Pakistan was believed to be \$539.00 a metric ton cost and freight included (c&f), European traders said in initial assessments. Offers from the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) state agency are still being considered and no purchase has yet been reported, they said. The lowest offer was said to have been submitted by trading house ED&F Man for 50,000 tons of fine grain sugar sourced from any origin. Two other participants were reported. Dreyfus was said to have offered \$567.40 a ton c&f for 25,000 tons of fine grain sugar from any origin and Al Khaleej Sugar was believed to have offered \$599.00 a ton c&f for 30,000 tons of medium grain sourced from the United Arab Emirates. (*Business Recorder, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Record food imports, skyrocketing prices hit masses***

Pakistan's food import bill rose to a record \$8.14bn in FY25, up 3pc from \$7.90bn in FY24, as imports of palm oil, soybean oil, pulses and dry fruits reached all-time highs, driven by rising demand and population growth. According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) data, palm oil imports surged to a new peak of 3.213 million tonnes (\$3.4bn) in FY25, surpassing the previous record of 3.197m tonnes (\$2.66bn) in FY21. The average per-tonne price rose to \$1,056 in FY25 from \$927 in FY24.

Soybean oil imports also hit a new high at 321,107 tonnes (\$344m) in FY25, compared to 119,845 tonnes (\$129m) in FY24 and the previous record of 227,388 tonnes (\$315m) in FY23. However, the average price per tonne dipped slightly to \$1,070 from \$1,081.

Pulses imports also reached historic levels. Full-year data shows imports at 1.464m tonnes (\$1bn) in FY25 — up from 1.166m tonnes (\$774m) in FY24 and surpassing the previous record of 1.315m tonnes (\$946m) in FY23. The average per-tonne import price rose slightly to \$694 in FY25 from \$664 in FY24. SPI data reflected mixed trends in domestic pulse prices over the past year. The price of masoor fell to Rs260–370 per kg from Rs290–400 in July 2024, while moong rose to Rs340–460 from Rs300–410. Mash prices declined to Rs400–530 from Rs500–640, while gram remained steady at Rs270–400. The FY25 Economic Survey showed declining local pulse production. Gram production dropped by 16.6pc to 175,000 tonnes from 209,000 tonnes in FY24. Moong production fell to 131,000 tonnes from 153,000, while masoor and mash remained unchanged at 5,000 tonnes and 6,000 tonnes, respectively. With annual demand for gram estimated at 700,000–900,000 tonnes, the country continues to rely heavily on imports — up to 700,000 tonnes annually — to bridge the supply gap.

Dried fruits and nut imports also soared to an all-time high of 165,790 tonnes (\$143m) in FY25, up from 102,566 tonnes (\$71m) in FY24. Dried fruits are widely consumed in traditional sweets and dishes, particularly around Islamic festivals such as Eidul Fitr and Rabi-ul-Awal, driving seasonal spikes in demand. (*Dawn, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)



### ***TCP buys more sugar***

State-run Trading Corporation of Pakistan has purchased an initial 30,000 tonnes of white sugar in an international tender seeking around 200,000 tonnes which closed last week, European traders said. The validity of other price offers submitted in the tender has been extended until, Aug 27, so more purchases are seen as possible, Initial 30,000-tonne purchase was believed to have been made from Al Khaleej Sugar for medium grade sugar at an estimated \$582.50 a ton c&f, Reports reflect assessments from traders, and further estimates of prices and volumes are still possible. The tender sought offers for fine, small and medium grade sugar, all for arrival in Pakistan by Oct 31. TCP can consider offers for several days in tenders before deciding whether to purchase. Offers in tender were submitted on Aug 21. The Lowest offer is not always accepted if other conditions associated with it are not seen as attractive. (*Dawn, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Import tariff cut on 300 products approved, Jam tells Senate***

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal informed the Senate that the government has approved sweeping import tariff reductions on around 300 products, aiming to spur industrial growth, cut consumer costs, and boost export competitiveness. Responding to a calling attention notice in the House, the minister said the government had authorised tariff reductions on nearly 300 items – primarily goods not produced or readily available in Pakistan – while duties on 900 other products would remain unchanged under the National Tariff Policy. Some import tariffs, he noted, previously reached as high as 40pc. The revised structure is designed to facilitate access to imported inputs used in value-added production and to lower costs for general consumers. The reductions will be rolled out gradually, with some taking effect within a year, and others phased in over the next two to five years – an approach Kamal said would give local industries time to adapt. (*Business Recorder, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Govt decides to import 85,000 MT of sugar***

The government has decided to import 85,000 metric tons of sugar to meet the demand for sugar in country and stabilize Sugar prices in local market. In order to meet the demand for sugar in country and stabilize prices, Letters of Credit have been established through SOCAR for the import of 85,000 metric tons of sugar, said a release issued by Federal Ministry of Food Security. (*Business Recorder, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***APSEA delegation signs \$500m US soybean import deal in Washington***

A trade delegation from the All Pakistan Solvent Extractors' Association, led by Patron-in-Chief Shahzad Ali Khan and President Zain Mahmood, visited Washington this week and finalised agreements with leading soybean exporters, including Cargill, LDC, Olam and others, to import 1.1 million tons of US soybeans valued at approximately \$500 million. The agreement is expected to significantly reduce the US–Pakistan trade deficit while placing no additional burden on Pakistan's import bill, as purchases will replace existing imports largely from Brazil. (*Business Recorder, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***Solar push sparks 68% rise in lithium battery imports***

Pakistan's imports of lithium-ion batteries from China have surged to high levels in the first half of 2025, trade data shows. Head of Research at 'Business Recorder' Zuhair Abbasi shared data from the International Trade Centre (ITC) and explained that Pakistan imported 68 per cent more lithium batteries from China in just six months of 2025 than it did in the entire 2024. (*The News, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

### ***Listed banks post Rs168bn profit***

Pakistan's listed banks posted a combined profit of Rs168bn in second quarter of 2025, up 22pc year-on-year but down 3pc from the previous quarter, according to a report by Topline Securities. The sector's net interest income rose 19pc YoY. United Bank Ltd (UBL) recorded sharpest growth, with NII up 213pc to Rs91bn, followed by NBP with a 42pc increase to Rs61bn, and Bank of Punjab with a 158pc jump to Rs21bn. Excluding these three, sector-wide NII declined 2pc YoY. (*Dawn, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## **6.1 # Food Companies**

### ***Over 20 brands of drinking water unsafe for human consumption***

Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) declared 23 brands unsafe for human consumption due to microbiological or chemical contamination. The government of Pakistan had tasked PCRWR with monitoring bottled/mineral water brands on quarterly basis and publicize the results for awareness of public health. For the second quarter of year 2025 from April to June, 203 samples of mineral/bottled water brands were collected from 21 major cities. Comparison of test results with the bottled water quality standards of Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) had revealed that 23 brands were unsafe for human consumption due to microbiological or chemical contamination. (*Dawn, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***Competition Appellate Tribunal cuts fine on flour mills to Rs35m***

The Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) has reduced the penalty imposed by the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) on the Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA) for its involvement in wheat flour price-fixing, cutting the fine from Rs75 million to Rs35 million. The CCP had launched an inquiry in 2019 after reports emerged of an unusual spike in wheat flour prices nationwide. It later found that the PFMA had violated Section 4 of the Competition Act 2010 by fixing prices, sharing commercially sensitive information, and collectively determining production quantities — conduct deemed a horizontal agreement with anti-competitive objectives. Following its investigation, the CCP imposed the maximum statutory penalty of Rs75m. However, the PFMA challenged the decision before the tribunal, which, after reviewing the record and hearing arguments from both sides, decided to reduce the fine to Rs35m. (*Dawn, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)



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

### ***July FDI up 7pc to \$208m YoY***

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Pakistan rose by 7 percent in the first month of this fiscal year (FY26). According to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Pakistan received FDI amounting to \$208 million during July 2025 as against \$195 million in July 2024, showing an increase of \$13.4 million. During the period under review, FDI inflows were \$317 million as against \$109 million outflows. In the previous fiscal year (FY25), Pakistan attracted \$2.457 billion in FDI, posting a remarkable growth of 110 percent, largely supported by Chinese inflows. Analysts said the growth momentum witnessed in the previous year is expected to continue during the current fiscal year. “With improving economic indicators, foreign investment in the country is gradually rising as investor confidence strengthens,” they said.

Pakistan’s two Eurobonds, worth \$1.8 billion, are set to mature this year, providing a cushion for the issuance of fresh bonds. In addition, Pakistan’s bonds are currently trading at a premium, reflecting improved economic fundamentals, they mentioned. Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) witnessed an outflow of \$34 million in July 2025 compared to \$23.6 million inflows in July 2024. The net foreign investment in the country decreased by 55 percent or \$200 million to \$163.5 million in the first month of this fiscal year as against \$363 million in the same month of previous fiscal year. The country wise analysis revealed that China is the largest investing country with some \$51 million in July 2025 followed by Canada \$36 million and \$21 million by Switzerland. (*Business Recorder, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Flows from abroad surge 59pc in July***

Pakistan began the new fiscal year with foreign inflows of \$695 million in July, a 59 per cent increase compared to the same month last year. This boost came from \$675m in foreign loans and \$19m in grants, reflecting a significant rise from last year’s \$426m in loans and \$10.5m in grants. The uptick in inflows comes after the finalisation of Pakistan’s Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which had been delayed following the approval of the federal budget. Despite this, the government was able to achieve robust growth in both loan and grant categories in July.

The target for foreign inflows in the current fiscal year has been set at \$19.9 billion, slightly higher than the \$19.4bn target for the previous year. This includes \$6.4bn from multilateral and bilateral lenders, \$400m in international bonds, \$3.1bn in foreign commercial loans, as well as substantial time deposits from Saudi Arabia and China. In July 2023, Pakistan had secured over \$2.89bn in foreign loans, largely due to the signing of a 9-month Stand-By Agreement (SBA) with the IMF. This resulted in substantial inflows, including \$2bn from Saudi Arabia and \$1.2bn from the IMF. Overall, total inflows for July 2023 amounted to \$5.1bn.

However, this year's foreign inflows were significantly higher, with July seeing \$694.53m compared to \$436.39m in the same month last year. The Ministry of Economic Affairs (EAD) confirmed that out of this amount, \$246.47m were for project financing, a 20pc decline from the \$307m received in July 2024. On the other hand, non-project financing surged to \$448m in July 2025, up almost 250pc from \$129m a year earlier. A notable development this year was the sharp increase in budget support loans, which reached \$196m in July, compared to just \$1.23m in the same month of 2024. This marks a record increase in budget financing, despite annual target for budget support being set at \$13.5bn for current year, lower than last year's target of \$15bn.

Pakistan was also able to secure \$100m from the Saudi Oil Facility in July, against an annual target of \$1bn. The government's overall foreign financing targets include \$5bn from multilateral lenders, excluding the IMF. In July, \$380m was received from multilateral lenders, up from \$201m in the same month last year, reflecting an increase in multilateral support despite the reduced full-year target of \$4.5bn.

Bilateral lenders, excluding the three strategic allies, contributed \$118m in July, slightly surpassing the \$108m from the previous year. The annual target for bilateral inflows stands at \$1.36bn. Total inflows from both bilateral and multilateral sources amounted to \$498.3m in July, against the annual target of \$6.4bn. Last year, Pakistan had received \$309m from these lenders, with an annual target of \$5.05bn. Remittances from overseas Pakistanis also saw an uptick in July, with \$196.2m received through Naya Pakistan Certificates, a sharp rise from \$128m in July 2024. The government has projected a total of \$609m in remittances from these certificates for the current fiscal year. The government's ambitious \$19.9bn target for foreign inflows in the current fiscal year includes \$6.4bn from multilateral and bilateral sources, \$400m in international bonds, \$3.1bn in foreign commercial loans, and substantial contributions from strategic allies, including \$5bn from Saudi Arabia in time deposits and \$4bn in SAFE deposits from China. (*Dawn*, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

## **7.1 # Countries / Regions**

### ***UK announces £1.33m aid to support flood affectees***

The United Kingdom (UK) Government has announced £1.33 million in humanitarian aid to support Pakistan's response to the devastating effects of the 2025 monsoon season. This funding will help more than 223,000 people across seven flood-affected districts in Punjab, Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), the spokesperson for the British High Commission said in a statement. "The UK's support is enabling a wide range of emergency and early recovery efforts. These include the provision of dry food rations, search and rescue operations, mobile medical camps, rehabilitation of drinking water systems, restoration of irrigation channels, and support for livelihoods and agriculture," the statement added. (*Business Recorder*, August 23<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8)

## **7.2 # China**

### ***China eyes agri, mining cooperation***

China is willing to cooperate with Pakistan in industry, agriculture and mining, Foreign Minister Wang Yi told Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar in Islamabad, according to a readout of the meeting released by Wang's ministry. Beijing would continue to support Pakistan in safeguarding its national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and combating terrorism, Wang told Dar, adding that China would continue to give priority to Pakistan in its regional diplomacy.

Both countries should join hands to safeguard the multilateral trading system and oppose unilateral bullying, and upgrade the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, he said. Wang, on a five-day tour of South Asia, has visited India and Afghanistan, mending and consolidating ties with China's neighbours to the south days before a leaders' summit in China for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, a 10-nation Eurasian security and political grouping whose members include China, Russia, India, Pakistan, and Iran. (*Business Recorder*, August 22<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1)

### ***Pakistan eyes \$5bn investments at Pakistan-China B2B moot***

In a bid to deepen economic ties with Beijing, Pakistan is targeting up to \$5 billion in new investment at the forthcoming Pakistan-China B2B Investment Conference, scheduled for 4th September in Beijing, coinciding with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit 2025. The conference underscores Islamabad's renewed drive to attract Chinese capital beyond traditional government channels, focusing on business-to-business partnerships to unlock opportunities across key sectors. (*Business Recorder*, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1)

### ***Chinese team assured of full cooperation in agriculture collaboration***

The Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, has assured a Chinese agricultural delegation that Pakistan will extend full institutional support to all joint projects and ensure a transparent, efficient, and facilitative environment for Chinese companies and experts working in Pakistan. A 20-member Chinese delegation, led by Yuan Jianmin, Adviser to the People's Government of Xinjiang, China, began a two-week visit to Pakistan with a meeting with the minister for national food security and research. (*Dawn*, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3)

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

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

#### ***ADB to give \$410m for Barrick-run Reko Diq***

The Asian Development Bank will provide a \$410 million financing package to help develop Pakistan's Reko Diq copper mine, one of the world's largest untapped deposits, which will be operated by Barrick Gold. Islamabad hopes the project will serve as a springboard to draw more foreign interest to its mineral sector, particularly to exploit rare earth deposits. Pakistan has already attracted interest from Trump administration

and offered future concessions to US companies. The loans and a financing guarantee will support development of Reko Diq, which is expected to produce copper and gold from 2028 and generate about \$70 billion in free cash flow over its lifespan. The financing is composed of two loans totalling \$300m to Barrick and a \$110m financing guarantee for the Government of Pakistan, both sources said ahead of the official announcement. The \$6.6bn project in Balochistan is 50pc owned by Barrick with the other half held by the federal and provincial governments.

The project aims to raise upwards of \$2bn and has a previous agreement for \$700m in financing from the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private investment arm. The project's developers are in talks with other prospective financiers, including the US Export-Import Bank, Export Development Canada and Japans JBIC and expect to sign term sheets this quarter, project director Tim Cribb told *Reuters* in April. (*Dawn*, August 22<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

### ***ADB support***

Pakistan's quest for deeper collaboration with the Asian Development Bank underscores both its growing appetite for long-term, low-cost development financing and its reliance on multilateral lenders to shore up a frail economy. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb's meeting with ADB president Masato Kanda for greater cooperation across key areas and policy-based lending appears to be as much a pitch for fresh funding from the lender as it is a request for technical support to develop innovative financing instruments to explore international debt markets and raise more funds. The wish-list for financial support from the bank and its collaboration in market-based financing instruments — green bonds, blended finance and debt-for-nature swaps — indicates both ambition and desperation for new funding avenues amid dwindling bilateral official and private flows.

