

# ***HAAL AHWAL***

Monthly News Reviews on Food and Agriculture

**October, 2025**

**Roots for Equity**



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Monthly News Reviews on Food and Agriculture

**October, 2025**

Editor

***Azra Talat Sayeed***

Sub-Editor

***Mujtaba Zaidi***

Contributors

***Imamuddin***

***Yasir Iqbal***

**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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**AARI:** Agricultural Research Institute

**ADB:** Asian Development Bank

**AIIB:** Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

**AJK:** Azad Jammu and Kashmir

**AMR:** Antimicrobial Resistance

**AQI:** Air Quality Index

**AT:** Awami Tehreek

**B2B:** Business-to-Business

**BISP:** Benazir Income Support Programme

**BTOR:** Back-to-Office Reports

**CABI:** Centre of Agriculture and Biosciences International

**CBN:** Cost of Basic Needs

**CDA:** Capital Development Authority

**CDWP:** Central Development Working Party

**CLCVD:** Chilli Leaf Curl Virus Disease

**CPI:** Consumer Price Index

**DAP:** Diammonium Phosphate

**DCFA:** Dairy and Cattle Farmers Association

**DEFRA:** Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

**DPO:** District Police Officer

**DRAP:** Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan

**ECC:** Economic Coordination Committee

**ECNEC:** National Economic Council

**EFF:** Enhanced Fund Facility

**EU:** European Union

**FAO:** Food and Agriculture Organisation

**FCA:** Federal Committee of Agriculture

**FDI:** Foreign Direct Investment

**FED:** Federal Excise Duty

**FII:** Future Investment Initiative

**FLI:** Friedrich Loeffler Institute

**FMPAC:** Fertilizer Manufacturers of Pakistan Advisory Council

**GCF:** Green Climate Fund

**HAS:** Health Services Academy

**IAC:** IRSA Advisory Committee

**IED:** Independent Evaluation Department

**IFIs:** International Financial Institutions

**IGS:** Institute of Gender Studies

**IMF:** International Monetary Fund

**IRSA:** Indus Water River System Authority



**Ji:** Jamaat-i-Islami

**KDP:** Kisaan Dost Programme

**KMC:** Karachi Metropolitan Corporation

**KSTA:** Knowledge and support technical assistance

**LMIC:** Low- and Middle-Income Country

**MAF:** Million Acre-Feet

**MEFP:** Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies

**MENAAP:** Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan

**MMT:** Million Metric Tons

**MNFSR:** National Food Security and Research

**MoM:** Month on Month

**MoU:** Memoranda of Understanding

**MPA:** Member of the Provincial Assembly

**MRLs:** Maximum Residue Limits

**MSP:** Minimum Support Price

**MWM:** Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen

**NAB:** National Accountability Bureau

**NDMA:** National Disaster Management Authority

**NEOC:** National Emergencies Operation Centre

**NIH:** National Institute of Health

**NPCs:** Naya Pakistan Certificates

**NSFSI:** National Subsistence Farmers Support Initiative

**PBoC:** People's Bank of China

**PBS:** Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

**PCB:** Pakistan Cotton Board

**PCGA:** Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association

**PDMA:** Provincial Disaster Management Authority

**PFF:** Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum

**PFMA-KP:** Pakistan Flour Mills Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

**PIDE:** Pakistan Institute of Development Economics

**PKRC:** Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee

**PMD:** Pakistan Meteorological Department

**PPHS:** Pakistan Panel Household Survey

**PPM:** Parts Per Million

**PPP:** Pakistan Peoples Party's

**PPP-SB:** Pakistan Peoples Party-Shaheed Bhutto

**PSMA:** Pakistan Sugar Mills Association

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

**QIA:** Qatar Investment Authority

**RSF:** Sustainability Facility

**SAB:** Sindh Abadgar Board

**SAU:** Sindh Agriculture University

**SBP:** State Bank of Pakistan

**SCA:** Sindh Chamber of Agriculture

**SDGs:** Sustainable Development Goals

**SEA:** Sindh Employees Alliance

**SIFC:** Special Investment Facilitation Council

**SLA:** Staff-Level Agreement

**SLF:** Snow Leopard Foundation of Pakistan

**SOEs:** State-Owned Enterprises

**SOPs:** Standard Operating Procedures

**SPM:** Single Point Mooring

**SRO:** Statutory Regulatory Order

**TA:** Technical Assistance

**TCR:** TA completion report

**TCR:** Technical Assistance Completion Report

**TEDs:** Turtle Excluder Devices

**UC:** Union Committee

**UET:** Engineering and Technology

**UHC:** Universal health coverage

**UMIC:** Upper Middle-Income Country

**USGS:** United States Geological Survey

**WBG:** World Bank Group's

**WFP:** World Food Programme

**WHO:** World Health Organisation

**WPV1:** Wild Poliovirus Type 1

**YoY:** Year on Year

# NEWS EXCEPTS

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## National News

### AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

- Finance Minister has painted an alarming picture of the country’s agriculture sector — the backbone of the economy — citing crop failures, low yields, farmer migration to cities and compounding climate and economic crises.
- Finance Minister stressed that credit disbursement to the farm sector by the frontline agriculture support institution — Zarai Taraqiati Bank Limited (ZTBL) — plunged almost 54 per cent in two years to just Rs39.66 billion. The figure was Rs85.563bn in 2023 and Rs61.362bn in 2024.
- The Punjab government approved financial assistance of Rs20,000 per acre for compensation of crop losses.
- The Balochistan government has declared a water emergency in Gwadar and suspended all taxes related to water supply to resolve the issue of serious water shortage the coastal district.

### AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

- Faced with a worsening wheat crisis and record market prices, the Sindh government has announced a ‘Rs58 billion Wheat Growers Support Package’ to assist small and medium scale farmers in preparing for the upcoming 2025–26 wheat cultivation season.
- The Sindh government has promulgated Sindh Agricultural Income Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025 for applicability of higher agricultural income tax from July 1, 2025 onwards.
- Registration of 44 new pesticides was discussed in a meeting of the technical sub-committee of the Faisalabad Ayub Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) for the control of pests and diseases of various crops, vegetables and fruits.
- Federal Seed Certification Department confirmed a severe seed shortage, with only 4,000 tonnes available against a national demand of 68,000 tonnes.

### AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS

- Federal Minister for Energy (Petroleum Division) Ali Pervez has warned that the recent floods have devastated vast tracts of agricultural land, destroying cotton, wheat and other crops, and leaving farmers facing crippling losses.
- The minister said, “As far as I recall, Rs400 billion had been earmarked for the federal contingency fund.
- Cotton production has increased by a record 49 percent compared to the same period last year, with a total of 3.044 million bales of seed cotton (phutti)

arriving at the factories. Sindh led the charge with 1.907m bales, marking a 45pc rise, while Punjab recorded 1.136m bales, reflecting a 56pc increase.

- In Pakistan, cotton is primarily grown in Punjab and Sindh Punjab accounts for 68.5pc of national output. An estimated 1.5m farmers grow cotton, with over 90pc cultivating less than five hectares.
- Despite a 22 per cent year-on-year increase in national cotton production, the domestic market has seen a sharp decline in fresh arrivals during the first half of October.
- Punjab's cotton arrivals at ginning stage has fallen to 40 per cent of the total recorded output as Sindh shines on the national agricultural scape with a thumping 56 per cent share.
- Leading agricultural scientists have warned that climate change coupled with shrinking water resources and unsustainable farming practices have slashed national cotton yields by nearly 50pc over past 15 years.
- Pakistan's cotton production has fallen sharply to 6.8 million bales in the 2025-26 season—34 percent below the target of 10.18 million bales.
- Wheat production target of 29.678 million tons for the Rabi season 2025-26 from 9.648 million hectares of land.
- Wheat seed procurement availability for sowing Rabi 2025-26 is 551467.63 metric tons, which will fulfil 49 percent of the total seed requirement of 1126444 metric tons.
- In 2025-26, as rice was cultivated in an area of 3.70 million hectares, which is 5.0 percent below the last year's area of 3.89 million hectares.
- Rice production is estimated to be 9.41 million tons, showing a decrease of 3.2 percent as compared to last year's production of 9.72 million tons.
- Sugarcane was cultivated over an area of 1.146 million hectares in 2025-26, showing an increase of 5.9 percent over the last year.
- Estimated sugarcane production for the 2025-26 increased to 84.7m tons from 84.2 million tons of last year's production, showing an increase of 0.6 percent.
- During 2025-26, maize is cultivated on an area of 1.47 million hectares with an annual production of 8.4 million tons, reflecting a decrease of 7.1 percent and 6.8 percent in area and production, as compared to last year.
- Paddy growers in Sindh have seconded their leaders' apprehensions about a further slump in prices leading to heavy financial losses as well as export of the commodity.
- An agreement has been finalised between Punjab government and the private sector to purchase wheat crop from farmers at the rate of Rs3,500 per maund.
- Sindh government will spend Rs 55.9 billion on farmers under the Benazir Hari Card Programme to promote wheat cultivation.

- The federal government has approved a new wheat policy, setting a minimum support price (MSP) of Rs3,500 per 40kg, and abolishing restrictions on interprovincial movement of the staple.
- Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah announced that the provincial government would procure between 0.8 and 1.2 million tonnes of wheat during the 2025–26 season, setting the support price at Rs3,500 per 40 kilograms.
- The federal government has set a wheat production target of around 30 million tonnes for the Rabi season 2025-26.
- The federal and provincial governments have approved Wheat Policy 2025–26, and the support price for wheat has been fixed at Rs3,500 per 40 kg.
- The federal and provincial governments will procure 6.2 million tons of wheat for strategic reserves.
- The wheat cultivation target for the current season in Punjab has been set at 16.5 million acres.

## **SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

- “The Sindh government is striving to modernise Livestock and Fisheries Department through information technology.”
- Pakistan has launched a project to protect endangered sea turtles, which will also help boost shrimp exports from the country.
- The Sindh government is set to develop mini fish harbours in Ketī Bandar and Shah Bandar, aiming to support small-scale fisheries, improve local livelihoods, and alleviate congestion at the Karachi Fish Harbour.

## **TRADE**

- Pakistan’s merchandise exports fell by 3.83 per cent in the first quarter of the current fiscal year.
- The cumulative trade deficit for FY25 increased by 9pc to \$26.27bn, compared to \$24.11bn in FY24.
- Exports from the country declined 3.83 percent to USD 7.60 billion in the first quarter of FY26 as exports for the second consecutive month showed a downward trend.
- Imports during the first quarter of FY26 registered a growth of 13.49 percent, increasing to USD 16.97 billion compared to USD 14.95 billion in the corresponding period of last year.
- Sluggish performance of the textile sector and a sharp decline in the rice exports are seen as factors mainly responsible for ballooning the trade deficit to USD 9.4 billion in the first quarter of 2025-26.

- The World Bank has warned that Pakistan's exports as a share of GDP are declining and they are substantially below potential, revealing an untapped export potential of nearly USD 60 billion.
- Pakistan's rice exports fell 28 per cent in the first quarter of FY26, raising concerns within the sector about policy and regulatory barriers that continue to undermine competitiveness.
- Pakistan's food import bill surged to nearly \$2.252 billion during the first three months of the current fiscal year, rising from \$1.661bn in the same period last year, reflecting an increase of 35.56 per cent. The increase was primarily driven by higher imports of sugar, edible oil, and tea to meet domestic demand.
- Pakistan annually spends USD 889 million on the imports of formula milk.

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

- That Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan increased by 27.2 percent in the financial year 2025, rising from USD3.17 billion to USD4.027 billion.
- Pakistan suffered more than \$30 billion in damages and losses in the 2022 floods but received only \$600 million in foreign assistance.
- The current account changed its track from deficit to surplus in September and foreign direct investment (FDI) plunged 34 per cent year-on-year during the first quarter of FY26.
- The current account posted a surplus of \$110 million in September against the deficits in July and August.

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

- Pakistan and IMF have reached a staff-level agreement. The agreement, pending approval by the IMF Executive Board, is set to unlock around \$1.2 billion in financial assistance, comprising \$1bn under the EFF and \$200 million under the RSF, bringing total disbursements under the two arrangements to about \$3.3bn.

## **SOCIO – ECONOMIC CONDITION**

- Pakistan's total public debt swelled by 13pc to Rs80.5tr in fiscal year 2025,
- Pakistan's central government debt declined by Rs 430 billion during the first two months (July-Aug) of the current fiscal year (FY26).
- Over 90 per cent of rural households depend on self-supplied drinking water, often drawn from contaminated groundwater sources, which is posing serious health risks and leaving people highly vulnerable to waterborne diseases.
- Inflation, measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), rose to 5.6 per cent in September, up from 3pc in August.

- CPI inflation (urban) increased by 5.5pc on a YoY basis in September 2025, as compared to 3.4 percent in the previous month and 9.3pc in September 2024.
- Sensitive Price Index-based inflation on a YoY basis increased by 4.5percent in September 2025 as compared to an increase of 2.6 percent a month earlier and an increase of 9.2percent in September 2024.
- The World Bank has warned that actual inequality in Pakistan is likely higher, as surveys typically underrepresent top-income brackets. The Bank, in its latest “Poverty & Equity Brief”, stated that inequality, as measured by the Gini Index of household consumption, is estimated at 30.3, a decrease of 1.4 points relative to last year.
- Food insecurity remains widespread in Pakistan as only 19.5pc of households can always afford desired meals, while 30pc sometimes go without three meals a day.
- In Pakistan, the wealthiest 10pc hold 42pc of national income — lower than the average across major Asian economies, but still enough to create massive inequalities that make it impossible to build fair or sustainable societies.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

- Speakers at a health seminar have said that breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among women in Pakistan with an alarming statistics that one in every nine women is at risk during her lifetime.
- Pakistan is losing an estimated Rs 35 to 50 billion every year due to non-evidence-based prescribing and unethical marketing of medicines.

## **CLIMATE DISASTERS**

- Full compensation to the affected families — Rs1 million for a destroyed house, Rs500,000 for a partially damaged house, Rs500,000 for loss of livestock, and Rs20,000 per acre (up to 12 acres) for farmers — will be provided based on the survey report.
- Pakistan suffered estimated damages and losses of USD 2.9 billion across all provinces due to the recent floods. “The agriculture sector suffered the biggest loss of Rs 430 billion, while infrastructure losses stood at Rs 307 billion.
- The Punjab government claimed to have completed 70 per cent of survey of flood-stricken areas and announced an allocation of Rs100 billion for the rehabilitation of the victims.

## AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

- Global government spending on agriculture reached a record \$701 billion in 2023, but the sector's share relative to its economic contribution has declined.
- The Agriculture Orientation Index — which compares agricultural spending to the sector's contribution to GDP — fell from 0.50 in 2015 to 0.43 in 2023, despite the nominal rise in spending.

## AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS

- The annual harvest, once a peaceful gathering for the occupied West Bank's families, has in recent years turned into a series of increasingly violent confrontations involving Israeli settlers, troops, Palestinian harvesters and foreign activists.
- The West Bank boasts over eight million olive trees for three million Palestinians, according to the agriculture ministry's 2021 census.

## TRADE

- The rules-based international trade system is in danger, UN chief Antonio Guterres warned, amid spiralling debt, heavy tariffs and financial insecurity for emerging nations.

## CORPORATE SECTOR

- Thousands of UK claimants have filed legal action against US pharmaceutical and cosmetics giant Johnson & Johnson alleging people diagnosed with cancers were exposed to asbestos in its talcum powder.

## INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN / INVESTMENT

- Nearly 42 million people are set to lose food aid due to second-longest US government shutdown.
- Syria's interim president Ahmed al-Sharaa said his country had managed to secure USD28 billion worth of investments in the 10 months since the 2024 overthrow of Bashar al-Assad's government.

## SOCIO – ECONOMIC CONDITION

- A flotilla carrying aid to Gaza said Israeli forces were intercepting its latest bid to break an Israeli blockade of the war-battered Palestinian territory.



- Almost 14 million people in countries including Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, risk severe hunger due to cuts in global humanitarian aid.
- The agency expects to receive 40pc less funding for 2025, resulting in a projected budget of \$6.4 billion, down from \$10 billion in 2024.
- Pakistan, too, will battle alarming food poverty. The present scenario is hardly healthy: four out of 10 under-five children are stunted, 17.7pc are experiencing wasting and a staggering 28.9pc underweight. An IPC study last year revealed that 2.14m of the country's children are severely underfed.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

- The increase in the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere last year was the biggest ever recorded.
- The increase in CO2 levels in the atmosphere from 2023 to 2024 marked the biggest one-year jump since records began in 1957.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- Every one of the last ten years has been the hottest in history.
- In the past five decades, weather, water and climate-related hazards have killed more than two million people, with 90pc of those deaths occurring in developing countries.

## **CLIMATE DISASTERS**

- The rate of heat-related mortality had risen 23 per cent since the 1990s, pushing total heat-related deaths to an average 546,000 deaths per year.
- In 2023, the number of people who faced “moderate or severe food insecurity” was 124 million more than during the previous year.
- Exposure to heat caused a loss of 640 billion potential labour hours last year, with productivity losses equivalent to \$ 1.09 trillion.
- A severe cyclone that battered India's eastern coast this week caused damage estimated at nearly 53 billion rupees (USD603 million).
- An early damage assessment indicated that farm sector suffered the highest losses at 8.68 billion rupees, adding that the storm also killed 120 animals.

## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

Farm lending slumps as finance minister warns of ‘alarming’ crisis [P. 1]

Punjab agri dept signs four MoUs with Chinese firms [P. 1]

Farm sector crisis [P. 2]

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Punjab farmers to get Rs20,000 per acre for losses of crops [P. 2]

Farmer held for stubble burning [P. 3]

Rice growers sensitised on global standards [P.3]

### 1.2 # Land

Rizq launches drive to reclaim flood-hit farmlands [P.4]

### 1.3 # Water

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Govt declares water emergency in Gwadar [P. 4]

All major water reservoirs ‘filled to brim’ [P. 5]

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Collateral-free loans: SBP launches ‘NSFSI’ for small farmers [P. 6]

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Registration of 44 new pesticides discussed [P. 7]

DAP and urea: PM forms body to examine prices and advice solution [P. 8]

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Pakistan among top five cotton producers [P. 10]

Dip in cotton output stokes supply fears [P. 11]

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National cotton yields dropped by nearly 50pc over past 15 years: agri scientists [P. 11]

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Growers will stop cultivating wheat if support price not raised: SCA [P. 14]

Wheat cultivation: Rs55.9bn to be spent on farmers: Sharjeel [P. 14]

Chitralis want dept to dispose of wheat stock to prevent decay [P. 14]

Centre sets new wheat support price at Rs3,500 [P. 14]

Farmers win wheat price hike, ask for more [P. 15]

New wheat procurement mechanism boon for farmers, says Sharjeel [P. 15]

Punjab 'ban' on wheat movement violation of Constitution: KP CM Afridi [P. 15]

Sindh to procure up to 1.2m tonnes of wheat at Rs3,500 per 40kg [P. 16]

Punjab under fire for 'choking' wheat flow to two provinces [P. 16]

Rabi wheat target set at 30m tonnes [P. 17]

Wheat cultivation area for Pindi division increased to over 1.5m acres: minister [P. 17]

Punjab notification fixing maximum retail price of wheat set aside [P. 18]

### **3.3 # Goods**

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Livestock and fisheries department: Sindh govt to launch modern digital portal [P. 18]

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Pakistan launches sea turtles project [P. 20]

Six trawlers involved in illegal fishing seized [P. 20]

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Fishermen from Pasni end month-long fishing boycott [P. 21]

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Pakistan’s Q1 exports down, imports up YoY [P. 23]

Afghanistan, Iran and Russia: ECC approves draft SRO to amend B2B barter trade rules

Sluggish textile sector, rice exports plunge: Q1 trade deficit balloons to USD9.4bn

G-24 press briefing: Pakistan working to diversify global trade in local currencies: SBP

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ECNEC approves 12 major uplift projects worth over Rs380bn [P. 35]

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## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

### ***Farm lending slumps as finance minister warns of ‘alarming’ crisis***

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has painted an alarming picture of the country’s agriculture sector — the backbone of the economy — citing crop failures, low yields, farmer migration to cities and compounding climate and economic crises. “Farmers face cash-flow issues due to crop failures, low yields and open-market price fluctuations, leading to delayed repayments,” Mr Aurangzeb said. He stressed that credit disbursement to the farm sector by the frontline agriculture support institution — Zarai Taraqiati Bank Limited (ZTBL) — plunged almost 54 per cent in two years to just Rs39.66 billion. The figure was Rs85.563bn in 2023 and Rs61.362bn in 2024.

Attributing the aggravating situation in the agriculture sector to climate and economic crises, the minister said that floods, droughts or pest attacks destroy crops, leaving farmers unable to pay loans while economic challenges like inflation increase input costs (seeds and fertilisers), reducing farmers’ profit margin. Mr Aurangzeb also blamed the farming community for inefficient practices, stressing that the low productivity was caused by outdated techniques, poor seeds and inadequate fertiliser use besides limited knowledge of modern agricultural practices.

Mr Aurangzeb reported that ZTBL’s credit disbursement had declined by 53pc in Punjab and 59pc in Sindh — the country’s top two agriculture and food baskets. In Punjab, credit to the farm sector in 2023 amounted to Rs75.167bn, followed by Rs61.362bn in 2024, down by more than 18pc. It dropped further to Rs35.43bn in 2025, he said. In Sindh, the farm credit amounted to Rs10.4bn in 2023 and fell to Rs7.22bn in 2024, down 30.6pc. It further decreased to Rs4.23bn in 2025. The report said that the outstanding loan portfolio moved in a narrow band in both provinces. (*Dawn, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

### ***Punjab agri dept signs four MoUs with Chinese firms***

The Punjab Agriculture Department has signed four memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with Chinese technology and agricultural machinery manufacturing companies for improving farming in the province. The MoUs were signed during the recent visit of the department’s officials led by Minister Syed Ashiq Kirmani. Under one agreement with the Piesat Technology Company, crop monitoring will be carried out through a modern satellite-based system, covering all stages from sowing to harvesting. Under another MoU, the Gold Dafeng Machinery Company expressed its interest in establishing a tractor and harvester manufacturing plant in Punjab through joint collaboration. Under the third and fourth MoUs, a Chinese agricultural university will assist the department in developing high-quality seeds and establishing a centre of excellence for advanced agricultural research. (*Dawn, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Farm sector crisis***

Report submitted to parliament by finance minister exposes the grim state of Pakistan's agriculture sector. It points out that sector, often touted as the economy's 'backbone', has fallen to pieces, unleashing what many term as a broader rural crisis. The report, submitted in response to information sought by a senator on state of farm credit, gives a detailed account of collapsing agriculture credit, crop failure, low yields and farmer migration to cities. While the situation has been compounded by extreme weather events caused by climate change and ongoing economic troubles, as stressed in report, the crisis in farm sector is structural. The report also seeks to exonerate government of any blame for current state of rural economy by holding farmers, if partially, along with natural disasters and economic downturn, responsible for a complex structural problem rooted in decades of state neglect.

