

## Disaster & IDP Crisis

### Situation of IDPs

#### **Floods Hit Women the Worst**

Participants of a panel stated this in a seminar organised by ActionAid to mark the World Food Day on October 16 at Lok Virsa that floods have displaced over 20 million people and destroyed over 2 million hectares of crops, raising fears of growing hunger and malnutrition among poor people. If we are to defeat hunger, we must empower and facilitate small farmers, especially women to have own land, and access to seed and fertilizers 'Food security, Flood and implications for Rural Women' was the title of discussion during two-day conference on World Rural Women Day. Marking 'World Food Day'. The forum aimed to highlight rural women's contribution in country's economy and assess impact of floods on growing hunger. ActionAid disclosed its hunger scorecard report, which indicates that Pakistan is much worse in terms of food security than its South Asian neighbours including India, Nepal and Bangladesh. Compared to 25 developing countries, it occupies the bottom position, indicating a serious gap in policies and practices. It is necessary to ensure food security such as investing in poor farmers, and introducing basic measures to protect the vulnerable. ActionAid's International food rights expert Aftab Alam said that the food crisis in the new millennium is the bitter fruit due to political neglect and failed free market policies. Our children, however, will pay the heaviest price of rise of world hunger. Unless concrete policy measures are taken to ensure women farmers have access to land, seed, credit, education and other agricultural inputs. **Women from flooded areas Layyah and Kot-Addu shared their tales of suffering, demanding their rightful share in cultivable land.** Arshad Bibir said that there is only one way that women can survive the flood devastation, government should provide seed and fertiliser immediately as the flood water has receded and our land is ready for cultivation, but we don't have money to buy seed.

**Bakhtawar Bibi, a farmer from Kot Adu, strongly demanded that government distribute land amongst landless women Haris so that they could feed themselves and their children. "It is a tragedy that we, who grow food but remain hungry and we, who build houses as labourers are without a roof. Floods have washed away everything, now sand is our home and mud is our grave," she said.**

Amaar Sindhu, a prominent women's rights activist from Sindh, supporting civil society's demand to waive off international loans. She demanded that bonded labourers be freed of their loans that keep them suppressed and deprived generation after generation. Holding feudal system responsible for alarming levels of hunger she demanded that Sindh government should stop leasing Kacha land to big landlords and distribute it among women farmers. She also asked civil society to join hands with poor women farmers to start campaign for their land ownership.

Alice Shakleford, while representing UN said that World Food Day was very important in order to highlight the issue of women's food insecurity. UN supports NGOs and civil society to achieve Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for halving hunger by 2015.

Balochistan's Minister for Women Development Ghazala Gola said that thousands of women are shelterless and without food. The government is trying to ensure that needs are met but seeing the scale of the disaster, it is a challenge to ensure that every stomach is fed. She expressed commitment to take women's farmers' demand and recommendations to the assembly floor.

[Daily Times – October 17, 2010]

#### **500, 00 Flood-Hit Women Need Instant Care**

ActionAid, an NGO says that the recent floods have displaced millions from their homes worst affecting the food producing rural areas. According to a WHO report, more than 85 percent of displaced are women, 500,000 of which lactating or pregnant requiring special food and nutritional support.

**"Women produce 60-80 percent of food in developing countries, yet they face stiff discrimination in access to credit, land, inputs, education and other key resources. Unless governments and donors invest in the specific needs of these women farmers, increase their rights to land and ease their unpaid care burden,**

**hunger will never be eradicated. The floods have further threatened women's access to food, increasing risks of hunger and food insecurity," it said.**

To reflect on issues arising in the aftermath of floods and their implication for women farmers, ActionAid Pakistan is organising a plenary session during World Rural Women Day conference in Islamabad. Aftab Alam, ActionAid's International Food Rights Expert, Luigi Damiani, Senior Emergency and Rehabilitation Coordinator, FAO Pakistan, Amar Sindhu, Educationist and Women's Rights Activist and Rafique Jamali, State Minister for Food & Agriculture, Pakistan will participate in the discussion.

[Daily Times – October 15, 2010]

### **Price Hike Causes Malnutrition in Flood-Hit KP**

Hundreds of children are suffering from diseases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to malnutrition and poverty as price-hike and the recent devastating floods have caused food crises in the province. Paediatrician Mohammad Khalid told on October 18 that malnutrition causes various diseases among growing children, Mohammad Khalid told Daily Times on Saturday. He said that the number of malnourished children was on the rise due to lack of access to proper food. Unusual rise in prices of food items in the province has made it difficult for the common man to get proper food. According to the United Nations, about 9 to 11 percent of children are faced with hunger and starvation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Dr Khalid said about 10 to 15 percent of the children brought to hospitals were facing food shortage and this percentage was growing. He warned that out of ten, every two children could die, if the price-hike was not controlled. Massive floods in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the rest of the country caused price of the commodities to skyrocket. The rising prices threaten to intensify misery in the province where many residents were already struggling with poverty and food insecurity before the floods struck.

[Daily Times – October 17, 2010]

### **Two Died of Hunger at Dadu Flood Relief Camp**

Two persons including a woman have died of hunger in a flood relief camp at Mehr Garh in Dadu district of Sindh. Brother of Shahnawaz, 60 who died in the camp said his brother and a woman Shehr Bano, 40 died due to hunger, as they could not get any relief from government. He said for three months no relief has been provided at Mehr Garh camp.

[The News – October 25, 2010]

### **Flood-Hit Man Commits Suicide over Watan Card**

A flood-affected man committed suicide by shooting himself after having failed to get a Watan Card in Ambar village of taluka Mehar on October 16. Hussain Khoso, whose paddy crops over 50 acres of land, a house and cattle were washed away by floodwaters on Aug 24, was very worried about his financial plight. A relative of the deceased, Allan Khoso, alleged that policemen at a Nadra centre in Mehar demanded Rs1,000 from Hussain for allowing him to enter the office. He said a dejected Hussain, who had no money with him, returned home and shot himself dead. Meanwhile, 10 people were injured in a police baton-charge outside a Nadra centre at the Dadu bypass. Sources said that a large number of flood-affected people from villages of Dadu and Johi talukas had gathered at the NADRA centre for getting Watan cards. A scuffle broke out when some of them tried to enter the office without waiting in queue. Police resorted to baton-charge to pacify the charged crowd. The injured were identified as Amnat Birhamani, Amina Lashari, Sher Gadehi, Munawar Abro, Khan Mohammad Rodhnani, Mohammad Raheem, Abdul Aleem, Naveed Ahmed, Sajan and Ali Sher. Some of the flood-affected people accused police of demanding bribe for allowing them to enter the office.