However, the real challenge does not lie in mobilising debt but in a long-term commitment to structural, fiscal and governance reform beyond the present IMF funding programme. The painfully slow progress in critical areas such as energy, taxation and SOEs, however, does not inspire much confidence in the government's commitment to reforms. That the ADB boss has reaffirmed his support for Pakistan at a time when the two sides are working out details of the 10-year Country Partnership Strategy (2026-35) on the pattern of a similar \$20bn World Bank programme is reassuring. However, while this fact does signal the bank's confidence in Pakistan's medium-term trajectory, it also underlines Pakistan's increasing dependence on its multilateral partners to heavily finance its development and keep the economy afloat.

There is no doubt that the ADB has played an important role in Pakistan's economic trajectory over the past decades. But the country's experience with the bank — or, for that matter, with other multilateral agencies — in recent years shows that, without credible reforms and sound management, such a partnership cannot go very far. Mr

Aurangzeb is right to stress the recent hard-won macroeconomic stabilisation: inflation is down, the current account has turned around and international rating upgrades are expected to ease borrowing costs. Yet these gains will remain fragile unless the execution of long-standing productivity and governance reforms is expedited. Not just that, Islamabad also stands to lose the international goodwill it has gained in the past couple of years if it fails to show consistent commitment to sound governance and economic management policies. (*Dawn, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 6*)

### ***ADB commits \$3 million grant for flood relief***

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has announced a \$3 million grant from the Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund to support emergency relief efforts following massive flooding in Pakistan. The announcement was made by ADB President Masato Kanda, who concluded his three-day official visit to Pakistan. He extended condolences over the loss of lives and the hardships faced by those affected by the monsoon rains and floods, according to an ADB press release. “Pakistan is experiencing devastating flooding that has displaced families and communities, and ADB stands firmly with Pakistan during this crisis,” Mr Kanda said. (*Dawn, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Asian Development Bank to fund climate-resilient agriculture project***

ADB is poised to finance a climate-resilient and low-carbon agriculture mechanisation project in Punjab, designed to enhance access to modern farming equipment for small farmers while reducing the sector’s environmental footprint. The proposed Punjab Climate Resilient and Low Carbon Agriculture Mechanisation Project will involve the import of advanced agricultural machinery, which is expected to improve efficiency, reduce fuel consumption, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

This machinery will replace the outdated, inefficient equipment currently used in the province, much of which is 20 to 60 years old. The ADB report highlights that the existing machinery is fuel-inefficient, produces higher emissions, and is less environmentally friendly. Under the new project, small farmers will be able to access this modern equipment during critical periods such as sowing and harvesting, which they could not otherwise afford. The mechanisation is expected to enhance agricultural productivity, increase crop yields, and reduce operational costs by decreasing the reliance on large labour forces.

The ADB report also notes that while the introduction of hi-tech machinery will reduce emissions, improper use of the equipment could lead to increased pollution. The agriculture sector currently accounts for 174.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, with a significant portion stemming from rice paddy flooding, crop residue burning, excessive fertiliser use, and livestock management. Of these emissions, 89.8 tonnes are methane, and 83.7 tonnes are nitrous oxide.

Punjab, the country’s agricultural powerhouse, contributes 76 per cent of the national wheat, 62pc of rice, and 91pc of maize production. However, the province faces

significant risks from climate change, which threatens crop yields through shifts in temperature, precipitation patterns, and water resource variability. Studies predict that, even under lower emissions scenarios, key crops like wheat and maize could see yield reductions of 5pc and 6pc, respectively. To combat these challenges, the ADB project will establish a circular agriculture model that promotes resource efficiency, reduces environmental impacts, and encourages the adoption of advanced machinery. The model will also involve strategic private-sector engagement to promote sustainable biomass utilisation and off-farm rice residue management. As climate change continues to impact agriculture in the region, the project aims to build resilience and mitigate the sector's environmental impact, ensuring long-term sustainability and economic benefits for small farmers in Punjab. (*Dawn*, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

## **8.2 # World Bank (WB)**

***NA panel told: 55 active projects being implemented through World Bank financing***

The National Assembly Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Special Initiatives was informed that a total of 55 development projects are currently being implemented across the country with financial support from the World Bank. The committee met under the chairmanship of Abdul Kadir Gilani, where members were given a detailed briefing on the ongoing engagements with the World Bank Group. The committee unanimously recommended that the Planning and Development Departments of Punjab and Sindh be called to provide exclusive briefings on such projects. (*Business Recorder*, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1)

## **9 # POLICY**

### **9.1 # Agricultural Policy**

***Better policies needed to salvage agriculture sector, says SAB***

A meeting of Sindh Abadgar Board (SAB) expressed its dismay over current situation of crops in the province. It noted that government's flawed policy has aggravated state of farm sector, already hit by low production, inadequate rates and increasing input costs. The participating growers told the meeting, chaired by SAB President Mahmood Nawaz Shah, that the federal and Sindh governments implemented 'crooked' deregulation policy in this crisis which started with wheat in March 2024 when government suddenly stopped procurement of wheat. It noted that around seven million tons of wheat was not procured by government which usually creates a domino impact on wheat market with no buyers and middlemen taking advantage of bumper wheat stock. Amid this situation, wheat price dropped from Rs3,800 to Rs2,200 in market against the production cost of Rs3,450 (calculated by government).

SAB said that this caused a cumulative loss of Rs900bn to wheat farmers in 2024 and despite this colossal loss to agriculture sector, government did not take remedial measures and same story was repeated in 2025 not only in wheat but in sugar cane sector as well where government did not fix any price. It said that government, however,

allowed prices of sugar to increase after harvesting of sugar cane in April 2025. Prices of other major commodities such as cotton and paddy remained low. In addition to this, SAB noted, government continued to spend foreign exchange on import of agricultural commodities right at the time of harvesting of crops, further affecting revenue of growers. This resulted in bleeding of agricultural economy. As a consequence, uptake of fertilisers reduced, tractor sales plummeted, price of diesel and pesticides continue to rise. (*Dawn, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Karachi needs vertical farming for fresh food production, moot told***

Former federal minister and prominent scientist Prof Dr Atta-ur-Rahman has emphasised the urgent need to address food insecurity in Pakistan and across the globe. He asserted that vertical farming and controlled environment agriculture (CEA) offer a feasible and efficient solution for producing fresh food in densely populated cities like Karachi. “Fresh food production in urban areas such as Karachi, even in limited spaces, is possible through vertical farming and CEA,” he said while speaking at a symposium — Sustainable Agriculture for Food and Nutritional Security under the Climate Change Scenario — held at the L.E.J. National Science Information Center, University of Karachi. The event was organised by the KU’s International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), in collaboration with the Sindh Innovation, Research, and Education Network (SIREN). (*Dawn, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 16*)

## **9.2 # Developmental Policy**

### ***Ministry okays Rs141bn PSDP for first quarter***

The Ministry of Planning and Development has authorised the release of Rs141 billion under Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for the projects of federal ministries and divisions for the first quarter (July-September) of the current fiscal year. Funds for Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan will be released on a biannual basis due to seasonal constraints, according to the ministry’s Monthly Development Update for August 2025, released by Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal. Ministry of Finance notified the funds release strategy for the FY26 development budget, under which 15 per cent of the Rs1 trillion PSDP is required for disbursement in July-September, followed by 20pc in October-December, 25pc in January-March and the remaining 40pc in April-June. (*Dawn, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***CDWP clears 15 projects worth Rs520bn***

The CDWP cleared 15 development projects worth an estimated Rs520bn. Of these, nine projects totalling Rs496.485bn were referred to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (EcneC) for formal approval, while six projects valued at Rs22.487bn were approved directly by the CDWP. Presided over by Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, the CDWP meeting evaluated proposals across various sectors, including education, health, housing, social welfare, and transport. Under financial rules, the CDWP can approve projects costing up to Rs7.5bn, while higher-value projects are submitted to EcneC following technical clearance. (*Dawn, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)



### ***Murad approves Rs55bn for district ADP funds***

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah approved a Rs55 billion allocation for the district Annual Development Programme and directed that deputy commissioners serve as project directors for schemes in their respective districts, with the exception of Karachi. A spokesperson for the CM House said that the implementation of district ADP schemes in Karachi would remain under the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) while deputy commissioners would continue to serve as project directors for schemes in rural areas. (*Dawn, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***New PSDP projects limited to 2pc under IMF programme***

The government has restricted financing for new projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) to just two per cent for the current year, in line with conditions of the ongoing Extended Fund Facility (EFF) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This was disclosed by Planning and Development Secretary Awais Manzoor Sumra while briefing the Senate Standing Committee on Planning and Development. Mr Sumra said the IMF had demanded that new development projects be limited to 10pc of the PSDP to maintain fiscal discipline, given the already large and longstanding project portfolio.

He said 2,518 projects worth Rs344bn were completed or closed down in this process. The secretary informed the committee that IMF had also sent a questionnaire covering multiple areas, including Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Public Investment Management (PIM), which were directly linked to the Planning Commission. Pakistan submitted the completed questionnaire on March 20, 2025. While discussing the IMF's Diagnosis Report, it was revealed that the lender had pointed out weak project prioritisation, frequent delays, cost overruns, and inadequate protection of funds for approved projects as major shortcomings. (*Dawn, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## **9.3 # Neo – Liberal Policies**

### ***USC closure leaves employees, consumers high and dry***

The government's decision to close all utility stores across the country has not only left thousands of employees in a state of shock, but has also triggered deep concern among low-income consumers who depended on the network for essential goods at subsidised rates. Amid harsh hot and humid weather conditions, a large number of USC employees, including women, have established a protest camp outside the USC head office at Blue Area, waiting for the result of talks between their union and the government negotiating team. (*Dawn, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***Govt decides to deregulate sugar sector: minister***

Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain said the government has decided to deregulate the sugar sector in a move aimed at stabilising the market, deregulation of the sugar sector includes prices, export and import. Under the deregulation, the government will not intervene in pricing, procurement, or supply



mechanisms, allowing the private sector to operate freely. Dispelling rumours of sugar shortage and inflated prices, Hussain assured that sufficient sugar stock is available across the country. He said that following reports of rising market prices, the government signed an agreement with sugar mills on July 14, fixing the ex-mill price at Rs165 per kg, with the retail price currently averaging Rs173 per kg. He emphasised that strict action is being taken against hoarders and profiteers attempting to create artificial shortages. (*Business Recorder, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Cabinet approves USC dissolution***

The federal cabinet unanimously approved the dissolution of the state-run Utility Stores Corporation (USC), weeks after its nationwide operations were suspended. While chairing a meeting of the cabinet, PM Shehbaz Sharif directed that the winding down of the loss-making retail chain be conducted with full transparency and with safeguards in place to protect employee rights. The USC, established to provide subsidised goods to low-income households, ceased operations on July 31 amid growing concerns over inefficiency, mismanagement, and overlapping mandates with other government programmes. The decision marks a significant shift in the government's strategy to streamline state-owned enterprises and reduce fiscal strain, though no timeline for the dissolution was disclosed. (*Business Recorder, August 23<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Utility Stores Corporation closure puts 11,000 jobs on the line***

The National Assembly Standing Committee on Privatisation was informed that the government will ensure the payment of Rs27 billion in dues to employees and vendors of the Utility Stores Corporation (USC) in two phases following its closure. Chaired by Dr Muhammad Farooq Sattar, the committee was told that the closure of USC had been finalised, but safeguarding the rights of the approximately 11,000 workers was the government's top priority. The committee sought a detailed breakdown of outstanding dues to be paid to employees and vendors, which the Privatisation Commission was asked to submit at the next meeting. In response, Privatisation Commission's secretary informed the committee that the due diligence process for the privatisation of Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Ltd (PIACL) had already begun, with several business houses expressing interest. The privatisation process for PIA is expected to be completed by the last quarter of 2025. (*Dawn, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## **10 # SOCIO – ECONOMIC CONDITION**

### ***Karachi inches closer to severe water crisis: WWF***

Karachi is edging dangerously close to a severe water crisis, as key freshwater sources that sustain the city face mounting stress. Experts signalled weaning over the fast-depleting Keenjhar Lake, Hub Dam, and underground aquifers, alerting that unsustainable extraction, climate change, and poor governance are dragging the city to acute water scarcity. President WWF-Pakistan Nadeem Khalid, speaking at a high-level workshop, said these water bodies are not merely supply points, but “lifelines” that support millions of people, farms, and entire ecosystems. He was addressing the third

workshop of the Collective Action Platform for Initiating the Policy Level Work and Strategic Planning for Resilience and Sustainability of Freshwater Ecosystems. (*Business Recorder*, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4)

### ***Real GDP growth to rush to 3.5pc by 2027: Fitch***

Pakistan's real GDP growth to accelerate to 3.5 percent by 2027 from 2.5 per cent in 2024, says Fitch Ratings. Fitch, in its report, stated that Pakistan's economic recovery comes after a period of significant turmoil and high inflation. The rating agency expects the country's real GDP growth to accelerate to 3.5 percent by 2027 from 2.5 percent in 2024. Consumer price inflation eased to 4.1 percent in July 2025 from its peak of 38 percent in May 2023, and the Fitch expect it to average around 5 percent in 2025. The halving of the policy rate since May 2024 to 11 per cent and a stabilising external position, evident in lower currency volatility and current account surpluses, should support this recovery. (*Business Recorder*, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1)

## **10.1 # Food**

### ***Pakistanis spending billions on formula milk unnecessarily: experts***

At a time when fewer than 2,000 newborn infants in Pakistan genuinely require breast milk substitutes due to maternal death, critical illness or rare metabolic disorders, the country consumes formula milk and baby food worth over Rs110 billion every year, officials and health experts disclosed. Senior paediatricians and public health experts say this vast gap between actual medical need and consumption volume raises serious concerns about the aggressive and unchecked marketing tactics of multinational formula milk companies operating in Pakistan. With approximately six million births annually, and a maternal mortality ratio of 186 per 100,000 live births, only a small proportion of newborns are unable to receive breast milk immediately after birth.

Experts estimate that even accounting for severe maternal illness and rare infant conditions, fewer than 2,000 newborns nationwide require breast milk substitutes in the immediate postnatal period. Despite this, the formula milk industry continues to expand, largely fuelled by unregulated marketing, promotions in health facilities, and distribution practices that blur the line between medical necessity and consumer convenience. Seven multinational companies currently dominate Pakistan's infant formula market. These firms are lobbying the Sindh government to soften the Sindh Protection and Promotion of Breastfeeding and Young Child Nutrition Act, 2023, while pushing to prevent similar laws at federal and provincial levels.

The Sindh Act, considered one of South Asia's most progressive breastfeeding protection frameworks, aligns with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes and World Health Assembly (WHA) resolutions. It bans promotional activity in health settings and giving gifts to professionals, and mandates prescription-only sales of breast milk substitutes for children up to 36 months. Industry groups like the Baby Nutrition & Food Council claim that the law restricts access and scientific

information. They seek to reclassify formula milk as a food product instead of a therapeutic good, shifting regulation from the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan to under-resourced provincial food authorities. According to the World Health Organisation, suboptimal breastfeeding contributes to nearly 50 per cent of child deaths, mostly from infections like diarrhoea and pneumonia. Economically, the country loses an estimated \$2.8 billion annually due to increased illness, medical costs and impaired cognitive development. Even though breast milk substitutes are rarely medically necessary, they are often marketed for use among older infants and toddlers, especially in urban areas. (*The News*, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 13)

### ***IHC urged to help stop wheat flour wastage***

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has been approached to prevent the wastage of billions of rupees worth of flour (atta), the staple food of the masses, lost during handling and transit. In a letter addressed to the Chief Justice of IHC, Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar, Chairman of Pakistan Polypropylene Woven Sack Manufacturers Association, Iskandar Khan, recalled that former IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah had initiated proceedings under National Interest Case on July 8, 2020. At present, most flour continues to be packed in substandard, non-food grade bags manufactured from hospital waste, crushed batteries, and hazardous plastic. Not only does this cause large-scale wastage of flour, but it also contaminates the staple food, spreading diseases.