Successive governments have failed to invest in rural extension services, encourage farm credit and crop insurance, promote mechanisation and technology adoption, or develop drought and pest-resistant seed varieties. Each administration has responded to the recurring agriculture crises with short-term fixes, including indirect subsidies that rarely reach smallholders, instead of addressing the structural flaws. The absence of credible market reforms and long-term planning has left the farm economy stagnant, unproductive and vulnerable to both climatic and economic shocks behind which every government seeks to conceal its failures. Now that the farm productivity crisis is morphing into larger problem of exodus of rural populations to cities, authorities must move beyond their rhetoric. Pakistan needs a coherent rural development strategy that combines climate resilience with financial inclusion, technological support and market reforms to revitalise agriculture to raise rural incomes and alleviate poverty. Without a paradigm policy shift, the so-called backbone will continue to crack under the weight of state neglect. (*Dawn*, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 6)

### **1.1 # Farmers**

#### ***'Flood-hit farmers to get financial assistance'***

Punjab Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani announced that farmers impacted by recent floods would soon receive financial assistance delivered directly at their door step. He was speaking at a high-level meeting to review rehabilitation measures for flood-affected areas. Minister Kirmani announced that farmers impacted by floods would soon receive financial assistance delivered directly at their doorstep to spare them any inconvenience. He stressed that complete transparency would be maintained in the disbursement of the relief package, with every stage closely monitored to ensure the aid reaches its rightful beneficiaries. The Minister further said that expert recommendations had been sought regarding the upcoming wheat crop to provide timely guidance and support to farmers. (*Business Recorder*, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 2)

#### ***Punjab farmers to get Rs20,000 per acre for losses of crops***

The Punjab government approved financial assistance of Rs20,000 per acre for compensation of crop losses, with the provincial disaster management authority (PDMA) warning of potential flooding in some regions amid rain forecast for many

districts and expected release of over 150,000 cusecs from India into the Chenab, Sutlej and Ravi rivers within a day or two. While chairing a meeting in Multan to review the condition of cotton, rice, sugarcane and other standing crops, Punjab Agriculture Secretary Iftikhar Ali Sahoo said about 2,000 teams were conducting surveys of flood-related damages, though Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had already approved financial assistance of Rs20,000 per acre to compensate for crop losses.

He said a comprehensive action plan had also been prepared to achieve wheat sowing target, noting that measures aimed at boosting cotton production had yielded encouraging results. So far, he said, 2.65 million bales equivalent of seed cotton (phutti) were picked this year as compared to 1.846m bales obtained during the same period last year according to Crop Reporting Service statistics. Earlier, the National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) issued an alert for rains in Islamabad, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan over the next 12 to 24 hours, specifically in the upper catchment areas of Jhelum, Ravi and Sutlej rivers. (*Dawn, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Farmer held for stubble burning***

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has taken strict notice of increasing incidents of crop residue burning across the province and ordered a crackdown with arrests and heavy fines. “Strict operations are ongoing against individuals involved in burning crop residues, releasing smoke in the air, and contributing to smog formation,” an official handout said. Acting on the Punjab government’s directives, the Environment Protection Department and Agriculture Department, in collaboration with police officials, conducted an operation in Depalpur and arrested farmer Yaseen for burning paddy residues. A case has been lodged against him with Depalpur City Police Station. “Upon receiving the report, the government and police teams reached the site and successfully extinguished the fire spread over five acres of land, the handout said. (*Dawn, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Rice growers sensitised on global standards***

The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan organised a seminar in Larkana to raise awareness among farmers and other stakeholders about harmful and beneficial microorganisms affecting rice crops and help them align with global standards. Agro Consultant Dr Mubarak informed rice growers, warehouse operators, agricultural officers, and rice mill owners that Basmati rice was one of Pakistan’s most valuable export commodities, famous worldwide for its aroma and taste, but in recent years, several consignments of Pakistani rice had been rejected by international markets due to excessive levels of toxins and pesticide residues beyond permissible limits. It caused financial losses to the country, he said. Keeping this situation in view, the authority had taken the initiative to create awareness among farmers, mill owners, and stakeholders, to help them align with global standards. The expert explained that the seminar’s objective was to provide farmers and traders essential knowledge regarding post-harvest

handling, safe pesticide usage, and quality certification — so that Pakistan’s rice exports could increase and its reputation in international markets could be strengthened. Agricultural experts presented practical solutions and best practices for reducing toxins level and ensuring full compliance with Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs). (*Dawn, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

## **1.2 # Land**

### ***Rizq launches drive to reclaim flood-hit farmlands***

Rizq, a social platform dedicated to food security and rural empowerment, has launched an ambitious initiative to rehabilitate 100,000 acres of flood-affected agricultural land across Pakistan, beginning with Khanewal under its ‘Seeding Good’ campaign. The initiative aims to help smallholder farmers in Punjab recover from recent monsoon floods that devastated over 2 million acres of farmland nationwide, destroying key crops such as rice, maize, sugarcane, and cotton. Thousands of farmers in the province’s most fertile districts are still struggling to prepare their lands for the upcoming wheat season.

Under the project, Rizq will provide interest-free loans in the form of agricultural inputs, land preparation, and technical support through its ‘Kisaan Dost Programme’ (KDP) — an existing model that has already rehabilitated 10,200 acres and benefited 800 farmers since 2022. The first phase of the scaled-up program was launched in Khanewal on October 15, where over 100 farmers were onboard and field levelling operations began. (*Business Recorder, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

## **1.3 # Water**

### ***IRSA approves 8pc water shortage***

The Indus Water River System Authority (IRSA) approved an overall system shortage of 8 percent, the lowest in the last 10 years of system operation and significantly less than the post-IRSA shortage of 18 percent. These estimates were approved at a meeting of the IRSA Advisory Committee (IAC) held here under the chairmanship of Sahibzada Muhammad Shabir, Chairman IRSA. The meeting was convened to approve the anticipated water availability criteria for Rabi from October 2025 to March 2026. (*Business Recorder, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 14*)

### ***Govt declares water emergency in Gwadar***

The Balochistan government has declared a water emergency in Gwadar and suspended all taxes related to water supply to resolve the issue of serious water shortage the coastal district. A decision to this effect was taken after a massive protest demonstration was staged by residents of Gwadar. The water crisis has been growing with each passing day in Gwadar due to what the people say lethargy of elected representatives and officials concerned who have done nothing to resolve this serious matter for a long time. Thousands of people, including women and children, gathered in front of the office of Gwadar Development Authority and staged a protest demo organised by Amir Kirwan. The chief minister took notice declared a water emergency in Gwadar and presided over

an emergency meeting to discuss the matter, the chief minister expressed dissatisfaction at the lethargic implementation of previously-approved relief measures. (*Dawn, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***All major water reservoirs ‘filled to brim’***

Mangla Dam, Pakistan’s largest reservoir in terms of storage capacity, reached its maximum conservation level of 1,242 feet, and now stores 7.277 million acre-feet (MAF) of water, according to Wapda. Now, all three of the country’s main water reservoirs — Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma — are filled to their maximum levels, holding a cumulative live storage of 13.316 MAF, considered a boon for irrigated agriculture and hydroelectric power generation. (*Dawn, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

## **2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS**

### ***Punjab Agri Marketing Programme***

Discrepancies between technical assistance completion report (TCR) and the consultant reports, along with gaps in supporting data, limit the ability to fully verify the achievement of outcome and output targets of “Pakistan: Enhancing Technology-Based Agriculture and Marketing in Rural Punjab Program.” The Technical Cooperation and Validation Report of the Independent Evaluation Department (IED) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) noted that technical assistance of USD 2.5 million was approved in 2019, which was subsequently revised to USD 2.7 million.

The objective of the knowledge and support technical assistance (KSTA) was to facilitate the rapid adoption of advanced agricultural technologies in the Punjab province. The technical assistance (TA) was aimed at improving the productivity and profitability of the agriculture sector by increasing farmers’ access to new technologies and strengthening rural agricultural value chains. According to the TA completion report (TCR), nine output targets were achieved or exceeded, and one was partially achieved. Based on the reports provided, it appears that eight output targets were achieved or exceeded, and two were partially achieved. This indicates discrepancies between the data and stated findings provided in the TCR, reports, and the back-to-office reports (BTOR). (*Business Recorder, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

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

#### ***Sindh unveils Rs58bn wheat growers package amid soaring market prices***

Faced with a worsening wheat crisis and record market prices, the Sindh government has announced a ‘Rs58 billion Wheat Growers Support Package’ to assist small and medium scale farmers in preparing for the upcoming 2025–26 wheat cultivation season. According to official documents, the Sindh Cabinet has approved the initiative to provide direct financial assistance and fertilizer support to more than 411,000 growers cultivating between 1 and 25 acres of land. The initiative, part of the provincial government’s Wheat Cultivation Programme 2025–26, will be implemented through the Sindh Agriculture Department under district-level monitoring. Sindh Agriculture

Minister Sardar Bux Mahar said each registered farmer would receive Rs24,700 per acre to promote timely wheat sowing and enhance per-acre yield.

The provincial government has allocated Rs58 billion for the initiative, covering fertilizer subsidies, urea provision, and field-level technical support. “Each eligible farmer will receive assistance before the sowing season begins so that no grower is left behind due to financial constraints,” added Mahar while talking to media. A provincial monitoring committee headed by the Directors General of Agriculture (Extension and Research) has also been formed to ensure transparency, prevent ghost entries, and monitor district-level implementation. The announcement comes amid a deepening wheat crisis across Sindh.

According to a summary prepared by the Food Department, provincial wheat stocks currently stand at 1.385 million metric tonnes, while open market prices have surged from Rs6,150 to Rs9,000 per 100 kilograms during the past two months. The Food Department admitted that this year’s market is entirely dependent on private reserves, as the government failed to carry out procurement during the 2024–25 harvest season. In view of the crisis, the department has formally recommended to the federal government to import 2 to 3 million tonnes of wheat to stabilize supplies and control spiraling prices. Under the new Wheat Release Policy 2025–26, the Sindh Food Department has proposed issuing wheat to flour mills at Rs8,000 to Rs11,000 per 100 kilograms, a rate that would require an estimated Rs84 billion subsidy to maintain price stability and protect consumers from inflationary shocks. An official admitted that “in the absence of timely procurement, the province is at the mercy of private stockholders, leading to unprecedented price manipulation.” (*The News, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 14*)

### ***Collateral-free loans: SBP launches ‘NSFSI’ for small farmers***

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has introduced a fully digital platform, “National Subsistence Farmers Support Initiative” (NSFSI) to facilitate subsistence farmers to obtain collateral-free financing from banks and MFBs. In a major step to boost rural livelihoods, in August, the federal government launched a Risk Coverage Scheme for Small Farmers, a landmark initiative aimed at expanding bank financing to small, marginalized, and previously unserved farmers. The move aligns with the Prime Minister’s vision to modernize and strengthen the country’s agriculture sector, ensuring financial inclusion and protection for those at the heart of Pakistan’s food economy. The scheme has been notified by the State Bank on August 20, 2025. Now in order to further enhance the scope of the scheme, the SBP in consultation with banks has developed an end-to-end digital solution titled as NSFSI to facilitate subsistence farmers/tenants to obtain collateral-free financing from banks and MFBs. (*Business Recorder, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **2.2 # Agricultural Taxes**

### ***Sindh enforces higher agriculture income tax rates from July 1***

The Sindh government has promulgated Sindh Agricultural Income Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025 for applicability of higher agricultural income tax from July 1, 2025 onwards. The Agricultural Income Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025 has amended Sindh Agricultural Income Tax Act, 2025. The section 2 of the amending Ordinance is very important as it has prescribed application of old rates for the period from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025 and brings Sindh AIT for the said period at par with the AIT rates applicable in Punjab. This ultimately ends the discrimination against Sindh farmers under the revised law. Under the Agricultural Income Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, the new AIT rates (i.e the higher rates) will apply for the period from July 1, 2025 onward. In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) of Article 128 of the Constitution, the Governor is pleased to make and promulgate the following Ordinance: This Ordinance may be called the Sindh Agricultural Income Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025. (*Business Recorder, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **2.3 # Fertilizer**

### ***Urea sales rise 17pc***

Urea sales in September clocked in at 428,000 tonnes, up by 17 per cent year on year (YoY) amid low base effect while it was down by 48pc month on month (MoM) due to pre-buying trend observed in August. Pre-buying in August was led by continued higher discounts by select manufacturers during the month. Asad Ali of Topline Securities said that Engro Fertiliser maintained an average discount of Rs260 per bag in both August and September, part of which was rolled back in the first half of September. Meanwhile, Fauji Fertiliser continued to offer discounts in the range of Rs40-70 per bag.

This will take 9M2025 urea offtake to 4.2m tonnes, down 8pc year-on-year compared to 4.57m tonnes in 9M2024, mainly due to weak farm economics. The closing inventory of urea was around 1.17m tonnes in September, up from 1.03m tonnes in August. Asad said that total DAP sales during September was anticipated at 71,000 tonnes, down 47pc year-on-year and 48pc month-on-month possibly due to delay in sowing sessions led by flood. In 9M2025, total DAP offtake was 769,000 tonnes, down by 17pc year-on-year. He said the closing inventory of DAP was around 378,000 tonnes in September compared to 316,000 tonnes in August and 383,000 tonnes in September 2024. (*Dawn, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Registration of 44 new pesticides discussed***

Registration of 44 new pesticides was discussed in a meeting of the technical sub-committee of the Faisalabad Ayub Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) for the control of pests and diseases of various crops, vegetables and fruits. A press release said that Punjab Agriculture Research Board Chief Scientist Dr Sajid-ur-Rehman chaired the meeting. Dr Sajid urged the private sector to accelerate the introduction of more



pesticides with new chemistry to not only help in better care of crops but also increase their per acre yield, thereby achieving food security in the country. He further said that implementation of modern crop production technology was the need of the hour keeping in mind the effects of climate change.

The meeting presented field trial data of 44 different types of pesticides, including insecticides and herbicides, as well as fungicides on crops. After detailed deliberations in light of the data, technical experts from public and private industry and committee members finalised the recommendations with reservations regarding four pesticides. The experts sent these to the relevant forum for approval, while three cases were rejected. The committee directed the private sector firms to submit samples for data collection of new chemical pesticides on time and to expedite field experiments on their use on various crops. A detailed discussion was also held on the pre-mixtures of pesticides and the committee was informed that the Federal Department of Plant Protection had formed a committee in this regard which would give its recommendations. (*Dawn, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

#### ***DAP and urea: PM forms body to examine prices and advice solution***

Taking serious notice of the rising prices of Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) and urea, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has constituted a high-level committee to review fertilizer prices and recommend a way forward. The committee includes Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema (convener), Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister of State for Power Abdul Rehman Khan Kanju, and Ahmed Umair. The committee has been directed to convene immediately to address issue. This development coincides with the Petroleum Division's submission of a summary to the ECC seeking allocation of indigenous gas to three fertilizer plants — two in Punjab and one in Karachi.

Industry sources noted that DAP prices, which are linked to international markets, have increased by Rs 500 per bag domestically. Urea, on the other hand, is reportedly being sold at Rs 300 per bag below market rates. Insiders suggest the issue was raised by a cabinet member during a recent meeting on wheat crop assessment and National Wheat Policy, prompting the Prime Minister to intervene. Meanwhile, in a letter to different Ministers and Secretaries, Fertilizer Manufacturers of Pakistan Advisory Council have urged clearing of dust; the fertilizer industry in Pakistan consists of 10 strategically located manufacturing facilities. This capital-intensive industry, with a replacement value of USD 8.5bn, has a production capacity of 10m tons of complex fertilizers, including 7m tons of urea. It plays a critical role in ensuring national food security and supporting economic prosperity. (*Business Recorder, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)



## **2.4 # Seed**

### ***Punjab-Balochistan row over seed supply deepens***

Tensions between Punjab and Balochistan surfaced as the National Assembly Standing Committee on National Food Security was informed that the Punjab Seed Corporation had stopped supplying seeds to Balochistan. Balochistan's agriculture secretary raised matter before the committee, while Federal Seed Certification Department confirmed a severe seed shortage, with only 4,000 tonnes available against a national demand of 68,000 tonnes. The ministry stated that while all provinces were asked to enforce seed regulations through their agriculture extension departments to ensure the availability of quality seeds, only Punjab had implemented the directive. The committee instructed the ministry to issue formal letters to all provinces, with a 15-day deadline for response. (*Dawn, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Govt steps in to resolve row over flow of wheat seeds***

In a bid to resolve the wheat seed issue among the provinces, the Ministry of National Food Security and Research has called upon the provincial food departments to facilitate inter-provincial movement of wheat seeds on a priority basis. Despite seed companies adhering to all agreed Standard Operating Procedures, the movement of wheat seeds between provinces has reportedly been hindered. To address issue, a meeting was held on the prime minister's directives in Islamabad. (*Dawn, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

## **2.5 # Subsidies**

### ***SCA opposes subsidy to individual farmers***

Sindh Chamber of Agriculture (SCA), Larkana division president Siraj-ul-Oliya has opposed any subsidy to be given individually to farmers. He said there was no need to give any subsidy to individual farmers in the name of agricultural improvement. If Sindh government really wants improvement in the agriculture sector and collective prosperity of farmers, it should honestly regulate the goods sold for and by this sector, he said. He elaborated that the companies, industrialists, and investors selling agricultural inputs should be stopped from fixing prices of their products arbitrarily. Likewise, owners of sugar mills, ginning factories and rice mills must be prevented from unfairly exploiting farmers. (*Dawn, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

## **3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS**

### ***Floods devastate crops, threaten exports: Pakistan minister***

Federal Minister for Energy (Petroleum Division) Ali Pervez Malik has warned that the recent floods have devastated vast tracts of agricultural land, destroying cotton, wheat and other crops, and leaving farmers facing crippling losses. Minister said the government's top priority is to compensate farmers and enable them to prepare for the next crop season, warning that missing crop targets could trigger "severe problems" for the national economy. "The real crisis is agricultural productivity. If we don't safeguard the next harvest, the cycle of losses will only worsen. The solution lies in technology,

not in arbitrary pricing,” Malik stressed. The minister said, “As far as I recall, Rs400 billion had been earmarked for the federal contingency fund. While part of it has already been spent, the remaining amount can be utilised for relief efforts. In addition, around Rs700 billion allocated for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) could also be directed toward rehabilitation and helping farmers prepare for the next crop season.” (*Business Recorder, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### **3.1 # Cash Crop**

#### ***Cotton output rebounds 49pc***

The country is witnessing an unexpected and remarkable surge in cotton production, prompting the government to announce the creation of the Pakistan Cotton Board (PCB), which will lead a comprehensive strategy for the sector’s revival. According to data released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA), cotton arrivals at ginning factories across the country have surged significantly, as of Sept 30. Cotton production has increased by a record 49 percent compared to the same period last year, with a total of 3.044 million bales of seed cotton (phutti) arriving at the factories. Sindh led the charge with 1.907m bales, marking a 45pc rise, while Punjab recorded 1.136m bales, reflecting a 56pc increase.

Sajid Mahmood, Head of the Technology Transfer Department at the Central Cotton Research Institute in Multan, noted that the latest figures have alleviated earlier concerns about lower production in the season. During this period, textile mills purchased 2.410m bales, and exporters bought 95,000 bales. As of now, 540,000 unsold bales remain in ginning factories. Ginning activity has also seen a significant uptick, with a record 265 factories now operating in Punjab (up from 171), and 236 in Sindh (up from 221). (*Dawn, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

#### ***Pakistan among top five cotton producers***

Pakistan continues to rank among world’s top five cotton-producing countries, despite recent flooding and a decline in yields, offering some relief to its struggling textile industry, which remains a major source of employment and export earnings. The United Nations marks Oct 7 as World Cotton Day each year to highlight importance of cotton in economic development, trade, and poverty reduction. This year’s theme, “The Fabric of Our Lives”, underlines the fibre’s role in sustaining millions of livelihoods globally.

In Pakistan, cotton is primarily grown in Punjab and Sindh, with the federal government now promoting production in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Punjab accounts for 68.5pc of national output. An estimated 1.5m farmers grow cotton, with over 90pc cultivating less than five hectares. More than 40pc of the industrial workforce is linked to textiles, with the sector contributing 8pc to GDP and earning 60pc of the country’s foreign exchange. It employs nearly 10m people and comprises 1,050 ginneries, 430 textile mills, and 350 cottonseed crushers and oil refiners. (*Dawn, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Dip in cotton output stokes supply fears***

Despite a 22 per cent year-on-year increase in national cotton production, the domestic market has seen a sharp decline in fresh arrivals during the first half of October. This slowdown has raised concerns about a potential supply shortage, driving a bullish trend in the prices of raw cotton, cottonseed and oilcake. Data released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) shows that from Oct 1 to 15, the arrival of seed cotton (phutti) at ginning factories across the country plummeted by 30pc compared to the same period last year, signalling that the initial strong momentum of the season is flattening out earlier than expected. (*Dawn, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Punjab's cotton share shrinks to 40pc***

Punjab's cotton arrivals at ginning stage has fallen to 40 per cent of the total recorded output as Sindh shines on the national agricultural scape with a thumping 56 per cent share. As per the fortnightly report released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners' Association (PCGA), of the total 3.795 million bales received, Punjab accounts for 1.52 million bales, whereas Sindh has surged ahead with 2.136 million bales as of October 15, 2025. Balochistan recorded 0.138 million bales with a share of 3.65 per cent. (*The News, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 17*)

### ***National cotton yields dropped by nearly 50pc over past 15 years: agri scientists***

Leading agricultural scientists have warned that climate change coupled with shrinking water resources and unsustainable farming practices have slashed national cotton yields by nearly 50pc over past 15 years. Raising grave concerns over decline in cotton cultivation across Pakistan, particularly in Sindh, they called for coordinated research, innovation and policy reforms to protect and revive Pakistan's most vital cash crop. They were speaking at the "Cotton Mela 2025" organised by the Centre of Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI) at the Business Incubation Centre of Sindh Agriculture University (SAU), Tandojam. Acting SAU VC Prof Dr Altaf Ali Siyal said that country's cotton output was on continuous decline due to multiple interlinked challenges, including climate change, dwindling irrigation supplies, middlemen exploitation, unfair pricing mechanisms, rising input costs and declining export quality of the produce. (*Dawn, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Cotton production down 34pc***

Pakistan's cotton production has fallen sharply to 6.8 million bales in the 2025-26 season—34 percent below the target of 10.18 million bales. According to an official document submitted to the Federal Committee of Agriculture (FCA) for the Rabi season, presided over by State Minister for National Food Security and Research Malik Rasheed Ahmed Khan, the estimated cotton production is 6.85 million bales from 2.0 million hectares. The shortfall is attributed to multiple challenges, including climate change, unexpected rains and floods, pest infestations like White Fly and Pink Bollworm, Chilli Leaf Curl Virus Disease (CLCVD), limited seed technology, and competition with other crops. Earlier, the FCA meeting held on April 24 had fixed a

production target of 10.18 million bales from 2.2 million hectares. This year, cotton was sown on 2.0 million hectares, 11.5 percent less than the target, the document says. An official said that the meeting also set a wheat production target of 29.678 million tons for the Rabi season 2025-26 from 9.648 million hectares of land. The committee reviewed the performance of Kharif Crops (2025-25) and set production targets for Rabi Crops (2025-2026), he said. A senior official said that the meeting was informed that wheat seed procurement availability for sowing Rabi 2025-26 is 551467.63 metric tons, which will fulfil 49 percent of the total seed requirement of 1126444 metric tons. Wheat seed availability in Punjab is 515795.04 metric tons, Sindh 19351.98 metric tons, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 16320.62 metric tons. He said that FCA also set production targets for various other crops, including potatoes, 8.91 million tons, onions, 2.78 million tons, gram, 442,900 tons, lentil, 9,220 tons, and tomatoes, 690,900 tons.

According to the official document, the meeting also reviewed the performance of Kharif Crops and was informed that in 2025-26, as rice was cultivated in an area of 3.70 million hectares, which is 5.0 percent below the last year's area of 3.89 million hectares. Rice production is estimated to be 9.41 million tons, showing a decrease of 3.2 percent as compared to last year's production of 9.72 million tons. The official said that according to provincial government estimates, sugarcane was cultivated over an area of 1.146 million hectares in 2025-26, showing an increase of 5.9 percent over the last year. Estimated sugarcane production for the 2025-26 increased to 84.7 million tons from 84.2 million tons of last year's production, showing an increase of 0.6 percent, he said.

During 2025-26, maize is cultivated on an area of 1.47 million hectares with an annual production of 8.4 million tons, reflecting a decrease of 7.1 percent and 6.8 percent in area and production, as compared to last year. He said that the total estimated production of Mung bean in 2025-26 is 105,800 tons; mash production for 025-26 is 5.34 thousand tons from an area of 6.75 thousand hectares.