[Dawn – October 17, 2010]

### **Flood-Hit Villagers Yet to Receive Watan Cards**

The residents of Mohib Banda, one of the most affected villages in the recent floods, have appealed to the government to provide them the Watan Cards and proper relief within two days as otherwise they would start a protest drive for their rights. Addressing a press conference, Zahid Nabi, president of Mohib Banda Welfare Association said their village was totally devastated by the floods in July. He said the affected 22,000 families in the village were in dire need of assistance. He lamented that only five percent of the families had so far received Watan Cards. He asked the government to issue the cards to the affectees within two days.

[The News – October 21, 2010]

### **Flood Victims Going into Debt to Rebuild Homes**

With their villages in a shambles, winter on its way and government help slow to arrive, the flood victims are scrambling to rebuild their homes. Many are taking on debt as the price of construction materials has soared following the disaster that damaged or destroyed 1.9 million houses. The rush to rebuild three months after the water first came tearing through is a sign of the people's lack of faith in the weak civilian government, a key US ally in the fight against terrorists whose patchy response to the crisis has undermined its stability. The government has promised it would come up with a long-term reconstruction strategy, but flood victims say self-reliance is a more realistic, and timely, option. Aid agencies say they, too, are facing the time crunch and are running short of funds to provide temporary shelter for those displaced by the deluge.

Ghulam Ali's three-bedroom, one-story house in this northwestern city collapsed during the floods. To rebuild, he has had to borrow Rs 50,000 from friends and family, what many Pakistanis earn in half a year, but it hasn't been enough to even get past the foundation. To top that off, the 46-year-old lost a fortune in tools and products when his shoe shop was damaged in the floods. All around Ali in the Abakhel neighborhood of Nowshera city are damaged houses and desperate residents. An older woman next door cried as she begged for help to build "just a room and kitchen." A few streets away, a family unable to start rebuilding has pitched a tent within their damaged home's

[Daily Times – October 18, 2010]

### **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Farmers Await Relief**

Paddy growers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly in Malakand division, hit hard by floods and soil erosion, are waiting for government support. Farmers say the loss to rice crop and land carries risks of food security, price-hike, decreased exports, low incomes and increased poverty. The worst hits are the subsistence farmers. The government would have to reclaim the fields and canals to facilitate cultivation of Rabi crop. KP agriculture minister has said the provincial administration would do everything possible to reclaim the 35,000 acres which had been rendered uncultivable by the floods. But farmers are skeptical of seeing it done any time soon as the task requires huge funds, machinery, personnel and strong commitment on the part of the government. Abdur Rahim Khan, secretary general of the KP chamber of agriculture, said that rice farmers were badly hit. They should be provided free or subsidised agriculture inputs. Their agriculture loans should be written off or at least the interest thereon should be waived. Easy farm and non-farm loans to small farmers should also be arranged," he said.

The Food and Agriculture Organization says rice is the worst-hit crop in KP. An official from the agriculture ministry said 71 per cent rice crop standing over 55,000 acres was washed away by floods, inflicting loss of over Rs2 billion to farmers. The loss will have serious implications for the impoverished farmers. Four districts of Malakand division - Swat, Dir upper and lower and Malakand - were home to 68,000 acres or 88 per cent of province-wide paddy crop. But the destroyed crop of Malakand Division constituted 95 per cent of the total devastated crop. The floods also washed away 90 per cent of paddy crop in Peshawar, Nowshera and Charsadda but due to mere cumulative acreage of around 1,500 acres, its impact was very little.

[Dawn – October 25, 2010]

### **Flood Survivors Battle Hunger, Disease in Tent City**

The flood-affected people of Khairpur Nathan Shah and adjoining villages living in a tent city in nearby Khanpur town face hunger and diseases because of a nagging shortage of food and medicines. The tent city was set up by the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, in August. The agency provided 25,000 people living in 400 tents 15-day ration before handing the camp over to the district administration. Since then, the camp dwellers have been facing shortage of food and drugs almost on a daily basis, according to flood-affected people. Ms Rehana Vighio of Bug Buriro village living in tent No. 17 said that the agency distributed 15-day ration 30 days ago but now they were facing food shortage. She said that they were forced to have meal once a day if and when a social welfare organisation brought cooked food for them. They were also facing shortage of drinking water, she complained. Ms Hajani Shaikh of the same village at tent No 18 said that she was pregnant and ill but there was no doctor in the camp to examine her and her five children who were also suffering from different diseases. Ms Sadori Chandio of Bahadur Chandio village said that all her seven children had contracted malaria and they were waiting in vain for medical help.

[Dawn- October 28, 2010]

## Domestic & Foreign Assistance

### **PM's Flood Relief Fund Gets Another \$1m**

Ambassador of Pakistan to Turkey Tariq Azizud Din presented a cheque of \$1 million raised by the embassy and donation from the Pakistani community and people of Turkey to Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund on October 12. Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani lauded the role of Pakistan ambassador and Pakistani embassy at Ankara for their highly commendable campaign of mobilising relief assistance for the flood affectees. He hoped that Pakistani diplomatic missions abroad would work in this regard with the same zeal and zest. On the occasion the ambassador also informed the PM about the latest developments in Pakistan-Turkey bilateral relationship. He further briefed the PM about the forthcoming visit of Turkish prime minister's to Pakistan.

[Daily Times – October 13, 2010]

### **Imran, MKRF Collect Rs2.05 Billion for Flood Relief**

Imran Khan said on October 2 that Imran Khan and Mir Khalilur Rehman Foundation's (MKRF) joint venture has collected Rs2.05 billion in cash for the flood victims so far, the work on as many as 23 model villages was currently underway for the rehabilitation of the deluge-hit people. He told a news conference here at a local hotel that as the noble joint venture had received donations from all across Pakistan, they wanted to undertake rehabilitation of the people devastated by floods equally. Imran was flanked by Geo Television's President Imran Aslam on the occasion. Giving break-up of the cash donations, Imran said that from within Pakistan Rs1.13 billion had been collected while Rs350 million from the United States and Rs70 million from the United Kingdom had been received. He noted various donors had selected villages for rehabilitation on their own; costing Rs500 million and this amount was part of the total cash donations. With a view to enabling people to stand on their own feet, Imran said that they had chalked out a plan to provide wheat and fodder seeds to the farmers within a month free of cost. These seeds would be supplied to farmers having less than five acres of land and this way, as many as 0.323 million acres of land would be cultivated from this facility.