According to the association, the non-implementation of the Gazette Notification has resulted in flour wastage valued at approximately Rs 594 billion annually. This represents the wheat cultivated on 752,941 acres of land and 1,014,239 cubic feet of water consumed to grow it each year since 2017. The price difference between non-food grade and food-grade sacks is minimal compared to the potential saving of Rs 67.2 billion in flour losses during the current year alone. “We seek the Chief Justice’s intervention to stop the wastage of flour, particularly for the 45 percent of people living below the poverty line, as per World Bank estimates, and the 11 million facing acute food insecurity, as reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization,” Iskandar Khan stated in his letter. (*Business Recorder*, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3)

## **10.2 # Food Scarcity**

### ***Food shortage in Ghizer as road damaged by floods yet to be repaired***

A severe food shortage is expected in Ghizer district of Gilgit-Baltistan as the region was still disconnected from other areas days after floods damaged the Gilgit-Shandoor road. Local people have been stranded in the area, as mobility, even for emergency needs, has become impossible due to extensive damage to the road network. According to the local administration, a flood in a nullah in Khotom village blocked the Ghizer river six days ago. It increased the water level in the river and submerged the Gilgit-Shandoor road. Phander, Khalti, Teero and other areas of Ghizer up to the Shandur top have been disconnected from other parts of the region due to the flooding. (*Dawn*, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12)

### ***Country's nutrition situation worsening: experts***

Experts in agriculture, research and food sciences have expressed deep concern over the country's worsening nutritional situation, warning that Covid-19 pandemic has intensified malnutrition among women and children while climate change continues to threaten food sources. They were speaking at the "Provincial Consultation on Setting Priorities & Defining Research Agenda on Food Systems Transformation & Nutrition," hosted by Sindh Agriculture University (SAU), Tandojam, with the support from Pak-Korea Nutrition Centre (PKNC) and Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN). According to recent findings, 82.8pc of the population could not afford a healthy diet and 37pc face moderate to severe food insecurity. The experts urged national institutions to formulate effective policies to address the food crisis.

In his presidential address, SAU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Altaf Ali Siyal stressed that if Sindh was to avert a surge in malnutrition and food insecurity, a united approach, from policymakers to farmers, was essential. He called for climate-resilient agriculture to safeguard crops from floods, droughts and heatwaves; strict enforcement of food safety laws to prevent contamination and wastage and creation of nutrition-focused value chains to ensure delivery of healthy food to the marginalised households.

Dr Benash Sarwar from PKNC, University of Agriculture Faisalabad, said Pakistan's food system was under immense strain, with an estimated 20m tonnes of food wasted annually including up to 50pc of fruits and vegetables after the harvest. She stressed the need for integrated, multi-sectoral strategy aligned with UN Food Systems Summit Pathway and Sustainable Development Goals, along with a National Nutrition Research Agenda involving provinces, academia, government and development partners. This would help bridge data gaps, guide investments, and institutionalise reforms.

Dr Tahseen Fatima Miano, associate professor at the SAU's Institute of Food Sciences, said children and women in Sindh were among the most affected. She noted that 46pc children under five suffer from stunting, 41pc are underweight and 23pc face wasting while anaemia in pregnant women reached 45pc. She urged the government to prioritise food fortification, strengthen storage and distribution systems and expand community-based nutrition education programmes. (*Dawn, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

## **10.3 # Inflation**

### ***Fuel and food costs push July inflation to 4.1pc***

Headline consumer inflation rose to 4.1 per cent in July, up from 3.2pc a month earlier, driven by a rebound in fuel and food prices, official data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) showed. The uptick in inflation over the past two months is attributed primarily to higher petroleum product prices, record-high retail sugar rates, and a nationwide rise in meat prices. Despite the month-on-month increase, average annual inflation for FY25 dropped sharply to 4.49pc from 23.41pc in the previous year, aided by a high base effect, declining food prices, and lower transport costs. Economists

describe the current trend as disinflation — a slowdown in the pace of rising prices, not a general decrease as seen in deflation — though the cost of living remains high for many households. The latest CPI data showed a 2.9pc increase in July on a month-on-month basis, indicating a reversal of the disinflationary trend. However, inflation for July 2025 remained the lowest compared to the corresponding month of the previous year, when it stood at 11.1pc. Inflation had previously fallen into single digits in August 2024 — at 9.6pc — for the first time in over three years, continuing a declining trend until the recent rebound. Food inflation in July increased by 2.2pc in urban areas and 1.5pc in rural areas, while non-food inflation reached 5.9pc in urban areas and 5.4pc in rural regions. This marks a return to positive growth in food prices after four consecutive months of decline. In July, core inflation — excluding volatile food and energy components — stood at 7pc in urban areas and 8.1pc in rural areas. (*Dawn, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Wheat, vegetable prices surge as market disruptions continue***

After over a year of price stability driven by declining interest rates and encouraging economic indicators, consumers are now facing rising prices for wheat and related products. The wheat crop, although harvested in March, came in below expectations, contributing to growing concerns. Traders warn that wheat consumption in the livestock and poultry sectors has added to the supply pressure, as a significant amount of wheat has been diverted for animal feed. In addition, recent heavy rains, particularly in Karachi and the upcountry, have exacerbated the supply-demand imbalance for vegetables, leading to higher prices at markets. (*Dawn, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Sharp surge in prices of various medicines***

The prices of a broad spectrum of medicines have surged sharply in recent months, threatening to put essential treatments beyond the reach of many citizens. An anecdotal survey conducted by Business Recorder revealed that medicine prices have risen between eight and 35 percent over the past four months. Talking to this correspondent, the traders lamented that these are some of the most essential medicines used to combat fever, cardiac issues, infections, weakness, and eye problems.

They said that many drugs, especially those treating chronic conditions, have become out of reach for the average consumer. They said most drugs, especially those for chronic ailments, have been rendered unaffordable for the public. The caretaker government of Anwaarul Haq Kakar had approved the deregulation policy in February 2024 after the Ministry of National Health recommended it, allowing pharmaceutical companies to independently raise prices for non-essential drugs excluded from the National Essential Medicines List. (*Business Recorder, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Flour prices sharply higher***

Flour prices have sharply increased across the city (Peshawar), with a 20-kilogram bag now costing up to Rs300 more. Price of flour per kilogram has risen by Rs15 to Rs20.

A 20kg bag of mixed flour is now being sold at Rs1,800, while fine flour has reached Rs1,900. Dealers attributed the price hike to large-scale wheat hoarding, saying stockists have purchased bulk quantities directly from farmers and stored them, creating an artificial shortage in the market. (*Business Recorder, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

#### **10.4 # Poverty**

##### ***Women Economic Development Forum for action against climate-induced poverty***

Addressing the urgent need to combat climate-induced poverty through women's economic empowerment, speakers at the Women Economic Development Forum, organized by the Sindh Community Foundation (SCF) under the SURMI project with support from Pathfinder International, called for coordinated efforts from the government, civil society, and private sector. The forum marked the completion of adult literacy programs, vocational skills training, and livelihood asset distribution that benefitted over 250 women from 35 villages in District Thatta.

In his keynote remarks, Javed Hussain, Executive Director of SCF, stressed that while rural women possess skills and determination to succeed in traditional crafts and micro-enterprises, they often lack access to markets and institutional support. He warned that growing impacts of climate change are intensifying poverty, placing a double burden on women and their families. SCF has established a Women Economic Empowerment Fund to help tackle poverty and respond to climate shocks through livelihood restoration among rural women, aiming to institutionalize long-term support mechanisms beyond project-based assistance. (*Business Recorder, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

##### ***Worn clothing imports rise as poverty surges to 45pc***

Pakistan's imports of second-hand clothing have surged to an all-time high of 1.137 million tonnes worth \$511 million in the previous fiscal year, surpassing the previous record of 990,266 tonnes (\$434 million) in FY24. This sharp rise reflects both the growing demand for affordable clothing and the country's deepening poverty crisis. A significant number of people, unable to afford locally made branded goods, have turned to second-hand clothing markets known as landa bazaars or flea markets. According to the World Bank's latest report, nearly 45pc of Pakistan's population now lives below poverty line, with new threshold set at \$4.20 per person per day, up from \$3.65. This increase has pushed poverty ratio for lower-middle-income groups to 44.7pc, up from 39.8pc under previous threshold. Muhammad Usman Farooqui, General Secretary of Pakistan Second Hand Clothing Merchants Association, attributed rise in second-hand clothing imports to escalating poverty. (*Dawn, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

##### ***Second brother tortured over trifle expires***

A young man who was allegedly tortured by some street vendors over a petty dispute of Rs30 succumbed to his injuries at a local hospital. He was identified as Rashid and his brother Wajid had already died of severe torture marks at the spot. (*Dawn, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

## 11 # ENVIRONMENT

### ***Rs50bn project to treat wastewater before disposal into Ravi***

Long-awaited Rs50bn Babu Sabu Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) project has finally entered its final stages of planning and implementation after the Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) approved it. The project, being built with the financial support of a French funding agency, would now be sent to the federal government for approval from the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec). The initiative, aligned with the approved master plan of Water and Sanitation Agency (Wasa) Lahore, aims to provide the city with its first large-scale wastewater treatment facility. (*Dawn, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***18pc decline in forest cover over 33 years leaves Pakistan vulnerable to nature's wrath***

Experts say that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the rest of Pakistan have reached a critical environmental tipping point. The 18 percent decline in Pakistan's forest cover is exposing the environment, economy, and national security to serious threats. Deforestation, the destruction of rangelands, forest fires, and climate change-related threats are directly contributing to devastating floods, landslides, and cloudbursts. Since 1992, forest area has decreased by 18 percent, while rangelands are producing only 20–30 percent of their potential biomass, with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa having the largest share in this decline.

The catastrophic floods of 1992, 2010, and 2025 prove that the destruction of forests and rangelands has turned the watersheds of the upper regions into “flood factories.” Environmental experts say forests in Pakistan are not just trees but the country's first line of defence for the environment, economy, and national security. They absorb rainwater to prevent flash floods, recharge groundwater, protect agricultural land from erosion, and sustain soil fertility for farming. They balance the climate by reducing temperatures, storing carbon, and regulating rainfall.

In Pakistan, forest cover has dropped from 3.78 million hectares in 1992 to 3.09 million hectares in 2025 — an 18 percent reduction. Annual deforestation, which was on peaked at about 40,000 hectares in 1992, has declined due to government intervention to 11,000 hectares in 2025, but international organisations say that even today, Pakistan continues to lose about 11,000 hectares of forest annually. The situation remains alarming. (*The News, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Deforestation, unregulated construction posing threat to Galiyat***

The scenic Galiyat region consisting of picturesque valleys including Nathiagali has been facing severe environmental threats due to rampant deforestation and unregulated high-rise commercial construction. Local stakeholders and environmental organizations are calling for immediate action to prevent further degradation. Environmentalists expressed concerns over deforestation and the construction of high-rise buildings in Kalabagh, Nathiagali, Dungagali, Ayubia and other parts of Galiyat.



Calling for immediate action, environmentalists and other stakeholders warned that if timely restrictions were not imposed on unchecked construction and tree felling, Galiyat could face environmental devastation similar to what was witnessed in Buner. Sardar Sabir, Chairman of the Galiyat Tahafuz Movement placed the blame on the construction of unregulated commercial buildings. “The construction of unregulated commercial buildings is primarily responsible for the destruction of Galiyat,” he said. “If this continues, we should brace for a major tragedy in the coming years.” (*The News, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### **11.1 # Atmosphere**

#### ***Punjab govt plans to double forest area in five years***

Identifying environmental changes, population growth, and land-use issues as challenges for forest conservation, the Punjab forest department has taken up an ambitious plan of doubling forest area in the province in next five years. In line with this goal, the forest department has launched a largest tree plantation campaign having plans to plant 51 million saplings during 2025-26. Some 20m saplings will be planted during the ongoing monsoon plantation campaign and 31m saplings during the spring campaign of 2026. The forest department at its one-day conference on “Empowering Forest Frontlines: Strategy, Surveillance, Sustainability” also identified that colonial-era provisions of the Forest Act, 1927, were still in force and urgently needed revision.

The conference participants comprising relevant bureaucrats, climate change council members, academia and representatives from IUCN, FAO, and WWF Pakistan shared suggestions for improving forests, discussed challenges faced, and proposed solutions. The forest department has also introduced cutting-edge hydroseeding technology for greening barren lands for the first time to lead the country in environmental restoration, afforestation, and soil erosion control. The forest department has used machinery to spray a mixture of seeds, fertilisers, water, and organic components on several acres of land in Forest Park Jallo, Lahore, and Takht Pari, Rawalpindi. The forest department officials say this technology will not only save time but also provide more results with less effort. (*Dawn, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### **11.2 # Pollution**

#### ***Global plastics treaty remains an elusive dream***

The 10-day negotiations towards a legally binding agreement to tackle global plastic pollution fell apart, a couple of days after the first draft of the treaty was rejected by 80 countries. The new iteration was adjourned in 43 seconds. It took another 16 hours for the plenary to be reconvened. Talks chair Luis Vayas Valdivieso said the session had merely been adjourned rather than ended. He told *AFP* that countries and the secretariat “will be working to try to find a date and also a place” for resuming the talks. However, the process was a shambles, with many delegates being excluded from the final plenary. (*Dawn, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)



### ***Experts say rise in Manchhar level has failed to improve lake's water quality***

Despite significant rise in Manchhar Lake's level to 111.2 feet (RL), its water remains unfit for drinking or irrigating farmland as the lake continues to receive heavy inflows of polluted water from MNVD, drastically affecting livelihoods of local communities. Many years of unchecked inflow of polluted water has turned the lake into a toxic body, making the condition of fishermen and their families dire even after billions of rupees have reportedly been spent on the lake's rehabilitation projects by the Sindh government and international donors. (*Dawn, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Disease outbreaks feared in Karachi as stagnant water turns toxic***

As dense clouds continue to dominate the city's skies following recent monsoon devastation, health experts and senior environmentalists have urged the authorities to speed up the process of clearing standing water and lifting solid waste before the next spell to minimise the threat of disease outbreaks. They also stressed the need to prioritise regular cleaning of storm water drains and rainwater harvesting in ways that help replenish depleting groundwater resources and minimise the threat of urban flooding.