The official said that the concerned department also briefed the meeting about fertilizer off-take during Rabi 2025-26. Urea consumption during Rabi 2025-26 is estimated to be around 3,415,000 tons against 3,103,000 tons in the previous Rabi season, showing an increase of 10.1 percent, he said, adding that DAP off-take is projected to be around 894,000 tons, which is 5.5 percent higher than Rabi 2024- 25. Total fertilizer off-take during Rabi 2025-26 is expected to increase by 9 percent over the previous Rabi. Regarding water availability, the IRSA Advisory Committee anticipated no shortage of water for Punjab and Sindh during Rabi 2025-26. The provinces have been allocated 33.814 million acre-feet of water. (*Business Recorder, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### **3.2 # Food Crop**

#### ***Farmers' body worried by fast declining price of paddy crop***

The Sindh Abadgar Board (SAB) in its meeting here expressed concerns over agricultural losses in Punjab and expressed solidarity with its farmers, demanding

immediate rehabilitation measures be taken by the government. These measures should be planned and implemented by taking farmers in confidence, noted the meeting chaired by SAB president Mahmood Nawaz Shah. It also discussed current alarming situation of paddy, which is the largest crop of Kharif and one of the largest export commodity.

It said that harvesting of paddy had just started and its prices continued to decline. In the last three years, it observed, paddy prices had reduced from Rs3,500 per 40kg to Rs2,200 per 40kg so far. On the other hand, cost of production continued to increase and on top of that, there was no control from the government to ensure transparency and fairness in paddy purchases from growers. The buyers of paddy continued to deduct payments on flimsy basis of moisture and quality without having proper moisture metres or quality parameters. (*Dawn, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Growers want paddy support price fixed at Rs4,000/40kg***

Paddy growers in Sindh have seconded their leaders' apprehensions about a further slump in prices leading to heavy financial losses as well as export of the commodity. While a distress call was given by the Sindh Abadgar Board (SAB) only a day earlier, the president of its Tando Mohammad Khan chapter, Abdul Jalil Nizamani, termed the situation 'alarming' for paddy growers. He has written to the deputy commissioner that paddy growers were not getting a fair return against their crop. "The offered price is far below the actual cost of production," he said, pointing out that prices of agricultural inputs, including seeds, fertilizer and pesticide, besides the cost of water, diesel and labour, had risen sharply.

The paddy selling rate does not cover these expenses, leaving the growers in severe financial distress. This would ultimately force paddy growers to opt for some other crop which would be disastrous, not only for farmers but also for the national economy, he cautioned. Mr Nizamani repeated SAB's call for opening paddy procurement centres, and said Passco should purchase the crop after fixation of its support price at a minimum of Rs4,000 per 40kg. He said government agencies should act to stabilise market and protect farmers from exploitation by middlemen and rice millers. (*Dawn, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Sindh govt approves wheat release policy***

The Sindh cabinet has approved releasing 1.265 million metric tons of wheat to flour mills and Chakkies at Rs 9,500 per 100kg bag. Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah made several decisions. (*Business Recorder, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Punjab govt finalises deal to buy wheat at Rs3,500 per maund***

An agreement has been finalised between the Punjab government and the private sector to purchase wheat crop from farmers at the rate of Rs3,500 per maund. As per a handout, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz chaired a meeting in which the agriculture department team gave a detailed briefing on wheat cultivation. The authorities concerned briefed her that there is no shortage of wheat in Punjab as ample reserves of the staple are

available in the province. They also apprised her of a comprehensive plan to procure wheat for the next year.

Meanwhile, Jamaat-i-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has demanded that the government fix the wheat support price at Rs4,500 per maund, grant a subsidy on flour, and reduce the prices of fertiliser, seeds and pesticides by 50 per cent. He also asked for Rs40,000 per acre compensation for flood-affected farmers and the deferral of agricultural loan repayments. Rehman announced that the Jamaat would hold “Save Farmers, Save Pakistan” road caravans across Punjab on Oct 24, 25, and 26 to highlight the plight of the farming community. Earlier, Rehman held consultations with farmers’ representatives and invited them to participate in JI’s upcoming public gathering at Minar-i-Pakistan in November. (*Dawn, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Growers will stop cultivating wheat if support price not raised: SCA***

The Larkana chapter of the Sindh Chamber of Agriculture has warned if the Sindh government does not fix support price for wheat at Rs4,000 per 40 kilogram, growers will stop cultivating wheat this year. SCA President Syed Siraj-ul-Oliya Rashdi, who presided over a meeting of the growers’ body, said that inflation in Pakistan had become unbearable for the common man as the price of flour had reached Rs110 per kg, while a 10 kg bag was now being sold for Rs1,100. He said that it was the same flour that was purchased from wheat growers at the rate of Rs60 per kg, an increase of over 90 per cent in price. A tandoori roti was now sold for Rs20–25, whereas the government had fixed its price at Rs12, with a maximum limit of Rs15, he said. (*Dawn, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Wheat cultivation: Rs55.9bn to be spent on farmers: Sharjeel***

Sindh Senior Minister and Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon has said that the Sindh government will spend Rs 55.9 billion on farmers under the Benazir Hari Card Programme to promote wheat cultivation. He said that in the first phase, four lakh farmers are being included in the programme, and financial assistance will be provided for 2.26 million acres of land. In a statement, Sharjeel Inam Memon said that 50,000 Benazir Hari Cards would be issued through Sindh Bank in the last week of this month. Registration for the cards has already started. (*Business Recorder, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Chitralis want dept to dispose of wheat stock to prevent decay***

Civil society representatives from Upper and Lower Chitral districts have demanded of Chief Minister Sohail Afridi to direct the food department to sell the 200,000 bags of wheat stocked in its godowns in the region for the past two years to the public at a low price to prevent the grain from being wasted. (*Dawn, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Centre sets new wheat support price at Rs3,500***

In a move aimed at supporting the flood-hit farmers, the federal government has approved a new wheat policy, setting a minimum support price (MSP) of Rs3,500 per

40kg, and abolishing restrictions on interprovincial movement of the staple. The policy comes less than a year after the price system was abolished by the federal government in line with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demand to deregulate the wheat market. In September this year, after floods wreaked havoc in Punjab, the national food minister said the IMF would be approached for the restoration of the MSP policy to support wheat production.

The decision to restore the minimum price was taken in a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and attended by the chief ministers of Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan, a representative from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and other stakeholders. According to a document available with Dawn, the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFSR) proposed ‘Wheat Policy 2025–26: Transitioning to a Market-Based System’. Speaking on the occasion, PM Shehbaz emphasised the importance of the crop in Pakistan’s agro-economy. (*Dawn, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Farmers win wheat price hike, ask for more***

The government has been compelled to increase the minimum support price (MSP) for wheat to Rs3,500 per maund, a decision that the Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee (PKRC) has hailed as a direct result of continuous farmers’ agitation and public pressure. PKRC General Secretary Farooq Tariq said that the announcement was a clear indication that when farmers unite and run an organised movement, the government is forced to concede. Despite the increase, the PKRC maintained that the new price remained insufficient. Their core demand was that the MSP be set at a minimum of Rs4,000 per maund to cover the escalating production costs and ensure that farmers earned a reasonable profit. Mr Tariq criticised the government’s previous “anti-farmer policy,” which he claimed was adopted last year under instructions from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). (*Dawn, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***New wheat procurement mechanism boon for farmers, says Sharjeel***

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has said that the new wheat procurement mechanism introduced by the federal government is the result of the Pakistan Peoples Party’s (PPP) efforts and stance. This continues the PPP’s policies aimed at making agriculture a strong part of the national economy. “The Agricultural Income Tax, which was to take effect in December 2024, has been postponed until June 2025 to facilitate farmers and encourage greater investment in the agriculture sector,” he said. He concluded that PPP sees agriculture as the backbone of the economy, and its leadership prioritises the welfare of farmers and citizens. (*Dawn, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Punjab ‘ban’ on wheat movement violation of Constitution: KP CM Afridi***

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mohammad Sohail Afridi condemned the Punjab government’s ‘move’ to restrict transportation of wheat and its flour to his province. The chief minister termed the ‘ban’, a blatant violation of the Constitution and an attack on the rights of the KP citizens. The chief minister, while presiding over a meeting,



directed the food department high-ups to write a letter to the Punjab government demanding immediate removal of all restrictions to ensure free movement of wheat and its flour across the provincial borders, according to a statement issued from the chief minister's secretariat.

Officials from the food department informed the meeting that KP's annual wheat and flour consumption was approximately 5.3 million metric tons, of which only 1.5 million metric tons were produced locally. The remaining requirement, according to the statement, was met through supplies from Punjab and other provinces. The chief minister was informed that at present, around 273,000 metric tons of wheat was available in godowns across the province. The meeting was informed that the recent surge in flour prices was primarily caused by restrictions imposed by Punjab on the transportation of wheat and flour to KP.

Regarding sugar, officials noted that the province's annual requirement was around one million tons — 30 per cent for domestic use and 70 per cent for commercial consumption. The meeting was informed that KP had about 480,000 metric tons of sugar in stock right now. The chief minister reaffirmed his government's commitment to protecting the rights and welfare of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, stating that no political obstacle would be allowed to endanger food security or exploit citizens for partisan gains. (*Dawn, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Sindh to procure up to 1.2m tonnes of wheat at Rs3,500 per 40kg***

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah announced that the provincial government would procure between 0.8 and 1.2 million tonnes of wheat during the 2025–26 season, setting the support price at Rs3,500 per 40 kilograms. Addressing a press conference at the CM House, he said the initiative, along with a Rs55 billion relief package, includes substantial fertiliser subsidies (DAP and urea) aimed at countering rising cultivation costs and supporting farmers' incomes. "The support package includes one bag of DAP and two bags of urea per acre to further promote cultivation," he added. (*Dawn, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***Punjab under fire for 'choking' wheat flow to two provinces***

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government asked Punjab to withdraw restrictions on the inter-provincial movement of wheat and flour, warning that the curbs are disrupting supply chains, increasing prices and threatening food security in the province. Meanwhile, the PPP leadership in Sindh also lashed out at the Punjab government, accusing it of restricting the supply of wheat seed. In a letter to his Punjab counterpart, KP's food secretary said that lifting the ban was critical to restoring a smooth supply chain, stabilising market prices, and safeguarding his province's food security. The letter said KP, a wheat-deficient province, depends on inter-provincial supplies from Punjab to meet its requirements — roughly 14,500 tonnes per day.



Meanwhile, despite an apparent ceasefire between coalition partners, tensions between the PPP and PML-N have escalated once again after the Punjab government allegedly halted the supply of wheat seed to Sindh — a move that sparked strong protests from the PPP, which has called for the prime minister’s urgent intervention. Nisar Khuhro, PPP’s Sindh chapter president and chair of the provincial Public Accounts Committee, accused both the federal and Punjab governments of being “anti-Sindh” and urged PM Shehbaz to take immediate notice of the issue. “As the wheat sowing season begins, the Punjab Agriculture Regulatory Authority and the Food Department, acting on the Punjab government’s directives, have reportedly halted the supply of hundreds of thousands of wheat seed bags to Sindh,” he said.

With the dust barely settled, the PPP’s leadership from Sindh has now raised fresh objections, accusing the PML-N of depriving the province’s farmers of their due rights. “It’s a grave injustice to Sindh’s farmers and tantamount to economic exploitation of growers and haris [farm labourers],” said Mr Khuhro. “Pakistan produces about 552,000 tonnes of wheat seed annually, out of which Punjab-based seed companies account for roughly 516,000 tonnes. However, the Punjab government is reportedly preventing these companies from selling their wheat seed to Sindh.” According to the PPP leader, Sindh’s farmers and dealers have already paid Punjab-based suppliers for the seeds, yet the supply has been blocked. He described the move as “anti-Sindh” and discriminatory against the province’s farmers. (*Dawn, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Rabi wheat target set at 30m tonnes***

The federal government has set a wheat production target of around 30 million tonnes for the Rabi season 2025-26, banking on adequate water availability in Punjab and Sindh — the two main wheat-producing provinces. The wheat production target for the Rabi season 2024-25 was set at 27.92m tonnes, but the government exceeded it by achieving 28.42m tonnes. The target for 2025-26 was approved at a meeting of the Federal Committee on Agriculture (FCA), which also finalised the wheat policy to ensure farmers receive fair support prices, enabling them to cover production costs and earn reasonable profit margins, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. Production targets for other Rabi crops were fixed at 393,000 tonnes for gram, 8.916 million tonnes for potato, 2.788m tonnes for onion, and 659,000 tonnes for tomato. The committee also reviewed seed availability for Rabi crops. (*Dawn, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Wheat cultivation area for Pindi division increased to over 1.5m acres: minister***

Punjab Minister for Agriculture Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani said that the wheat cultivation area for Rawalpindi Division has been increased to 1.53 million acres as against 1.49 million acres last year as the weather condition is favorable for sowing in rain-fed areas. On the special instructions of the Chief Minister Punjab, the Minister for Agriculture Punjab and Secretary Agriculture Punjab are visiting divisional headquarters as part of the wheat sowing campaign. Addressing the meeting, the

minister said that the federal and provincial governments have approved the Wheat Policy 2025–26, and the support price for wheat has been fixed at Rs3,500 per 40 kg.

The federal and provincial governments will procure 6.2 million tons of wheat for strategic reserves. He said that wheat has now become a profitable crop for farmers, while, considering the international scenario and local requirements, wheat prices are becoming increasingly stable. The wheat cultivation target for the current season in Punjab has been set at 16.5 million acres, he said. Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani further stated that certified wheat seed is available in the market at Rs5,500 per bag, while fertilisers are abundantly available at rates lower than the fixed prices. He emphasised that only certified seed should be used instead of household-consumed wheat grain. (*Dawn, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***Punjab notification fixing maximum retail price of wheat set aside***

The Lahore High Court has set aside a Punjab government's notification fixing a maximum retail price of wheat, reinforcing that the province must acquire wheat through competitive bidding. Wheat growers and traders filed petitions before the court challenging the legality of the impugned notification issued by the director general (food)/cane commissioner on Sept 4, 2025. The notification fixed the maximum retail price of wheat as Rs3,500 per 40kg with immediate effect and until withdrawn or altered for the Punjab province. It directed that no dealer, wholesale dealer, retail dealer or retailer shall charge or cause to be charged, the maximum retail price of wheat offered for sale in excess of the rate fixed and notified. (*Dawn, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **3.3 # Goods**

### ***Punjab Forest Dept moves to boost silk output, cut Rs112bn imports***

The Punjab Forest Department is taking steps to revive and strengthen the province's declining sericulture sector with the aim of boosting local silk output and reducing the country's heavy dependence on imported silk worth Rs112 billion annually. Sericulture has been practiced for decades in Punjab's rural areas, providing a vital source of livelihood to thousands of families despite facing numerous challenges. Over 4,000 households, including nearly 4,000 women, are currently engaged in silkworm farming in Punjab. (*Business Recorder, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 20*)

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

### ***Livestock and fisheries department: Sindh govt to launch modern digital portal***

“The Sindh government is striving to modernise Livestock and Fisheries Department through information technology.” This was stated by Provincial Minister for Livestock and Fisheries, Muhammad Ali Malkani. He said that just as the Sindh government has decided to include the agenda and other details of cabinet meetings on a modern digital portal, similarly, we want to organise the Livestock and Fisheries Department through an advanced portal system. Through this platform, departmental meetings, review sessions, and services for livestock owners across Sindh will be streamlined so that they

can access veterinary treatment facilities right at their doorstep. Through this portal, district-level complaints, requirements, or reports of animal diseases can be submitted. The district officers of the department will be responsible for addressing such complaints within 24 hours and submitting a detailed report. This report will include information about the sick animals, type of disease, and details regarding use and stock of medicines. (*Business Recorder*, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4)

#### **4.1 # Dairy**

##### ***Standoff intensifies as milk sellers threaten to hike rate to Rs300 a litre***

The standoff between milk sellers and the Karachi city administration has intensified, with dairy farmers and wholesalers threatening to raise the price of milk to Rs300 per litre from October 11, while the administration has insisted on evaluating milk quality before setting a new price. The milk retailers' and wholesalers' associations warned that if the administration did not immediately issue a notification regarding new prices, the price of milk would be fixed at Rs300 per litre from Oct 11. At a recent meeting with representatives of dairy farmers, wholesalers, retailers, consumers and relevant officials, Karachi Commissioner Syed Hassan Naqvi decided that the new price of milk would be determined after checking its quality. He formed a committee comprising representatives of relevant departments and consumers to check the quality of milk being sold across the city.

The committee has been tasked with collecting 50 milk samples from across the city at the levels of farmers, retailers and wholesalers. All samples will be tested by the PSQCA, and a report will be compiled and submitted within seven days of collection. The commissioner told *Dawn* that he made it clear that the sale of unhealthy milk would not be tolerated as it was essential to ensure that citizens received quality milk. He said the Bureau of Supply had presented a report on the production cost and proposed a new farm-gate price of Rs235 per litre. Officials said that it was decided that a testing laboratory would be established at Lea Market and that milk would only be sold after ensuring its quality. (*Dawn*, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13)

##### ***Call to fix milk rate at Rs300/litre***

Dairy farmers, wholesalers and shopkeepers have jointly announced that milk will be sold at Rs300 per litre in Karachi from October 11, unless the government officially sets a reasonable rate. Representatives from the Dairy and Cattle Farmers Association (DCFA) and the All Karachi Milk Retailers Welfare Association said that the price hike is due to the rising cost of production and increased expenses. They explained that the price of animal feed, which used to be around Rs500-600 per maund, has now doubled to Rs1,200 per maund, making it hard to cover the cost of milk production. DCFA representatives added that it now costs Rs278 to produce one litre of milk, making it impossible to continue selling at the current price of Rs220 per litre. Retailers also said they are facing losses as costs like packaging, electricity and labour have added Rs33.5 per litre to their expenses. (*Dawn*, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13)

## **4.2 # Fisheries**

### ***53 Sindh fishermen released by India stranded in Lahore for 25 days***

As many as 53 Sindh fishermen, who had been released by Indian authorities and handed over to their Pakistani counterparts on Sept 9, remain stranded in Lahore since then. The fishermen's relatives claimed Sindh Fisheries Department, provincial government, and Fishermen's Cooperative Society of had not made any official communication with the Punjab Rangers authorities for immediate handover of the released prisoners. (*Dawn, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***PFF claims foiling 'plunder' of fisheries warehouse***

Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) has claimed that a 'systematic plunder' of fisheries workshop and warehouse in Makli going on for nearly a week has been foiled with the help of local journalists and fishermen. PFF Senior Vice Chairperson Yasmeen Ali Shah said she had been receiving complaints about the alleged plunder during night hours over last week. As the suspicious activity was continuing as well, she along with local fishermen and journalists visited the warehouse and saw machinery, power generator, fishing equipment, ice boxes, fishing nets and other articles meant for the fishing community being loaded on a truck, Ms Shah said. (*Dawn, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Pakistan launches sea turtles project***

Pakistan has launched a project to protect endangered sea turtles, which will also help boost shrimp exports from the country. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs will initiate the Rs90 million initiative aimed at protecting sea turtles during shrimp trawling operations. The project is part of efforts to sustain marine biodiversity and ensure the long-term health of ocean resources. It includes the free distribution and installation of standardised Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs), along with capacity-building workshops, hands-on training for trawler crews, and data collection to monitor the devices' impact on shrimp catch efficiency and net performance. The introduction of TED is expected to help Pakistan regain US certification, paving the way for the resumption of shrimp exports to the American market. Pakistan's shrimp exports currently stand at around \$100 million annually. (*Dawn, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***Six trawlers involved in illegal fishing seized***

Pakistan Coast Guards and Balochistan Fisheries Department conducted joint operations in the Arabian Sea, seizing six fishing trawlers involved in unlawful trawling within Balochistan's territorial waters and 245 banned fishing nets from Karachi's coastal area. (*Dawn, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Plan to develop mini fish harbours in Ketī, Shah Bandar***

The Sindh government is set to develop mini fish harbours in Ketī Bandar and Shah Bandar, aiming to support small-scale fisheries, improve local livelihoods, and alleviate congestion at the Karachi Fish Harbour. During a meeting with Livestock and Fisheries Minister Mohammad Ali Malkani and Fisheries Secretary Dr Kazim Jatōi at the CM

House, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah directed to formulate proposals for the project, estimated to cost Rs1.35 billion and funded through a combination of provincial and foreign assistance. (*Dawn, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

#### ***Fishermen from Pasni end month-long fishing boycott***

Fishermen in Pasni have officially ended their month-long boycott of the sea, restoring fishing activities along the Makran coast. This was announced by Jamaat-i-Islami Balochistan chief and Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch at a press conference at Pasni Press Club. He said that fishing operations would resume immediately under an agreement that captains (Naakhuda) of all boats must be locals of the area. (*Dawn, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

#### ***4 boats destroyed in fire at Karachi Fisheries***

Four large boats were damaged in a fire at Fisheries. No casualties were reported in the incident. (*Business Recorder, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### **4.3 # Livestock**

#### ***Court upholds govt decision to relocate cattle pens***

The Sukkur bench of the Sindh High Court upheld decision to relocate buffalo pens to a new site outside Rohri and make the town a cattle-free zone. The bench dismissed several constitutional petitions filed by cattle owners, Imdad Ali and others challenging the government decision to relocate livestock to newly established Cattle Colony, and upheld notification dated June 26, 2025, which declared Rohri a ‘cattle-free zone’. The court said the notification shall remain in force and be implemented in letter and spirit. The bench, however, issued specific directions to ensure humane treatment and welfare of animals during and after the relocation process. (*Dawn, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### **4.4 # Poultry**

#### ***Poultry farmers seek withdrawal of FED on chicks***

Poultry farmers have demanded the federal government immediately withdraw Federal Excise Duty (FED) on chicks, citing that prices have plunged to a record low and the levy is severely adding to their cost of production. Chick prices, which once stood at around Rs 227 per chick, have slumped to Rs 40-50 in recent weeks. Farmers noted that the FED was imposed when chick prices were high, but the situation has now reversed, leaving producers unable to recover their costs.

Imran Khan, a leading poultry farmer and rate committee member from Balochistan Chapter said broiler chicken production has surged to about 170 million birds per month, against a demand of only 140 million. The oversupply has triggered a sharp fall in prices of both chicks and broiler chicken in the domestic market. “Farmers are incurring heavy losses. The cost of production stands at Rs 350-380 per kilogram, while chicken is being sold at Rs 270-280 per kilogram, resulting in losses of up to Rs 100 per kilogram,” Khan said. He further added that the FED on chicks is directly hurting

farmers as it cannot be passed on to consumers. Meanwhile, the benefit of lower farm-gate prices is also not reaching end consumers due to profiteering by middlemen and shopkeepers. (*Business Recorder, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

## **5 # TRADE**

### ***Exports fall in July-Sept as trade gap widens***

Pakistan's merchandise exports fell by 3.83 per cent in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, raising concerns among policymakers about weakening international demand and the potential slowdown in external orders. The decline in exports has continued for the second consecutive month of FY26, with September marking the fifth month of contraction in the last six. While July saw a brief recovery with a marginal increase in export proceeds, the overall trend points to a challenging trade environment. Exporters are facing pressures from subdued global markets and the high cost of doing business, particularly in the textile sector, where producers have cited escalating expenses as a major concern.

According to data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), exports in September dropped by 11.71pc to \$2.51 billion, down from \$2.84bn in the same month last year. However, on a month-on-month basis, exports showed a slight recovery with a 3.64pc increase compared to August. In the first three months of the current fiscal year (July-September), total export proceeds stood at \$7.61bn, a decrease of 3.83pc compared to \$7.91bn during the same period last year.

