

Rain Brings Grief

At least 42 people lost their lives as heavy rains lashed the length and breadth of the country on Saturday, heaping misery on the helpless and mocking the administrators' helplessness. Twenty deaths took place in Sindh — 11 of them in Karachi alone — while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa accounted for 15 of the dead and Balochistan seven. While KP and Balochistan continued to bear the fury of rampaging rivers, Karachi and Hyderabad owed their agony more to the administration's apathy than nature's wrath. Thousands of people living in low-lying areas lost their homes, many neighborhoods went through long power breakdowns and endless traffic jams tested the patience of commuters. The administration in Hyderabad sought assistance of the army after rain flooded several parts of the province's second largest city. In Karachi at least 11 people lost their lives in rain-related incidents, including electrocution and drowning. The meteorological department recorded up to 126 millimeters (almost five inches) of rain. The inaction of the administration prompted the province's local body's minister to suspend Karachi's municipal services chief after accusing him of having failed to meet the challenge.

"The Sindh chief minister has removed KMC administrator Hashim Raza Zaidi on my recommendation," Sindh local bodies minister Owais Muzaffar told Dawn. "Incompetence is the major reason and definitely he has failed to manage the city on the first rain of the season. We are trying our best to keep the rain-related system intact and wherever human error is found in maintaining this, the officials concerned would be punished." With downpour, came the power outages as electricity supply to several areas was suspended. A spokesman for the Karachi Electricity Supply Company said that 103 of the KESC's 1,350 feeders in Karachi tripped due to the rain. In other parts of Sindh, torrential rain and light to moderate showers killed at least eight people and injured a number of others. There were reports of power outages lasting five to 20 hours. And in many cities, towns and rural areas, electricity could not be restored as rain either did not stop or continued intermittently till late in the evening. Light to heavy downpour started pounding Sukkur, Larkana, Rohri, Pannu Aqil, Salehpat, Ghotki, Khanpur Mehar, Mirpur Mathelo, Daharki, Ubauro, Thull, Jacobabad, Kashmore, Kandhkot, Ghouspur, Tangwani and other areas of upper Sindh on Friday evening.

HYDERABAD: Life in Hyderabad was paralysed by a heavy spell of rain that lasted three hours in the afternoon. Almost all the main arteries and localities in Hyderabad, including Qasimabad and Latifabad, were inundated. Sewerage and drainage system failed to cope with rainwater mixed with filth and garbage. "If the rains continue as predicted by the Met office, we would need army's assistance for rescue of people stuck up in low-lying areas. The municipal administration has limited resources and manpower which would not be enough to handle the situation," said an official. The situation drew a strong reaction from the Muttahida Qaumi Movement, (MQM) which governed the municipal administrations of Karachi and Hyderabad for four years. In a statement, MQM chief Altaf Hussain called for immediate measures for rain relief in the two cities. "The Sindh government should appoint Mustafa Kamal and Kunwar Naveed Jameel as caretaker Nazims of Karachi and Hyderabad, respectively," he said. "I feel it my responsibility to convey thoughts of Karachi and Hyderabad citizens to Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah. Sindh cities have been left abandoned in this crisis like situation, which demands immediate action from the authorities concerned."

BALUCHISTAN: The rains caused heavy damage to property and claimed seven lives in Jhal Magsi, Loralai and Hub. Four children and a woman were killed when the roof of a house collapsed in Bela's Jam Colony following torrential rains in the region. "Army has been put on alert due to worsening flood situation in Jhal Magsi and other areas of the province," Chief Secretary Babar Yaqoob Fateh Mohammad said. The provincial government released Rs30 million for relief operation. "Five districts of the province were badly affected due to heavy rains and floods," officials said. Heavy rains and flooding disrupted the train service and two major trains were stopped at Jacobabad, before entering Balochistan, because the tracks were inundated. A discharge of 125,000 cusecs of water in Mola River of Jhalawan inundated Jhal Magsi and Kachhi plains. The discharge of Nari Bank was 80,000 cusecs. Both the rivers take the discharge towards Kachhi and Naseerabad division.

On the way, they inundated hundreds of villages, destroying houses, people's belongings, cattle and crops beside food and fodder stock. In Naseerabad, rains continued to pour for 15 hours, inundating the entire region, including over half a million acres of crops. The cotton and paddy crops were extensively damaged, growers said. The entire Jaffarabad town was swamped. The Meteorological Department issued flood warnings for Sibi, Jhal Magsi, Naseerabad, Zhob, Kalat and Makran divisions for the next 12 hours. In Jhal Magsi district, the heavy rain submerged 25 villages. Ali Murad of Goth Dildar Khan Akhwani was swept away by floodwater. Floodwater from Mola River demolished the boundary wall of Goth Badal Khan Rind police and entered Gandawah town. People of the town were asked to move to safe places. The highway linking the district with other areas was under water. Jhal Magsi Deputy Commissioner Tariqur Rehman said: "We have asked people to migrate to safe locations." Balochistan government spokesman Jan Buledi said the provincial irrigation secretary and PDMA DG had been asked to visit the district.