[The News – October 03, 2010]

### **NADRA issues 1m Watan Cards**

The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has so far issued one million Watan Cards and 300,000 computerised identity cards, while a total of Rs 20 billion has been disbursed among the flood victims. NADRA Deputy Chairman Tariq Malik, in a statement issued on Wednesday, said that NADRA was assisting the provincial governments, provincial disaster management authorities and partner banks to make the project successful. He said that the floods had caused one of the largest human displacements in history.

[Daily times – October 28, 2010]

### **ECC Approved Cash Package for Flood-Hit Farmers**

The government has approved a time-bound financial package for flood-affected farmers by announcing Rs30,000 grant to small land holders and a concessionary loan package for big farmers. Finance Secretary Salman Siddique disclosed this on October 16 while briefing the media persons about decisions taken in the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) meeting that took place on October 15 and continued till late in the night, he said that those having land up to 25 acres would be eligible to a grant of Rs2,400 per acre and an owner of more than 25 acres would be entitled to obtain a concessionary loan at a rate of 8 per cent per annum. He said that the small farmer can get the grant only for 12.5 acres, bringing the maximum benefit of Rs30,000 per farmer. He said the State Bank would provide the concessionary loan through commercial banks at 8 percent interest rate and the federal government would pick up the remaining 5.5 percent interest. He said that the flood has adversely affected 3.3 million acres cultivated land. He said that all flood affected farmers, irrespective of cultivators or owners, would be eligible to the financial assistance package, he said and added that the package has been offered for a period of four months. He said the cost will be borne by both the federal and provincial government on 50:50 bases. The package would be operated in consultation with the provincial governments.

[The News – October 17, 2010]

### **Govt Withdraws IDP Tax; Money to be Refunded**

As the government struggles to decide whether or not to impose a flood tax, it has finally taken a decision on the Internally Displaced People tax it had imposed last year. It has decided to return the amount collected during the last fiscal year to corporate employers. Almost three months after losing court battles, the Finance Ministry has given the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) permission to return the revenue it had collected under the head of IDP

tax. The summary in this regard has been forwarded to the Chairman FBR by the relevant department, which is expected to be signed by the end of the week. "The notice will allow the income tax commissioners of North and South to adjust the filed IDP tax against the income tax of the current fiscal year," an FBR official said. The two commissioners will probably get the notice by next week. Though FBR has filed an appeal in the Supreme Court against the recent decisions of the Lahore High Court and the Sindh High Court that declared the tax illegal, it is gearing up to return the revenue collected; this shows that its officials are not too optimistic about winning in the Supreme Court either. The government decided to levy the one-time IDP tax at the time the Swat operation was begun in the summer of 2009. It argued that to rehabilitate the residents of Swat who were displaced due to the military operation, it was introducing a one-time tax to be charged on the bonus income of corporate executives at the rate of 30 per cent, apart from a tax at the rate of 5 per cent on tax paid by individuals and association of persons, whose taxable income exceeded Rs1 million.

[Dawn – October 28, 2010]

### **Donors to Finance 2,100 Houses for Punjab Flood Victims**

Donors announced to finance construction of 2,100 housing units for the flood-affected people at a cost of over Rs 700 million, besides providing financial assistance for early rehabilitation of the flood victims. The pledges are made at a donor conference titled "Rebuilding Pakistan, Brick by Brick" organized by the Punjab government and attended by ambassadors, councillors, high ranking and senior representatives of international financial institutions and donor agencies.

[The News – October 01, 2010]

### **UN Responds to Malaria Outbreak in Flood-Hit Provinces**

The United Nations Health Agency said that nearly 300,000 suspected malaria cases, including some confirmed cases of a severe form of the disease, have been recorded in flood-affected areas of Pakistan since the end of July (2010), with the overall incidence slightly above the average seasonal outbreak. The UN World Health Organisation (WHO) is supporting the Pakistan health ministry's malaria control programme, as well as aid agencies working in the health sector, to control the epidemic. The agency is coordinating the deployment of preventive and curative measures. Malaria is endemic in rural areas of Pakistan where there are two seasonal peaks — in August, when the milder vivax-malaria is mostly seen, and October, when the potentially fatal falciparum-malaria is common. More than one million malaria cases are registered annually, but 12 per cent of people living in rural areas are infected by malaria parasite without showing symptoms of the disease. Balochistan has recorded the largest number of consultations for suspected malaria, while an increasing number of cases are also being reported in Punjab and Sindh provinces, according to WHO's Disease Early Warning System and the ministry of health. The rising number of cases is the result of the floods that have displaced millions of people, forcing many into poor shelter where they are exposed to mosquito bites. Pools of stagnant water are ideal breeding sites for Anopheles mosquitoes, the malaria vector. Guido Sabatinelli, the WHO representative in Pakistan said that the total number of suspected malaria cases reported in flood-affected districts is only slightly higher than at the same period in previous years. However, falciparum-malaria needs special consideration as it is responsible for severe cases and it can be fatal. Communicable disease surveillance of all epidemic-prone diseases has been strengthened and malaria experts are currently visiting Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan to assist the health ministry in conducting outbreak investigation, training and other malaria control activities.

[The News – October 14, 2010]

### **UAE RCA Launches Tent Village**

A delegation of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Red Crescent Authority (RCA), in association with UNHCR, has launched a tent village in Khashkai town, Nowshera district of KP on October 4. It was co-funded amounting \$7.8 million; the basic purpose of this village was to provide emergency shelter facilities to the most affected people, living in these nearby areas. A humanitarian assistance distribution ceremony was also held. UAE RCA Chairman Ahmed Humaid Al Mazrouei, along with Ambassador Ali Mohammed Al Shamsi, UAE special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ambassador of UAE Ali Saif Al Awani and deputy representative of UNHCR, graced the occasion. In a UNHCR press release, the basic necessities will benefit more than 20,000 families. Tents, plastic sheets, blankets, sleeping mats, quilts, kitchen utensils, jerry cans, plastic buckets, mosquito nets, soaps and plastic rolls were also distributed to the flood inflicted masses. The chairman announced the beginning of transitional phase parallel to rescue, relief, recovery and rehabilitation phase in the province during the inauguration of two projects in Khashkai town, namely water supply projects and the setting up the Emirates village, which was highly acknowledged by the deserving poor people. It will be implemented with the help of Pak-CDP.