Notably, exports in July posted a significant growth of 16.91pc, marking a sharp reversal from the previous months, where the country had experienced consecutive negative growth. In FY25, total exports amounted to \$32.106bn, reflecting a modest 4.67pc increase from \$30.675bn in FY24. However, the pace of growth slowed significantly in the latter half of the year, with export growth turning negative in several months, including February, April, and May. Despite a brief recovery in March with a 3.08pc increase, the overall trend remained downward. The continuing decline in exports is a source of concern for policymakers, who are grappling with the adverse effects of both global and domestic challenges.

### **Trade deficit grows**

The trade deficit has also widened in recent months, exacerbating concerns about Pakistan's external sector. Data from the PBS shows that imports in September grew by 14pc year-on-year, rising to \$5.85bn from \$5.13bn in the same month last year. Month-on-month, imports also increased by 14pc. During the first quarter of FY26, Pakistan's import bill reached \$16.97bn, reflecting a 13.49pc increase compared to \$14.95bn during the same period in FY25. Imports rose by 6.57pc in FY25, totalling \$58.38bn, up from \$54.78bn in FY24. The widening import bill, coupled with the decline in exports, led to a sharp increase in the trade deficit. In September, the trade deficit expanded by 45.83pc, reaching \$3.34bn, compared to \$2.29bn in the same month of the

previous year. For the July-September period, the trade deficit stood at \$9.37bn, up from \$7.05bn in the same period last year. The cumulative trade deficit for FY25 increased by 9pc to \$26.27bn, compared to \$24.11bn in FY24. This growing trade imbalance poses significant challenges for the country's economic stability and raises further questions about the sustainability of its external accounts. Policymakers will need to address both the decline in exports and the rising import costs to stabilise the trade balance and protect the country's economic position on the global stage. (*Dawn, October 3rd, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Pakistan's Q1 exports down, imports up YoY***

Exports from the country declined 3.83pc to USD 7.60 billion in first quarter of FY26 as exports for the second consecutive month showed a downward trend. According to the statistics issued by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the exports from the country in July-September FY26 remained at USD 7.60bn compared to USD 7.91bn in corresponding period of last year, showing a decline of 3.83pc. Whereas imports during the first quarter of FY26 registered a growth of 13.49 percent, increasing to USD 16.97 billion compared to USD 14.95 billion in the corresponding period of last year.

In September FY26, the exports stood at USD 2.50 billion compared to USD 2.84 billion in the corresponding period last year, showing a decline of 11.71 percent. Whereas imports stood at USD 5.84 billion compared to USD 5.13 billion in the corresponding period of last year. The trade deficit in September FY26 jumped to USD 3.34 billion compared to USD 2.3 billion in the corresponding period of last year, registering an astonishing increase of 45.83 percent. However, because of the lethargic performance of the export sector last month, exports in September, on a month-on-month (MoM) basis, increased by 3.64 percent.

Exports in September remained USD 2.5 billion compared to USD 2.42 billion in August. Whereas imports, on a MoM basis, increased by 10.53 percent as they swelled to USD 5.84 billion in September FY26 compared to USD 5.29 billion in August. The trade deficit on a MoM basis increased by 16.33 percent as it increased to USD 3.34 billion in September compared to USD 2.87 billion in August. The country's exports declined mainly because of a drop in textile exports, which account for around 60 percent of total export proceeds. (*Business Recorder, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Afghanistan, Iran and Russia: ECC approves draft SRO to amend B2B barter trade rules***

The ECC of Cabinet approved a draft Statutory Regulatory Order, aimed at amending Business-to-Business (B2B) Barter Trade Mechanism governing bilateral trade with Afghanistan, Iran and Russia. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb, chaired a meeting of the ECC of the Cabinet and considered and approved a draft SRO as proposed by the Ministry of Commerce. The SRO is aimed at amending the B2B Barter Trade Mechanism governing bilateral trade with Afghanistan, Iran, and Russia. (*Business Recorder, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)



### ***Sluggish textile sector, rice exports plunge: Q1 trade deficit balloons to USD9.4bn***

Sluggish performance of the textile sector and a sharp decline in the rice exports are seen as factors mainly responsible for ballooning the trade deficit to USD 9.4 billion in the first quarter of 2025-26. According to detailed external trade figures issued by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the exports in the July-September period of FY26 declined by 3.88 percent to USD 7.6 billion compared to USD 7.9 billion in the corresponding period of the previous year. During the July-September period, the imports totalled USD 17 billion compared to USD 14.95 billion in the corresponding period of last year, showing an increase of 13.9 percent.

In the first quarter of FY26, the food exports declined by 31.42 percent. In the food category, rice exports are down by 42 percent, among which Basmati rice and others (IRRI 6 & IRRI-9) declined by 43.64 pc and 41.10 pc, respectively, on a year-on-year (YoY) basis. Due to floods and torrential rains in the country, the vegetables and tobacco exports also declined by 41 percent and 48 percent, respectively, on a YoY basis. Whereas sugar export remained nil, and oil seeds, nuts, and kernal exports reduced by 68 percent. Fish and fish preparations exports up by 28 percent, and fruits by 17 percent. (*Business Recorder, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***G-24 press briefing: Pakistan working to diversify global trade in local currencies: SBP***

Pakistan is actively working to diversify its international trade settlement mechanisms and promote the use of local currencies. This was stated by Second Vice Chair of the G-24 and Executive Director at the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Muhammad Ali Malik. Speaking at the G-24 press briefing on the sidelines of the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings, Malik said Pakistan has already signed a currency swap agreement with the People’s Bank of China (PBoC) to facilitate trade in local currencies and support the gradual transition away from dollar-denominated settlements. “From Pakistan’s perspective, we have been working quite hard to diversify and settle some trade in local currencies. We have signed a currency swap agreement with the People’s Republic of China, with the central bank of China. And one of the objectives is to assist in the transition to local currency. So we are very keen on that. And gradually, we are working on that to diversify”, Malik added. (*Dawn, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Pakistan trade imbalance with 9 states deepens***

Pakistan’s trade deficit with nine neighbouring countries surged by 34.54 per cent in the first quarter of the current fiscal year (FY26), rising to \$3.93 billion compared to \$2.921bn recorded during the same months last year. The increase in deficit is mainly the outcome of a decline in Pakistan’s overall exports to regional countries, except China, where Pakistan’s exports showed signs of recovery in the first three months of the current fiscal year. A marginal increase was also recorded in exports to Sri Lanka, while shipments to Bangladesh and Afghanistan registered negative growth during the period under review, according to the latest data compiled by the State Bank of Pakistan. In FY25, Pakistan’s trade deficit with nine neighbouring countries expanded



by 29.42pc to \$12.297bn compared to \$9.502bn recorded during the same period last year. The value of Pakistan's exports to nine countries — Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Iran, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives — dipped 5.07pc to \$1.011 billion in July-September FY26 from \$1.065bn over the same period last year. In FY25, Pakistan's exports to nine countries rose 1.49pc to \$4.401bn in July-June FY25 from \$4.336bn over the same period last year. Contrary to this, imports surged 23.95pc to \$4.941bn in 3MFY26 from \$3.986bn over the same months of the previous fiscal year. In FY25, imports surged 20.66pc to \$16.698bn in FY25 from \$13.838bn over the same period of the previous fiscal year. (*Dawn, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## **5.1 # Export**

### ***Mustafa Kamal for expanding Pakistan's medical and pharma exports market to \$30bn in next five years***

"Pakistan currently has a \$1 billion medical and pharmaceutical export market, and our vision is to expand it to \$30 billion within the next five years," said Syed Mustafa Kamal, federal minister for national health services, while addressing the audience as the chief guest at a seminar titled "Made in Karachi Medical Devices." The seminar was organized by Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Ziauddin University, in collaboration with the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), Karachi.

The seminar aimed to emphasize and promote the critical role of Karachi-based manufacturers in advancing Pakistan's medical device sector, encouraging innovation, cost-effectiveness, and the development of locally produced technologies that meet international standards. Reflecting on the progress made in his short tenure, the federal minister said, "In the past, it used to take around 3.5 years to register a medical device through DRAP. Process has been fully digitalized, and licenses are now issued within just 20 days. This reform shows our commitment to efficiency, transparency, and facilitation for our local manufacturers." (*The News, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***Textile exports fall for second month***

Pakistan's textile and clothing exports fell by 1.99 per cent in September, marking the second consecutive month of negative growth. Official data shows that textile and clothing exports dropped to \$1.57bn from \$1.61bn in September 2024. This follows a sharper 7.34pc decline in August, reflecting ongoing challenges in the sector. The drop in September extends the volatility seen in the textile industry, which had witnessed a sharp rebound of over 30pc in July, the first month of the current fiscal year. The contrast between the months underscores the fluctuating demand in global markets and persistent domestic issues affecting the sector. For the first quarter of FY26 (July-September), textile and clothing exports saw a modest increase of 5.63pc, rising to \$4.77bn compared to \$4.52bn in the same period last year. The quarterly growth was supported by higher exports of yarn and made-up articles, though overall performance was weaker in September. (*Dawn, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Non-textile export shrinks 16.54pc***

Pakistan's exports of non-textile products shrank 16.54 per cent in the first quarter (July-September) of the current year, mainly led by a sharp decline in raw food exports. Pakistan's raw food exports saw a decline in the first quarter of FY26, primarily due to a significant drop in rice shipments, marking the first downturn after 19 consecutive months of growth, according to data compiled by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. The export value of non-textile products fell to \$2.825 billion in 3MFY26 from \$3.85bn over the corresponding months of last year. The decline in rice exports has started since July 2025, owing to changes in the supply chain. Official figures from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics revealed that rice exports were the main contributor to this decline in 3MFY26. Shipments of rice dropped by 42.02pc year-on-year, largely due to reduced exports of both basmati and non-basmati varieties. (*Dawn*, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

### ***Health minister vows to boost pharma exports to \$30bn***

Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Syed Mustafa Kamal said that government has decided to increase export of pharmaceutical equipment and medicines from the current level of around \$1 billion to \$30bn in the coming years. He said this while addressing a ceremony after the inauguration of a three-day '22nd Health Asia-2025 Exhibition & Conferences' at the Expo Centre. Mr Kamal said that the target of the government was to elevate Pakistan's pharmaceuticals, pharmaceutical equipment and medicines exports to \$30bn, adding that it was a very significant day in Pakistan's economic history as a three-day exhibition was being held, in which delegates and companies from over 50 countries were participating. (*Dawn*, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13)

### ***Pakistan plans to standardise food exports***

Pakistan has decided to align its food safety standards with international regulations to improve access to European markets, though coordination gaps remain between the federal and provincial authorities. The Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) has approved the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with United Kingdom's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to enhance cooperation on food safety, certification and technical regulations.

The decision was taken during a recent meeting of the PSQCA board of directors. Officials said the move aims to harmonise Pakistan's food safety framework with international standards — a key requirement for exports to the UK and European Union (EU). The proposal follows directions from the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Industries and Production, which had asked the PSQCA to explore ways to expand exports of food products, particularly honey, to European markets. (*Dawn*, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

### ***Exports as share of GDP shrinking: WB***

The World Bank has warned that Pakistan's exports as a share of GDP are declining and they are substantially below potential, revealing an untapped export potential of nearly USD 60 billion. The Bank cited high tariffs, cumbersome regulations, costly energy, and logistics as key factors constraining the country's exports. In its report "Pakistan Development Update," the World Bank stated that since 2000, exports as a share of GDP have steadily declined from an average of 16 percent in the 1990s to just around 10.4 percent in 2024, leaving growth dependent on debt and remittance-driven consumption which underlies Pakistan's recurrent boom-bust cycles.

Pakistan's export performance once outpaced Bangladesh and India, but today it lags both countries and is below the low- and middle-income country (LMIC) and upper middle-income country (UMIC) averages. This decline has happened against the backdrop of a widening exports gap, i.e., the difference between actual exports and Pakistan's export potential. Taking account of core economic characteristics such as population, level of development, and proximity to major markets, current estimates suggest an untapped export potential of close to USD 60 billion. Closing this gap would put Pakistan on par with the average of UMICs but would require the current export share in GDP to double, Bank added. (*Business Recorder, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Rice exports fall 28pc in first quarter of 2025-26***

Pakistan's rice exports fell 28 per cent in the first quarter of FY26, raising concerns within the sector about policy and regulatory barriers that continue to undermine competitiveness. According to official data, total rice exports dropped to 712,797 tonnes from 991,146 tonnes during the same period last year. The decline was most pronounced in the basmati segment, which fell 45.5pc to 137,066 tonnes from 248,500 tonnes, while non-basmati exports declined 22.1pc to 575,731 tonnes from 764,700 tonnes. Analysts attribute the fall to a mix of fiscal, monetary, and administrative measures that have made Pakistani rice less competitive internationally, especially against India.

Rice analyst Hamid Malik said the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) policy has made export financing around 600 basis points costlier than in India. He added that the rupee's managed appreciation — from Rs284.70 to Rs280.85 per dollar during the harvest season — further inflated export prices. In contrast, the Reserve Bank of India typically allows a gradual depreciation of the Indian rupee during harvest, boosting its exporters' price advantage. (*Dawn, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## **5.2 # Import**

### ***Sugar import to harm industry, farmers: PSMA***

Reacting to the government's decision of capping sugar imports at 0.3 million metric tons (MMT), the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA) has strongly opposed the move, warning that it would harm both farmers and the domestic sugar industry. PSMA spokesman said the industry had repeatedly cautioned the government against importing

sugar despite sufficient stocks already available in the country. He noted that as of November 18, 2025, local stocks were more than adequate, yet government continued with its plan to import 0.3 MMT. (*Business Recorder, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

***Pakistan, Malaysia sign six accords: Malaysia to import USD200m meat***

Pakistan and Malaysia vowed to deepen bilateral cooperation across various sectors, including trade, education, Halal certification and anti-corruption efforts, with Malaysia announcing to import USD200 million worth of Halal meat from Pakistan. Prime Minister Shehbaz, who is on his first visit to Malaysia, said that Pakistan desired to join hands with Malaysia to learn from its expertise and pursue joint ventures and mutually beneficial projects as both sides could collaborate in areas of agriculture, IT, and vocational and skills training, where Pakistan was doing “wonderfully well.” (*Business Recorder, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

***Costly sugar, oil drive 36pc import rise***

Pakistan’s food import bill surged to nearly \$2.252 billion during the first three months of the current fiscal year, rising from \$1.661bn in the same period last year, reflecting an increase of 35.56 per cent. The increase was primarily driven by higher imports of sugar, edible oil, and tea to meet domestic demand. According to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, palm oil constituted the largest share among imported food items, followed by pulses, tea, soyabean oil and sugar.

Pakistan imported 31,289 metric tonnes of sugar during the first three months of the current fiscal year (3MFY26), marking an unprecedented year-on-year increase of 3,050.38pc compared to just 993 metric tonnes in the same period last year. In terms of value, sugar imports rose sharply to 18.98 million, up from 1.03m in 3MFY25 — a jump of 1,746pc, according to official trade data. In terms of value, imports soared to 56.65m, compared to 29.57m in 3MFY25. The surge highlights Pakistan’s decision in agreement with the US to increase reliance on soyabean oil for edible oil needs. The value of palm oil imports surged to \$1bn 3MFY26, up from \$746.411m a year ago. The import bill for all other food items rose 65.96pc to \$689.565m in the 3MFY26 from \$415.493m a year ago. (*Dawn, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

***Govt spends USD 889m annually on imports of formula milk***

Health experts revealed the health hazards associated with the use of formula milk, saying that Pakistan annually spends USD 889 million on the imports of formula milk. An awareness session for journalists at the Health Services Academy (HAS) titled ‘The Role of Media in the Promotion, Protection and Support of Breastfeeding’ was organised by UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of National Health Services, the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, and other partners.

Highlighting the cost-benefit analysis of breastfeeding, the experts pointed out that only 48.4 percent of infants- under six months- are exclusively breastfed in Pakistan, well below the World Health Assembly target of 60 percent by 2030. This shortfall results

in losses of USD 2.8 billion annually due to the negative impact of low breastfeeding rates on public health, according to data from Nutrition International's Cost of Not Breastfeeding Tool. As per Nutrition International data in Pakistan, low breastfeeding rates also trigger over 33,700 deaths, 6.6 million child diarrhea cases, and 2.7 million school years lost annually.

According to data shared at the session and the Statista Market Forecast, formula milk sales reached USD 435 million, around Rs 124 billion by September 2025, most of it imported, creating a financial strain on families and a serious blow to the national economy. The session underscored the critical role of media in shaping public understanding, countering harmful myths and exposing unethical marketing of breast-milk substitutes that erode mothers' confidence and endanger infant health. (*Business Recorder, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Iron, steel imports surge as State Bank relaxes curbs***

Pakistan's iron and steel scrap imports rose to their highest level since 2021, indicating a shift in the government's import policy, according to data shared by Arif Habib Ltd (AHL). AHL reported that iron and steel scrap imports reached 359,759 tonnes in September, up 30 per cent year-on-year and 36pc month-on-month. During the first quarter of FY26, total scrap imports increased by 12pc to 935,981 tonnes. In value terms, imports stood at \$178 million in September, reflecting an 11pc rise year-on-year, while first-quarter import values declined by 2pc to \$486m due to a 12pc fall in the average import price to \$524 per tonne. (*Dawn, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Mills ink deals to import 2m cotton bales***

Textile mills have stepped up cotton import agreements following quality concerns over the domestic crop affected by rains, floods, and reports of adulteration by some ginners in Sindh Industry sources said mills were securing imported cotton to ensure timely delivery of export orders. Around two million bales have been contracted over the past six to eight weeks, mainly from Brazil and the United States, with smaller volumes from Mexico and Argentina.

This year marks the first time Pakistan is importing more cotton from Brazil than from any other origin. Analysts attribute this shift to Brazil's strong crop performance and relatively competitive prices. However, some mills have reportedly scaled back orders from Brazil due to the "Honey Dew" issue detected in this season's crop.

The temporary closure of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border has also disrupted trade, with around 50,000 bales reportedly returned to Afghanistan. Industry officials said Pakistani mills might cancel import contracts for about 500,000 bales of Afghan cotton if the situation persists. Pakistan traditionally imports most of Afghanistan's annual cotton output of about one million bales. (*Dawn, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Balochistan coast: Pakistan receives first-ever US crude oil shipment***

Pakistan received its first-ever shipment of US crude with the cargo arriving at Cnergyico's offshore terminal, marking a new chapter in Pak-US trade relations. The cargo arrived aboard the Suezmax vessel MT Pegasus and docked at Cnergyico's Single Point Mooring (SPM) port situated on the coast of Balochistan. (*Business Recorder, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

### **6.1 # Food Companies**

#### ***Coca-Cola Foundation contributes USD130,000 to flood-hit areas***

A leading beverage company and its welfare foundation contributed USD 130,000 to flood affected individuals beside delivery of meals and ration in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Gilgit-Baltistan. Details released by the company revealed that the Coca-Cola Foundation, the Coca Cola Systems including Coca Cola beverages Pakistan provided USD 130,000, alongside Rizq's teams to ensure swift and effective distribution, with a special focus on isolated communities as winter approaches. (*Business Recorder, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 7*)

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

#### ***Aurangzeb tells NA FDI soars 27.2pc to USD4.027bn in FY25***

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb informed the National Assembly that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan increased by 27.2 percent in the financial year 2025, rising from USD3.17 billion to USD4.027 billion. In a written response to a question, the minister stated that FDI inflows had already seen a 23.3 percent increase during FY 2024, climbing from USD2.57 billion to USD3.17 billion, followed by another significant jump in FY 2025. He further informed the House that refunds worth Rs30.22 billion are currently pending for 293,232 exporters. These cases, he added, are being regularly forwarded to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) for disbursement. Additionally, refunds amounting to Rs10.88 billion remain pending for 94,379 exporters during the first two months (July and August) of FY 2025-26. (*Business Recorder, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

#### ***Govt chose not to seek foreign aid after floods: Aurangzeb***

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said that Pakistan deliberately chose not to seek international aid after the 2025 floods, stressing that an improved macroeconomic position allowed the government to rely on its own resources. Addressing a select gathering of scholars and economists at the Atlantic Council in Washington, the minister discussed the government's approach to economic reform, disaster response and private-sector-led growth. (*Dawn, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

#### ***'Pakistan got just \$600m aid after 2022 floods'***

Pakistan suffered more than \$30 billion in damages and losses in the 2022 floods but received only \$600 million in foreign assistance, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said.

Apart from that, all international commitments were loans, most of them repurposed from previous facilities, he said while releasing preliminary estimates for flood-related damages at Rs822bn (about \$2.9bn). “This is an irony,” he said, adding that the global community had pledged a \$100bn climate-finance fund but “did not provide even \$1bn”. Therefore, after consultations, the government decided to meet the latest losses through domestic resources rather than “external crutches” despite the around \$3bn damages to agriculture and infrastructure on top of human lives following the recent “apocalyptic floods”.

The minister said the surveys for flood losses, including those in the economic field, were currently in progress and would be finalised in about two weeks. He said the preliminary report entailed human losses of more than 1,039 lives and 1067 injuries, besides about Rs822bn damage to infrastructure and agriculture. This included Rs430bn damages in the agriculture sector, Rs307bn in infrastructure, besides damage to more than 229,763 houses, including 213,000 in Punjab alone. Besides, 6,370 houses were damaged or destroyed in Balochistan, 3,677 in Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, 3,332 in Sindh and 3,222 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. “At least 6.5m people across 70 districts have felt the brunt, including around 4m temporarily displaced as waters receded and families assessed the wreckage”, he said.

More than 2,811 kilometres of roads were damaged, over 2,200 head of livestock lost, around 2,200 educational institutions affected, more than 250 health facilities impacted and roughly 866 water-infrastructure assets hit, he added. Crop losses included up to 3.4m bales of cotton, more than 1m tonnes of rice and an estimated 1.3m to 3.3m tonnes of sugarcane, subject to ground verification. (*Dawn, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***September sees \$110m surplus after two months***

The current account changed its track from deficit to surplus in September and foreign direct investment (FDI) plunged 34 per cent year-on-year during the first quarter of FY26, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The SBP reported that the current account posted a surplus of \$110 million in September against the deficits in July and August. This came as a surprise to many, who had predicted more deficits in the coming months. The Sept result was much better than the same month of the previous fiscal year — FY25 — when the current account posted a deficit of \$52m. However, the fiscal year FY25 had ended with a surplus of \$1.932 billion, which was a pleasure for the government struggling for more dollars. The deficit in FY25 turned positive with the record inflows of \$38bn in remittances. It supported both the exchange rate stability and foreign exchange reserves of the central bank.

### **Decline in FDI**

According to the SBP data, FDI fell to \$568.8m during the first quarter FY26 while it stood at \$864.6m in the same period of last fiscal year — showing a 34pc decline this year. The government has been struggling for the last three years to increase the inflows



but foreign investors have not found Pakistan a suitable country to invest in. The highest inflow was noted from China that fell sharply this year compared to previous fiscal year. The first quarter inflow from China was \$188m compared to \$502.6m in same period of last fiscal year. It was difficult for analysts to find the actual reason for this massive drop in FDI from China but some of them were sure that it would improve in the coming months. Other significant inflows were \$96m from Hong Kong, \$55m from Switzerland, \$50m from UAE and \$53m from UK. (*Dawn, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Doha signs protocol to invest \$3bn in Pakistan***

Pakistan and Qatar have signed a protocol to formalise commitments across multiple sectors, including a pledge of \$3 billion in investment in Pakistan through the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) or other designated investment vehicles. The agreement aims to strengthen economic cooperation and deepen bilateral relations between the two countries. A key focus is strengthening direct engagement between the QIA and Pakistan's Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to streamline investment processes and create an enabling environment for Qatari investors. The SIFC will serve as the leading platform for facilitating investment in priority sectors. (*Dawn, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

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

### **8.1 # Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)**

#### ***Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank okays \$235m for Lahore water project***

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved financing of \$235 million for the Lahore Water and Wastewater Management Project. This funding aims to ensure a sustainable supply of safe water and alleviate the environmental damage caused by untreated sewage discharge in the city. (*Dawn, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

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

#### ***ADB warns of risks from policy slippage, climate change***

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has maintained Pakistan's growth forecast for the current year at three per cent, while revising its inflation forecast upwards to 6pc, citing the impact of recent floods on agriculture and infrastructure. In its Asian Development Outlook (ADO-September 2025), the Manila-based lender flagged policy slippage and climate change as key risks that could threaten Pakistan's economic stability.