"There is a high risk for the spread of vector and water-borne diseases this year, given the high intensity of rains we have just experienced. We must try to utilise the brief time available right now before the next spell hits as pools of standing water will soon turn into breeding grounds for mosquitoes," shared Dr Imran Sarwar, who heads the emergency department of the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi. He added that generally cases of gastroenteritis, malaria and dengue see a sharp increase soon after the rains, especially during this season. (*Dawn, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

## **11.3 # Health**

### ***Year's tally rises to 18 as another polio case reported from KP***

Pakistan has reported another polio case from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), raising the total number of cases for the ongoing year to 18. According to an official from the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health (NIH), a new case has been confirmed from Tank district of KP. "A 10-month-old boy from Union Council Mullazai in District Tank has been confirmed as the 11th polio case from the province this year, bringing the total number of polio cases in Pakistan in 2025 to 18," he said. Out of the 18 cases, 11 have been reported from KP, five from Sindh and one each has been reported from Punjab and Gilgit Baltistan. (*Dawn, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***15 years on, KP Preventive Health Act not enforced***

As the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has yet to implement the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Preventive Health Act, 2009, meant to prevent thalassaemia and hepatitis C, the Khyber Medical University Peshawar has started genetic testing of the pregnant women with positive carrier screening or at-risk families to know if their unborn children have the genetic disease. The local government and rural development

department's directives to all village and neighbourhood secretaries in March last year for that law's enforcement was largely ignored. However, a few concerned families have started testing at the newly-launched services to undergo tests for thalassaemia, a genetic ailment. (*Dawn, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Nearly 50pc of heart attack patients in Pakistan are under 49, moot told***

Senior cardiologists shared the shocking findings of a study according to which nearly 50 per cent of heart attack patients in the country are younger than 49 years, and 12 to 15pc of them are under 40 years of age. The health experts representing the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) were speaking at a symposium held at a local hotel here. The experts warned that this trend — fueled by diabetes, hypertension, obesity, smoking, and unhealthy lifestyles — is making Pakistan one of the world's worst-hit countries for early-age heart attacks. The trial was designed and conducted independently by NICVD's cardiology team and ran from June 7, 2021, to December 31, 2023. It enrolled 261 post-heart attack patients for testing effects of two anticoagulants for treating a blood clot that can form in the heart after an attack and cause stroke or other complications. The findings have been published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology: Advances*. (*Dawn, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***Pakistan's diabetes crisis deepens as 3.4m at risk of amputations***

Around 10 per cent of people with diabetes in Pakistan suffer from diabetic foot, leaving more than 3.4 million at risk of severe ulcers or amputations, experts warned at the launch of a multidisciplinary facility at the Baqai Institute of Diabetology and Endocrinology (BIDE). Highlighting the country's struggle with the highest diabetes prevalence rate in the world, the experts said diabetes was silently fuelling heart attacks, strokes, kidney failure, blindness and long-term disability, making it one of Pakistan's deadliest and costliest health challenges. BIDE Director Prof Zahid Miyan said diabetes was the leading cause of kidney failure and amputation globally, and one of the main triggers of stroke. (*Dawn, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 14*)

### ***Pakistan among hardest-hit countries for anaemia in women: WHO***

Pakistan is among the hardest-hit countries in the world for anaemia in women of reproductive age, with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) 2025 Global Anaemia Estimates placing it in the highest "severe public health" category, where at least 40 percent of women aged 15–49 are affected. While no exact figure is published for Pakistan, the WHO's country prevalence maps for 2023 shade Pakistan in the same high-burden range as Afghanistan, Yemen and Sudan — nations where nearly one in two women live with this debilitating condition. The WHO report warns that global progress in reducing anaemia has stalled since 2012, with prevalence in many countries static or even increasing. Worldwide, 30.7 percent of women of reproductive age were anaemic in 2023, and only one country, Uzbekistan, is on track to meet the 2030 global nutrition target of halving anaemia. (*The News, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***‘Drug-resistant bacteria found in 74pc of diabetic ulcers in Pakistan’***

Infections caused by multidrug-resistant (MDR) bacteria are rapidly worsening the diabetic foot crisis in Pakistan, driving up treatment costs, leaving patients with fewer treatment options, and pushing amputation rates to alarming levels, experts warned at the international conference on diabetes and diabetic foot 2025. “Around 74 percent of the diabetic foot ulcers are infected with more than one, usually three or more bacteria, which are multi-drug resistant and very hard to treat,” said Dr. Saif-ul-Haq, deputy director, BIDE, while speaking on the opening day of scientific sessions. “Treatment of these wounds is not only difficult and expensive but often leads to amputations if the patient doesn’t reach out to tertiary-care health facilities.”

The meeting, organised by the Baqai Institute of Diabetology and Endocrinology (BIDE) in collaboration with Diabetic Foot International and Baqai Medical University, brought together leading specialists from Pakistan and abroad. BIDE Director Prof. Zahid Miyan reiterated that diabetes has become one of Pakistan’s deadliest health challenges, not only because of heart disease, kidney failure and blindness, but also because of the growing burden of diabetic foot complications. (*The News, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 16*)

### ***380 cases of communicable diseases recorded in KP’s flood-hit districts***

Health department has documented 380 cases of communicable diseases among children under five in flood-affected districts including acute respiratory infections and acute watery diarrhoea besides damage to health facilities. To address the health needs of affected population, a health sector cluster coordination meeting has been convened with partner organisations to streamline response efforts. Dr. Shahid Yunis, the director-general of health services of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, meanwhile responded to a report titled “flood-hit KP turns to donors for disease prevention,” published in this newspaper on Sunday and clarified that response efforts had already begun, with neighbouring districts deploying human resources and supplying sufficient medicines to help people in calamity-hit districts. “World Health Organisation being mandated as technical agency for health emergency will be the co-chair and other UN agencies and partner organisations are members of the health emergency cluster,” he said. (*Dawn, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Two more polio cases confirmed in southern KP, taking 2025 nationwide tally to 23***

Two more poliovirus cases were confirmed in southern parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, bringing Pakistan’s total count this year to 23, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) said. Pakistan is one of the last two countries in the world, alongside Afghanistan, where polio remains endemic. Despite global efforts to eradicate the virus, challenges such as security issues, vaccine hesitancy, and misinformation have slowed progress. “With these detections, the total number of polio cases in Pakistan in 2025 has reached 23, including 15 cases from KP, six from Sindh, and one each from Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan,” the statement noted. (*Dawn, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Water-borne diseases, infections surge in Swat, Buner after flood disaster***

The recent flash floods, which wreaked havoc across Swat and Buner, have triggered a severe public health crisis, with hospitals reporting a sharp rise in waterborne diseases and other infections. Health officials told that cases of diarrhoea, gastroenteritis, cholera, skin infections and respiratory illnesses had surged due to the stagnant floodwaters and the collapse of sanitation systems. They said children and the elderly remained the most vulnerable groups. The officials said an emergency had been declared at major health centres across the region, including the Saidu Sharif Teaching Hospital, the largest tertiary care facility in Malakand Division. (*Dawn*, August 23<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8)

### ***ICT records 122 dengue virus cases this season***

The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) has recorded 122 confirmed dengue virus cases this season, with the vast majority emerging from rural communities, said the local District Health Officer (DHO). In a briefing to Dr Mukhtar Ahmed Bharath, State Minister for National Health Services and Regulations, Syeda Rashida Batool, DHO Islamabad, revealed that 107 of the reported cases have been documented in rural areas, while only 15 have surfaced in urban localities. Alarming, 27 new infections were recorded within the last 24 hours alone. She said that approximately 22 per cent of patients had recently travelled to Murree, a nearby hill station known for its dense vegetation and favourable conditions for mosquito breeding. (*Business Recorder*, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3)

### ***NA subcommittee report highlights irregularities in private hospitals' working***

A subcommittee of the National Assembly standing committee in its report highlighted irregularities in working of private hospitals. Taking up the report National Assembly Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (NHSR&C) directed the authorities concerned to take steps to rectify the situation. The NA committee which met here with MNA Dr Mahesh Kumar Malani took up a report of sub-committee. The Sub-Committee headed by MNA Dr. Amjad Ali Khan revealed widespread non-compliance with licensing requirements, improper waste management and a lack of transparency in Islamabad's private hospital operations.

The report said that several private healthcare facilities were found operating without valid licenses and it was also highlighted that some Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA) board members had conflicts of interest, owning private health facilities themselves. The committee directed the Ministry of NHSR&C to strengthen the IHRA, issue immediate show-cause notices to all non-compliant hospitals and develop a robust regulatory framework for licensing and monitoring. The regulatory authority was further tasked with categorizing healthcare facilities based on service levels and establishing standardised service charges for each category. (*Dawn*, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4)

## 12 # CLIMATE CHANGE

### ***‘Human actions’ led to 15pc heavier rains this year***

Pakistan, one of the countries least prepared to deal with the impact of climate change, was hit particularly hard this year as it received 15 per cent more rainfall than average. This anomaly was a result of human actions that exacerbated the crisis of climate change, said a group of 18 scientists and researchers who were part of the World Weather Attribution group at Imperial College’s Grantham Institute in the UK. The group, which included experts from universities and meteorological agencies in Pakistan, the UK, France and the Netherlands, said the recent floods were triggered by heavier-than-normal rainfall and blamed human actions for the weather anomaly.

Pakistan’s monsoon season starts in late June and ends in September. It brings 70 to 80pc of the country’s annual rainfall, but frequently causes flooding. While monsoon rains are crucial for replenishing water sources, they have become more intense recently. Floods, which followed relentless bouts of heavy monsoon rain, badly hit the northern half of Pakistan. States of emergency had been declared in several districts, with floodwaters submerging roads, destroying homes and wiping out crops. From June 26 to August 3, 300 people were killed across country, with 242 deaths in a region of northern Pakistan. Report noted that international adaptation finance was urgently needed for Pakistan, which required an estimated \$40 to 50bn annually to cope with extreme weather. Without large-scale transformative adaptation, extreme weather could cost Pakistan an estimated \$1.2tr by 2050, according to an earlier UN report. At COP29, rich countries, responsible for most emissions, agreed to raise climate finance for developing nations to \$300bn by 2035.

However, there remains a significant gap between the climate finance currently provided by developed countries and the amount needed, it said. The report quoted the UN that developed countries were only providing about \$28 billion in adaptation finance annually, which is \$187 to \$359bn short of what is required. It said floods in 2022 killed more than 1,700 people, underscoring how vulnerable Pakistan was to climate change but three years later, monsoon floods were still resulting in shocking loss of life. “Climate change is taken more seriously in Pakistan, but international finance and long-term planning are lacking”, it said, adding a record-breaking 48.5°C in northern Pakistan, followed by deadly rains in July, was yet another stark reminder of what the country was enduring at just 1.3°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels. (*Dawn, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Sindh, Ethiopia join hands to boost climate cooperation, greenery***

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah met a high-powered Ethiopian delegation at CM’s House to discuss enhanced cooperation on climate change, mass afforestation and green development initiatives. The Ethiopian delegation was led by Ambassador Dr Jemal Beker Abdula. The Ethiopian side briefed CM on their Green Legacy Initiative under which Ethiopia had planted over 40bn trees since 2019 with a target of 50bn by 2026, including 7.5bn seedlings by end of 2025. (*The News, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***GB glaciers, rivers hold a \$9bn value — but Pakistan isn't counting***

Gilgit-Baltistan's (GB) glaciers, rivers and forests generate an estimated Rs2.7 trillion (US \$9 billion) annually, yet their value remains absent from Pakistan's national planning, experts warn. "Gilgit-Baltistan is the ecological heart of Pakistan," said Khadim Hussain, Director of the Environmental Protection Agency. "Almost 90 percent of the country's agriculture and hydropower depends on water from here, but in our economic accounts its value is zero. That is dangerous." The region is home to more than 8,400 glaciers that feed the Indus River Basin, in addition to vast forests, pastures and rare wildlife. Hussain said that conservative estimates show water and glaciers contribute over Rs2,000 billion annually, forests Rs300 billion, tourism Rs150 billion, biodiversity Rs50 billion, while disaster risk reduction contributes Rs200 billion. "These numbers do not include carbon financing or climate credits, which could add billions more," he added. (*The News, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

## **13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS**

### ***NDMA projects 22pc increase in natural disasters for coming year***

Chairman of National Disaster Management Authority Lt-Gen Inam Haider Malik informed the Public Accounts Committee of a projected 22 percent increase in natural disasters in Pakistan for the coming year. During his briefing to the PAC, chaired by Junaid Akbar, NDMA boss called for immediate action to address the alarming rate of glacier melt threatening country's environmental and economic stability. NDMA chief highlighted that Pakistan is home to 7,500 glaciers, nearly half of which – around 45pc – are currently melting. He warned that a global temperature rise of just two degrees Celsius could result in the loss of 65 percent of these glaciers. Describing climate change as a critical national security threat, Haider underscored the urgency of proactive disaster management measures. "One dollar of pre-disaster assistance is better than eleven dollars of post-disaster aid," He also pointed to the country's rapidly growing population, which could make it the world's third most populous country by 2050. He noted country's vulnerability to even moderate rainfall, saying that 200 millimetres of rain can trigger devastating floods. (*Business Recorder, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

### ***Tourism in GB drops 90pc amid climate disasters, conflicts***

Unprecedented climate disasters and other factors have caused a sharp decline in both foreign and domestic tourist arrivals to Gilgit-Baltistan this year, badly affecting local economy. Officials said that international conflicts, natural calamities and other issues resulted in a 90pc drop in tourism across region. (*Dawn, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

## **13.1 # Drought**

### ***Tharparkar in dire need of rain to escape famine: local community***

Tharparkar — rendered parched by delayed or erratic rains — is now on the brink of famine, the local farming and herder communities say. The situation poses a serious threat to the local population that depends on earning from their crops. The threat of

famine looms large as a long dry spell has destroyed crops; and locals have already consumed or disposed of their produce during the period. Livestock is the second source of income for many families but, at present, no fodder is available for millions of animals being reared in the region. (*Dawn, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### **13.2 # Flood**

#### ***140 kids among nearly 300 lives lost to monsoon: NDMA***

At least 299 people, including 140 children, have died and more than 700 others have been injured in flash floods and torrential rains that have battered several parts of Pakistan since late June, the National Disaster Management Authority said. The NDMA said the deluges, which began on June 26, have left a trail of devastation across the country. The dead include 102 men, 57 women and 140 children, while injured include 239 children, 204 women and 272 men. The severe weather has also caused widespread destruction, damaging a total of 1,676 houses, according to the agency's data. Of those, 562 homes were completely destroyed while 1,114 sustained partial damage. The floods also led to loss of 428 livestock, compounding the impact on local communities. In response, the NDMA said it has carried out 223 rescue operations, successfully evacuating 2,880 people from flood-hit regions. (*Dawn, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

#### ***Heavy glacial flood rages through Hunza***

A glacial lake outburst flood (Glof) from Shisper Glacier swelled the Hassanabad Nullah in Hunza, damaging infrastructure, and putting dozens of mountainside homes at risk in the mountainous region of Gilgit-Baltistan. Officials said the heavy flood eroded the protective walls of the Karakoram Highway (KKH) and damaged farmland. Due to land erosion caused by the nullah, dozens of houses are at risk in case of such events in the future. According to the Gilgit-Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA), the flood damaged the newly constructed retaining wall and a portion of the Karakoram Highway. Though the highway is open to all types of traffic, the damaged section has been sealed off for safety measures. (*Dawn, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

#### ***Flash floods ruin infrastructure in Gilgit-Baltistan***

Flash floods continued to wreak havoc across Gilgit-Baltistan, leaving one person dead, eight injured, and dozens displaced. Roads and bridges were swept away, thousands — including tourists — remained stranded at multiple locations, and electricity, mobile, and internet communication were disrupted in region. Cloudburst-triggered flash floods hit multiple areas, adding to misery of local communities. (*Dawn, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

#### ***Trail of death and destruction: Rescuers recover bodies as rains, floods toll tops 350***

At least 351 people have lost their lives in the last 48 hours as floods, landslides, and rain-related incidents wreaked havoc across northern Pakistan, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said. Rescue operations are ongoing to restore normalcy in the affected areas. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) alone, 328 people have lost their lives and dozens more have been injured. Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) reported 12



fatalities, while Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) confirmed 11 deaths. According to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), 327 of KP's deaths resulted from flash floods triggered by intense cloudbursts, with Buner district alone accounting for a staggering 204 fatalities. A detailed PDMA report stated that the deceased included 279 men, 15 women, and 13 children. Additionally, 17 men, four women, and two children were injured. (*The News, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Rain claims five more lives in AJK***

At least five people were killed in Azad Jammu and Kashmir in different rain-related incidents as monsoon-induced floods ravaged multiple areas in the Ghizer district of Gilgit-Baltistan, blocking roads and destroying infrastructure. (*Dawn, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

### ***Displacement, crop devastation as Indus floods ravage South Punjab***

Thousands of villagers in low-lying areas of Layyah, Taunsa, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur and Muzaffargarh are compelled to leave their homes after rising level of Indus River washed away all the protective guide bunds and dykes constructed to support the Layyah-Taunsa Bridge as heavy rains continue to lash several many parts of Punjab. Thousands of acres of crops in these areas are underwater and entirely ruined, leaving the displaced population without shelter or livelihood, forced to live under the open sky. (*Dawn, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Death toll rises to 14 as rain and power outages continue***

Torrential monsoon rains continue to exacerbate the suffering of residents, taking the rain-related death toll to 14 with several parts of the city experiencing widespread power outages that lasted for hours. (*Dawn, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***'60pc of families in Buner, Swat have lost their livelihoods'***

A new assessment carried out by humanitarian aid organisation, Islamic Relief, reveals that 60pc of families in badly affected areas of Buner and Swat have lost their livelihood by flash floods and there have also been massive destruction of homes and farms. The Islamic Relief's emergency response team is on ground distributing food and water, and team's assessment found that 73pc of houses are destroyed or partially damaged; sixty per cent of people in Buner and 53pc in Swat are now unable to support their families; eighty per cent of agricultural land in Buner has been damaged; nearly 50pc of livestock animals have died and been washed away. (*Dawn, August 22<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

### ***Floods damage crops in Kalash valley***

Heavy rains triggered flash floods at three points in Kalash valley of Rumbur caused widespread damage to crops and orchards while blocking link roads and suspending traffic. According to local sources, floodwaters from the main Rumbur stream, the Ochuq Gol stream near the police station, and the Donlod Gah stream created a serious situation in the valley. Residents reported huge agricultural losses as fields and gardens were inundated. (*The News, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)



### ***Relentless flooding claims over a dozen more lives in KP***

At least 13 people were killed and 52 others injured in rain-related incidents as heavy downpours lashed several districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa over the weekend. According to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), the death toll from floods and rains in the province has risen to 409 since Aug 15, with 251 people injured. The PDMA report said the victims included 305 men, 55 women and 49 children. Among the injured were 183 men, 38 women and 30 children. Rains and floods have also destroyed 578 houses and partially damaged 2,954 across the province.