### **UNHCR Aid Reaches 665,000 Flood Victims**

The UN Refugee Agency has provided assistance to 665,000 flood-affected people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa so far which was devastated in recent floods. To reach the needy people, the UNHCR established 17 distribution points in coordination with implementing partners in Peshawar, Charsadda, Swat, Kohat, Nowshera, Kohistan, Shangla, Dera Ismail Khan, Dir Lower and Dir Upper districts. In addition, the UNHCR distributed aid to affected people in Haripur, Mansehra and those scattered in various parts of the Chitral valley. The UNHCR and its partners carried out assessments and those whose houses were destroyed or damaged received tokens, which were used to collect assistance that included tents and other non-food items like jerry cans, mosquito nets, or kitchen sets at distribution points.

[Daily Times – October 11, 2010]

### **UNICEF sets up 525 Temporary Schools**

UNICEF Regional Director for South Asia and Special Representative in Pakistan Daniel Toole said on October 13 that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has established 525 temporary learning centres to provide proper education to children in the flood-affected areas. While giving a news briefing to media persons here, he said, some 43,000 children have so far been enrolled in these centres in which education would be imparted to them in line with the international standards. He said out of total 20 million people affected by devastating floods 2.8 million are children that need extreme level of care in the face of spread of various diseases and absence of the educational facilities. Daniel Toole said Unicef has been providing clean drinking water to 2.5 million people every day but the figure would decrease in the coming days as the people are returning back to their hometowns after recession of water level in the flood-hit areas.

[The News – October 14, 2010]

### **UNESCO Assures Full Support for Flood Relief**

UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova highlighting Unesco's rapid response to Pakistan's flood situation has affirmed its commitment to provide expertise through projects in science, education and culture. Speaking at the opening plenary session at UNESCO headquarters, she said the projects would focus on prevention of floods and landslides, ground-water management, strengthening relevant flood management institutions, said a message received here from Paris on October 12. The UNESCO director general said that Unesco would work in close cooperation with Government of Pakistan, adding that an integrated plan of action for hydro risk-reduction developed for Pakistan would become a model for other countries to follow.

[The News – October 13, 2010]

### **FAO helping flood-affected farmers**

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is distributing wheat seeds that will benefit over half a million farming families, or nearly five million people, whose seed supplies were destroyed during the recent flood disaster. The floods, which began in late July and inundated one fifth of the country, claimed more than 1,800 lives and have affected more than 20 million others. Agriculture is the mainstay for over 80 per cent of the victims of the disaster, which damaged over 2.4 million hectares of cultivable land and washed away millions of homes and livelihoods. FAO noted that providing seeds, as well as fertilizer, to vulnerable farming families for the current 'Rabi' planting season that ends in December is crucial because an estimated 500,000 to 600,000 tonnes of wheat seeds were washed away or ruined by the floods.

[The News – October 29, 2010]

### **EU Doubles Pak Flood Aid to 150m Euros**

The European Union's humanitarian aid chief said on October 1 that the European Commission has decided to more than double its Pakistan flood aid to 150 million euros (205 million dollars). European humanitarian aid commissioner Kristalina Georgieva told a news conference that the EU's executive arm has already provided 70 million Euros in aid and will now distribute another 80 million Euros to its partner organizations. She said that our own staff in Pakistan confirms that more financial resources will translate into more lives saved and more people helped. For that reason we have decided in the commission to more than double our humanitarian support to Pakistan. She said that combined with contributions from national governments, the European Union's support for Pakistan now totals 400 million Euros. The UN has issued a record two-billion-dollar appeal for funds to cope with the disaster, which UN agencies say affected 21m people and left 12m in need of emergency food aid. The new European aid will be directed primarily to the south of the country, Georgieva said. Georgieva said that the floods in Pakistan continue to present an enormous challenge. A more "comprehensive package" will be presented at the

Friends of Democratic Pakistan meeting in Brussels on October 14-15 to be hosted by EU chief diplomat Catherine Ashton and attended by Pakistani FM Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

[The Nation – October 02, 2010]

### **Donors to Build 7,481 Houses in Flood Areas**

Local and foreign donors and philanthropists have so far promised to build 7,481 houses in seven worst flood affected districts of Punjab with a total cost of Rs2 billion. According to the Punjab Disaster Management Authority, these houses will be built in 204 model villages in Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, Rajanpur, Layyah, Mianwali, Bhakkar and Rahim Yar Khan Districts. The Turkish Aid, Habib Bank Limited, Qatar Charity, Mobilink, Guard Group, King Abdullah, Turkish International Cooperation Agency, Islamic Help-UK, Lions Club, Sukh Chain Gardens, Muslim Charity-UK, Asif Irfan Foundation, Ishaq Dar, Pakistan Club Manama (Bahrain), Fazal Cotton Mills, Interloop Faisalabad, Mian Mansha, Malik Aamir Saeed, Arshad Warraich, Khawaja Haroon, Naeem Mir and Ayub Ansari are among the donors and philanthropists who have promised to build houses in the model villages. “Besides 7,481 houses, donors have pledged to establish 12 schools, 15 dispensaries and a vocational training centre with a total cost of Rs250 million for the flood affected people,” PDMA Director General Khalid Sherdil told. He said most donors had started work on the houses after signing memoranda of understanding with the government.