"Pakistan's economic outlook faces several downside risks that could adversely affect growth and macroeconomic stability. Key domestic risks stem from policy slippage and climate change," the report noted. The ADB had initially projected a 3pc growth rate for Pakistan in April and retained the estimate, though it increased its inflation forecast from 5.8pc to 6pc. While the country was expected to see a boost in economic activity due to a reduction in debt risks and improved business confidence following a recent US-Pakistan trade agreement, the extensive damage caused by floods could limit overall growth. (*Dawn, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)



### ***ADB sees resilient growth in developing Asia, warns of tariff headwinds***

The Asian Development Bank forecast a slight improvement in its growth outlook for developing Asia and the Pacific for this year, reflecting robust expansion in the first half, but trade headwinds continue to cast a shadow over expectations. Growth in 2025 is now projected at 4.8%, up slightly from 4.7% in July, the ADB said in an update to its Asian Development Outlook, but it remains below the 4.9% forecast made when the report was first released in April.

The ADB defines developing Asia and the Pacific as 46 economies ranging from China to Georgia to Samoa, and excluding countries such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Developing Asia grew 5.4% in the first half of 2025, faster than the 4.9% expansion in second half of 2024, driven by the front loading of exports of electronics and artificial intelligence-related goods to head off the higher tariffs. “Front loading ahead of tariff hikes boosted growth in some economies this year, but this momentum is expected to fade as tariff hikes come into full effect,” ADB Chief Economist Albert Park said at a press briefing. (*Business Recorder, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***GCF approves USD250m for ‘Glaciers to Farms’***

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has approved USD 250 million for Glaciers to Farms—a flagship adaptation program led by Asian Development Bank (ADB) to build resilient water and agriculture systems for vulnerable communities in glacier-dependent regions of Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and Pakistan. GCF’s funding will be provided mostly as grants and invested alongside USD 3.25 billion from the ADB over the next decade in a series of projects identified by the countries covered by the program. By investing in efficient irrigation, water storage, and watershed management, the projects will help improve agricultural productivity even as accelerated glacial melt increases the frequency of droughts or floods. (*Business Recorder, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

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

### ***Pakistan set to secure \$1bn tranche despite slippages***

Pakistan appears well-placed to secure over \$1 billion as the third tranche of the Enhanced Fund Facility (EFF) despite some slippages, as the authorities enter policy-level talks with a visiting review mission of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Informed sources said technical-level discussions had been concluded, indicating that the two sides would need to agree on a couple of waivers during policy-level engagements before wrapping up the review with Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb by the weekend (Oct 9-10). (*Dawn, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Govt set to ink IMF deal after ‘flood adjustments’***

The authorities are hopeful for the finalisation of a staff-level agreement (SLA) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb’s upcoming visit to the United States, subject to the consensus on the external account and verified flood-related losses, as well as their fiscal adjustment across central and

provincial accounts. Official sources confirmed that the IMF had shared the draft Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) with the authorities before a visiting mission left Pakistan after two weeks of engagements.

Pakistan anticipates receiving around \$1.2bn as a combined tranche from the two IMF facilities next month, subject to board approval, based on the expected SLA outcome from policy-level discussions next week. The IMF team visited Karachi and Islamabad from Sept 24 to Oct 8 to discuss the second review under EFF and the first review under RSF. “Programme implementation remains strong, broadly aligned with the authorities’ commitments,” the IMF noted. (*Dawn, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***IMF agreement, US trade deal ‘imminent’***

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that Pakistan and IMF are expected to sign a staff-level agreement (SLA) this week, unlocking a \$1.24 billion tranche as part of an ongoing loan programme. Speaking with members of the Pakistani-American community and the media in Washington, Mr Aurangzeb also indicated that Pakistan and the United States would soon issue a joint statement on bilateral trade, to be followed by a framework agreement. (*Dawn, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Staff-level agreement with IMF unlocks \$1.2bn***

Pakistan and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have reached a staff-level agreement on the second review of the country’s 37-month Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and the first review of the 28-month Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF). The agreement, pending approval by the IMF Executive Board, is set to unlock around \$1.2 billion in financial assistance, comprising \$1bn under the EFF and \$200 million under the RSF, bringing total disbursements under the two arrangements to about \$3.3bn. The IMF mission, led by Iva Petrova, conducted discussions from Sept 24 to Oct 8 in Karachi, Islamabad and Washington, DC. (*Dawn, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **8.4 # World Bank**

### ***World Bank downgrades Pakistan’s growth projection to 2.6pc***

The World Bank has revised the GDP growth rate projection downward for Pakistan by 0.5 per cent to 2.6 per cent for the current fiscal year 2025-26 against the earlier projection of 3.1 percent (June 2025), while saying that ongoing catastrophic floods have damped the forecast, and also warned of a rise in inflation due to disruption in food supply chain. In its latest report, “Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (MENAAP) economic update, jobs and women untapped talent, unrealized growth,” the Bank stated that early estimates suggest a drop of at least 10 percent in agricultural output in Punjab, affecting major crops such as rice, sugarcane, cotton, wheat, and maize. For fiscal year 2026-27, growth is expected to accelerate to 3.4 percent, supported by higher agricultural output, lower inflation and interest rates, recovering consumer and business confidence, and a rebound in private consumption and investment. In Pakistan, real GDP at factor cost is expected to have grown by 2.7 percent

year-on-year in fiscal year 2024-25, slightly above FY 2023/24's 2.5 percent expansion. Looking ahead, Pakistan, which has historically maintained high tariffs with a complex structure, stands to benefit in terms of exports and growth from a recently approved five-year reform plan (2025–30) to reduce its tariffs by half. In economies such as Egypt, Jordan, and Pakistan, removing the barriers that prevent women from joining the labor market could lift GDP per capita by 20 to 30 percent—the largest potential gains globally. (*Business Recorder*, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1)

## **9 # POLICY**

### **9.1 # Developmental Policy**

#### ***Mayor launches Rs281m development projects for city***

Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab announced the launch of major road rehabilitation and paver block installation projects worth over Rs281 million in District Central, under Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC)'s ongoing citywide service drive. (*Dawn*, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13)

#### ***ECNEC approves 12 major uplift projects worth over Rs380bn***

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) approved 12 major development projects worth over Rs380 billion, spanning key sectors including agriculture, education, health, infrastructure, and climate resilience. (*Business Recorder*, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3)

#### ***CDWP approves 18 critical development projects***

In a major stride towards steering Pakistan's development agenda through sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient initiatives, the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) approved 18 development projects across critical sectors of national growth. (*Dawn*, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12)

### **9.2 # Neo – Liberal Policies**

#### ***KP to outsource schools, colleges having low enrolment***

The cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa decided to outsource selected schools and colleges having low student enrolment. The decision was taken during a meeting of the cabinet with Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur. Education in those institutions would remain free, with all costs to be borne by the provincial government, it added. (*Dawn*, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 8)

#### ***PM orders swift action on SOE privatisation***

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed the Privatisation Commission to engage internationally recognised experts to assist in the government's ongoing privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), stressing that the process must align with national interest and international standards. (*Dawn*, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

### ***Move to privatise lab diagnostic services at Karachi's JPMC, Larkana's CMCH***

In what appears to be a decision that may adversely impact thousands of patients belonging to the lower strata of life, the Sindh government is planning to outsource radiology and diagnostic lab services at two major hospitals in the province, including the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre and approved funds to hire “transaction advisers” for the purpose. (*Dawn, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***Full deregulation of sugar sector recommended***

In a significant move aimed at enhancing transparency, a parliamentary committee has recommended full deregulation of the sugar sector to curb market manipulation and speculative practices. (*Dawn, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

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

### ***Finance ministry claims surge contained: public debt swells to Rs80.5trn in FY25***

Pakistan's total public debt swelled by 13 percent to Rs80.5 trillion in fiscal year 2025, though the Finance Ministry claimed the surge was contained compared to previous years due to what it says historic fiscal discipline and proactive debt management. According to the Finance Ministry's Annual Debt Review 2025 released domestic debt accounted for Rs54.5 trillion (68 percent) of the total, while external debt stood at Rs26 trillion (32 percent). The report noted that the federal fiscal deficit of Rs7.1 trillion was the main driver of debt accumulation, with 91 percent financed from local sources. External debt increased by 6 percent YoY, reaching USD 91.8 billion as of June 25. The major reasons for this increase were disbursements from the IMF, an ADB-guarantee-backed commercial loan of USD 1bn, and inflows from other multilateral institutions.

Composition-wise, multilateral loans (including loans from the IMF) account for 57 percent, bilateral loans 26 percent, followed by commercial sources such as Euro/Sukuk bonds, commercial banks, and Naya Pakistan Certificates (NPCs). Importantly, the majority of external loan sources continue to be multilateral and bilateral, which are generally of long-term tenor and have concessional rates. They have less refinancing and interest rate risk. The share of bilateral official loans continued to decline because of net retirement. However, bilateral deposits from friendly countries were rolled over and now represent 9.8 percent of total external debt. Finance Division also underscored savings of Rs850 billion in interest payments, narrowing Eurobond yields to 6-9 percent, and closing the fiscal deficit well below the budgeted Rs8.5 trillion. (*Business Recorder, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Govt debt falls by Rs430bn in Jul-Aug***

Pakistan's central government debt declined by Rs 430 billion during the first two months (July-Aug) of the current fiscal year (FY26). According to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the country's overall debt stocks (including domestic and external) dropped to Rs 77.458 trillion by the end of August 2025, compared with Rs 77.888 trillion in June 2025. The SBP statistics showed that the bulk of the decline came from

domestic debt, which contracted by Rs 398 billion to Rs 54.073 trillion in July-August FY26, down from Rs 54.471 trillion. Sharp fall in domestic debt have been witnessed due to lower borrowing by the federal government followed by the transferred of profit by the SBP to the federal government. Economists noted that while the reduction in government debt during the early months of FY26 provides some relief, country continues to face significant debt sustainability challenges due to massive stock of the domestic and external debt. The SBP posted a strong profit of Rs 2.5 trillion in the last fiscal year, out of which Rs 2.4 trillion was transferred to the federal government. This inflow has helped ease the overall debt burden on the economy. (*Business Recorder, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***IMF, Pakistan mull cutting GDP growth forecast to 3.5pc***

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Pakistani authorities deliberated on revising downward the GDP projection to 3.5 percent for the current fiscal year against the government target of 4.2 percent, as recent floods caused damage to infrastructure, agriculture, and livestock, well-placed sources revealed to *Business Recorder*. According to official sources, the talks are part of the ongoing IMF review mission in Islamabad, where both sides are examining government's policy actions and financing needs ahead of the release of the next tranche under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

Sources further revealed that in view of the damages caused by recent floods and external factors, an increase in inflation is anticipated. During the talks inflation target was deliberated upon and projected to be in the range of 7-8 percent for the current fiscal year, while foreign exchange reserves are projected to be around \$14.5 billion. Current account deficit was estimated to be around \$1.495 billion, exports around \$32.981 billion, while imports were estimated to be around \$59.6 billion, which may result in to trade deficit of around 27 billion by the end of the current fiscal year. Remittances are expected to be projected to be around \$36 billion. Negotiations will continue in the coming days, covering broader structural reforms, tax revenue measures, and external financing needs. The government side termed the latest round of discussions "constructive," with the Fund emphasizing effective implementation as a prerequisite for disbursements. (*Business Recorder, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***GDP growth rises to 3.04pc in FY25***

The country's economy is estimated to have grown by 3.04 per cent in FY25, higher than the 2.68pc reported in May, mainly due to stronger performance in agriculture, industry and services during the fourth quarter, despite a decline in public education and health sectors. The upward revision in the growth rate also stemmed from a smaller size of the economy — \$407 billion instead of \$411bn — and a lower per capita income of \$1,812 against \$1,824 estimated in May this year on the basis of the first three quarters. The updated full-year growth rates for agriculture, industry and services were 1.51pc, 5.26pc and 3pc, compared to earlier estimates of 0.56pc, 4.77pc and 2.91pc, respectively. In agriculture, important crops showed a slight improvement from -

13.49pc to -13.12pc, while other crops recorded a significant jump from 4.78pc to 19.55pc due to double-digit growth in green fodder (16pc), vegetables (12pc), fruits (10pc) and tobacco (25.7pc). Livestock growth slowed to 2.94pc from 4.72pc due to higher fodder inputs. Forestry and fishing grew by 2.66pc and 1.40pc, respectively.

These changes were driven by upward revisions in annual benchmarks for agriculture, which improved growth to 1.55pc in Q1 from 0.84pc, to 1.97pc in Q2 from 0.79pc and to 2.36pc in Q3 from 1.18pc. Industry also improved in all three quarters — to 0.32pc in Q1 from -0.91pc, to 0.21pc in Q2 from -0.99pc and to 1.23pc in Q3 from -1.14pc. The services sector improved slightly to 2.36pc in Q1 from 2.28pc but was revised down to 2.45pc in Q2 from 2.59pc and to 3.45pc in Q3 from 3.99pc. Growth in the fourth quarter was 5.66pc, supported by all three sectors: agriculture (+0.18pc), industry (+19.95pc) and services (+3.72pc). In agriculture, important crops declined by 17.55pc, but other crops grew by 17.99pc, driven by increases in green fodder (14.2pc), onion (12.6pc) and mangoes (26.4pc). Livestock, forestry and fishing also grew by 1.44pc, 3.6pc and 2.23pc, respectively. (*Dawn, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***IMF projects 3.6pc growth vs 4.2pc govt target***

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected Pakistan's GDP growth rate at 3.6 percent during the 2025-26 fiscal year against the government target of 4.2 percent. The Fund, however, clarified that its projections do not yet reflect the impact of the 2025 monsoon floods, as the impact of the disaster has yet to be assessed. In its report titled "World Economic Outlook, Global Economy in Flux, Prospects Remain Dim", the IMF reported a 2.7 percent GDP growth rate for Pakistan in 2024-25 against the government's revised estimates of 3.07 percent, which was earlier estimated at 2.68 percent. The Fund has projected an increase in the inflation rate for Pakistan while saying that consumer prices are projected at six percent for 2026 against 4.5 percent in 2025. The Fund has projected a decline in unemployment for Pakistan from 8 percent in 2025 to 7.5 percent in 2026. Current account balance is projected at (-)0.4 percent for 2026 against 0.5 percent in 2025. (*Business Recorder, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***Growth rate: IMF vs WEO: competing forecasts***

The staff-level agreement reached on 14 October 2025, communicated through International Monetary Fund (IMF) website, cited floods as bringing down the projected GDP growth rate to about 3.25 to 3.5 percent however the World Economic Outlook released the same day with the same growth rate postulated that this projection did not reflect the impact of the 2025 floods. The April 2025 projection as per the graph carried on the Fund's Pakistan page projected a growth rate of 3.6 percent for the current fiscal year. (*Business Recorder, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***SBP projects 3.25pc growth in FY26***

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has projected real GDP growth to remain near the lower end of its earlier estimate — around 3.25pc — for FY26, while warning that

headline inflation may exceed 7pc in the second half of the fiscal year, breaching the upper bound of the medium-term target range of 5-7pc. In its Annual Report on the State of Pakistan's Economy 2024-25 the SBP noted that while there has been a partial recovery in industrial activity, macroeconomic risks remain, including pressure on inflation, fiscal accounts, and external balances.

GDP growth for FY25 was revised up to 3.02pc from 2.68pc, following a sharp rebound in the fourth quarter. Industrial output rose by 19.9pc in Q4, after growing marginally in the first three quarters — 0.3pc in Q1, 0.2pc in Q2, and 1.2pc in Q3. This late surge was driven by value addition in electricity, gas, water supply, and construction. Manufacturing, particularly small-scale manufacturing, also contributed, though mining and quarrying continued to contract for the fourth consecutive year. (*Dawn, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### **10.1 # Food**

#### ***Over 90pc rural households use unsafe drinking water, Sindh CM-World Bank meeting told***

Over 90 per cent of rural households depend on self-supplied drinking water, often drawn from contaminated groundwater sources, which is posing serious health risks and leaving people highly vulnerable to waterborne diseases. This emerged during a meeting between Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and a World Bank delegation led by its Country Director Bolormaa Amgaabazar. The meeting was held to review the proposed Sindh Transformational Accelerated Rural Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene Services (STAR WASH) Project, aimed at tackling rural water, sanitation, and hygiene challenges and reducing child stunting across the province. Held at the CM House, the meeting was attended, among others, by Irrigation Minister Jam Khan Shoro and Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah. (*Dawn, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

#### ***KP's 90pc flour mills closed due to wheat supply ban, claim owners***

Pakistan Flour Mills Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (PFMA-KP) and Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry voiced serious concern over what they called an unconstitutional ban on the transportation of wheat and flour from Punjab to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and warned if the restriction was not lifted immediately, street protests would be staged. Addressing a joint news conference at the SCCI House, the chamber's president, Junaid Altaf, and PFMA-KP chairman Naeem Butt said the Punjab government's decision had severely affected the people, flour industry and trade sector in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Mr Altaf urged both federal and provincial governments to take urgent notice of the situation and ensure uninterrupted inter-provincial trade. "Policies and actions that cause the closure of industries and businesses must be abandoned. We want to promote economic and trade activity and not to suffocate it," he said. (*Dawn, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)



### ***DGK police seize 2,188 tons of wheat, flour***

In a major operation to curb wheat smuggling, District Police Officer (DPO) Dera Ghazi Khan Captain Tariq Walait (retd) led a province-wide crackdown that resulted in the seizure of 2,188.04 metric tons of wheat and flour from various checkpoints across the district. According to police data, the confiscated wheat is valued at approximately Rs 140 million, while the seized flour is worth Rs 130 million. The targeted operations were conducted at both border and internal checkpoints to prevent illegal transportation of food commodities. (*Business Recorder, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 7*)

### ***FAO Sindh chief terms food insecurity, malnutrition critical national challenges***

Speakers at a seminar on food security expressed their grave concern over Pakistan's worsening food insecurity. They warned that diminishing agricultural land, reduced productivity, rising imports and adverse impact of climate change had put food security at serious risk in the country. The seminar on 'Hand in hand for better food and a better future' was organised by the Institute of Food Science and Technology of the Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) in collaboration with Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to mark World Food Day 2025. (*Dawn, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

## **10.2 # Inflation**

### ***Govt expects floods will worsen inflation***

The government warned that supply chain disruptions caused by ongoing floods could temporarily increase inflation despite improved fiscal and industrial performance. "Due to ongoing floods in 2025, the agriculture sector is expected to suffer," said the Ministry of Finance in its Monthly Economic Update and Outlook for September 2025. "Flood-related disruptions may exert pressure on food supply chains, leading to an uptick in prices. As a result, inflation is expected to rise temporarily but remain contained within the 3.5-4.5 per cent range in September 2025," it added.

The report noted that large-scale manufacturing registered a significant year-on-year growth of 9pc in July 2025 and 2.6pc on a month on-month basis. Overall, 16 out of 22 sectors recorded positive growth, including textiles, wearing apparel, coke and petroleum products, non-metallic mineral products and pharmaceuticals. Inflation measured by Consumer Price Index (CPI) moderated to 3pc in August 2025 and stood at 3.5pc during July-August FY26 as compared to 10.4pc last year. (*Dawn, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***Inflation rebounds to 5.6pc on food price surge***

Inflation, measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), rose to 5.6 per cent in September, up from 3pc in August, marking a sharp increase driven by rising prices of perishable goods, according to official data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The reversal in the inflation trend over the past two months is largely attributed to a sharp rise in the prices of essential food items. The inflation between July and September was recorded at 4.22pc this year, the lowest compared to 9.19pc over the



corresponding months of last year. This lower rate is also due to the high base effect of last year. 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.

It further said that due to ongoing floods in 2025, the agriculture sector is expected to suffer. Flood-related disruptions may exert pressure on food supply chains, leading to an uptick in prices. Food inflation in September increased by 4.4pc in urban areas and 6pc in rural areas, while non-food inflation reached 6.2pc in urban areas and 5.6pc in rural areas. This indicates that non-food inflation remains very high. In September, core inflation — excluding volatile food and energy components — stood at 7pc in urban areas and 7.8pc in rural areas. (*Dawn, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Floods push essential items' prices up in Pakistan***

Floods finally take their toll on prices of essential commodities, as inflation benchmark Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 5.6 percent on a year-on-year basis in September 2025, as compared to 3.0 percent in the previous month. According to figures released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics on a month-on-month basis, CPI increased by 2.0 percent in September 2025 as compared to a decrease of 0.6 percent in the previous month and a decrease of 0.5 percent in September 2024. The CPI was 6.9 percent in September 2024.

CPI inflation (urban) increased by 5.5 percent on a YoY basis in September 2025, as compared to 3.4 percent in the previous month and 9.3 percent in September 2024. On a month-on-month basis, it increased by 1.5 percent in September 2025 as compared to a decrease of 0.7percent in the previous month and a decrease of 0.5percent in September 2024. Whereas the CPI inflation (rural) increased by 5.8 percent on a YoY basis in September 2025, as compared to an increase of 2.4 percent in the previous month and 3.6 percent in September 2024. On a MoM basis, it increased by 2.8 percent in September 2025 as compared to a decrease of 0.5 percent in the previous month and in September 2024.

Sensitive Price Index-based inflation on a YoY basis increased by 4.5percent in September 2025 as compared to an increase of 2.6 percent a month earlier and an increase of 9.2percent in September 2024. On a MoM basis, it increased by 2.0 percent in September 2025 as compared to 3.2 percent in the month earlier and an increase of 0.2percent in September 2024. Whole Price Index inflation on YoY basis increased by 0.6 percent in September 2025 as compared to a decrease of 1.0 percent in the previous month and an increase of 1.9 percent in September 2024. On MoM basis, it increased by 0.5 percent in September 2025 as compared to a decrease of 0.2 percent in the previous month and 1.1 percent in September 2024. Measured by non-food non-energy urban inflation increased by 7.0 percent on a YoY basis in September 2025 as compared to 6.9 percent in the previous month and 9.3 percent in September 2024. On a MoM

basis, it remained stable at 0.3 percent in September 2025 as well as in the previous month, and an increase of 0.2 percent in the corresponding month of last year, i.e., September 2024. Measured by non-food non-energy rural inflation, it remained stable at 7.8 percent on a YoY basis in September 2025 as well as in the previous month, and an increase of 12.1 percent in September 2024. On a MoM basis, it increased by 0.6 percent in September 2025 as compared to 0.2 percent in the previous month and an increase of 0.5 percent in the corresponding month of last year, i.e., September 2024.