Since June 26, torrential rains and floods have claimed 788 lives, injured 1,018 people, damaged 6,630 houses and killed 5,548 livestock across country, according to NDMA. The deceased included 200 children, 471 men and 117 women. Punjab recorded 165 deaths, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 469, Sindh 51, Balochistan 24, Gilgit-Baltistan 45, Azad Jammu and Kashmir 23, and Islamabad eight. Injured included 279 children, 493 men and 246 women. Punjab reported highest number of injuries at 584, followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (285), Sindh (71), Gilgit-Baltistan (42), Azad Jammu and Kashmir (28), Balochistan (five), and Islamabad (three). (*Dawn, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Glacial lake in Ghizer leaves thousands cut off***

Thousands of people in several tehsils of Gilgit-Baltistan remained cut off from the rest of the region after an artificial lake formed by a glacial flood in the Raushan area inundated five to ten kilometres of a major route, which connects Ghizer with other districts and Chitral in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (*Dawn, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

### ***1.5m affected as Punjab reels from ‘worst flood in decades’***

The Punjab government has launched one of its largest evacuation operations in recent years, as floodwaters affected over 1.46 million people across the province, with the Chenab River expected to swell to dangerous levels at Head Trimmu. Extremely high floods in the Sutlej, Ravi and Chenab rivers have also resulted in the loss of 17 lives. The province is battling its worst flooding in four decades, which has caused havoc in hundreds of villages and submerged vital grain crops. (*Dawn, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Pakistan evacuates over 600,000 people, expects more floodwaters from India***

Relentless rains deepened the misery of flood-stricken communities across Punjab, claiming five lives in Lahore due to collapsing roofs. Rising waters in the Ravi River also swept through villages and farmlands, triggering widespread devastation. Heavy rains in Punjab, including Lahore, have caused rivers to overflow, worsening the flood situation. PDMA Punjab warns that the collapse of India’s Madhupur Headworks may bring an additional 70,000 cusecs of water, threatening areas like Kasur and Multan. While Lahore remains safe, over 2,300 sites are under water, 300,000 more people have been displaced and crops over thousands of acres destroyed. Controlled dam breaches were made to protect Jhang. Infectious diseases are spreading among flood victims. (*The News, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **14 # NATURAL DISASTERS**

### **14.1 # Earthquake**

#### ***5.2-magnitude quake jolts Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and parts of KP: PMD***

A 5.2-magnitude earthquake jolted Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and several parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Seismic Network of the PMD said in a statement. According to the statement, the quake was felt in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, KP's Peshawar, Swat, Chitral, and Abbottabad. Punjab's Provincial Disaster Management Authority reported that earthquake was also felt in the province's divisions of Bahawalpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Lahore, Multan, Sahiwal and Sargodha. No casualties have been reported so far. (*Dawn, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 14*)

#### ***Moderate earthquake shakes capital, parts of KP***

A moderate earthquake struck the Hindu Kush region in Afghanistan sending tremors across northern Pakistan, including the capital, but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. The earthquake was felt in cities such as Peshawar and Islamabad. The tremor was also felt in Swat, Malakand, Swabi, Mansehra, and other neighboring regions. The shaking reached as far as Gahkuch city in Gilgit-Baltistan's Ghizer district. (*Dawn, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### **14.2 # Mudslide**

#### ***Mudslide buries seven volunteers in GB***

A mudslide swept over a group of villagers attempting to fix a water channel in the Danyor area of Gilgit-Baltistan damaged in monsoon rains, killing seven people and leaving six others injured. More than 300 people have been killed across the country since the monsoon season began in last week of June, NDMA said. Thirteen volunteers were attempting to fix the main water channel from Danyor nullah to Danyor town when a mudslide buried them. (*Dawn, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

#### ***Six bodies recovered from AJK home hit by mudslide***

Rescuers and volunteers recovered all six bodies from mounds of mud in a suburban area of Muzaffarabad, as the death toll from rain-related incidents across Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) rose to nine. (*Dawn, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

## **15 # RESISTANCE**

#### ***Marchers demand peace as North Waziristan under curfew***

A complete curfew was imposed across North Waziristan in view of the security situation, while a peace jirga tried to prevail upon local militant leaders to leave Bajaur. The moves were part of efforts to restore peace to these merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which have witnessed a spike in militant activity of late, especially along border with Afghanistan. A peace march was held in Shewa tehsil of North Waziristan district against deteriorating law & order situation in area. Tribal elders, representatives of all political parties, Utmanzai Jirga, Youth of Kabul Khel, and activists of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement attended gathering. (*Dawn, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***GB traders vow to continue protest at Pak-China border***

Traders in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) continued their protest for a 23rd consecutive day, blocking a key trade route with China and vowing to continue until the government scraps federal taxes they call illegal. The protest on the Karakoram Highway has halted all Pakistan-China trade and travel through the border crossing, leaving thousands of people, including Chinese nationals and foreign tourists, stranded in the area. (*Dawn, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Police use tear gas to disperse protesting govt employees***

The police used tear gas to disperse a sit-in of government employees outside the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly. A large number of employees had gathered outside the provincial legislature on the call of All Government Employees Grand Alliance (AGEGA), KP chapter, to press for their demands, including award 30 per cent disparity reduction allowance on the pattern of the federal government. The protesting employees first gathered at the Government High School No 1, Peshawar City, and later walked to the Khyber Road where they staged a sit-in outside the assembly building. (*Dawn, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***JUI-F stages sit-in against corporate farming***

The Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) held a protest rally and later staged a sit-in in Jacobabad against federal government's controversial plan to hand over fertile lands to the corporate sector for farming. The protest was organised by the party's Jacobabad district chapter. According to a JUI-F press release, the rally set off from Madressah Qasimul Uloom in Jacobabad and after passing through various thoroughfares culminated near the city's airport, where the participants held a sit-in. They were carrying party flags and displaying placards inscribed with slogans against corporate farming. (*Dawn, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Farmers set protest deadlines over new agriculture taxes***

Farmers have warned the government to stop imposing unjust taxes on the agricultural sector or face countrywide protests, saying that the agriculture income tax has been imposed on an income of Rs600,000, which previously started at an income of Rs1.2 million. Addressing a joint press conference at the Karachi Press Club Chairperson of Kissan Ittehad Pakistan Chaudhry Khalid Hussain Bath and President of Sindh Abadgar Ittehad (SAI) Nawab Zubair Ahmed Talpur announced two key demonstrations: one in Kasur outside deputy commissioner's office on August 11 and another from August 20 in Hyderabad, led by SAI. (*The News, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 17*)

### ***AT observes hunger strike against govt policies***

Activists of the Awami Tehreek (AT) observed a token hunger strike outside the local press club against corporate farming, new canals and dams, lawlessness and usurpation of Sindh's resources. The protest was led by Sindhyani Tehreek (AT's women wing) leaders Husna Rahujo, Subhani Dahri, Jam Tamachi, Noor Nabi Palijo and others.

Comrade Iqbal of the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP) also joined it. Speaking to them, the leaders said international media reports claimed of a deal having been struck to hand over Sindh's oil and gas reserves to the US. They asked the federal coalition why decisions about Sindh's resources were being made in Islamabad and US. "Who made this secret deal with US and under what law?" (*Dawn, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

***BYC vows to continue Islamabad sit-in until demands met***

Nadia Baloch Advocate, sister of Baloch Yekjehti Committee's (BYC) chief Dr Mahrung Baloch, announced that the BYC sit-in protest in Islamabad will persist until their demands are met. The committee demands include the release of imprisoned BYC leaders and an end to enforced disappearances, with the subsequent release of all missing persons. Speaking at a press conference at the BYC protest camp in Islamabad, Baloch revealed that the demonstration, involving families of detained BYC leaders and missing persons, had entered its 19th day. Instead of addressing their concerns, Islamabad authorities and police have allegedly resorted to threats and intimidation, she said. (*Business Recorder, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

***Shia Ulema Council to hold sit-ins against ban on land travel***

The Shia Ulema Council (SUC) has called for a nationwide protest and sit-ins from Tuesday (today) against the government's decision to block land routes for pilgrims travelling to Iraq via Iran for Arbreen (Chehlum of Imam Husain). The SUC came up with the decision after a meeting of its central executive council, chaired by Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi. Allama Dr Shabbir Hassan Meesami, the party's secretary general, told a press conference that rallies would be held across the country. (*Dawn, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

***Traders continue sit-in, halting travel, trade on KKH for 20th day***

The ongoing protest sit-in on Karakoram Highway (KKH) has disrupted travel and trade between Pakistan and China via Khunjerab Pass for the 20th consecutive day. People are protesting against taxation policies and the suspension of customs clearance at Sost dry port. Organisers plan to escalate their movement, accusing the government of lacking seriousness despite Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent promise to resolve the issue and grant a one-time amnesty for stuck consignments. Traders criticised authorities for their inaction. Speaking at a press conference in Sost town near Khunjerab Pass, members of the Tajir Etihad Action Committee condemned the government for its delaying tactics. (*Dawn, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

***Traders sit-in protest on Karakoram Highway enters fourth week***

The ongoing sit-in on Karakoram Highway (KKH) has disrupted travel and trade between Pakistan and China via Khunjerab Pass for the 22nd consecutive day as deadlock between government and protesters persisted. The federal committee constituted by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will meet on Monday (today) to make recommendations for resolving the issue. The protesters have given a two-point agenda

to the committee. They demanded exemption of GB residents from income tax, sales tax, and other federal taxes on items imported from China through the Khunjerab Pass. They also demanded Customs clearance of 280 consignments stuck at Sost Dry Port for over a year under a one-time amnesty scheme. (*Dawn, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

***Superhighway blocked for hours after seven dumpers torched over sibling deaths***

The death of two siblings in a fatal accident involving a heavy vehicle sparked violent protests as enraged people torched seven trucks, prompting transporters to block the Superhighway to vehicular traffic for hours. The accident took place on main Rashid Minhas Road near UBL Sports Complex at 3:15am when a fast-moving dumper hit a motorcyclist and his two pillion riders. As a result, Mahnoor, 22, and her brother, Ahmed Raza, 14, died on the spot, while their father, Shakir, 48, suffered critical injuries, said Central SSP Zeeshan Shafiq Siddiqi. (*Dawn, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

***End to all forms of discrimination, acceptance of diversity urged at Minority Rights March in Karachi***

Forced conversions, equitable and quality education, protection of minority communal property, amendment to Articles 41 and 91 of the Constitution and the prevention of misuse of blasphemy laws were just some of the demands raised during the Minority Rights March 2025. While reflecting on Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's historic speech to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on August 11, 1947, in which the Father of the Nation insured non-Muslims that they were free to go to their temples, mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan, many participants wondered aloud if that was really the case in Pakistan of today. (*Dawn, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

***Lawyers hold march against delay in judicial probe into May 20 Moro incident***

The All-Sindh Lawyers Action Committee (ASLAC) held a march against provincial governments failure to set up the promised judicial commission on the May 20 violence in Moro town of Naushahro Feroze district. Two protesters were killed allegedly by police and the residence of Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar was attacked in the ensuing reaction. The protest titled 'Moro March' was led by Hyderabad District Bar Association (HDBA) President Ashar Majeed Khokhar and High Court Bar Association (HCBA) General Secretary Israr Chang. The protesting lawyers held a march from Gul Centre Chowk to the local press club raising slogans against the incident and in favour of their demand for a judicial probe into violence. (*Dawn, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

***Revenue officials observe strike for restoration of magisterial powers***

Revenue officials observed a strike and held protest demonstrations at all district headquarters against withdrawal of their magisterial powers, cuts in the pension of their retired colleagues and other issues. In Hyderabad, their association pitched a protest camp outside Shehbaz Building, where several officers observed a token hunger strike. They told local reporters that their magisterial powers had been withdrawn which exposed

them to threat of physical harm. They also deplored that their pension funds had been drastically slashed, causing financial issue to already inflation-hit retired colleagues and concern to those attaining age of retirement. (*Dawn, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Protests grip various parts of Gilgit-Baltistan***

Gilgit-Baltistan was paralysed after several protests gripped various parts of the region. The sit-in staged by Gilgit-Baltistan police personnel outside the Chief Minister's House entered its third day. Police have been protesting to press the authorities to increase their allowance as per budget 2025-26. Police from other districts, including those deployed for the security of Chinese nationals in Chilas, also joined the sit-in in Gilgit. (*Dawn, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***Killing of teacher, daughter sparks protest in Dir***

A schoolteacher and his young daughter were shot dead by unidentified assailants in Shorshing area triggering a protest and closure of the main Chakdara-Chitral Road for about three hours. (*Dawn, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Unabated illegal logging sparks protest***

Activists of political, social, literary and media organisations staged a demonstration on Dadu-Johi road in Johi town in protest against unabated practice of illegal logging of rare and indigenous trees in Kachho region. The protest led by prominent citizens of the town, Advocate Yaqoob Rustamani, senior journalist Wafa Brahmani, poet Khalil Arif Soomro, social activist Gul Sher Panhwar and others was held in front of Johi Press Club, where the participants demanded immediate action from the administration to halt the rampant deforestation. (*Dawn, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Traders continue protest against FBR***

The currency exchange owners announced to continue the strike until the desealing of their businesses by the FBR. According to sources, in the meeting, they said that the traders were being punished for their work. They said it was unprecedented the way the traders were being blackmailed. They announced that the strike would not be called off until the shops are desealed. (*Dawn, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Christians' sit-in continues for justice to Jaranwala riots victims***

A dozen Christian leaders continued their sit-in on the second consecutive day in Christian Colony at Jaranwala over the alleged failure of the government in providing justice to the affectees of riots on Aug 16 in 2023 carried out on the pretext of allegations of blasphemy. They claimed that in the riots, 27 churches and 23 houses were torched by the mob and all nominated accused persons were declared innocent in investigation by police. They called Christian community and civil society people of all over the country to stage sit-ins as a protest and to demand justice for the affectees. (*Dawn, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***JUI-F, nationalists hold rallies against corporate farming, lawlessness in Sindh***

The Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), Qaumi Awami Tehreek (QAT) and Awami Tehreek (AT) held separate rallies in different parts of Sindh against corporate farming and Sindh government's failure to fulfill its responsibilities. They called for immediate measures to restore state's writ in the dacoit-infested riverine areas of upper Sindh and complete peace in the entire province. (*Dawn, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Kidnapping of school principal sparks protest in Wana***

Armed men shot and injured two men before abducting the principal of a private educational institution in Wana, Lower South Waziristan. According to DSP Imranullah, the armed assailants intercepted principal Rahmatullah Wazir outside the school, forced him into a car and took him away. Sources confirmed that two bystanders were injured when the abductors opened fire during the incident. (*Dawn, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Bajaur IDPs stage protest to demand financial aid***

Scores of people displaced from Lowi Mamund and War Mamund areas due to the military operation protested their non-registration for the provincial government's financial package. They demonstrated at the Civil Colony in Khar, saying a large number of IDPs live with communities in different areas and several relief camps established by the government. The protesters claimed that the IDPs living with local communities and relatives and in rented houses, hadn't been registered for the Rs75,000 financial package per family even a week after the launch of the ongoing registration process. (*Dawn, August 22<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Lawyers to go on strike today against murder of colleague***