[Dawn – October 22, 2010]

### **Canada to Supports Agricultural Recovery in Pakistan**

Canadian Government on October 16 announced further support in agriculture sector for those affected by the recent floods in Pakistan. Minister of International Cooperation Canada Beverley J Oda, in a news release issued said the contribution responds to agricultural recovery needs by providing seeds, fertilizers, and tools and by supporting the rehabilitation of land and livestock sector in Pakistan. Minister Oda said that the floods have washed away more than 4 million acres of crops and affected more than 30 percent of Pakistan’s farmlands, leaving half of the country’s food at risk. This means families will face hunger and lose income over the next growing seasons if no action is taken. Today (16<sup>th</sup> October, 2010), Canada is providing urgently needed agricultural support to make sure that farmers can recover and plant on their land in time for the critical wheat season currently underway. Our help will also prevent further loss of livestock that is critical to the well-being of farmers in the flooded regions. A total of \$11.5 million will be provided by CIDA from the Pakistan Flood Relief Fund to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (\$6 million), Save the Children Canada (\$3.5 million), and Development and Peace (\$2 million), allowing these organizations to help meet the humanitarian and early recovery needs associated with the agricultural sector for the current Rabi wheat season.

[The News – October 17, 2010]

### **Turkish Cyprus Ambassador Donates \$176,916 for flood victims**

Ambassador of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) to Islamabad Mustafa Ebran on Wednesday presented a cheque amounting to \$176,916 as a donation on behalf of the government of TRNC for the relief of flood victims. Ebran called on National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Chairman Lt Gen (R) Nadeem Ahmed at his office.

[Daily Times – October 28, 2010]

### **WB Okays \$300m for Pak**

The World Bank has approved a credit worth \$300 million to assist Pakistan’s efforts to respond to the loss of life and destruction wrought by the recent devastating floods. The Bank said in a statement that this support, which is part of the Bank’s \$1 billion commitment for Pakistan’s floods recovery and reconstruction in this fiscal year, is fast-disbursing financing of critical flood-related imports.

[The Nation – October 02, 2010]

### **UN Appeal for Food Victims Remains Under-Funded: Official**

The \$2 billion appeal for aid for Pakistani flood victims, the largest-ever launched by the UN for a natural disaster, is just 35 percent funded, the top UN humanitarian official said Tuesday, while underscoring the need to keep pressing for quicker international response. Responding to questions at a press conference, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos, acknowledged that funding was way short of the appeal, and that was the reason it was necessary to continue to keep the pressure up in terms of the immediate humanitarian situation. The appeal was launched a month ago, more than quadrupling the original \$460 million sought in August as the full scope of the floods became clear. The disaster has claimed some 2,000

lives, exposing over 20 million others to homelessness, malnutrition, risks of epidemics and loss of livelihood as the waters steamrolled down from north to south, damaging or destroying nearly 1.9 million homes and devastating at least 160,000 square kilometres. Amos said her office had been engaged in a consultation process between United Nations agencies and the Pakistani government on the totality of the projects within that appeal. As for the next phase reconstruction there was a damage-needs assessment being carried out by the World Bank. Continuing, Amos said that there was a recent meeting in Brussels of the Friends of Democratic Pakistan and a further meeting was planned for November in Islamabad with the aim of looking at the longer-term reconstruction needs. At present, she was most concerned with ensuring that the immediate needs were not forgotten as the process moved towards early recovery and on to reconstruction, she stressed. She said that we have to continue to try to mobilise the resources for the revised appeal.

[Daily Times – October 28, 2010]

### **US Expands Flood Assistance to Balochistan Farmers**

In a ceremony in Islamabad, the United States committed \$16 million to provide seed and fertilisers to flood-affected farmers and their families in Balochistan. The assistance is being funded from the Kerry-Lugar funds through the US Agency for International Development and will help ensure that farmers affected by the recent floods can plant a viable crop of Rabi wheat this winter and recover their ability to support themselves, contribute to the national food supply, and contribute to the economy. The programme will be implemented by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and will provide wheat, vegetable seed and fertiliser packages to help approximately 680,000 family members, particularly female farmers, and households headed by women with children under five years of age.

[Daily Times – October 30, 2010]

### **Rehabilitation Strategy to Cater Needs of All: PM**

Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani said on October 29 that the national strategy for rehabilitation and reconstruction of flood-affected areas has been designed keeping in view the needs of flood victims of all provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. The PM was talking to a joint delegation of the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), led by Fuaad Ali Al-Mazroei, head of the OIC Humanitarian Affairs Department. The delegation, which included two members of the OIC and two from UNDP has been visiting various flood-affected areas since October 25. During their visits, the delegation is accompanied by Abrarul Haq of the Sahara Foundation and Youth Parliament members, along officials of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The PM said disbursement and distribution of funds to flood victims through the Smart Cards is the world's biggest fund disbursement scheme for people affected by disasters. He added that the procedure adopted for the distribution of funds through proper registration and Watan Cards would earn credibility and the establishment of the National Oversight Disaster Management Council would further ensure transparency.

[Daily Times – October 30, 2010]

### **ECC Okays Relief Package for Flood-Hit Farmers**

The Economic Coordination Committee of Cabinet (ECC), on October 29, approved a host of measures geared at providing relief to the flood-hit farmers. The committee met under the chairmanship of Finance Minister Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh. Ministers for food and agriculture and petroleum, and senior officials of the ministries concerned attended the meeting. It discussed a two-point agenda of wheat support price and a financial package for the farmers of flood-affected areas. The meeting was presented a proposal calling for an increase in wheat support price to Rs 1,000 per 40 kilogramme from last year's Rs 950. But the proposal was rejected and the meeting decided to maintain last year's price. The meeting decided to extend, through banks, a loan facility to flood-affected farmers at an 8 percent interest rate against the market rates of 12.5 percent. Those farmers who own more than 25 acres of land will also be able to benefit from this initiative. They would be given cash to purchase fertiliser and seed, while those with more than 25 acres of land would be given loans at an eight percent markup. The meeting decided to provide a grant of Rs 2,400 per acre to the flood-affected farmers/landowners who owned up to 12.5 acres of land.

[Daily Times – October 30, 2010]

## **Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Efforts & Challenges**

### **Rehabilitation and Reconstruction: Challenging Tasks Ahead**

Total investment in the country is just 17 per cent of its GDP owing to factors such as power, gas and water shortages and weak law and order situation prevailing today. Improvement in the investment level is essential to accelerate industrial, commercial and agricultural activities, which ultimately leads to better socio-economic

conditions in the long run. For promoting vigorous economic activities and restoring the confidence of investors, their worries and fears need to be addressed first, with favourable investment and pro-business packages. The WB, ADB and other donor organizations have expressed their worry and dismay at the inability of the government in approving and implementing vital flood rehabilitation programmes. They have asked Pakistan to adhere to at least ten basic principles for setting up an accountable institutional arrangement to efficiently execute multi-billion dollar reconstruction work in the flood-hit areas. These ten principles are: efficient delivery, equity, transparency, accountability, planning and budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, coordination, indigenous best practices, ownership and social responsibility. Accountability remains at the top of donors' concerns and they expect a lot more from the government, including enhancing fiduciary safeguards and risk mitigation capabilities, and measures for establishing internal and external controls etc. For effective monitoring and evaluation, WB and ADB want an effective internal and external third party monitoring and evaluation with clearly defined roles at the federal and provincial levels.