Core inflation (trimmed) urban increased by 5.7percent on YoY basis in September 2025, as compared to 4.2 percent in the previous month and 7.1percent in September 2024. On a MoM basis, it increased by 0.3 percent in September 2025 as compared to no change in the previous month and a decrease of 0.1percent in the corresponding month of last year, ie, September 2024. Whereas core inflation (trimmed) increased by 6.5percent on a YoY basis in September 2025 as compared to an increase of 3.6 percent in the previous month and 7.4 percent in September 2024. On MoM basis, it increased by 0.7percent in September 2025 as compared to an increase of 0.3percent in the previous month and a decrease of 0.1percent in the corresponding month of last year, i.e., September 2024. (*Business Recorder, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

### ***IMF warns of rising inflation, current account deficit***

Without accounting for the yet-to-be-finalised losses from the recent floods, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated Pakistan's economic growth rate at 3.6 per cent for the current fiscal year, along with higher inflation and widening current account deficit. The Fund's growth projection — following its recent two-week review of Pakistan's economy — is notably higher than the 2.6pc GDP growth and 7.2pc inflation projected by the World Bank earlier this month, which were based on its own estimates of flood-related damages. (*Dawn, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Crop losses fuelling inflation, ECC told***

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet was cautioned over a renewed inflationary surge, fueled by flood-hit crops, disrupted supply chains, and possible cartelization in the edible oil and ghee sectors, raising fears of another spike in food prices nationwide. (*Business Recorder, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **10.3 # Poverty**

### ***Surveys underrepresent top-income brackets: Actual inequality in Pakistan likely higher, says World Bank***

The World Bank has warned that actual inequality in Pakistan is likely higher, as surveys typically underrepresent top-income brackets. The Bank, in its latest "Poverty & Equity Brief", stated that inequality, as measured by the Gini Index of household consumption, is estimated at 30.3, a decrease of 1.4 points relative to last year. Despite modest growth at 2.7 percent (real GDP), Pakistan's economic stability and easing inflation in fiscal year 2025 are projected to have contributed to poverty reduction. The

poverty rate, measured at the new LMIC international poverty line threshold, is estimated to have decreased to 45.0 percent in fiscal year 2025 (USD4.20/day 2021 PPP) from 47.1 percent in the previous year.

This reduction is driven by a sizable growth in the construction and logistics sectors, which has raised labour incomes; about a quarter of all working poor are employed in these sectors. The bank further stated that, in addition, a marked decrease in food inflation in fiscal year 2025 eased price pressures and improved purchasing power for poor households, who allocate around 45 percent of their budgets to food. Inequality, as measured by the Gini Index of household consumption, is estimated at 30.3, a decrease of 1.4 points relative to last year. However, actual inequality is likely higher, as surveys typically underrepresent top-income brackets. Recent climate-induced shocks, however, have caused widespread loss of lives, assets, and livelihoods, jeopardizing these gains. Since June 2025, intense monsoon rains and glacial melt have triggered flash flooding across the country, affecting over two million people and causing widespread damage to homes, agricultural assets, and infrastructure.

Preliminary estimates suggest a loss of 0.5 million hectares of cropped land, and an associated 10 percent drop in agricultural output in Punjab, affecting major crops such as rice, sugarcane, cotton, wheat, and maize. This further raises concerns over food insecurity in fiscal year 2026 and risks reversing poverty reduction gains, if not mitigated. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces have been hit the hardest thus far, while another 1.6 million people further downstream in Sindh remain at risk.

While the early signs of growth in fiscal year 2025 have translated into welfare improvements for some segments of the poor, sustaining these gains will depend on economic recovery and reconstruction efforts, alongside effective social protection responses for those impacted by the floods. In particular, poor rural households that have lost agricultural assets have limited savings, and inadequate coping mechanisms are especially vulnerable to these shocks. Additionally, food inflation has experienced an uptick since June 2025 and could further increase in the face of disrupted supply chains, potentially reversing gains made earlier in the year.

It further noted that, given the high degree of job informality in construction and logistics sectors, especially for low-skill work, volatility in the growth of these sectors can sharply diminish real wages for the poor. External remittances surged to a record high of 9.3 percent of GDP fiscal year 2025 and serve as a crucial buffer for vulnerable households (just above the poverty line), but their impact on the poorest remains limited, with only 3.2 percent of them receiving remittances.

Poverty is estimated over the vector of the household consumption expenditure per adult equivalent. The Food Poverty Line reflects the cost of consuming 2,350 calories per adult equivalent per day; the poverty line reflects additional expenditure necessary for non-food needs. The Cost of Basic Needs (CBN) poverty line estimated using the HIES

2013-14 was Rs 3,030 per adult equivalent in current prices (Rs 3,741 and Rs 3,769 expressed in 2018-19 rural and urban prices, respectively). The international poverty rates use the vector of temporally and spatially deflated household consumption expenditure. Welfare projections beyond 2018-19 are micro-simulations based on macroeconomic data, including sectoral GDP growth rates and inflation rates, it added. (*Business Recorder, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

***Only one in five families eat desired meals, reveals think-tank survey***

Food insecurity remains widespread in Pakistan as only 19.5pc of households can always afford desired meals, while 30pc sometimes go without three meals a day. These are the findings from the Pakistan Panel Household Survey (PPHS) 2024, the country's only long-term, nationally representative household survey tracking economic and social change for more than two decades, conducted by the country's renowned think-tank Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) and unveiled at a seminar titled "PPHS: Key Insights and Implications for Policymaking". The event featured Dean of Research (PIDE) Dr Shujaat Farooq and was moderated by Dean Academics (PIDE) Dr Karim Khan.

Dr Farooq announced that 76 per cent of the households surveyed in 2010 were successfully re-tracked in 2024, an exceptional achievement in longitudinal research. Supported by RASTA-DDR and conducted in collaboration with the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the PPHS expanded from 16 to 30 districts, now including major urban centres such as Lahore, Karachi, Hyderabad, and Peshawar. The 2024 round covers 8,621 households nationwide and is the first fully digital survey, conducted via tablets for real-time monitoring and improved data quality. The 2024 wave also introduced several new research modules, including learning poverty, care work, disability, financial literacy, and a detailed child well-being and parenting section, along with modernised consumption categories such as "eating out". Inflation was identified by more than 60pc of households as the most severe shock impacting their livelihoods. (*Dawn, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

***'Warming, wired world' becomes playground for the rich***

In Pakistan, the wealthiest 10 per cent hold 42pc of the national income — lower than the average across major Asian economies, but still enough to create massive inequalities that make it impossible to build fair or sustainable societies. This is one of the findings of an Oxfam report, highlighting uneven patterns of economic growth driven by widening wealth disparity, climate change and the digital divide. Titled *An Unequal Future: Asia's Struggle for Justice in a Warming, Wired World*, the report makes for grim reading: the richest 10pc capture 60-77pc of national income, while the poorest 50pc receive only 12-15pc; and the top 1pc own nearly half the wealth.

The report points out that in the past decade, the fortunes of Asian billionaires have more than doubled, whereas the poorest half of the population in countries like China,

India, Indonesia, and Korea, saw their share of income decline. “The income share of the poorest 50pc has declined in almost all countries except Bangladesh, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. The increase in these countries is also minimal, around 1pc, except in Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Timor-Leste,” the report notes. (*Dawn, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

## **11 # ENVIRONMENT**

### ***NAB reclaims forests worth Rs1.3tr across Balochistan***

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Balochistan has recovered more than one million acres of forest land, valued at over Rs1.3 trillion, across the province. The recovery had been made after an intensive eight-month operation carried out in collaboration with the Board of Revenue and deputy commissioners. NAB officials said that the large-scale operation aimed to reclaim forest lands from encroachers and illegal occupants, and to prevent further misuse of state property. The reclaimed lands have now been officially mutated in favour of the Forest Department, Balochistan. (*Dawn, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

### **11.1 # Atmosphere**

#### ***Anti-smog gun technology introduced***

The Punjab government has introduced anti-smog gun technology. “The formal use of anti-smog guns has begun in different areas of Lahore,” Punjab Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said. She said with the help of an AI-linked modern climate system, the effectiveness of the anti-smog gun had also been assessed. The modern machinery along with other measures had been introduced to control the problem of smog in Punjab’s regions. (*Dawn, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

#### ***Anti-smog gun developed by UET inaugurated***

Punjab Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb inaugurated the anti-smog gun developed by the engineers at the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore. (*Dawn, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### **11.2 # Biodiversity**

#### ***Snow leopard population in Pakistan dwindling amid climate threats***

Snow leopards living in Pakistan are severely threatened by climate change, poaching, and habitat fragmentation, experts have warned after a first-of-its-kind scientific survey that revealed only 167 of these rare animals remain in the country. The research by the Snow Leopard Foundation of Pakistan (SLF) provides a scientific population estimate for the species, which was previously counted on the basis of suggestions and assumptions, said Dr Hussain Ali, the paper’s author and a senior regional programme manager at the SLF. Conducted between 2010 and 2019, the study used extensive camera trapping over 40,000 square kilometres, with 1,000 cameras and 1,200 genetic samples. (*Dawn, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### **11.3 # Health**

#### ***Karachi witnesses alarming rise in viral flu cases***

With a gradual seasonal shift towards winters, the city has seen a dramatic increase in cases of viral flu, it emerged. Sources said while most of these patients are reporting to private clinics, the number of those turning to tertiary care hospitals is no less. “We are seeing around 150 to 200 patients with viral flu presenting with persistent high fever and severe body aches, along with other complaints such as sore throat, cough, nausea and vomiting,” shared Dr Imran Sarwar Sheikh of the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi, adding that 1,200 to 1,600 patients are currently reporting daily at the hospital’s emergency unit. (*Dawn, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

#### ***Chikungunya outbreak declared in Peshawar’s dengue hotspots***

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa health department declared a Chikungunya outbreak in Peshawar after the detection of 16 cases of the viral fever caused by mosquito bites. The cases have been reported in the areas with high dengue incidence, according to a statement from the department. It said Sufaid Dheri area in Peshawar had been declared a “Chikungunya outbreak zone” after tests confirmed 16 cases. The department also said effective measures to contain the outbreak were being taken. Health secretary Shahidullah Khan said a surge in Chikungunya incidence came to light earlier this week when residents complained about symptoms of the viral fever, raising concerns about an outbreak. (*Dawn, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

#### ***Pakistan ‘committed to universal health coverage’***

Pakistan has reaffirmed its commitment to universal health coverage (UHC), regional solidarity and multilateral cooperation at a meeting of the World Health Organisation held in Cairo. The assurance was given by Federal Minister for Health Syed Mustafa Kamal during his address at the meeting of WHO’s Eastern Mediterranean Regional Committee. The minister said that Pakistan was strongly aligned with the year’s theme — “Together for a Healthy Future: Action, Access and Equity” — reflecting the government’s dedication to translating commitments into tangible actions that improved people’s health and well-being. (*Dawn, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

#### ***Karachi, Hyderabad face dengue outbreak as cases spike alarmingly***

While the provincial health department puts the total number of dengue cases in Sindh this year at 819, figures obtained by three major Karachi hospitals and one public sector laboratory and its branches in Hyderabad suggest an outbreak-like situation, with the actual number exceeding 12,000 in a short span of just six weeks. The government had confirmed one dengue-related death in July, but independent figures suggest four dengue patients in Hyderabad — a young girl and two men and an elderly woman — and two in Karachi had lost their lives after testing positive to the mosquito-borne disease. (*Dawn, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***Probe begins into two deaths as dengue cases soar to 3,638 in KP***

The health department has launched an investigation into two deaths in Mardan allegedly from dengue as the province-wide infections soared to 3,638 with the emergence of 37 new cases. (*Dawn, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Another polio case takes year's tally to 30***

Another polio case has been reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, raising the nationwide tally to 30 so far this year. According to an official of Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at National Institute of Health, lab has confirmed a new case of wild poliovirus type 1 in Torghar district, KP. (*Dawn, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***Dengue tally hits 1,163 in Pindi***

There is no let-up in the arrival of dengue patients in the city's three government-run hospitals as 21 more patients went down with mosquito-borne disease, taking the tally to 1,163 in the current season. Mostly, patients arriving in July to October forced the Punjab government to make arrangements to stop the virus from further spreading. A large number of dengue patients were reported in three government-run hospitals, including Holy Family Hospital, Benazir Bhutto Hospital and Rawalpindi Teaching Hospital. (*Dawn, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***'Breast cancer killing 40,000 annually'***

Speakers at a health seminar have said that breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among women in Pakistan with an alarming statistics that one in every nine women is at risk during her lifetime. They said that nearly 90,000 new cases were reported annually while approximately 40,000 women lost their lives to it, underlining urgent need for awareness, early detection and its timely treatment. They were speaking at the breast cancer awareness programme titled "Raise for Hope, for Survival, for Strength, and for Promise of a Cure", organised by the Institute of Gender Studies (IGS), Sindh University. (*Dawn, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Irrational drug use: Pakistan losing up to Rs50bn annually: DRAP***

Pakistan is losing an estimated Rs 35 to 50 billion every year due to non-evidence-based prescribing and unethical marketing of medicines, a practice that is not only draining the country's healthcare resources but also fuelling antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and eroding global trust in local pharmaceutical products, federal health officials said. (*Business Recorder, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***KP reports 74 new dengue cases***

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has reported 74 new confirmed cases of dengue in the past 24 hours, according to a report issued by the provincial health department. The report stated that the total number of dengue cases in the province this year had reached 3,939, while the number of active cases currently stood at 304. During the past 24 hours, 23 new patients were admitted to various hospitals, bringing the total number of hospitalisations



to 33. So far this year, 1,628 dengue patients have been admitted to hospitals across the province. (*Dawn, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

### ***Health department releases report on confirmed dengue cases***

The Sindh Health Department has released its latest report on confirmed dengue cases across the province, revealing that 439 new cases have been reported so far in October, bringing the total number of confirmed cases in 2025 to 1,083. (*Business Recorder, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***6 children among 9 dead in gastro outbreak on Karachi's outskirts***

Nine people, including six children, have died of gastroenteritis after consuming contaminated water and food in a village on the outskirts of Karachi, forcing the government to declare a health emergency in the affected areas and the nearby Malir district. (*Dawn, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***3,995 children in Sindh are HIV positive, minister told***

Health Minister Dr Azra Pechuho was informed that the spread of HIV in Sindh had reached an “extremely alarming” level, with 3,995 registered HIV-positive children in the province. A high-level meeting on the alarming rise of HIV cases across Sindh was chaired by the health minister. She was briefed by officials that more than 600,000 quack doctors are operating in Sindh, 40 per cent of them in Karachi alone. (*Dawn, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***‘57 children died of vaccine-preventable measles in province this year’***

Expressing serious concern over growing numbers of measles’ cases these days, especially in Karachi, health experts at an event urged parents to get their children protected against the highly contagious and potentially fatal viral infection — which has claimed at least 57 lives this year so far, while affecting over 4,200 (confirmed cases) others in 73 outbreaks across the province. (*Dawn, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***1,558 new dengue cases reported in 24 hours in Sindh***

Cases of dengue fever are on the rise in the province with 1,558 new patients testing positive for the mosquito-borne viral infection in 24 hours, the health department’s data released showed. According to official figures, highest number of dengue patients were recorded in Hyderabad (800) followed by Karachi (758), where 4,010 laboratory tests (out of the total 5,742) were conducted. This year’s total count stands at 2,735,” it says. The total cases reported in Karachi this year is 1,005 followed by Hyderabad 938. The department has confirmed three deaths this year. (*Dawn, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

## **11.4 # Pollution**

### ***Lahore continues to be most polluted city of the world***

Lahore was enveloped in a thick, hazardous blanket of smog with real-time data confirming the city had the distinction of being most polluted city in world. According to IQAir, Lahore’s air quality index soared to a hazardous level of 312, with its



concentration of PM2.5 — the most harmful particulate matter — reaching a staggering 190.5 micrograms per cubic meter (56?g/m<sup>3</sup>). This level is over 25 times the World Health Organisation’s annual air quality guideline. (*Dawn, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

## **12 # CLIMATE CHANGE**

### ***Climate change support surges to 34pc in Pakistan: WB survey***

Climate change along with water and sanitation have become higher priorities in Pakistan, while perceptions of the World Bank Group’s support have declined in key sectors, according to the results of ‘Pakistan Country Opinion Survey for Pakistan’, commissioned by the World Bank. The survey found that support for climate change initiatives increased from 5 per cent in fiscal year 2021 to 34pc in fiscal year 2025. Similarly, support for water and sanitation rose from 9pc to 35pc in the same period. While the World Bank Group’s (WBG) work in pandemic preparedness, gender equity, and disaster risk management received the highest effectiveness ratings, the overall perception of its support has decreased significantly since 2021 in other areas, especially for governance, education, and water and sanitation.

The survey showed that financial resources were considered the WBG’s greatest value to Pakistan at 48pc, followed by knowledge products (33pc), technical assistance (32pc), and capacity development (24pc). While ratings for many key performance indicators remained largely consistent with 2021 findings, the survey noted that the only rating to show a significant improvement was the perception of the WBG’s effectiveness in achieving development results in Pakistan. More than half of respondents felt that the WBG has strengthened its work in improving people’s lives (52pc) and in being easy to work with (51pc). (*Dawn, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 3*)

## **13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS**

### **13.1 # Flood**

#### ***Sutlej breaches continue to submerge 28 mouzas***

Flood devastation continues to grip southern Punjab as three breaches at the Noraja Bhutta embankment along the Sutlej River have inundated 28 mouzas across Multan, Bahawalpur and Lodhran districts, displacing thousands and causing extensive damage to infrastructure. Meanwhile, the flood survey teams collected the data of 27,500 affected people in Punjab in the first three days since the launch. The Noraja Bhutta embankment, which initially broke at seven locations 20 days ago due to heavy water flow, has left several villages submerged under six to eight feet of floodwater. The Punjab government kicked off a survey to assess the losses suffered by people in the province due to recent floods but refrained from giving any timeline for completing the exercise or for the start of compensation payments to the more than four million affected residents. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz was informed that flood survey teams have collected data of 27,500 people. The teams have also completed the survey of

48,071 acres of flood-affected land, besides obtaining data of 8,305 houses destroyed by the flood. The teams also obtained records of 1,712 livestock killed during the flood. She was also briefed that 1,429 flood survey teams had been mobilised in flood-affected areas in 26 districts of Punjab.

She directed the commissioners, deputy commissioners and assistant commissioners to support and monitor the survey teams. The Punjab government said that 2,200 survey teams comprising 10,000 members of the Pakistan Army, revenue, agriculture, and livestock departments, and district administration would carry out the survey. Full compensation to the affected families — Rs1 million for a destroyed house, Rs500,000 for a partially damaged house, Rs500,000 for loss of livestock, and Rs20,000 per acre (up to 12 acres) for farmers — will be provided based on the survey report, it said. (*Dawn, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***Govt says floods caused USD2.9bn losses***

Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal said that Pakistan suffered estimated damages and losses of USD 2.9 billion across all provinces due to the recent floods. He said the overall damage to the GDP is estimated to be at 0.3–0.7 percent, reducing the financial year growth outlook to 3.5–3.9 percent, against the target of 4.2 percent. “The agriculture sector suffered the biggest loss of Rs 430 billion, while infrastructure losses stood at Rs 307 billion.

The disaster claimed 1,039 lives and left 1,067 people injured. A total of 229,763 houses were damaged — 59,258 were destroyed and 170,505 were partially damaged. Additionally, 22,841 livestock were lost, 2,811km of roads destroyed, along with 790 bridges, 129 public buildings, 2,267 educational institutions, 243 healthcare facilities, 1,297 commercial areas, and 866 water infrastructure sites,” the minister said while addressing a news conference. He said that due to crop losses, the agriculture sector’s growth is now projected at 3.0–3.8 percent, compared to the target of 4.2 percent. He added that estimated crop losses include 3.0–3.4 million bales of cotton, 0.6–1.2 million tons of rice, 1.3–3.3 million tons of sugarcane, and 0.6–1.3 million tons of maize. (*Business Recorder, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***CM launches Rs100bn relief package for flood victims***

The Punjab government claimed to have completed 70 per cent of survey of flood-stricken areas and announced an allocation of Rs100 billion for the rehabilitation of the victims. The chief minister said the unprecedented floods in the Ravi, Sutlej, and Chenab, which lasted for three weeks, had caused massive destruction, affecting 2.5 million people who suffered irreparable losses to crops, livestock, and homes. She said from the very first day, the Punjab government remained fully engaged in rescue and relief efforts, ensuring the safe evacuation of affected families and their 2.2m heads of livestock. Camps were established to provide food, medical treatment, and other essential facilities under difficult circumstances. (*Dawn, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 2*)

### ***Punjab doles out Rs6.39bn among flood-hit people***

The Punjab government has distributed Rs6.39 billion among flood-affected people across the province. The amount is part of Rs100bn allocation made under the Punjab Chief Minister Flood Rehabilitation Programme. (*Dawn, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **14 # NATURAL DISASTERS**

### **14.1 # Earthquake**

#### ***Low-intensity tremor felt in parts of Karachi***

A low-intensity earthquake jolted parts of the city but officials said that the latest seismic activity had nothing to do with more than five dozen tremors the city experienced over two months ago. According to Pakistan Meteorological Department, the earthquake measuring 3.2 magnitude on the Richter scale, with its epicentre located seven kilometres northwest of Malir at a depth of 10km. Chief Meteorologist Ameer Hyder Leghari, also a senior seismologist, explained that today's seismic activity was caused by the (active) fault passing close to the Thana Bola Khan. (*Dawn, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

#### ***5.6 tremor jolts northern parts***

Tremors jolted parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad and other areas in Pakistan's north, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said. No loss of life was reported. PMD data showed that the quake was registered with a magnitude of 5.6 at a depth of 120 kilometres. The tremors were felt in Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Peshawar, Swat and Chitral, among other areas. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) registered a 4.7 magnitude quake less than 30km from the western Pak-Afghan border, at a depth of 10km. However, USGS also registered a 5.5 magnitude earthquake less than 10km from Pakistan's northern border with Afghanistan. This one was registered at a depth of 10km. (*Dawn, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

#### ***Quake jolts parts of Barkhan***

A 5.0-magnitude earthquake jolted several areas of Rakhni tehsil in Barkhan district of Balochistan. Officials said the moderate tremor struck parts of Rakhni and adjoining areas in the morning, forcing people to rush out of their homes for safety. According to the National Seismic Monitoring Centre, the quake measured 5.0 on the Richter scale, and its epicenter was located about 39 kilometers from Rakhni in a mountainous region. The depth of the earthquake was recorded at 15km. (*Dawn, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### **14.2 # Landslide**

#### ***Landslide cuts off Balochistan-KP link via highway***

Traffic between Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad was suspended after a landslide blocked the Zhob-Dera Ismail Khan Highway near the Daraband area of Sherani district of Balochistan. Officials said the landslide occurred suddenly after the Suleman Mountain Range received heavy rainfall a few days earlier, triggering massive

rock and mudslides in the area. “Heavy boulders and mud blocked the highway, suspending all kinds of vehicular traffic from both sides, an official said. (*Dawn, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Mine worker killed in Mingora landslide***

A worker was killed when a landslide hit an emerald mine in Mingora. According to reports, the deceased, Zahoor Iqbal, a resident of Shangla, was engaged in extracting emeralds when a mass of earth suddenly collapsed inside the mine, burying him under the debris. Co-workers and residents immediately launched a rescue operation and managed to recover body from rubble. Over years, dozens of mine workers have lost their lives in similar incidents, raising serious concerns about the absence of safety protocols and monitoring by relevant authorities. (*Dawn, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## **15 # RESISTANCE**

### ***AJK witnesses shutter-down strike for second day***

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) witnessed an overwhelming shutter-down and wheeljam strike on the second consecutive day amid intermittent skirmishes between law enforcers and activists in the state capital Muzaffarabad. The atmosphere was highly charged following the death of one person and injuries to several others a day earlier. Although government offices remained open, attendance was thin for want of transport. Banks were also open but hardly saw any client. All private businesses and shops, including medical stores, remained closed. Even street vendors were nowhere to be seen. Angry youngsters, some carrying batons, blocked intercity roads in many areas of the state capital till afternoon by placing different obstacles and torching bushes. (*Dawn, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Teenager’s stabbing sparks protest in Dir***

A 13-year-old boy was stabbed to death in Timergara general bus terminal, sparking strong protests as enraged residents blocked the Timergara-Peshawar Highway for several hours. Police said the teenager, Abu Bakar, was attacked with a sharp-edged weapon and succumbed to his injuries. The incident triggered outrage, with thousands of people from Arang, Bajaur and Timergara joining the protest at Zulam Bridge. The blockade left hundreds of vehicles and passengers stranded for about three hours. District police officer Taimoor Khan said the suspect, Arshad Ali, a resident of Mardan, was arrested within an hour of the incident. A murder case under Section 302 of Pakistan Penal Code has been registered against him, and further investigation is underway. (*Dawn, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Islamabad students protest CDA’s crackdown on private hostels***

Students staged a protest outside the National Press Club against the closure of private hostels established in residential areas by the Capital Development Authority (CDA). The protest call was given by the Students Coordination Committee, and a large number of students from various educational institutions in Islamabad participated. The

demonstration was led by Youth Leader Society President Daniyal Abdullah, along with Tabish Hamid, Shahid Shah and other student leaders. The speakers said in their addresses that hostel facilities are a fundamental right of non-local students. They claimed that a large number of students are currently enrolled in public and private universities in Islamabad, and a major part of these students are from other cities. (*Dawn, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***SEA stages sit-in at DC office in Makli***

The Sindh Employees Alliance (SEA) has announced that it will hold a large-scale ‘historic’ sit-in outside Bilawal House on Oct 6 in Karachi in protest against pension cuts and other government policies affecting provincial employees. Addressing a sit-in outside the Deputy Commissioner Office in Makli, SEA central chairman Haji Ashraf Khaskheli said the protest would continue unless the government reversed what he termed its “anti-employee policies”. Rejecting dialogues with commissioners, ministers or committees, Mr Khaskheli insisted that negotiations would only be held with Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and chief secretary. “The era of small-level talks is over. We will talk to the chief minister and chief secretary and not to anyone else,” he said. (*Dawn, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Protests erupt in Karachi against Trump’s ME peace plan, Israeli attack on Gaza flotilla***

Several parties staged demonstrations across the metropolis against the Trump administration’s proposed plan for peace in the Middle East and an Israeli attack on Global Sumud Flotilla. Speaking at a protest held outside Jamia Masjid Haider-i-Karrar in Orangi Town, the Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen (MWM) termed the Trump’s plan a betrayal of the trust of the oppressed Palestinians.