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council announced province-wide strike today (Monday) against the killing of junior lawyer Mian Asim Shah Kakakhel allegedly by police in Charsadda district two days ago. In a press release issued here, the bar council stated that police first killed the innocent person and then took into custody his family members by raiding their residence. The council said that police tried to portray the occurrence as an encounter and kept relatives of deceased in illegal detention for many hours. (*Dawn, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Bajaur IDPs protest 'denial' of relief goods***

Residents of the areas hit by the military operation staged a protest demonstration against the denial of relief goods to them. A number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) belonging to various areas of the restive Lowi Mamund and War Mamund tehsils attended the demonstration held at the Civil Colony Khar. The participants said they were forced to live in relief camps, relatives' homes and with local community members. However, they alleged they had yet to receive relief goods. (*Dawn, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)



### ***Govt employees hold strike across Sindh against revised pension policy***

Government employees staged sit-ins and rallies after boycotting work in several towns in response to Sindh Employees Alliance's call for province-wide protest against cut in pension under new policy. The protesters' leaders said new policy deprived them of pension benefits, Disparity Reduction Allowance and payment of group insurance upon retirement, and demanded immediate reversal of proposed reforms in Sindh Civil Servants (Amendment) Act, 2024, revival of quota in jobs for deceased employees and group insurance etc. They warned of continuing the protest until their demands were accepted and a formal notification to this effect was issued by provincial government. (*Dawn, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Karachi's S.M. Law College students protest against 'exceptional' fee hike***

Students of the Sindh Muslim Government Law College are protesting what they describe as an "exceptional fee hike" by the college administration, claiming it exceeds the limit approved by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan and is being applied to all batches rather than only to newly enrolled students. The protest, ongoing since Aug 25, 2025, is being led by the "Students Action Committee", which includes students from all current batches. They are demanding that college administration roll back decision to increase fees by 25-30 per cent. (*Dawn, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 14*)

### ***Strike observed in GB to back traders' protest in Sost***

A shutter-down strike was observed in various parts of Gilgit-Baltistan to express solidarity with protesting traders of Sost who have been staging a protest sit-in, blocking the Karakoram Highway for the last 40 days for acceptance of their demands. The protest has led to the suspension of trade activities between China and Pakistan. The traders have been demanding what the GB cabinet had suggested to the federal cabinet. The GB cabinet asked the federal government to declare GB a non-tariff area and exempt the people of GB from collection of sales tax and income tax on goods being imported from China and ensure speedy clearance of consignments at Sost Dry Port under the amnesty scheme announced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. On the call of Anjuman Tajiran of GB, the shutter-down strike was observed in Hunza, Nagar, Ghanche, Gilgit and Skardu. All markets, shops and business centres remained closed in these areas. (*Dawn, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

### ***HRCP protest against enforced disappearances halted in Hyderabad***

The HRCP Hyderabad chapter was stopped from holding a protest on International Day of Victims of Enforced Disappearances outside the Hyderabad Press Club. From early morning, a heavy contingent of police and other law enforcement personnel had been deployed outside press club to block HRCP's scheduled programme and demonstration. HRCP Coordinator Ghufrana Arain, along with members Imdad Chandio, Pushpa Kumari, and others, reached press club hall at scheduled time to begin the programme. However, the police asked the organisers to first display the banners prepared for the protest. After photographing the banners, officers barred them from staging the demonstration once the programme concluded. (*The News, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 16*)



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# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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### *China says ‘rampant’ US protectionism threatens agricultural ties*

US protectionism is undermining agricultural cooperation with China, Beijing’s ambassador to Washington said, warning that farmers should not bear the price of the trade war between the world’s two largest economies. “It goes without saying that protectionism is rampant, casting a shadow over China-US agricultural cooperation,” said Xie Feng, according to the transcript of a speech published by the Chinese embassy. Agriculture has emerged as a major point of contention between China and the US as the superpowers are locked in a tariff war launched by President Donald Trump.

China in March slapped levies of up to 15% on \$21 billion worth of American agricultural and food products in retaliation for sweeping US tariffs. Washington and Beijing this month extended a truce for 90 days, staving off triple-digit duties on each other’s goods. US agricultural exports to China fell 53% in the first half of the year from the same period in 2024, with a 51% decline in soybeans, Xie said in the speech to a soybean industry event in Washington. “American farmers, like their Chinese counterparts, are hardworking and humble,” Xie said. “Agriculture should not be hijacked by politics, and farmers should not be made to pay the price of a trade war.”

The envoy said agriculture is a promising area of cooperation and a “pillar of bilateral relations”. China has a comparative advantage in labour-intensive products, while the US excels in land-intensive bulk commodities through mechanised, large-scale production, he said. Last month US Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said Washington would curb farmland purchases by “foreign adversaries,” including China. The Department of Agriculture said it had fired 70 foreign contract researchers after a national security review intended to secure US food supply from adversaries including China, Russia, North Korea and Iran. (*Business Recorder, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## 2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

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## 5 # TRADE

### *Trump hits dozens of countries with steep tariffs*

US President Donald Trump slapped dozens of trading partners with steep tariffs ahead of a trade deal deadline, including a 35% duty on many goods from Canada, 50% for

Brazil, 25% for India, 20% for Taiwan and 39% for Switzerland. Trump released an executive order listing higher import duty rates of 10% to 41% starting in seven days for 69 trading partners as the 12:01 a.m. EDT (0401 GMT) deadline approached. Some of them had reached tariff-reducing deals and some had no opportunity to negotiate with his administration. The order said that goods from all other countries not listed in an annex would be subject to a 10% US tariff rate.

Trump's order said that some trading partners, "despite having engaged in negotiations, have offered terms that, in my judgment, do not sufficiently address imbalances in our trading relationship or have failed to align sufficiently with the United States on economic and national-security matters." Trump issued a separate order for Canada that raises the rate on Canadian goods subject to fentanyl-related tariffs to 35% from 25% previously, saying Canada had "failed to cooperate" in curbing fentanyl flows into US. The higher tariffs on Canadian goods contrasted sharply with Trump's decision to grant Mexico a 90-day reprieve from higher tariffs of 30% on many goods to provide more time to negotiate a broader trade pact. (*Business Recorder, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Slovenia bans imports from Israeli settlements over Gaza war***

Slovenia announced a ban on imports of goods from Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, in a "symbolic measure" designed to ratchet up diplomatic pressure over the war in Gaza. Slovenia's government has frequently criticised Israel over the conflict, and last year moved to recognise a Palestinian state as part of efforts to end the fighting in Gaza as soon as possible. "The actions of the Israeli government... constitute serious and repeated violations of international humanitarian law," the government said. (*Business Recorder, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Average US tariffs now highest since 1910s: WTO and IMF***

The US tariff rate now averages 20.1 percent, the highest level since the early 1910s — except for a brief spike earlier this year — after new duties took effect, WTO and IMF data showed. The figure, calculated by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), stands in contrast with the 2.4 percent rate in force at the time of President Donald Trump's inauguration on January 20. Trump's April 2 announcement of "reciprocal" tariffs on the United States' main trading partners and subsequent escalations, particularly on Chinese goods, briefly drove the average rate to 24.8 percent in May, a figure unseen since 1904, according to data from the United States International Trade Commission.

A trade "truce" brought down sky-high tariff levels that the United States and China had imposed upon one another, but that is set to expire next week. The new figure by the WTO and IMF takes into account the trade deals the United States negotiated with the European Union, Japan, South Korea and other nations that have now come into force. These deals usually included lower tariff levels than Trump threatened in April, but were higher than the baseline 10 percent rate the US introduced. The rate calculated

by the WTO and the IMF applies the latest rates to 2024 trade volumes. The updated average tariff rate exceeds the nearly 20 percent rate that the United States applied in the 1930s, a period of high tariffs that economists widely consider behind the severity and duration of the Great Depression. (*Business Recorder*, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1)

### ***US tariff on Indian rice opens market for Pakistan***

The 50 per cent tariff imposed by the Trump administration on Indian goods, including basmati rice, has reshaped trade flows in the United States, providing Pakistan an opportunity to expand its share in the American aromatic rice market. Pakistan's basmati rice exports have witnessed steady growth in recent years. According to the Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP), the country exported approximately 772,725 tonnes of basmati rice in FY24, generating \$876.9m — up from 595,120 tonnes worth \$650.4m in the previous fiscal year. The average export price per tonne also increased from \$1,092.93 to \$1,134.86. (*Dawn*, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

### ***US, China extend tariff truce for 90 days***

China and the United States delayed higher tariffs on each other's imports for 90 days, hours before a trade truce between the world's two largest economies was due to expire. US President Donald Trump signed an executive order that will "extend the Tariff Suspension on China for another 90 days," according to a post on his Truth Social platform. The White House said its halt on steeper tariffs will be in place until November 10. China also said it would continue suspending its earlier tariff hike for 90 days, starting August 12, while retaining a 10-percent duty, according to a joint statement. While the United States and China slapped escalating tariffs on each other's products this year, bringing them to prohibitive triple-digit levels and snarling trade, both countries in May agreed to temporarily lower them. As part of their truce that month, fresh US tariffs targeting China were reduced to 30pc and corresponding level from China was cut to 10 percent. (*Business Recorder*, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12)

### ***Japan's exports log biggest drop in 4 years as US tariff impacts intensify***

Japan's exports posted the biggest monthly drop in about four years in July, government data showed, as the impact of US tariffs intensified, raising concerns about the outlook for the export-reliant economy. Total exports from the world's fourth-largest economy dropped 2.6% year-on-year in July in value terms, the biggest monthly drop since February 2021, when exports fell 4.5%. It was larger than a median market forecast for a 2.1% decrease and marks a third straight month of decline after a 0.5% drop in June. Despite the plunge in the value of exports, shipment volumes have so far held up as Japanese exporters have avoided major price hikes, said Takeshi Minami, chief economist at Norinchukin Research Institute. "But they would eventually have to pass on costs to US consumers and that would further hamper sales in the coming months," he said. Exports to the United States in July fell 10.1% from a year earlier, with automobiles slumping 28.4% and automotive components down 17.4%. (*Business Recorder*, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 5)

### ***25 nations suspend deliveries to US over tariffs***

At least 25 countries have decided to suspend package deliveries to the United States, as concern grows over the impact of President Donald Trump's looming tariffs, a UN body said. The Trump administration said late last month that it will abolish a tax exemption on small packages entering the United States from August 29. The move has sparked a flurry of announcements from postal services, including in France, Britain, Germany, Italy, India, Australia and Japan, that most US-bound packages would no longer be accepted. The United Nations' Universal Postal Union said it had already been advised by 25 member countries that their postal operators "have suspended their outbound postal services to US, citing uncertainties specifically related to transit services". It said suspensions will remain in place until there is more clarity on how US authorities plan to implement announced measures. (*Dawn, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***US court strikes down Trump's global tariffs as unlawful***

A US appeals court has ruled that many of President Donald Trump's tariffs, which have upended global trade, were illegal — but allowed them to remain in place for now, giving him time to take the fight to the Supreme Court. The 7-4 ruling by the US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit affirmed a lower court's finding that Trump had exceeded his authority in tapping emergency economic powers to impose wide-ranging duties. (*Dawn, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

### ***Norway sovereign fund drops investments in 11 Israeli companies***

Norway's sovereign wealth fund, largest in world, said that it was selling its investments in 11 Israeli companies, following revelations that it had invested in an Israeli jet engine maker even as war in Gaza raged. "These measures were taken in response to extraordinary circumstances. The situation in Gaza is a serious humanitarian crisis. We are invested in companies that operate in a country at war, and conditions in West Bank and Gaza have recently worsened," said Nicolai Tangen, chief of Norges Bank Investment Management, which manages fund. (*Business Recorder, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

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

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

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## **9 # POLICY**

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## **10 # SOCIO – ECONOMIC CONDITION**

### ***One in four without potable water***

A new report jointly released by Unicef and WHO to mark the World Water Week, highlights persistent inequalities, with vulnerable communities left behind, and reveals

that one in four people in 2024, or 2.1 billion people globally, still lack access to safely managed drinking water, including 106 million who drink directly from untreated surface sources. While some progress has been made, major gaps persist, with people living in low-income countries, fragile contexts, rural communities, children and minority ethnic and indigenous groups face the greatest disparities, according to the report, “Progress on Household Drinking Water and Sanitation 2000-24”, published.

The report, with special focus on inequalities, says in 2024, 1.4 billion people lacked basic services, 287 million with limited services, and 302 million with unimproved services. Since 2015, 961 million people have gained access to safely managed drinking water services. Coverage has increased from 68pc to 74pc. The number of people using surface water for drinking has decreased by 61 million, according to the report. In Pakistan, the least basic drinking water coverage in urban areas declined from 94pc to 93pc. The number of people still lacking even a basic sanitation service decreased from 2.7bn to 1.5bn. In urban areas, 1.7 billion people gained safely managed services, with coverage increasing from under half of the population (48pc) to two thirds (66pc). (*Dawn*, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12)

### **10.1 # Gaza Starvation**

#### ***US promises Gaza food plan after envoy visit***

Palestinian Territories: President Donald Trump’s special envoy promised a plan to deliver more food to Gaza after inspecting a US-backed distribution centre, as the UN human rights office said Israeli forces had killed hundreds of hungry Palestinians waiting for aid. The visit by Steve Witkoff came as a report from global advocacy group Human Rights Watch accused Israeli forces of presiding over “regular bloodbaths” close to US-backed aid points run by the private Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF). The UN human rights office in the Palestinian territories said at least 1,373 people had been killed seeking aid in Gaza since May 27 — 105 of them in the last two days of July. (*Business Recorder*, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 1)

#### ***Spain air-drops 12 tonnes of food aid***

Spain said it had air-dropped 12 tonnes of food into Gaza, which UN-backed experts say is slipping into famine. The mission deployed 24 parachutes, each capable of carrying 500 kilos (1,100 pounds) of food, for a total of 12 tonnes — enough for 11,000 people, said Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares. Spain also has aid waiting to cross into Gaza by road from Egypt, the minister added in a video message posted on social network X, along with a video of the operation. “The induced famine that the people of Gaza are suffering is a disgrace to all of humanity,” Albares said. (*Business Recorder*, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 1)

#### ***France carries out first aid airdrop***

President Emmanuel Macron said France had carried out its first airdrop of humanitarian supplies into Gaza, after UN-backed experts warn the Israeli-blockaded



Palestinian territory was slipping into famine. “Faced with an urgent humanitarian crisis, we just conducted a food airdrop over Gaza,” Macron said in English on X. “But airdrops are not enough. Israel must grant full humanitarian access to address the risk of famine,” he said. He thanked France’s Jordanian, Emirati, and German partners for their support.

Several tonnes of food supplies will be delivered to Gaza “over several days”, the French foreign and defence ministries said in a joint statement. “France is also working on land transport, by far the most effective solution for the large-scale and unhindered delivery of humanitarian goods desperately needed by the population,” the statement added. France will air-drop 40 tonnes of aid into Gaza, Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said earlier this week. Concern has escalated in the past week about hunger in the Gaza Strip after more than 21 months of war, which started after Palestinian militant group Hamas carried out a deadly attack against Israel in October 2023. (*Business Recorder, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Starvation politics***

The visit of US envoy Steve Witkoff to Gaza’s aid corridors underlines how broken the West’s humanitarian response is to the Gaza war. Rather than help restore UN-led relief efforts after Israel blocked most humanitarian access to the occupied territory, the US has backed an alternative aid model, the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, whose poorly managed food distribution points have become death zones. More than 1,300 Palestinians, many of them women and children, have died trying to access aid. Some were trampled in stampedes; others were shot by Israeli forces as they queued for survival. With Gaza now in the grip of famine — and malnutrition ravaging a quarter of its children and pregnant women — the GHF model is indefensible. UN agencies have rightly refused to endorse it, warning that these chaotic distribution centres are neither neutral nor safe. Human Rights Watch has called them “bloodbaths”. Still, Washington continues to prop them up. (*Dawn, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 6*)

### ***Israel’s attacks kill dozens more amid starvation crisis***

As Palestinians across Gaza Strip struggled for food, Israeli bombardment in the territory continued with at least 30 more deaths. Among them were 13 aid seekers. The UN human rights office in the Palestinian territories said at least 1,373 Palestinians seeking aid in Gaza had been killed since May 27. On the other hand, seven more people, including one child, have died due to “famine and malnutrition” in Gaza, the territory’s health ministry said, bringing the number of deaths from starvation to 169, including 93 children. The amount of aid entering Gaza remains “very insufficient” despite a limited improvement, the German government said after ministers discussed ways to heighten pressure on Israel. Israeli forces attacks have killed at least 60,430 people and wounded 148,722 since October 2023, besides displacing millions of Palestinians in Gaza. A total of 898 Israeli soldiers have also been killed, according to the military. (*Dawn, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***Germany says ‘very insufficient’ aid entering Gaza***

The amount of aid entering Gaza remains “very insufficient” despite a limited improvement, the German government said after ministers discussed ways to heighten pressure on Israel. The criticism came after Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul visited the region and the German military staged its first food airdrops into Gaza, where aid agencies say that more than two million Palestinians are facing starvation.