The ADB has also proposed a supra apex agency to oversee the bank's multibillion dollars project from concept paper to handling the assets over to the flood victims. The ADB has expressed its willingness at the recently concluded friends of Pakistan (FoP) meeting, in Brussels, to provide two billion dollars, while the WB has pledged \$1 billion. A donors' conference in November 2010, is expected to provide much of the remaining funds. As far as rehabilitation and reconstruction activities are concerned, the first mega project was initiated after the devastating earthquake of October 8, 2005. The Earthquake Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Authority (ERRA) is the custodian and the body entrusted to plan, execute and monitor all the rehabilitation activities and development projects in the entire earthquake zones. After a lapse of more than five years and huge budgetary allocations of hundreds of billions of rupees, no encouraging progress report surfaced from ERRA's activities. As per latest estimates, given by the authority, out of 2,675 projects only 422 have been completed and 1,331 are under various stages of development. No one knows what percentage of the stipulated reconstruction activities has been completed by ERRA and how long it will take to complete the remaining work. Reconstruction activities of ERRA are a drain on the country's limited financial resources. ERRA has not even provided some sort of financial accountability to the concerned stakeholders, including foreign donors and taxpayers, as hundreds of billions of rupees have been utilized by it for reconstructing schools, houses, health centers etc in the earthquake damaged areas. If the present pace of reconstruction activities of ERRA does not improve, it may take at least 10 more years to complete the reconstruction task. Another rehabilitation activity emerged from the military operations in 2008, which necessitated the rehabilitation of countless number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The war on terror is costing the public exchequer enormously. According to Prime Minister Gilani, Pakistan has incurred about \$45 billion on account of war against militancy and there is no sign of an end to the losses. Furthermore to make things worse, the losses due to super floods have been estimated at about \$10 billion by the WB and IMF.

The task of rehabilitating the earthquake affectees, IDPs and now the floods affectees is so enormous that they consume bulk of the development budgets of the federal and the provincial governments, leaving some meager amounts for other equally vital development projects of education, health and infrastructure.

Pakistan has approached donors and friendly countries to participate in rehabilitation activities. However, the international community wants the government to do a lot more on its own before asking others for assistance. The government can play a leading role in rehabilitation and reconstruction with the cooperation of the masses. But for this it needs to deliver good governance and corruption-free administration that would help facilitate local and foreign businessmen to invest in the country and assist in reconstruction of the flood-ravaged country.

[The News – October 25, 2010]

### **Flood-Affected Areas Reconstruction**

Planning and Development Division has awarded a contract worth Rs9.9 million to National Engineering Services Pakistan (Pvt.) Limited (NESPAK) for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the flood-affected areas. Out of this Rs9.9 million, an official document of P&D Division revealed that half of the payment would be in advance, while the remaining amount would be released after submission of the draft report. It said that on completion of the relief activities and flood damage and need assessment exercise, reconstruction and rehabilitation plan for the flood-affected areas needs to be prepared.

According to the document, the plan should focus on most optimal use of scarce financial resources through prioritisation of structural and non-structural measures balanced with equitable distribution in all the affected areas. It would also focus on the reconstruction framework based on restoration of infrastructure and tangible economic

losses with redevelopment focusing on regenerating local/regional economic activities and livelihood. Preparation of a strategic plan is meant for the use of large dams (Tarbela and Mangla) for flood control through regulation of inflows and outflows and construction of new dams, such as Munda Dam on River Swat and increasing design capacity of the existing barrages, the document said. It would also focus on the enhancement of flood embankments (to higher return periods) and breaching sections in barrages (Taunsa, etc.) and construction of levees and dykes for eg, for Nowshera Valley, it added.

The document also revealed the construction of model villages and buildings, schools, health units, etc, in place of washed out villages/towns, construction, rehabilitation of roads, power lines, canals, etc, and enhancement of flood early warning systems. It would also advise for the preparation of resettlement action plan, especially for the landless households, covering livelihood sources, activities, livelihood schemes for landless households to support livestock, poultry, fish farm, kitchen garden and five marla houses supported by grant/credit and establishment of priorities subject to available resources: grant/credit/ microfinance, material, energy resources, machinery, organisational and institutional capacity at all tiers of the government. The reconstruction activities are proposed to be controlled at the federal and provincial levels with the assistance of Central Management and Design Consultants (CDMC) and it will focus on a sector-wise and area-wise (roads, bridges, river embankments/dykes, irrigation network, communication and utility lines, schools, hospitals, public buildings, housing, power, livestock, agriculture, health, etc.) approach needs to be adopted for identification, prioritising and implementation of the reconstruction and rehabilitation works, the document revealed.

[The News – October 31, 2010]

### **Modern Village to have Solar Electricity, Bio Gas plant: CM**

Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif said on October 4 that the modern village being set up in Miran Mullan for the flood-hit people will have contemporary facilities, including solar power and a bio-fuel plant. He made these comments while reviewing the pace of progress of the model village. The CM added that the model village initiative was not meant to build a concrete jungle but to provide some modern facilities to the flood victims. The biogas plant would provide fuel to poor villagers, and the solar power plant would ensure uninterrupted power supply to houses of flood-hit families. He added that the ground water was salty and, therefore, clean drinking water would be supplied to the village from the nearest source.