Allama Sadiq Jaffery said the 250 million people of Pakistan rejected the so-called “Trump Plan” outright. “We want Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s Pakistan, not Trump’s vision,” he declared, urging Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar not to mislead the public. Warning against double standards, Allama Jaffery questioned whether Pakistan would accept any settlement on Kashmir without the consent of Kashmiris. Allama Mubashir Hassan, addressing the protest, described the Trump plan as a strategic and deeply-rooted conspiracy by the Zionist and Western powers to strip the Palestinian people — especially those in Gaza — of their identity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. (*Dawn, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 14*)

### ***Protests held in KP districts against outsourcing of colleges***

Teachers and students of government colleges staged protest demonstrations in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa against the decision to outsource the under-enrolment colleges and the proposal to link the promotion of teachers to MPhil degree and research work in their respective subjects. The students converged on roads while the teachers boycotted classes. They demanded of the government to withdraw the decision of outsourcing the colleges having lower enrolment, mostly located in the far-off areas of

the province. The government has decided to outsource the under-enrolment colleges to the private sector under Public-Private Partnership mode. The provincial government will pay the fee of students in the outsourced colleges while the private partner will arrange the teaching staff and run the administrative affairs. The teachers also turned down the proposed amendment to the service rules, conditioning the promotion of college teachers with MPhil degree and publication of research papers in their respective subjects. (*Dawn, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### ***Thousands march on Karachi's Sharea Faisal to show solidarity with Gazans***

Thousands of people, including women and children, marched on Sharea Faisal to protest against the genocide in Gaza by Israeli forces, demanding united action from the Islamic world to support the oppressed Muslims. They also warned the government to refrain from endorsing any proposal, including the Abraham Accords, which they said was against the will of the Palestinian people. The march was organised by the party as a show of solidarity with Gaza, particularly in the backdrop of Israeli aggression against the Freedom Flotilla. In his address, JI chief Hafiz Naemur Rehman made it clear to Islamabad that any paradigm shift in Pakistan's policy on Palestine, set by none other than Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, would not be tolerated at any cost. (*Dawn, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

### ***JI holds 'Children March' to condemn Israel***

Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) held 'Children March' in Hyderabad and Jacobabad to condemn genocide of Palestinians in Gaza by Israeli forces. Pakistan Peoples Party-Shaheed Bhutto ((PPP-SB) also took out a rally to express solidarity with Palestinians. In Hyderabad, JI Deputy Emir Liaquat Baloch addressed the 'Children March' outside local press club. Schoolchildren and teachers took part in the march. (*Dawn, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Al-Aqsa courtyards storming anniversary: Demos across Karachi condemn US and Israel***

A large number of demonstrations were held across Karachi on the call of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Ameer Engr Hafiz Naem ur Rehman to mark two years since the launch of Operation Al-Aqsa Storm and to join the global day of protest against Israel. Protests took place in all districts of the city — on main roads, at schools, colleges, commercial centers, public spaces, and outside the City Court — where participants condemned Israeli aggression and US support for it. Lawyers, students, teachers, traders, religious scholars, workers, and members of civil society formed human chains and carried banners and placards expressing solidarity with the people of Gaza and Hamas. (*Business Recorder, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### ***AT protests corporate farming, water projects on Indus***

Activists of Awami Tehreek staged a rally under the aegis of Sindhi Hari Committee in protest against corporate farming, water projects on Indus River and low purchase price of paddy. AT president Vasand Thari, Sindhi Hari Tehreek president Comrade Ghulam

Mustafa Chandio and others demanded in their speeches before protesters an end to corporate farming project, agricultural reforms, distribution of land among landless peasants and fixation of support price for rice at Rs4,000 per 40kg and that of wheat at Rs5,000 per 40k. (*Dawn, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Growers stage rallies to protest low rate for paddy***

Farmers brought out rallies in Tando Mohammad Khan and Badin districts in protest against inadequate price of paddy being offered to them by rice millers. In Tando Mohammad Khan, protesters led by Sindh Abadgar Ittehad president Nawab Zubair Talpur, Ittehad leaders Pir Ashfaq Jan Sirhandi, Abdul Haq Zaunr and others staged a sit-in outside deputy commissioner's office. Growers' leaders said that after wheat and sugar cane now paddy crop was also facing price issues. Sindh's agriculture sector had been destroyed deliberately & now an artificial paddy crisis had been created, they said.

They said that growers invested millions of rupees in land preparation, seed, water availability etc but they were being paid Rs2,200 per 40kg only. Just a month back the paddy rate was Rs3,200 per 40kg, he said. They said that the inadequate price was causing huge economic losses to growers. The federal and provincial governments should take notice of this conspiracy to destroy farm sector, they said. They said that Pakistan should stop importing wheat and sugar and it should rather start exporting them. This artificial crisis was meant to discourage farmers from growing paddy crop so that rice was also imported and another avenue of corruption was opened, they said.

They said the government should provide support to farmers in growing paddy crop by providing them farm inputs and taking notice of falling price of the crop. The conspiracy which was aimed at undermining farm sector of Sindh should be foiled, they said. A large number of paddy growers took to streets in Badin to protest steep decline in paddy price following start of crop's harvest season. (*Dawn, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***'Wapda union to shut down power supply'***

In a nationwide protest against proposed privatisation of power distribution companies, the All Pakistan Wapda Hydro Electric Workers Union staged rallies and held demonstrations in parts of Sindh. Addressing a rally in Hyderabad, union president Abdul Latif Nizamani said workers of Wapda and its distribution companies would not allow what he termed the sale of those national enterprises at behest of IMF. If their (workers) demands were not met, they would shut down electric supply, he threatened. (*Dawn, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Dasu project workers block Karakoram Highway against non-payment of wages***

The Dasu hydropower project workers took to streets for second consecutive day and blocked Karakoram Highway demanding the release of their wages in line with labour laws, suspending traffic between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan for hours. "The company executing this mega energy project is delaying our wages, which is affecting our children's education and even our ability to afford two meals a day," Mohammad Behroom, one of protesters, said. (*Dawn, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)



### ***Farmers continue rallies for 'fair crop price'***

Farmers belonging to different areas of Sindh continued their rallies in Kandhkot-Kashmore for a second consecutive day against provincial government's indifferent attitude towards their plight. Raising slogans for better prices of their produce, they demanded end to their 'economic murder' by unscrupulous millers, traders, middlemen and government functionaries. The rallies were organised by Awami Tehreek (AT), Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and local organisations of growers, peasants and tillers. Political, nationalist, social welfare and other activists also took part in the rallies in considerably large numbers. (*Dawn, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***Rallies against unfair paddy price held in several Sindh cities***

Activists of Jamaat-i-Islami's farmers wing staged protests across a number of cities against unfairly low procurement price of paddy and illegal deductions mill owners made when buying rice from growers. In Larkana, JI workers staged sit-in at Jinnah Bagh Chowk, where local party leaders Rameez Raja and Dr Nabi Dino Baloch said in their speeches that Sindh government was betraying farmers by arbitrarily fixing crop prices and allowing unjust deductions from their produce. He demanded the government should immediately fix official support price for paddy and establish a transparent system of weight and payment at rice mills for farmers.

Similar protests were held in Kashmore, Nasirabad and Pakho town in Qambar-Shahdadkot district where the protesters demanded that price of paddy be fixed at Rs5,000 per 40 kg. In Sukkur, JI held a demonstration outside local press club where Sukkur JI emir Zubair Hafeez and other leaders told media persons that increasing inflation, unemployment, and economic crisis in the country had made life difficult for people, especially for growers and farmers. The protesters demanded the government formulate farmer-friendly policies, fix fair prices for farm products, and provide farmers facilities, subsidies, and easy loans.

In Jamshoro, JI workers organised a demonstration outside Kotri Press Club, demanding the government fix fair price and provide immediate relief to farmers. Local JI leaders said that until the government ensured proper facilities were provided to farmers, Pakistan could not achieve real economic progress. Current government policies were forcing farmers to sell their crops at unreasonably low prices, they said. (*Dawn, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 15*)

### ***UC chairman among four held over protest against KE***

A union committee (UC) chairman belonging to the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and three others were arrested for blocking the Preedy Street during a demonstration against prolonged loadshedding in Lines Area. An officer of the Brigade police confirmed the arrests and registration of a rioting case against them. Among those arrested were JI UC-II Chairman Noman Hameed, his coordinator Syed Talal Ali, and others who have been booked under relevant legal provisions, the officer added. In response, JI Karachi chief



Munam Zafar condemned the arrests in a statement, saying that the residents of Lines Area had been enduring load-shedding for several hours. He described the protest as a peaceful demonstration against the “cruelty” inflicted by K-Electric. (*Dawn, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 13*)

***Body of woman brought to KP’s Bara after protests over Tirah ‘shelling’***

The body of a woman and three injured children were brought to Bara after a series of protests by residents against the shelling of private houses in Tirah during fighting between security forces and terrorists. Local sources said that another girl, who was killed after her house was hit by a stray mortar shell, was buried in Tirah amid curfew in most parts of the valley. They said that while sporadic clashes continued between security forces and terrorist groups, mostly in the Bar Qambarkhel area, residents were strictly advised to remain indoors. (*Dawn, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

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# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

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## 2 # 2AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

### ***Global agriculture spending hits record \$701bn: FAO***

Global government spending on agriculture reached a record \$701 billion in 2023, but the sector's share relative to its economic contribution has declined, according to a new report by the UN's FAO. The "Tracking Progress on Food and Agriculture-Related SDG Indicators 2025" report reveals that the Agriculture Orientation Index — which compares agricultural spending to the sector's contribution to GDP — fell from 0.50 in 2015 to 0.43 in 2023, despite the nominal rise in spending. The FAO warns that the world remains moderately distant from achieving targets for productive and sustainable agriculture under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), though slight improvements have been observed since 2015. While there has been some progress, no sub-indicator has yet met the goal for productive and sustainable agriculture. The report notes the world is close to targets in areas such as gross output diversification, cropland nitrogen use efficiency, and agricultural water stress. (*Dawn, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

## 3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS

### ***Settlers disrupt West Bank olive harvest***

The scene shocked many and highlighted the violence of this year's olive harvest in the Israeli-occupied West Bank: a young masked man clubs an older Palestinian woman picking olives, who then collapses on the ground. The incident during an attack by Israeli settlers, filmed by an American journalist, took place in the town of Turmus Ayya near Ramallah, a hotspot of violence this year. Not far from the scene, an Israeli flag flapped in the wind at a settlement outpost, illegal even under Israeli law.

The annual harvest, once a peaceful gathering for the occupied West Bank's families, has in recent years turned into a series of increasingly violent confrontations involving Israeli settlers, troops, Palestinian harvesters and foreign activists. The season began in October and will last until mid-November, as Palestinians across the West bank harvest olives from trees they see as deeply connected to their national identity. The West Bank boasts over eight million olive trees for three million Palestinians, according to the agriculture ministry's 2021 census. Every autumn, Palestinians farmers, but also city folk whose families own a few trees, head out into the fields to pick olives, mostly by hand. The UN's humanitarian agency, OCHA, said that 27 West Bank villages were affected by harvest-related attacks in the week of Oct 7 to 13 alone. "The incidents included attacks on harvesters, theft of crops and harvesting equipment, and vandalism of olive trees, resulting in casualties, property damage, or both," OCHA said. (*Dawn, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

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

### ***500,000 birds culled in German bird flu outbreak***

More than half a million farm birds have been culled in Germany, as the country battles a surge in bird flu cases. Germany's national animal disease research centre, the Friedrich Loeffler Institute (FLI), said 31 outbreaks had been confirmed on farms since September and the disease was spreading rapidly. "The situation is changing so quickly that the figures are just a snapshot and give the scale of the outbreak rather than exact totals," an FLI spokeswoman said. The number of wild birds that have died is not known, though more than 1,500 wild cranes are believed to have succumbed to the disease in the eastern state of Brandenburg alone. A reporter at a poultry farm in the Brandenburg town of Neutrebbin saw thousands of culled chickens being tipped into a trailer, as well as dead ducks being removed from containers. Bird flu rarely poses a risk to humans but can cause big losses for the agricultural industry and prompt shortages of household items. (*Dawn, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

## **5 # TRADE**

### ***China tightens rare earth export controls***

China tightened its rare earth export controls expanding restrictions on processing technology and spelling out its intention to limit exports to overseas defence and semiconductor users. The announcement from the Ministry of Commerce clarifies and expands sweeping controls announced in April that caused shortages around the world before a series of deals with Europe and the US eased but did not eliminate the supply crunch. (*Business Recorder, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 5*)

### ***Global trade system 'at risk of derailment': UN***

The rules-based international trade system is in danger, UN chief Antonio Guterres warned, amid spiralling debt, heavy tariffs and financial insecurity for emerging nations. Guterres said too many countries were trapped in a debt crisis, spending more money on servicing creditors than funding health and education. "Global debt has soared. Poverty and hunger are still with us. The international financial architecture is not providing an adequate safety net for developing countries. And the rules-based trading system is at risk of derailment," Guterres said at the UN Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva.

Guterres said trade and development was facing a "whirlwind of change", with three-quarters of global growth now coming from developing world, services trade surging and new technologies boosting the global economy. However, geopolitical divisions, inequalities, conflicts and the climate crisis are limiting progress, the UN secretary-general said. Furthermore, US President Donald Trump's administration has slapped wide-ranging tariffs on other nations, triggering trade tensions around the globe. Guterres acknowledged that "protectionism might be, in some situations, inevitable", but, he stressed, "at least it should be rational". The UN chief warned that developing

countries “continue to be short-changed”, with uncertainty rising, investment retreating and supply chains “in turmoil”. “Trade barriers are rising, with some least developed countries facing extortionate tariffs of 40 percent, despite representing barely one percent of global trade flows,” (*Business Recorder, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 1*)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

### ***Owner of cough syrup firm linked to 19 deaths held***

Indian police have arrested the owner of Sresan Pharmaceutical Manufacturer, the cough syrup company linked to the deaths of 19 children in Madhya Pradesh. The children, all under five years of age, died in the past month in the state’s Chhindwara city, after consuming cough medicine containing toxic diethylene glycol in quantities nearly 500 times the permissible limit. The deaths were all linked to Sresan Pharma’s Coldrif syrup, which has been banned in several parts of India after a test confirmed the presence of the chemical. (*Dawn, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Johnson & Johnson faces UK lawsuit over talc cancer claim***

Thousands of UK claimants have filed legal action against US pharmaceutical and cosmetics giant Johnson & Johnson alleging people diagnosed with cancers were exposed to asbestos in its talcum powder. The company has faced a series of similar lawsuits in North America, with the latest UK claim filed in the High Court in London. The law firm representing around 3,000 complainants in Britain said the compensation claim “is estimated to be more than £1 billion” (\$1.3 billion). They allege that either they or a family member developed forms of ovarian cancer or mesothelioma from using J&J’s Baby Powder. “The claim, which covers the period from 1965 to 2023, details how Johnson & Johnson knew that their talc products contained carcinogenic fibres, including asbestos, for more than 50 years,” KP Law said. (*Dawn, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

## **7 # INTERNATIONAL AIL / LOAN / INVESTMENT**

### ***42 million set to lose food aid amid US shutdown***

Nearly 42 million people are set to lose food aid due to second-longest US government shutdown, as Democrats and Republicans in Congress continue to blame each other for a weeks-long legislative stalemate. Neither party was showing signs of changing its position days before funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programme, also known as food stamps, is set to lapse beginning. The US Department of Agriculture’s decision last week not to draw on an emergency fund to pay for part of November’s SNAP benefits is splitting senators, as Democrats argue the agency is legally required to spend the roughly \$5.5 billion in contingency funds to maintain at least a portion of the benefits. (*Dawn, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Syria attracted USD28bn in investment since Assad’s fall***

Syria’s interim president Ahmed al-Sharaa said his country had managed to secure USD28 billion worth of investments in the 10 months since the 2024 overthrow of

Bashar al-Assad's government. The president cited the figure while speaking in Saudi capital Riyadh at the Future Investment Initiative (FII) conference, where he was touted as a special guest during the ninth-edition of the forum. (*Business Recorder, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

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

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## **9 # POLICY**

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

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

### ***Israeli warships intercept Gaza aid flotilla***

A flotilla carrying aid to Gaza said Israeli forces were intercepting its latest bid to break an Israeli blockade of the war-battered Palestinian territory. The Global Sumud Flotilla — around 45 vessels carrying activists and politicians including Swedish climate campaigner Greta Thunberg — left Spain last month aiming to break Israel's blockade of the Palestinian territory, where the UN says famine has set in. "The warships are moving in to intercept the flotilla — only 81 nautical miles remain to Gaza," said the Maghreb contingent of the Global Sumud Flotilla in a statement. French politician Marie Mesmeur and Franco-Palestinian MEP Rima Hassan also reported that their boats were being intercepted. (*Dawn, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***13.7m face severe hunger due to aid cuts, says UN***

Almost 14 million people in countries including Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, risk severe hunger due to cuts in global humanitarian aid, the United Nations World Food Programme has warned. The WFP's biggest donor, the United States, has slashed its foreign aid under President Donald Trump, and other major nations have also made or announced cuts in development and humanitarian assistance. "WFP's funding has never been more challenged. The agency expects to receive 40pc less funding for 2025, resulting in a projected budget of \$6.4 billion, down from \$10 billion in 2024," the Rome-based agency said.

A WFP report, titled "A Lifeline at Risk", estimated that cuts to its food assistance could push 13.7 million people from "crisis" to "emergency" levels of hunger, one step away from famine in a five-level international hunger scale. Major WFP operations in six countries — Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan — are facing serious funding shortages before the end of the year, the agency said. A WFP spokesperson clarified that the expected 13.7-million increase in the number of severely hungry people included, but was "not exclusive", to those six countries. "The gap between what WFP needs to do and what we can afford to do has never been larger. We are at risk of losing decades of progress in the fight against hunger," WFP executive director Cindy McCain said.

“It’s not just the countries engulfed in major emergencies. Even hard-won gains in the Sahel region, where 500,000 people have been lifted out of aid dependence, could experience severe setbacks without help, and we want to prevent that,” she added. Around 319 million people are facing acute food insecurity, including 44 million in emergency levels of hunger, according to the World Food Programme (WFP). The Catholic leader also lambasted that people seem “to have forgotten” that using starvation as a weapon is a war crime. (*Dawn, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Hunger outbreak***

Feeding people will be harder than ever as the UN World Food Programme warns of a hunger emergency for nearly 14m people worldwide, including Afghanistan, Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Haiti, due to slashed global aid. The agency says it ‘expects to receive 40pc less funding for 2025, resulting in a projected budget of \$6.4bn, down from \$10bn in 2024’. Clearly, the Western world, led by the US, Britain, France and Germany, is morally broke. It has abandoned all obligation to development and humanitarian support, particularly in countries it spent trillions to destroy. A WFP report, *A Lifeline at Risk*, forecasts that food aid cuts could send a populace of 13.7m ‘from crisis to emergency’ stages of hunger, a degree away from famine ‘in a five-level international hunger scale’. According to the programme, some 319m people currently face food insecurity; 44m are in hunger emergency.

Pakistan, too, will battle alarming food poverty. The present scenario is hardly healthy: four out of 10 under-five children are stunted, 17.7pc are experiencing wasting and a staggering 28.9pc underweight. An IPC study last year revealed that 2.14m of the country’s children are severely underfed. The government’s cold-blooded attitude and unwillingness to include nutrition in political agendas has brought us to this point. Reliance on foreign aid long meant that the authorities were able to abdicate their duty to provide citizens with food, safety and education. As help from the US dries up, Pakistan cannot be dependent; it must itself provide its children with proper health facilities, accessible and affordable food supplies, including through mobile distribution units, and encourage guided feeding practices. In a dilapidated economy, lowered malnutrition is unachievable without health reforms. This requires international expertise and cooperation. Economic success is unattainable until sustenance and healthcare are guaranteed for future generations. (*Dawn, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 6*)

### ***WHO sees no reduction in Gaza hunger since truce***

The World Health Organisation said there had been little improvement in the amount of aid going into Gaza since a ceasefire took hold — and no observable reduction in hunger. “The situation still remains catastrophic because what’s entering is not enough,” WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told an online press briefing from the UN health agency’s headquarters. Since the US-brokered ceasefire between Israel and Hamas came into effect on October 10, there has been “no dent in hunger, because there is not enough food”, he warned.



Israel repeatedly cut off aid to the Gaza Strip, exacerbating dire humanitarian conditions. The United Nations said that it caused a famine in parts of the Palestinian territory. Since the start of 2025, 411 people are known to have died from the effects of malnutrition in Gaza, including 109 children, Richard Peeperkorn, the WHO's representative in the Palestinian territories. "All of these deaths were preventable," stressed Teresa Zakaria, WHO's unit head for humanitarian and disaster action. More than 600,000 people in Gaza were currently facing "catastrophic levels of food insecurity", she added. But while the agreement brokered by US President Donald Trump provides for the entry of 600 trucks per day, Tedros said currently only between 200 and 300 trucks are getting in daily. And "a good number of the trucks are commercial", he said, when many people in the territory have no resources to buy goods. (*Dawn, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

## **11 # ENVIRONMENT**

### ***CO2 in atmosphere up by record amount in 2024: UN***

The increase in the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere last year was the biggest ever recorded, the United Nations said, calling for urgent action to slash emissions. Levels of the three main greenhouse gases, the climate-warming CO2, methane and nitrous oxide—all increased yet again in 2024, with each setting new record highs, the UN's weather and climate agency said. The World Meteorological Organization said the increase in CO2 levels in the atmosphere from 2023 to 2024 marked the biggest one-year jump since records began in 1957. Continued fossil CO2 emissions, greater emissions from wildfires, and a troubling reduced absorption by land and sea all drove the increase, the WMO said.