Germany “notes limited initial progress in the delivery of humanitarian aid to the population of the Gaza Strip, which, however, remains very insufficient to alleviate the emergency situation,” government spokesman Stefan Kornelius said in a statement. “Israel remains obligated to ensure the full delivery of aid,” Kornelius added. Facing mounting international criticism over its military operations in Gaza, Israel has allowed more trucks to cross the border and some foreign nations to carry out airdrops of food and medicines. International agencies say the amount of aid entering Gaza is still dangerously low, however. (*The News, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***46 dead in Gaza as starvation rises and aid access remains limited***

At least 46 deaths, including six from starvation or malnutrition, were reported in Gaza over the past 24 hours, local health authorities said. The health ministry said that six more Palestinians died of starvation or malnutrition while 40 killed in Israeli gunfire and airstrikes across the coastal enclave. Deaths included persons trying to make their way to aid distribution points in southern and central areas of Gaza, Palestinian medics said. (*Dawn, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***99 die from malnutrition in Gaza this year, says WHO***

The World Health Organisation said that 99 people were now known to have died from malnutrition in the Gaza Strip so far this year, with the figure likely an underestimate. International outrage over the humanitarian situation in Gaza has ratcheted up pressure on Israel, with UN agencies warning of famine in the devastated Palestinian territory. WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called for scaled-up, sustained and unimpeded aid to be allowed to flow into Gaza, via all possible routes. Gazans “have limited access to basic services, have faced repeated displacement and are now suffering from a blockade of food supplies”, Tedros told the UN correspondents’ association ACANU. (*Dawn, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***Urgent action demanded: Gaza on brink of catastrophe: over 1500 EU staff***

A group of over 1,500 European Union civil servants have issued a searing letter to European Commission (EU) President Ursula von der Leyen and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas, warning that the humanitarian situation in Gaza is approaching a catastrophic point of no return, declaring that “time is running out.” The letter, signed by EU Staff for Peace and addressed to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas – and available with Business Recorder – urges

EU institutions to confront what the officials call the European Union's moral and political failure to stop Israel's siege of Gaza. (*Business Recorder, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Israel blamed for causing famine in Gaza City***

The United Nations officially declared a famine in Gaza City, the first time it has done so in the Middle East, with experts warning that over half a million people faced catastrophic hunger. "It is a famine: the Gaza famine," said Tom Fletcher, the UN's emergency relief coordinator, as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification panel found famine was now present in and around Gaza City. He blamed Israel, accusing it of "systematic obstruction" of aid deliveries to the war-ravaged Palestinian territory.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu slammed the UN-backed report as "an outright lie", while the foreign ministry insisted: "There is no famine in Gaza." The IPC defines famine as occurring when 20 per cent of households have an extreme lack of food; 30pc of children under five are acutely malnourished; and at least two in every 10,000 people die daily from outright starvation or from malnutrition and disease. UN agencies have long been warning of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, particularly as Israel steps up its offensive in besieged and war-torn enclave. The Rome-based IPC said that "as of 15 August 2025, famine (IPC Phase 5) — with reasonable evidence — is confirmed in Gaza governorate". (*Dawn, August 23<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***How global hunger monitor determines famine***

A global hunger monitor determined that famine is taking place in Gaza. Here is an explanation of what the monitor is, how it assesses a hunger crisis, when it identifies famine and how it collects data.

### ***Who is confirming famine?***

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is an independent body funded by Western countries and widely recognised as the main global system for measuring the severity of hunger crises. It was set up to sound the alarm so that famine and mass starvation could be prevented and to help organisations respond. The IPC is overseen by 19 major humanitarian organisations and regional bodies. It typically partners with national governments to analyse data.

### ***How is famine determined?***

The IPC system charts acute food insecurity on a five-phase scale. Its most extreme warning is Phase 5, which has two levels, catastrophe and famine. If the IPC or one of its partners finds that at least one area is in famine, a famine review committee, led by up to six experts, is activated. For an area to be classified as in famine, at least 20% of people must be suffering extreme food shortages, with one in three children acutely malnourished and two people out of every 10,000 dying daily from starvation or malnutrition and disease.

The IPC says it does not formally declare famine, but provides analysis for governments and others to do so. Even if a region has not yet been classified as in famine, IPC can determine that households there are suffering famine conditions, which it describes as starvation, destitution and death. The IPC relies on U.N. World Food Programme and other relief organisations and government agencies to provide data. Its preferred method for assessing acute malnutrition levels is to measure children's weight and height, or if conditions do not allow that, to measure circumference of children's upper arms.

### **What are the precedents?**

This is the fifth time in the past 14 years that a famine has been determined by the IPC, and the first time it has confirmed famine outside Africa. The IPC previously concluded that there was famine in areas of Somalia in 2011, South Sudan in 2017 and 2020, and Sudan last year. Some have criticised the IPC for being too slow to respond to serious humanitarian catastrophes. In Gaza, it has struggled to access data and Israel has contested its findings. While a famine classification does not trigger any formal response, it can focus global attention.

### **What is current assessment in Gaza?**

Of the people affected, some 280,000 are in a northern region covering Gaza City, which the IPC said was in famine. The rest are in Deir al Balah and Khan Yunis – central and southern areas that the IPC projected would be in famine by the end of next month. The IPC said the analysis released only covered people living in the Gaza City, Deir al Balah and Khan Yunis areas. It was unable to classify North Gaza governorate due to access restrictions and a lack of data and it excluded any remaining population in the southern Rafah region. (*Dawn, August 23<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

### ***UN declares famine in Gaza***

The United Nations officially declared a famine in Gaza, the first time it has done so in the Middle East, with experts warning 500,000 people face “catastrophic” hunger. “It is a famine: the Gaza famine,” said Tom Fletcher, the UN’s emergency relief coordinator. He blamed Israel, accusing it of “systematic obstruction” of aid deliveries to the war-ravaged Palestinian territory. Israel’s foreign ministry said the declaration that famine is now present in and around Gaza City was “based on Hamas lies laundered through organisations with vested interests”. “There is no famine in Gaza,” it insisted.

The assessment of famine was made by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Initiative (IPC), a coalition of monitors tasked by the UN to warn of impending crises. It defines famine as occurring when 20 percent of households have an extreme lack of food; 30 percent of children under five are acutely malnourished; and at least two in every 10,000 people die daily from outright starvation or from malnutrition and disease. UN agencies have for months been warning of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, which has worsened as Israel steps up its offensive against Hamas. (*Business Recorder, August 23<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **11 # ENVIRONMENT**

### **11.1 # Atmosphere**

#### ***Japan sweats through hottest July on record***

Japan sweltered through its hottest July since records began in 1898, the weather agency has reported, warning of further “severe heat” in the month ahead. Heatwaves are becoming more intense and frequent the world over because of human-caused climate change, scientists say, and Japan is no exception. The average temperature in July was up a record 2.89C from the 1991-2020 average for the month, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. It was the third year in a row of record-breaking average temperatures for July, it said. (*The News, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### **11.2 # Biodiversity**

#### ***Climate heat extremes driving tropical bird decline: study***

Tropical bird populations have plummeted not only due to deforestation but also extreme heat attributable to climate change, according to a study published in the journal Nature Ecology & Evolution. Intensifying temperatures caused a 25-38 per cent reduction in tropical bird populations between 1950 and 2020, compared to a scenario without manmade global warming, scientists based in Europe and Australia reported. Nearly half of all bird species are found in biodiversity-rich tropical regions. These often colourful animals perform essential services for ecosystems, such as dispersing plant seeds. (*Dawn, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### **11.3 # Pollution**

#### ***Plastic pollution ‘grave and growing’ health threat: Lancet***

Plastic pollution is a “grave, growing and under-recognised danger” to health that is costing the world at least \$1.5 trillion a year. The new review of the existing evidence, which was carried out by leading health researchers and doctors, was published one day ahead of fresh talks opening in Geneva aiming to seal the world’s first treaty on plastic pollution. “Plastics cause disease and death from infancy to old age and are responsible for health-related economic losses exceeding US\$1.5 trillion annually,” said the review in The Lancet medical journal. Comparing plastic to air pollution and lead, the report said its impact on health could be mitigated by laws and policies. The experts called for the delegates from nearly 180 nations gathering in Geneva to finally agree to a treaty after previous failed attempts. The amount of plastic produced by the world has risen from two million tonnes in 1950 to 475 million tonnes in 2022, the report said. The number is projected to triple by 2060. (*Business Recorder, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

#### ***Plastic pollution treaty talks open with ‘global crisis’ warning***

The 184 countries gathering to forge a landmark treaty on combating plastic pollution were told they must find a way to tackle a global crisis wrecking ecosystems and trashing the oceans. States should seize the chance to shape history, the man chairing the talks said as 10 days of negotiations kicked off at the United Nations in Geneva.

“We are facing a global crisis,” Ecuadoran diplomat Luis Vayas Valdivieso told the more than 1,800 negotiators as they prepared to thrash out their differences in the search for common ground.

“Plastic pollution is damaging ecosystems, polluting our oceans and rivers, threatening biodiversity, harming human health, and unfairly impacting the most vulnerable,” he said. “The urgency is real, the evidence is clear — and the responsibility is on us.” Plastic pollution is so ubiquitous that microplastics have been found on the highest mountain peaks, in the deepest ocean trench and scattered throughout almost every part of the human body. But after five rounds of talks, three years of negotiations hit the wall in Busan, South Korea, in December when oil-producing states blocked a consensus. (*Dawn, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***EU ready to do plastic pollution deal, ‘but not at any cost’***

The European Union is ready to do a deal to land a groundbreaking treaty on plastic pollution, but not at any cost, the EU’s environment commissioner insisted. With little over two days left to strike a global accord in talks at the UN in Geneva, Jessika Roswall said it was “time” to clinch a deal between oil-producing countries and more ambitious nations, including EU states. Five previous rounds of talks over the past two and a half years have failed to seal an agreement, including a supposedly final round in South Korea late last year. (*Dawn, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Plastic pollution plague blights Asia***

Kulsum Beghum sorts waste at a landfill in Dhaka. Her blood contains 650 microplastic particles per millilitre, according to an analysis funded by a waste pickers’ union. “Plastic is not good for me,” she told AFP through a translator during an interview in Geneva, where she came to bear witness on the sidelines of 184-nation talks to forge the world’s first global plastic pollution treaty. “It started 30 years ago” in the Bangladeshi capital, the 55-year-old said, supported by her union. At first, “plastic was for cooking oil and soft drinks”, she recalled. Then came shopping bags, which replaced traditional jute bags. (*Business Recorder, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

## **11.4 # Health**

### ***WHO slams US for axing vaccine contracts***

The decision by US President Donald Trump’s administration to terminate 22 federal contracts for mRNA-based vaccines is a major blow to a hugely promising platform, the World Health Organisation said. The announcement made by Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. marked his latest effort to weave vaccine scepticism into the core of US government policy. “This is, of course, a significant blow,” WHO immunisation figurehead Joachim Hombach told the UN correspondents’ association ACANU. (*Dawn, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

## 12 # CLIMATE CHANGE

### ***US, world's top producer of plastics, urges countries to reject UN production caps***

The United States has sent letters to at least a handful of countries urging them to reject the goal of a global pact that includes limits on plastic production and plastic chemical additives at the start of UN plastic treaty talks in Geneva, according to a memo and communications. In the communications dated July 25 and circulated to countries at the start of negotiations, the US laid out its red lines for negotiations that put it in direct opposition to over 100 countries that have supported those measures.

Hopes for a “last-chance” ambitious global treaty that tackles the full life cycle of plastic pollution from the production of polymers to the disposal of waste have dimmed as delegates gather for what was intended to be the final round of negotiations. Significant divisions remain between oil-producing countries who oppose caps on virgin plastic production fueled by petroleum, coal, and gas and parties such as the European Union and small island states, which advocate for limits, as well as stronger management of plastic products and hazardous chemicals. (*Dawn, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

## 13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS

### ***Insurers face soaring payouts as disasters intensify***

Natural disasters caused \$135bn in economic losses globally in the first half of 2025, fuelled by the Los Angeles wildfires, reinsurer Swiss Re said. Swiss Re, which serves as an insurer of insurance companies, said first half losses were up from the \$123bn in the first half of 2024. The Zurich-based reinsurance giant estimated that of this year's first half losses, \$80bn had been insured — almost double the 10-year average, in 2025 prices. The Los Angeles blazes in January constitute the largest-ever insured wildfire loss event by far, reaching an estimated \$40bn, said Swiss Re. It said the “exceptional loss severity” of the fires was down to prolonged winds, a lack of rainfall and “some of the densest concentration of high-value single-family residential property in the US”.

Insured losses from severe thunderstorms amounted to \$31bn in the first half of 2025. The second half of the year is usually more costly for insurers due to damage during the North Atlantic hurricane season. If current loss trends continue, global insured losses from natural catastrophes in 2025 could exceed the Swiss Re Institute's projections of \$150bn. “The strongest lever to increase the resilience and safety of communities is to double down on mitigation and adaptation. It's here that everyone can help reduce losses before they occur,” said Swiss Re's group chief economist Jerome Haegeli. (*Dawn, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Drought, dams and diplomacy: Afghanistan's water crisis goes regional***

Over four decades of war, Afghanistan wielded limited control over five major river basins that flow across its borders into downstream neighbouring nations. But as Taliban authorities swept to power and tightened their grip on the country, they have pushed for Afghanistan's water sovereignty, launching infrastructure projects to harness



precious resources in the arid territory. Dams and canals have sparked tensions with neighbouring states, testing the Taliban authorities' efforts to build strong regional ties, as they remain largely isolated on the global stage since their 2021 takeover. At the same time, the region is facing the shared impacts of climate change intensifying water scarcity, as temperatures rise and precipitation patterns shift, threatening glaciers and snowpack that feed the country's rivers. (*Dawn, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### **13.1 # Rainfall / Flood**

#### ***Hong Kong hit by flooding after flurry of rainstorm warnings***

Parts of Hong Kong were brought to a standstill by flooding caused by heavy rains, after the highest-tier rainstorm warning was issued for the fourth time in eight days. The city logged its highest daily rainfall in August since records began in 1884, at just over 355 millimetres recorded at the Hong Kong weather observatory's headquarters at 2:00 pm (0600 GMT). The financial hub has suspended school classes and opened temporary shelters, and some hospital services such as outpatient clinics have also been affected.