[Daily Times – October 05, 2010]

### **Rehabilitation Policy: Each Homeless Family to Get a Job Abroad**

The Punjab law minister on October 6 said that the people whose houses were swept away in the recent floods will not only be offered new houses in modern villages but also jobs abroad as some countries have given assurance to the effect. Rana Sanaullah Khan told the Punjab Assembly while giving a policy statement on the eve of general discussion on relief and rehabilitation of flood victims that Bahrain and Dubai have assured us of providing jobs in their countries to one member of the each flood-hit family in the villages to be built by them. He said in 11 Punjab districts 1,778 villages were devastated by floods, displacing 6.2 million population and damaging crops worth Rs81 billion. To rehabilitate the victims, the government would construct 204 modern villages in the first phase having all civic amenities, while local and foreign donors at a conference promised to adopt built 2,500 housing units. He said the chief minister, who would wind up the two-day debate, visited the flood affected areas 38 times while elected representatives and ministers also ensured their frequent visits. Opposition leader Chaudhry Zaheeruddin said bad governance and mismanagement multiplied losses. He said the government was very much aware of the consequences of the flood but unfortunately it did not take any step to control the damages.

[Dawn – October 07, 2010]

### **Report Calls for Progressive Taxation to Overcome Flood Challenge**

More than three months into the flood crisis, aid lifelines for humanitarian needs and rehabilitation remain underfunded, while the governance of the largest disaster the world has seen in many decades remains a challenge for Pakistan. A report by the Jinnah Institute finds that the only way Pakistan will rebuild itself better is if it commits to higher standards of transparency, taxation, community involvement and policy execution. The report recommends using this epochal moment as an opportunity to push a broad reform agenda, and draws upon a rich diversity of stakeholders and experts in the field to sketch the lines of a way forward. **The report brings together essays by prominent economists, development workers, public representatives and the head of UNOCHA and US economic assistance to Pakistan. These essays focus on economic and political security in Pakistan, and set a policy framework for rebuilding livelihoods in the reconstruction phase.** The overview by Jinnah Institute President Sherry Rehman stated that while several economic, social and national security shocks were

expected to affect Pakistan in the medium to long-term, these could be overcome by stringent cuts on non-development expenditure by the government, shrinking the cabinet and expanding the tax base. In particular, Sherry called for a system of progressive taxation that involved taxing high income groups and placing higher property and land ownership taxes, for which consensus must be built in parliament. She also called upon the international community to deliver on major aid requirements for several reasons, especially on the UN's appeals, and outlined the dangers that lied ahead for the region if Pakistan is unable to meet this unprecedented challenge alone.

US Economic Adviser for Economic Assistance to Pakistan Robin Raphel pointed to the coordination hurdles during the relief stage, saying that ensuring transparent mechanisms for accountability were crucial to attracting greater resources from philanthropists and countries around the world. Senior economist Akmal Hussain and former State Bank governor, Ishrat Hussain looked beyond the current relief stage to argue that recovery from the floods would take several years due to economic shocks to the agricultural sector, infrastructure and homes and livelihoods. According to the UN, 95 percent of crops in Sindh had been destroyed, and much of the land was still under water. Economist Asad Sayeed predicted that due to stagnant floodwater in Sindh, it was likely that agricultural land would not be reclaimed for the next planting season, and many sharecroppers would be unemployed for several months. This is an extremely dire situation for families that subsist on meager farming incomes. Dr Sayeed suggests initiating a cash-for-work programme and combining it with local-level reconstruction. The government must attempt to include IDPs and flood victims in the reconstruction process, particularly at the local level, when re-building health and education structures, small irrigation canals, inter-village and village-to-market roads. If the government simply handed over these projects to contractors, then it was unlikely that IDP labour would be utilised; there should be ways to ensure labour was provided to those who needed it the most in the present crisis. QAU Defence Studies Department head Rifaat Hussain argued that if millions of people continued to be food insecure for several months as major crop and economic losses caught up with the country, thousands could fall prey to militant assistance and aid.

According to Manuel Bessler, the head of UNOCHA in Islamabad, funding for agriculture, education and community restoration remained badly under-resourced and under-committed. This was partially due to a lack of public interest abroad, but also the lack of public interest locally, particularly amongst local media channels. Grassroots stakeholders such as Shandana Khan of RSPN and Naeem Mirza of Aurat Foundation agreed that devolving budgetary and decision-making powers to the local level was of utmost importance during any crisis. According to the report, the local government was a unique institutional mechanism to allow elected leaders to respond directly to local needs, however, its proper implementation and planning was needed. The report also quoted the keynote address delivered by the PM last month at JI's conference on 'Pakistan at Risk'. The PM urged provincial governments to take charge of holding local body elections at the earliest, but also committed to cuts in non-development expenditure. The PM and the NDMA also stated that involving local communities in damage-needs assessment and coming up with a standardized reconstruction plan was a top priority for the government.

[Daily Times – October 21, 2010]

### **Pakistan Needs up to \$30 Billion for Flood Recovery**

The World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) in their joint Damage Need Assessment (DNA) have estimated that Pakistan would need \$30 billion to reconstruct infrastructure and rehabilitate affected people in the flood-affected areas. The survey found that the country suffered a loss of \$9.5 billion (around Rs 800 billion) to public and private property, crops and other infrastructure in all four provinces and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The \$30 billion estimate covers reconstruction and rehabilitation costs of destroyed infrastructure and compensation of losses in the public and private sector, official sources at the Ministry of Finance confirmed on October 12. The Banks have shared these figures with the country's economic managers and a formal announcement would be made at the Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FODP) meeting, scheduled on October 14 in Brussels. Minister of State for Finance and Economic Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar will represent Pakistan at the FODP meeting, where ADB director general and WB vice president for South Asia are expected to announce the results of DNA. According to the sources, the assessment comprises two parts: estimates of damage caused by the floods and needs of the country for reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructure and compensation of losses in the public and private sector. Estimates about damage to public and private properties had been calculated on the basis of cost of the infrastructure at time of its construction. The "need" portion of the DNA had been prepared on the basis of cost of cement, steel, labour and other constructions in the market, explained the official sources. According to initial estimates, Punjab suffered Rs 253 billion loss; Sindh, Rs 350

billion; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Rs 103 billion; Balochistan, Rs 55 billion and FATA Rs 5 billion. Most of the damage occurred in the agriculture and livestock sector, which was estimated at Rs 428 billion.

[Daily Times – October 13, 2010]

### **Pakistan Seeks another \$3bn to Reconstruct Flood-Hit Areas**

Official sources informed on October 26 that the government asked donors community to extend fresh lending of \$3 billion to reconstruct the flood-hit areas. The government also made it clear that re-prioritising of the already committed loan worth \$3 billion for ongoing projects would not help Pakistan meet reconstruction challenges. The donors had questioned the denial of Pakistan to re-prioritise \$3 billion loan offered by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank, in meeting with State Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar. The Pakistani side also raised serious reservation over beating drum of large commitment by Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FoDP) with no substantial disbursement in real term, sources added.