A separate UN report, out next month, will detail shifts in emissions of the gases, but those numbers are also expected to rise, as they have every year with the world continuing to burn more oil, gas, and coal. This defies commitments made under the 2015 Paris Agreement to cap global warming at "well below" 2C above average levels measured between 1850 and 1900—and 1.5C if possible. 2024 was the warmest year ever recorded. The WMO voiced "significant concern" that the land and oceans were becoming unable to soak up CO2, leaving the greenhouse gas in the atmosphere.

It warned that the planet could be witnessing a so-called "vicious cycle" of climate feedback—whereby increasing greenhouse gas emissions fuel rising temperatures and trigger wildfires that release more CO2, while warmer oceans cannot absorb as much CO2 from the air. WMO senior scientific officer Oksana Tarasova said feedback may eventually push natural systems to a tipping point—for example, melting permafrost, leading to further emissions. "Our actions should be towards the side of emission reduction as fast as possible if we don't want to see the domino effect," she told reporters. Given CO2's role in driving climate change, "achieving net-zero anthropogenic CO2 emissions must be the focus of climate action", according to the report.

“The levels of the three most abundant long-lived greenhouse gases—carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide—reached new records in 2024,” the WMO said in its 21st annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin. In 2024, CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations were at 424 parts per million (ppm), methane at 1,942 parts per billion, and nitrous oxide at 338 parts per billion. That marks hikes of 152 percent, 266 percent and 125 percent respectively since pre-industrial levels before 1750. Of the three major greenhouse gases, CO<sub>2</sub> accounts for about 66 percent of the warming effect on the climate. In 2004, the figure stood at 377 ppm. The 3.5 ppm increase from 2023 to 2024 was “the largest one-year increase since modern measurements began in 1957”, the WMO said. (*Dawn, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### **11.1 # Health**

#### ***Spread of drug-resistant superbugs surging, WHO warns***

The World Health Organisation sounded the alarm over soaring numbers of drug-resistant bacterial infections, compromising the effectiveness of life-saving treatments and rendering minor injuries and common infections potentially deadly. The United Nations’ health agency warned that one in six laboratory-confirmed bacterial infections worldwide in 2023 showed resistance to antibiotic treatments. “These findings are deeply concerning,” Yvan J-F. Hutin, head of the WHO’s antimicrobial resistance department, told reporters. “As antibiotic resistance continues to rise, we’re running out of treatment options and we’re putting lives at risk.” Bacteria have long developed resistance against medicines designed to fight them, rendering many drugs useless. This has been accelerated by the massive use of antibiotics to treat humans, animals and food. Antimicrobial-resistant (AMR) superbugs directly cause over a million deaths and contribute to nearly five million deaths every year, according to the WHO. (*Dawn, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

#### ***WHO advice on 3 Indian cough syrups***

The World Health Organisation issued a health advisory warning about three contaminated cough syrups identified in India, urging authorities to report any detection of these medicines in their countries to the health agency. The WHO said the affected medicines are specific batches of Coldrif from Sresan Pharmaceutical, Respifresh TR from Rednex Pharmaceuticals and ReLife from Shape Pharma. The agency said the contaminated products pose significant risks and can cause severe, potentially life-threatening illness. (*Dawn, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

### **12 # CLIMATE CHANGE**

#### ***Global warming is pushing planet to the brink, UN chief says***

The United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned that global warming is pushing the planet to the brink and urged countries to implement disaster warning systems to protect people against extreme weather. “Every one of the last ten years has been the hottest in history. Ocean heat is breaking records while decimating ecosystems.

And no country is safe from fires, floods, storms and heatwaves,” he told delegates at the UN World Meteorological Organisation’s extraordinary conference in Geneva to mark its 75th year.

Guterres urged countries to mobilise funding to enable a global system of surveillance, known as Early Warning Systems, to protect people from extreme weather. “They give farmers the power to protect their crops and livestock. Enable families to evacuate safely. And protect entire communities from devastation,” Guterres said. Getting notice 24 hours before a hazardous event can reduce damage by up to 30pc, he added. Over 60pc of countries have introduced multi-hazard Early Warning Systems since Guterres launched an initiative in 2022 for all countries to have these in place by 2027. In the past five decades, weather, water and climate-related hazards have killed more than two million people, with 90pc of those deaths occurring in developing countries, the WMO said. (*Dawn, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Gates says climate change won’t end civilisation***

The Microsoft founder, a major backer of green technologies through his Breakthrough Energy organization, acknowledged that climate change will have “serious consequences” but added: “People will be able to live and thrive in most places on Earth for the foreseeable future.” He said he knew some climate advocates would disagree and call him a hypocrite because of his carbon footprint, which he said he fully offsets with “legitimate” carbon credits. Gates outlined his “Three tough truths about climate:” climate change will not end civilization, temperature is not the best measure of progress, and health and prosperity are the strongest defenses against a warming world.

While the planet is dangerously off course in meeting the Paris Agreement’s goal of limiting long-term warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, Gates argued that rather than fixating on the precise figure, the world should recognize progress in cutting emissions. For most of the world’s poor, he added, poverty and disease remain the more pressing problems.

That means, for example, less focus on limiting extremely hot and cold days, and more on ensuring “fewer people live in poverty and poor health so that extreme weather isn’t such a threat to them.” Looking ahead, Gates said a key climate strategy should be to reduce the so-called green premium—the cost difference between clean and dirty ways of doing something—to zero for materials such as cement, steel, and jet fuel. He compared the memo to one he wrote at Microsoft 30 years ago, urging the company to put the internet at heart of everything it did. Likewise, he said, the climate community needs a “strategic pivot” at COP30 and beyond. (*Dawn, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***World far off track to meet climate goals, says UN***

The UN estimated that nations’ carbon-cutting pledges imply a far-from-sufficient 10 per cent emissions cut by 2035, cautioning that it was unable to provide a robust global overview after most countries failed to submit their plans on time. With just days to go

before tense COP30 climate talks in Brazil, vulnerable small island nations slammed an “alarming” lack of new climate pledges, especially from major polluters. UN Climate Change was unable to include crucial targets announced by China and the European Union in its formal assessment of national 2035 pledges because neither has officially submitted detailed plans.

The UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has said emissions must fall 60pc by 2035, from 2019 levels, for a good chance of limiting global warming to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels — the more ambitious goal of the Paris climate deal. “The science is equally clear that temperatures absolutely can and must be brought back down to 1.5C as quickly as possible after any temporary overshoot, by substantially stepping up the pace on all fronts,” UN climate chief Simon Stiell said in a statement. (*Dawn, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### **13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS**

#### ***Climate inaction is claiming millions of lives every year, warns Lancet report***

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and its global partners have called upon governments to recognise public health as the most powerful driver behind climate action since, according to a new report, “continued overreliance on fossil fuels” and failure to “adapt to a heating world” are already having a devastating toll on human health. The report, titled “Countdown on Health and Climate Change” and prepared by the journal Lancet, said 12 of the 20 key indicators tracking health threats have reached record levels. “This shows that climate inaction is costing lives, straining health systems and undermining economies.” The report was prepared in collaboration with the WHO.

“The climate crisis is a health crisis. Every fraction of a degree of warming costs lives and livelihoods,” said Dr Jeremy Farrar, Assistant Director General for Health Promotion at WHO. “This report, produced with WHO as a strategic partner, makes clear that climate inaction is now killing people in all countries. However, climate action is also the greatest health opportunity of our time. “Cleaner air, healthier diets, and resilient health systems can save millions of lives now and protect current and future generations,” the WHO official said.

The report claimed that the rate of heat-related mortality had risen 23 per cent since the 1990s, pushing total heat-related deaths to an average 546,000 deaths per year. Last year, the average person was exposed to 16 days of dangerous heat that would not have been possible without climate change. Infants and older adults faced, on an average, over 20 heatwave days per person \_ a four-fold increase over the last 20 years.

In 2023, the number of people who faced “moderate or severe food insecurity” was 124 million more than during the previous year. Exposure to heat caused a loss of 640 billion potential labour hours last year, with productivity losses equivalent to \$ 1.09 trillion. The cost of heat-related deaths among older adults reached \$261bn. “Governments

spent \$956bn on net fossil fuel subsidies in 2023, more than triple the annual amount pledged to support climate-vulnerable countries. Fifteen countries spent more on subsidising fossil fuels than on their entire national health budgets,” the Lancet report claimed. (*Dawn, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 4*)

### **13.1 # Cyclone**

#### ***Cyclone Montha damage estimated at USD603m***

A severe cyclone that battered India’s eastern coast this week caused damage estimated at nearly 53 billion rupees (USD603 million), as farms, roads and buildings were flooded in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. Cyclone Montha made landfall on the coast of Andhra Pradesh bringing heavy rain and gusty winds that damaged crops and utility poles, uprooted trees and left several areas under water. An early damage assessment indicated that farm sector suffered the highest losses at 8.68 billion rupees, adding that the storm also killed 120 animals. “No human casualties were reported from the cyclone,” state Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said, although local media reported that two women had died. Heavy rain brought by the cyclone also lashed the neighbouring state of Telangana, causing flooding that persisted. (*Business Recorder, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 14*)

### **13.2 # Flood**

#### ***Landslides, floods kill over 60 in Nepal, India***

Landslides and floods triggered by heavy downpours in Nepal and neighbouring India have killed more than 60 people, as rescue workers raced to reach cut-off communities in remote mountainous terrain. Torrential downpours have lashed Nepal, leaving rivers in spate and many areas in the Himalayan nation inundated. At least 43 people have died in rain-triggered disasters and five are missing, Shanti Mahat, spokeswoman for Nepal’s National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority. At least 37 were killed by landslides in the worst-affected eastern district of Illam. (*Dawn, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

#### ***At least 37 dead in Mexico floods***

Floods caused by torrential rains have killed at least 37 people in Mexico in recent days and left behind a trail of destruction. Mexico’s civil defense authorities reported intense rainfall in 31 of 32 states, causing rivers to overflow, flooding entire villages, triggering landslides and collapsing roads and bridges. The central state of Hidalgo has been among the worst-affected areas, with authorities there reporting at least 22 dead, 1,000 homes damaged and 90 communities inaccessible to rescuers, the federal security secretariat said. (*Business Recorder, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

### **13.3 # Storm**

#### ***Storm kills two in France; strong gusts hit coast***

Parts of northern France declared an orange alert due to the strong winds of Storm Amy, which has already caused two deaths in the country. “Storm Amy is moving across the

British Isles, causing strong gusts of wind in the departments near the English Channel coast and in the northern inland departments of the country,” French weather service Meteo France said. (*Dawn, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

## **14 # NATIONAL DISASTER**

### **14.1 # Earthquake**

#### ***Five killed in central Philippines quake***

At least five people were killed when a 6.9-magnitude quake shook central Philippines. “We have five confirmed deaths,” police officer Felipe Cabague of the municipality of San Remigio said, adding he had no immediate details about the identity of the victims. The quake struck off the north of Cebu island, damaging buildings and roads and causing widespread power cuts. (*Dawn, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

#### ***69 die as quake ravages island in Philippines***

The death toll from a powerful earthquake in the central Philippines rose to at least 69, a disaster official said, with scores of injured patients overwhelming hospitals on the island of Cebu. Injured children cried and adults screamed while being treated on beds beneath blue tents outside the Cebu Provincial Hospital, having been wheeled outside as a precaution against waves of aftershocks overnight. They are survivors of the shallow magnitude 6.9 quake that struck off Cebu island’s north near Bogo according to the US Geological Survey. (*Dawn, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

#### ***Magnitude 6.0 quake hits off southern Philippines***

A magnitude-6.0 earthquake jolted just off the coast of southern Philippines, the United States Geological Survey said. The USGS reported the tremor to occur at a depth of 59 kilometres (37 miles), and about 10 kilometres from Cagwait town in the province of Surigao del Sur. There were no immediate reports of casualties from the quake, Cagwait Fire Officer Arnel Besinga told AFP. “The duration of the quake was not that long, just around 30 seconds but it was so sudden and so strong. Our pots here in the fire station fell in our kitchen,” Besinga said. Rescue and fire authorities were conducting a joint assessment of the damage. (*Business Recorder, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 8*)

## **15 # RESISTANCE**

#### ***Over 300 injured, 400 arrested after Morocco protests***

Nearly 300 people were injured and over 400 arrested in Morocco during protests for the fourth consecutive day demanding reforms in the public health and education sectors. Unauthorised demonstrations were held at the call of the GenZ 212 group, a recently formed collective whose organisers remain unknown. The protests turned violent in some cities including Oujda and Inzegane. Interior ministry spokesman Rachid El Khalfi said the clashes involved protesters using knives, Molotov cocktails and stones. (*Dawn, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Greek trains halted as thousands protest over working hours***

Greek trains, ferries and taxis were halted as thousands of workers, including teachers and seafarers, marched to parliament in Athens in a one-day general strike against labour reforms and a government plan to allow employers to extend working hours. The action was organised by Greece's largest private and public trade unions who say that the government bill, which would allow employers to seek up to 13 hours of work a day from their staff compared with the current eight, even for private sector workers with one job, hurts workers' rights. (*Dawn, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Morocco set for fresh protests as PM urges 'dialogue'***

Morocco was set for a sixth night of protests as country's prime minister appealed for engagement with demonstrators, a day after three people were killed in clashes in the southern city of Agadir. The protests across the usually stable North African kingdom have been fuelled by anger over social inequality as Morocco pushes forward major infrastructure projects to host the Africa Cup of Nations next month and the 2030 World Cup. "We don't want the World Cup, health is a priority" and "We have stadiums, but what about hospitals?" protesters have chanted during the demonstrations that erupted with spates of violence in some cities. (*Dawn, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

### ***Mass protests, strikes in Italy for Gaza***

Hundreds of thousands of people protested across Italy during a large-scale strike over the treatment of the Gaza aid flotilla and far-right Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's cautious stance on the conflict. Demonstrators condemned Rome's criticism of the Global Sumud Flotilla that sailed to challenge Israel's blockade of Gaza. Many also demanded more from Meloni, who has faced criticism for not speaking out more strongly on the situation in Gaza or recognising the state of Palestine. The CGIL, one of two unions to call the strike, said over two million people across Italy had taken to the streets in over 100 demonstrations. The strike saw trains cancelled or delayed, some schools closed, and even some prisoners downing tools. At least 80,000 people marched in Rome according to police. Organisers put the number at 300,000. (*Dawn, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

### ***Hundreds of thousands turn out at pro-Palestinian marches in Europe***

Huge numbers turned out at pro-Palestinian rallies in Europe, calling for an immediate end to the war in Gaza and the release of activists on board a flotilla carrying humanitarian aid to the territory. Organisers of the protest in Rome said hundreds of thousands of people had turned out for a fourth day running, after Israel intercepted the 45-strong flotilla seeking to reach Gaza earlier this week. Some 70,000 people, according to police, took to the streets in Barcelona, in one of several pro-Palestinian protests to take place across Spain. Elsewhere, several thousand people marched through the centre of the Irish capital, Dublin, to mark what organisers said was "two years of genocide" in Gaza. With Ireland, Spain is one of the fiercest European critics of Israel's military offensive in Gaza. But in Italy, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's



hard-right government has been criticised for its inaction on the siege of the Palestinian territory. Meloni accused demonstrators of defacing a statue of Pope John Paul II with graffiti in front of Rome's main train station, calling it a "shameful act". (*Dawn, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

### ***Thousands rally in Georgia election-day protest***

Thousands rallied in Georgia, heeding the opposition's call to protest local elections with a "last chance" demonstration to save democracy. The ruling, populist Georgian Dream party is facing its first electoral test since a disputed parliamentary poll a year ago plunged the Black Sea nation into turmoil and froze prospects for closer integration with the European Union. The normally low-key local elections have acquired high stakes after months of raids on independent media, the introduction of laws restricting civil society and the jailing of dozens of opponents and activists. Ahead of the demonstration, authorities pledged a tough response to those it cast as seeking "revolution". (*Business Recorder, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 6*)

### ***Rival rallies in Madagascar after deadly Gen Z protests***

Supporters and opponents of Madagascar's cornered government faced off at a distance in the capital Antananarivo, after days of deadly youth-led protests that the president has called an attempted coup. The protests, inspired by similar drives in Bangladesh, Nepal and Indonesia, and led by an online youth movement known as Gen Z Mada, have tapped into widespread frustration over poor governance, with demonstrators calling for President Andry Rajoelina to step down. At least 22 people have been killed and hundreds injured, according to the United Nations, a toll the government has dismissed as based on rumours or misinformation. The anti-government protesters attempted to converge in the centre of Antananarivo but were prevented by a heavy police presence. (*Business Recorder, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***London police arrest dozens at protest against ban on Palestine Action***

London police arrested dozens of protesters for supporting a banned pro-Palestinian group at a demonstration which went ahead despite requests to call it off after a deadly attack at a synagogue in Manchester. Two people were killed in the attack in the northwestern English city and police shot dead the assailant, a British man of Syrian descent who counter-terrorism police said may have been inspired by extremist Islamist ideology. Organisers refused requests by the police and government to call off demonstration, which had been announced before the attack, to protest against the banning of pro-Palestinian group Palestine Action under anti-terrorism laws. Calling for calm, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said: "I urge anyone thinking about protesting this weekend to recognise and respect the grief of British Jews." (*Business Recorder, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)



### ***UK police being empowered to limit pro-Palestinian rallies***

UK police are to be given greater powers to restrict protests as a minister said repeated large-scale pro-Palestinian demonstrations had caused “considerable fear” for the Jewish community. The government initiative follows deadly knife and car-ramming attack on a synagogue in the northwestern city of Manchester. A pro-Palestinian demonstration in central London went ahead despite pleas from Prime Minister Keir Starmer and the capital’s Metropolitan Police to delay it.

The government said police would be authorised to consider the “cumulative impact” of protests when deciding to impose limits on protesters. “The right to protest is a fundamental freedom in our country. However, this freedom must be balanced with the freedom of their neighbours to live their lives without fear,” Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said in a statement. Over 1,000 people took part in protest in London’s Trafalgar Square with nearly 500 people arrested for showing supporting for the banned Palestine Action campaign group. (*Dawn, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

### ***Madagascar protesters scorn move to name general as PM***

President Andry Rajoelina’s appointment of an army general as new prime minister was met with little enthusiasm in Madagascar and dismissed by the youth-led movement behind two weeks of protests as a diversion. Rajoelina named Major General Ruphin Fortunat Dimbisoa Zafisambo as head of government in a bid to quell anti-government unrest that has claimed 22 lives, according to a toll from United Nations that is disputed by local authorities. Day after announcement, around 200 people gathered for a fresh demonstration in capital, some telling they did not see change as a sign that Rajoelina was genuinely ready to tackle their demands. (*Dawn, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Madagascar soldiers join protesters***

Groups of Madagascar soldiers joined thousands of protesters in the capital after announcing they would refuse any orders to shoot demonstrators. Fresh youth-led demonstrations in Antananarivo drew large crowds in one of the biggest gatherings since a protest movement erupted on the Indian Ocean island on Sept 25. After police used stun grenades and tear gas to try to disperse the demonstrators, soldiers arrived at the heart of the gathering near the Lake Anosy area where they were welcomed with cheers. The soldiers said they would not take action against the protestors. (*Dawn, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

### ***Australia pro-Palestinian rally draws tens of thousands, scepticism on ceasefire***

Tens of thousands joined a pro-Palestinian rally in Sydney, organisers said, one of dozens of demonstrations across Australia, with some protesters expressing scepticism a ceasefire in Israel’s two-year-old assault in Gaza would hold. The organiser, the Palestine Action Group, estimated a crowd of 30,000 in Sydney, the nation’s most populous city, one of about 27 nationwide. Police did not have a crowd estimate for the protest. The Gaza ceasefire appeared to be holding and Israeli troops had pulled back

under the first phase of a US-brokered agreement to end the war, which has killed tens of thousands and left much of the narrow enclave in ruins. (*Business Recorder, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9*)

***Madagascar's president has left the country after Gen Z protests, officials say***

Madagascar's president has fled the African nation, the head of the opposition and other officials said, second time that young protesters have toppled a government in weeks of worldwide Gen Z unrest. Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko, leader of the opposition in parliament, told *Reuters* Rajoelina left Madagascar after units of the army defected and joined the protesters. (*Dawn, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

***Tens of thousands march in Brussels against austerity plans***

Tens of thousands flooded the streets of Brussels to protest against government austerity plans, as part of a national strike that has grounded flights and disrupted public transport. Grappling with a budget deficit so big that it violates EU rules, the coalition government led by Flemish nationalist Bart De Wever is looking to reform pensions and make other savings that have infuriated trade unions. "I am here to defend my rights and those of my pupils. If things continue like this, what future will they have?", teacher Victoria Coya said at the Brussels march. (*Dawn, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 11*)

***Thousands flee Philippine coast as storm makes landfall***

Thousands of residents fled their homes along the Pacific seaboard of the Philippines as Tropical Storm Fengshen made landfall, triggering warnings of coastal flooding. The storm barrelled into the municipality of Gubat at the southeastern tip of the main island of Luzon late afternoon, with gusts of up to 80 kilometres an hour, the government weather service said. Authorities said there were no immediate reports of serious damage or casualties, with evacuations already carried out in hazard-prone areas and low-lying communities. (*Dawn, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10*)

***'No Kings' protesters rally across US against Trump policies***

Huge crowds took to the streets in all 50 US states to vent their anger over President Donald Trump's hardline policies at "No Kings" protests that top Republicans ridiculed as "Hate America" rallies. From New York and Washington to smaller cities in Michigan, more than 2,700 protests were planned coast to coast, with organisers saying they expected millions to attend what could be one of the largest protest turnouts in modern US history. The mass mobilisation, the second of its kind after similar events in June, is aimed at what opponents say is an agenda pushing the country toward autocracy. (*Dawn, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 12*)

***Protest hits Rome over Libya migrant deal after boat wreck***

Migrants and rights activists protested in Rome against Italy's migrant deal with Libya, a day after some 20 people were feared dead in the latest boat wreck in the Mediterranean. Under a controversial 2017 deal renewed under Prime Minister Georgia Meloni's hard-right government, Italy funds and trains the Libyan coastguard. In return,

Libya is expected to help stem the departure of migrants to Italy or return those already at sea back to Libya. That agreement is up for renewal next month. During the protest, dozens of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa recounted what they endured in Libya, and a minute of silence was held for those who died trying to cross the Mediterranean. Hundreds of people attended the event, including activist Sarita Fratini. (*The News*, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 10)

### ***Thousands protest breast cancer screening scandal in Spain***

Protesters flooded Spain's southern city of Seville as public outrage grows over failings that led to hundreds of women not receiving the results of breast cancer screenings. The southern Andalusia region's conservative-run government said the scandal affected at least 2,300 women who had mammograms in public hospitals in recent years. All of the tests revealed issues or were inconclusive and would have required follow-ups, so the failure to inform patients meant potential cancer cases went undetected. The regional authorities have so far not offered clear explanations for the failing but said they planned to boost staffing in mammography units — a move many patients and activists have deemed insufficient.

Protests led by women erupted in several Andalusian cities earlier this month, which local media said drew thousands of people. Regions are responsible for public healthcare in Spain's decentralised political system. But the scandal has also stirred tension between the left-wing central government in Madrid and the right-wing regional authorities. Heeding a call from AMAMA — a Seville-based association of women who have breast cancer — protesters gathered in front of the San Telmo Palace, the regional seat of government. "No forgetting, no forgiveness, Bonilla resign!" the crowd chanted, calling on Andalusia's leader Juan Manuel Moreno Bonilla to step down. (*Business Recorder*, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Page 9)

## About Us

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

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

## Our Mission

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

## Our Vision

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

## Our Objectives

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

## Roots for Equity

A-1, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Block 2, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi, Pakistan

**Phone:** +9221 34813320, Fax. +9221 34813321

**Email:** [roots.equity@gmail.com](mailto:roots.equity@gmail.com)

**Website:** <http://rootsforequity.org/>

**Blog:** <https://rootsforequity.noblogs.org/>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/RootsEquity> **Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/rootsforequity/>