The observatory said the "black" rainstorm warning — meaning downpours exceeding 70 millimetres in an hour — would remain in force at least until 5:00 pm. It was hoisted and again in the pre-dawn hours. More than 9,600 cloud-to-ground lightning strikes were recorded between 5:00 am and noon, according to the observatory. The weather service warned afternoon that "persistent rainstorm will cause serious road flooding and traffic congestion". (*Business Recorder, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

#### ***Deadly monsoon floods devastate parts of India, China***

Deadly floods fuelled by torrential monsoon rains have devastated parts of India and China, killing several people and leaving dozens missing or trapped as rescue teams in both nations raced to find survivors. In the Indian Himalayas, the army deployed sniffer dogs, drones and heavy earth-moving equipment to search for scores of people missing a day after flash floods ravaged a mountain valley. At least four people were killed and more than 50 are unaccounted for after a wall of muddy water and debris smashed into the town of Dharali in Uttarakhand state. (*Dawn, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

#### ***Flood kills 37 in held Kashmir village***

Powerful torrents driven by intense rain smashed into a Himalayan mountain village in India-held Kashmir and killed at least 37 people, a top disaster management official said. It is the second major deadly flooding disaster in India this month. (*Dawn, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

#### ***Flood kills 56 in IIOJK mountain village, scores missing***

At least 56 people have died and dozens more remain missing after torrents of water and mud driven by intense rain crashed through a Himalayan village in IIOJK, a top disaster management official told AFP. It is the second major deadly flooding disaster in India this month. "The news is grim," IIOJK Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said in



a statement, reporting a “cloudburst” of heavy rain that had hit the Kishtwar district. Crowds gathered at a Kishtwar hospital while people carried some of the injured on stretchers. (*Business Recorder, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Northern China flash flood kills 10***

At least 10 people died in a flash flood in northern China with two others still missing, as the East Asian monsoon continues to unleash atmospheric chaos across the world’s secondlargest economy. The banks of a river running through the grasslands of Inner Mongolia burst, the report said, washing away 13 people camping on the outskirts of the city of Bayannur, a major agricultural hub. A search and rescue operation involving more than 700 people is underway, according to state news agency Xinhua. One person has been rescued. (*Dawn, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

### ***Over 30 killed as heavy rain causes flooding in held Jammu***

Heavy rain caused flooding and landslides in India-occupied Jammu, cutting off amenities and killing 34 people. A landslide near the shrine of Vaishno Devi on a famous pilgrims’ route killed at least 30 people. It was latest catastrophe caused by downpours in Himalayan region that killed 60 people and left 200 missing in Kishtwar, occupied Kashmir, last week. In Jammu, India Meteorological Department said rain reached 368 mm. Department forecast more rain and thunderstorms with gusty winds for mountainous region of Himachal Pradesh, as well as occupied Jammu and Kashmir. (*Dawn, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

### ***Floods, landslides kill at least 11 in IIOJ&K***

Floods and landslides triggered by record-breaking rain killed at least 11 people, including four children, in India’s Jammu and Kashmir. An intense monsoon rainstorm in the Indian-administered territory has caused widespread chaos, with raging water smashing into bridges and swamping homes. A local disaster official told *AFP* that Ramban and Reasi districts were hit by heavy rainfall and landslides, killing 11 people. One child aged five was trapped in the debris and still missing, he added. A landslide slammed the pilgrimage route to the Hindu shrine of Vaishno Devi in Jammu, killing 41 people. India’s Meteorological Department said the torrential rain had smashed records at two locations in the region. (*Business Recorder, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

## **13.2 # Torrents / Typhoon**

### ***60 killed as torrents destroy village in India-held Kashmir***

Rescuers pulled bodies from mud and rubble after the latest deadly flood to crash through a Himalayan village killed 60 people and washed away many more in India-occupied Kashmir. Torrents of water and mud driven by intense rain tore through Chisoti village, leaving many people missing, including Hindu pilgrims who were visiting a shrine. (*Dawn, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Trees down, homes flooded as typhoon batters Vietnam***

Typhoon Kajiki brought torrential rains to Vietnam’s north central coast, felling trees and flooding homes, despite wind speeds tapering off from earlier in the day. As of 0900

GMT, Kajiki was on the coast of Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces, with wind speed easing to 118-133 kph from as strong as 166 kph, according to the country's weather agency. (*Dawn, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### **13.3 # Heatwave**

#### ***More heatwaves to come after havoc during 'third-hottest July'***

The World Meteorological Centre (WMC) in Beijing has warned of impending heatwaves expected to sweep across various parts of the world, including Pakistan, from next week. The warning comes as European forecasters revealed that this past July was the third-hottest on record — breaking a months-long record setting heat streak. “Two years after the hottest July on record, the recent streak of global temperature records is over,” Carlo Buontempo, director of the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service, said in a statement. “But that does not mean climate change has stopped,” he said, adding: (*Dawn, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 14*)

#### ***Two die, thousands displaced as heatwave scorches Europe***

Two men died and thousands were forced from their homes as wildfires fuelled by a heatwave scorched southern Europe. Heat alerts were issued in Italy, France, Spain, Portugal and the Balkans, with temperatures expected to soar above 40C. The heatwave is another sign of climate change, which is fuelling longer, more intense and increasingly frequent bouts of extreme heat. “Thanks to climate change, we now live in a significantly warmer world,” Akshay Deoras, a research scientist at the meteorology department in Britain's University of Reading said, adding that “many still underestimate the danger”. (*Dawn, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### **13.4 # Wildfires**

#### ***Spain battles 20 major wildfires amid scorching heat***

Scorching heat hampered efforts to contain 20 major wildfires across Spain, prompting the government to deploy an additional 500 troops from the military emergency unit to support firefighting operations. In the northwestern region of Galicia, several fires have converged to form a large blaze, forcing the closure of highways and rail services to the region. Southern Europe is experiencing one of its worst wildfire seasons in two decades, with Spain among the hardest-hit countries. In the past week alone, fires there have claimed three lives and burned more than 115,000 hectares, while neighbouring Portugal also battles widespread blazes. (*Dawn, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

#### ***20 wildfires ravage record area in Spain***

Thousands of firefighters backed by the military and water-bombing aircraft battled dozens of wildfires across Spain and Portugal, as the death toll increased to six since the outbreaks began. The Iberian peninsula has been particularly affected by forest fires fuelled by heatwaves and drought blamed on climate change that have hit southern Europe. More than 343,000 hectares (848,000 acres) of land — the equivalent of nearly half a million football pitches — have been destroyed this year in Spain, setting a new

national record, according to European Forest Fire Information System. The previous record of 306,000 hectares was set in the same period three years ago. Two firefighters were killed — one in each country, both in road accidents — taking death toll to two in Portugal and four in Spain. The head of Spain’s Civil Protection and Emergencies, Virginia Barcones, told broadcaster TVE there were currently 23 “active fires” that pose a serious and direct threat to the population. (*Dawn, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Wildfires burn over record one million hectares in EU***

Wildfires have so far ravaged more than one million hectares (2.5m acres) in European Union in 2025, a record since statistics began in 2006, according to an analysis of official data. Surpassing annual record of 988,524 hectares burnt in 2017, figure reached 1,015,731 hectares, representing an area larger than Cyprus. This calculation is based on a total compiled from estimates by country from European Forest Fire Information System, at a time when Spain and Portugal are still battling wildfires.

Four countries in European Union — Spain, Cyprus, Germany, and Slovakia — have already experienced their worst year in two decades of existing data. Spain is struggling with numerous fires in west of country, which have claimed four lives. By far the most affected EU country by fires, with more than 400,000 hectares burnt, Spain accounts for nearly 40pc of EU total. Portugal, which holds the unenviable EU record of 563,530 hectares burnt in 2017, is second-most affected EU country. As of August 21, it has never had an area of this size (nearly 274,000 hectares) burnt so early in year. Romania follows with 126,000 hectares while in France 35,600 hectares of forest have been reduced to ashes, mostly in southern Aude region, which was ravaged by a massive fire in early August. These calculations by EFFIS, a component of European climate monitor Copernicus, only take into account fires that have burnt areas of at least 30 hectares. (*Dawn, August 22<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

## **14 # NATURAL DISASTERS**

### **14.1 # Earthquake**

#### ***Earthquake of magnitude 6.1 strikes western Turkey***

An earthquake of magnitude 6.1 struck western Turkey, the country’s AFAD disaster management authority said, while local media said the quake was felt across multiple provinces. AFAD said the quake occurred at around 7:53pm local time in the Balıkesir province, near Turkey’s biggest city Istanbul, but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage in any of the affected provinces. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said on X that emergency teams from AFAD had started inspections around Istanbul and the neighbouring provinces but that no negative reports had come through so far. (*Business Recorder, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### **14.2 # Landslide**

#### ***Mudslide engulfs Indian town; four die, 100 missing***

A flash flood driving a torrent of mud smashed into a town in India’s Himalayan region, killing at least four people with around 100 others missing. The roaring waters tore

down a narrow mountain valley, demolishing buildings as the flood barrelled into the town of Dharali in Uttarakhand state. “It is a serious situation,” Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth said. “We have received information about four deaths and around 100 people missing. We pray for their safety.” Videos broadcast on Indian media showed a terrifying surge of muddy water sweeping away multi-storey apartment blocks in the tourist region. (*Dawn, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

## **15 # RESISTANCE**

### ***Assange joins pro-Palestine march in Sydney***

Tens of thousands of demonstrators, including WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, braved pouring rain to march across Sydney’s iconic Harbour Bridge calling for peace and aid deliveries in the war-torn Gaza Strip, where a humanitarian crisis has been worsening. Nearly two years into a war which has killed more than 60,000 people in Gaza, governments and humanitarian organisations say a shortage of food is leading to widespread starvation. Some of those attending the ‘March for Humanity’ carried pots and pans as symbols of the hunger. Marchers ranged from the elderly to families with young children. Among them was Wikileaks founder Julian Assange. Many carried umbrellas. Some waved Palestinian flags and chanted “We are all Palestinians. (*Dawn, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***Tens of thousands join pro-Palestinian march***

Tens of thousands of demonstrators braved pouring rain to march across Sydney’s iconic Harbour Bridge calling for peace and aid deliveries in the war-torn Gaza Strip, where a humanitarian crisis has been worsening. Nearly two years into a war that Palestinian authorities say has killed more than 60,000 people in Gaza, governments and humanitarian organisations say a shortage of food is leading to widespread starvation. Some of those attending march, called by its organisers ‘March for Humanity’, carried pots & pans as symbols of hunger. “Enough is enough,” said Doug, a man in his 60s with a shock of white hair. “When people from all over the world gather together and speak up, then evil can be overcome.” (*Business Recorder, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Palestinians across West Bank protest Gaza war***

Thousands of Palestinians protested in the occupied West Bank’s major cities against the war in Gaza and in support of Palestinians held in Israeli prisons. One of the largest marches took place in Ramallah, the seat of the Palestinian Authority located just north of Jerusalem, with hundreds gathering at the main square, waving Palestinian flags. Many protesters carried photos of Palestinians killed or imprisoned by Israel, as well as photos depicting the hunger crisis unfolding in the Gaza Strip, where UN-backed experts have warned that a “famine is unfolding”. Protests were in other major Palestinian cities such as Nablus in the north and Hebron in the south, with many government employees receiving a day off to attend demonstrations. While there have been somewhat regular demonstrations against war in Gaza, they are rarely coordinated across various cities in West Bank. (*Business Recorder, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

***News Makers: SURABAYA:***

Environmental activists from the ECOTON Foundation and university students take part in a protest in front of the Australian consulate general in Surabaya, Indonesia, calling upon the Australian government to stop exporting plastic waste to Indonesia. (*Dawn, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

***News Makers: NEW YORK:***

Demonstrators march towards the offices of the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as they protest alleged use of the building as a covert detention facility. According to figures published by the Deportation Data Project, there have been over 100,000 immigrant arrests by ICE agents in the first five months of President Donald Trump's second term. (*Dawn, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

***Thousands protest in Tel Aviv against Israeli govt move to expand Gaza war***

Thousands took to the streets in Israel's Tel Aviv to call for an end to the war in Gaza, a day after the government, vowed to expand the conflict and capture Gaza City. Demonstrators waved signs and held up pictures of hostages still held captive in the Palestinian territory as they called on the government to secure their releases. (*The News, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

***Greenpeace stages protest on UK gas platform using Anish Kapoor art***

Greenpeace activists have unfurled a massive anti-fossil fuel canvas by renowned sculptor Anish Kapoor on a North Sea platform in a rare protest on an active offshore gas rig, the group said. Seven Greenpeace climbers scaled Shell's Skiff gas platform, 45 nautical miles off the Norfolk coast in eastern England, and attached the 12-metre (40 feet) by eight-metre (26 feet) work, entitled "BUTCHERED". They then pumped 1,000 litres of a "blood-red" mixture, composed of seawater, beetroot powder, and non-toxic dye, onto the canvas. (*Dawn, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

***Hundreds of flights grounded in Canada after strike***

Air Canada cancelled hundreds of flights as it began shutting down operations in response to a strike by flight attendants — triggering summer travel chaos for its 130,000 daily passengers. (*Dawn, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

***Israelis stage nationwide protests to demand end to Gaza war***

Thousands of Israelis took part in a nationwide strike in support of families of hostages held in Gaza, calling on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to reach an agreement with Hamas to end the war and release the remaining captives. Demonstrators waved Israeli flags and carried photos of hostages as whistles, horns, and drums echoed at rallies across the country, while some protesters blocked streets and highways, including the main route between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. (*Business Recorder, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Greta Thunberg, other activists block oil refinery in Norway***

Some 200 climate activists including Greta Thunberg of Sweden blocked Norway's largest oil refinery in a protest demanding an end to the country's oil industry, organisers and police said. Activists from Extinction Rebellion sat on the road, blocking the entrance to the Mongstad refinery in Bergen on Norway's southwestern coast, while kayaks and sailboats obstructed the port's entrance. (*Dawn, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***News Makers: OSLO***

Activists from environmental movement Extinction Rebellion hold up signs reading 'Oil Kills' as they take part in a protest. Greta Thunberg and more than 100 climate activists blocked the Norwegian capital's main avenue and a bank branch to demand that Norway put an end to its oil industry.-AFP (*Dawn, August 22<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Widespread protests held in Australia to support Palestinians***

Thousands of Australians joined pro-Palestinian rallies, organisers said, amid strained relations between Israel and Australia following the centre-left government's decision to recognise a Palestinian state. More than 40 protests took place across Australia, Palestine Action Group said, including large turnouts in state capitals Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. The group said around 350,000 attended the rallies nationwide, including around 50,000 in Brisbane, though police estimated the numbers there at closer to 10,000. Police did not have estimates for crowd sizes in Sydney and Melbourne. (*Business Recorder, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***UK vows to speed up asylum claims as hotel protests spread***

The UK government vowed to overhaul its asylum system after weekend protests broke out across the country at hotels housing migrants. The government said it will establish a new independent body to hear appeals by failed applicants more quickly as it attempts to end the costly use of asylum hotels, which have become the target of protests. (*Business Recorder, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***Killing of taxi driver by police sparks violent clashes in Indonesia***

Hundreds of Indonesians protested at sites across Jakarta over the death of a civilian hit by a police vehicle, triggering calls for police reform in the first major test for President Prabowo Subianto's nearly year-old government. The civilian, a motorcycle ride-sharing driver, was hit at the site of violent clashes near parliament as police sought to disperse demonstrators protesting over lawmakers' pay and education funding. (*Dawn, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Microsoft sacks four workers for protests over ties to Israel***

Microsoft has fired four employees who participated in protests on company premises against the firm's ties to Israel as it devastates Gaza, including two who took part in a sit-in this week at the office of the company's president. Anna Hattle and Riki Fameli received voicemails informing them that they were fired, the protest group No Azure for Apartheid said in a statement. It added that two more workers, Nisreen Jaradat and

Julius Shan, were fired. They were among protesters who had recently set up encampments at Microsoft headquarters. (*Dawn, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

***Venice moves spotlight from movie drama to real-world trauma***

Thousands of people protested against Israel's siege of Gaza on the sidelines of the Venice Film Festival, seeking to move the spotlight from movie drama to real-world trauma. Organised by left-wing political groups in northeast Italy, the demonstration began in the early evening a few kilometres from the festival where top Hollywood talent from George Clooney and Julia Roberts to Emma Stone have walked the red carpet in recent days. The protesters, whose numbers reporters estimated to be about three to four thousand, marched slowly to the entrance of the festival in the beachfront Lido district, waving Palestinian flags, as the Hollywood blockbuster *Frankenstein* was due to have its world premiere nearby. (*Dawn, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

***Five arrested during anti-asylum protest in London***

British police said they arrested five people after masked men tried to force their way into a hotel used by asylum-seekers, a day after the government won a court ruling on the use of another hotel to house migrants. Two groups of anti-asylum protesters marched to the Crowne Plaza Hotel near Heathrow Airport before some demonstrators tried to break in, London's Metropolitan Police force said. Two police officers suffered minor injuries, it said. (*Dawn, August 31<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

## 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.

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