[Daily Times – October 27, 2010]

### **Independent Assessment of Post-Disaster Damage Sought**

A think-tank on October 20 called for developing independent mechanism to assess post-disaster damage and needs. Jinnah Institute, a think tank recently formed by former information minister Sherry Rehman in a report titled “Pakistan at risk: challenges and opportunities after the floods” stressed that there must be a mechanism independent of multilateral donor organizations. The report says that development finance bodies and international financing institutions should be asked to partner with local organizations initially to create an infrastructure of knowledge and expertise on grassroots data compilation and analysis in disasters. Following are the recommendations of the report:

- It recommends empowering and funding the budget less National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to coordinate relief efforts with credible provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs). It must be answerable to parliament, and enhance the core capacity of all DM units by working through a statutory body called the National Institute of Disaster Management. As it stands, the NDMA itself reports a paucity of trained staff, and the PDMAs were clearly tested beyond capacity. There was little evidence of District DMAs on the ground, with rare exceptions found in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- The report also recommended strengthening Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) and provincial Flood Warning Cells (FWCs), noting that the PMD being a structural as well as service body must be given requisite equipment for its predictions, given that it is neglected and under-resourced.
- It urged the government to pay attention to calls for cuts in non-development expenditure and invest in accountability protocols. Many international and local NGOs have called for more transparency in the governance of the disaster and these must be heeded.
- A report on the government’s austerity measures may yield information on reductions proposed by the ministry of finance, but policy execution and monitoring by the Cabinet Division remains poor.
- The report said some of the austerity measures as announced in the federal budget before the disaster have been implemented, such as energy and power cuts in government buildings, but most remain hostage to the political elite’s capture of state resources.
- It said the budget-revisions must go through the relevant Standing Committees of Parliament. Approvals for Finance Ministry submissions on budgetary revisions must first go through parliamentary committees for input, including defence budget revisions, instead of being placed in parliament as post-fact supplementary demands for grants for voting.
- It said a reported mid-term 31 per cent proposed increase in the defense budget could only be justified if approval is sought on disaggregated service allocations. It says that coordination gaps in disaster-management between provinces must be identified at the highest level and addressed.
- At the Cabinet level, the Council of Common Interests must be strengthened, provided with a Secretariat, and enabled and empowered to oversee a more coordinated inter-agency recovery effort with the NDMA functioning as the lead agency. It must review the operation and competencies of the Federal Flood Commission in all the provinces.
- It says there must be visible and clear lines of authority in the reconstruction process. Experience from the relief stage predicts a high level of inter-agency confusion and overlap, with some sectors and areas left unattended or subject to coordination gaps.
- It stressed that benchmarks should also be established for the use of grant money for non-development expenditures and for capping high administration costs.

- It also stressed that a comprehensive, prioritized reconstruction plan agreed upon by the federal government and the provinces must be drawn up. The plan should indicate financial sources, allocations by sector and a timeline for deliverables.

[Dawn – October 21, 2010]

## Impact of Floods

### **Flood Ruins 19,450 Acres of Cultivable Land in Tank**

According to a survey of the Agriculture Department about 19,450 acres of cultivatable land has been eroded due to flash floods in July last. The survey revealed that the recent floods had eroded the cultivatable land and the torrents of floods also left two to four feet silt and stones on the soil in 10 union councils. The affected union councils include Wraspoon, Tatta, Shah Alam, Pai, Garhi Baloch, Gomal bazaar, Sarangzoon, Dabara, Mulazai and Amankhel. Agriculture Officer Anwar Khan Bhattani said that apart from causing a drop in productivity it would have a bad impact on the economy of the area. He said the farmers would suffer immensely as the flood had destroyed the existing irrigation system across the area. He explained that almost all the channels and watercourses in the 10 calamity-hit union councils had been damaged, adding to the miseries of the landowners. Anwar Bhattani said the newly established fruit orchards on about 1,000 acres have also been destroyed due to the land erosion caused by the flood.

[The News – October 21, 2010]

### **Education Suffers as Schools Substitute Relief Camps**

Educational process across the province has been affected as various institutes are still being used as relief camps for the IDPs. A large number of students have been suffering as classroom studies have been halted while scheduled examinations, admissions and other relevant processes have not yet started at the flood-affected schools. Although relevant authorities have announced on several occasions to vacate the flood victims from these schools, the educational process has not been fully revived in many areas. According to statistics from the education department, 4,000 to 5,000 schools in the province have been destroyed or damaged in the floods, whereas a large number of school and college buildings that escaped destruction during floods were converted into relief camps.

Affected students claim that the institutes where relief camps were established are in a miserable condition. Shoaib Minhas, a student of Government College of Technology SITE, said the classes in the college were scheduled for August 1 but the college could not be opened while the scheduled exams are still pending. He said a foul smell has drenched the campus and garbage can be seen everywhere in the college premises. There were only 15 to 20 washrooms in the college, where approximately 4,000 IDPs were accommodated, he said adding that the main reason of the smell in the college was that the IDPs were compelled to use open areas as toilet. Moreover, many of these washrooms are out of order, he added. Meanwhile, many students suggested that the government should establish a 'shelter city' with low cost residential structures by using recycled materials. It was learnt that Canadian consul general had offered to build a factory, which would help in constructing such houses for IDPs. Sindh Professors and Lecturers Association (SPLA) Additional Secretary General Prof Iftikhar Aazmi said that during the ongoing year, the educational session has been shrunk due to the late announcements of the secondary school examination result and the Centralized Admission Policy. He said the "coaching center mafia" has grabbed the opportunity for minting money as people do not want to put the future of their children at stake. He appealed to the relevant authorities to use educational institutes for the primary purpose of providing education and make alternative measures to accommodate the flood-affected people. Naveed Zubairi, coordinator to education minister, said the IDPs living in relief camps established in Karachi were being facilitated with gas connections available at the educational institutes. He dismissed it a rumour that IDPs were burning furniture in schools and colleges being used as relief camps. Sindh Education Minister Pir Mazharul Haq was not available for comments.

[Daily Times – October 04, 2010]