Dawn – August 04th, 2013

Rain Calamity Strikes

Incessant rainfall wreaked havoc across the country on Saturday, triggering flash floods up north, damaging infrastructure, submerging villages and inundating cities and towns. In all, at least 51 people were killed and many more injured, while the damage to properties was seen as colossal. Life in Karachi, the teeming metropolis of over 16 million, came to a grinding halt as it received the first downpour of the current monsoon. At least 16 people – among them eight children – died in rain-related incidents as provincial authorities called in army troops to help drain out rainwater from different neighborhoods. Most of the fatalities were caused by electrocution and drowning. The rain caused dozens of feeders of the Karachi Electric Supply Company (KESC) to trip, which resulted in power outages in almost half of the city. As most drains were clogged, rainwater and sewage flooded the busiest arteries and thoroughfares of the city, causing gridlocks at different places. Several cars and mini-buses also broke down in the middle of the roads adding to the traffic mess.

Angered by the mismanagement of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, the Sindh government sacked its administrator Syed Hashim Raza Zaidi and Municipal Services chief Masood Alam. Although the posh and residential neighborhoods were no exception, the worst-hit were the slums and villages on the edge of the city. Around 250 houses of Babu Basti and Bhund Goth were partially damaged after the Thado River broke its banks in Malir area. Most residents fled their homes to seek shelter in a state-run school in nearby Soomar Kandi village. Similarly, over a dozen houses were damaged in Badai Jokhio village while the situation in another six villages near the Sukkan River is also critical. Latt Basti and Ali Muhammad Jatt Goth were also inundated when the nearby drain overflowed. "Army troops have started draining out the rainwater," a military

spokesperson told The Express Tribune. "The troops have been draining water from Natha Khan Goth, Sharea Faisal, Airport and its surrounding areas," he added.

Other major cities of Sindh, including Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas, Sukkur and Sanghar also received heavy rainfall. In some areas, irrigation canals overflowed and inundated villages. In all, three fatalities were reported from rural Sindh. In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and its adjoining tribal regions, at least 19 people died as flash floods damaged properties and farmlands. Fatalities were reported in Chitral, Peshawar, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, FR Tank and tribal agencies of North Waziristan and Kurram. As of now, Chitral is the worst-affected district where over 100 houses, three small power houses and eight small bridges have been swept away. Officials, however, say they haven't been able to assess the damage in the remote areas of the district due to the difficult mountainous terrain. In Tank district, the union councils of Warsponn, Pai and Gulam Imam were flooded where dozens of houses were damaged and farmlands affected. Local administrator Muhammad Ali Shah claimed that the floodwater was receding. In Peshawar, scores of houses were inundated when Budhni stream broke its banks, forcing people in the neighborhood to move to safer places.

According to the Flood Control Cell, most of the rivers in the province are in normal or medium-level flood except the Kurram and Gambela rivers in Bannu district which are in high flood. Landslides triggered by heavy downpour blocked the strategic Karakoram Highway at three places, suspending traffic between Rawalpindi and Gilgit-Baltistan. "The traffic between G-B and Rawalpindi is suspended due to the blockage of the KKH," said a spokesman for the Northern Areas Transport Corporation, a government-sponsored transport company. Balochistan also bore the brunt of the devastating monsoon spell. At least eight people were reportedly killed and dozens of villages submerged, displacing hundreds of people in the province. Jhal Magsi is the worst-affected district where 25 villages have been virtually washed away, according to Khalid Baloch, the director general of the PDMA. Jhal Magsi is literally cut off from the rest of the province as the main highway has been flooded. Naseerabad district received incessant rain for 15 hours. The ensuing flood devastated over half a million acres of farmlands. In the neighbouring Jaffarabad district, the whole town, including government offices, is under knee-deep water. Several villages have also been flooded.

Similarly, Sibi, Loralai and Lasbela districts have also been affected where scores of mud-houses have been swept away by flash floods. Hill torrents unleashed by heavy rains swept through the impoverished south Punjab where at least five people were reportedly dead and 200,000 acres of farmlands ravaged by floodwater. To deal with the calamity, the authorities have declared a state of emergency in the districts of Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur and Jampur. All officials on leave have been called back for duty. The office of the chief minister is monitoring the situation round-the-clock. In DG Khan, the Ronghan, Raakhi Gaaj and Vahowa areas are the worst hit where more than 100 villages have been submerged, uprooting hundreds of villagers from their homes. In Rajanpur, the house Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Sher Ali Gorhacni and the farmhouse of former premier Yousuf Raza Gilani have also been inundated. According to an official tally, 100,000 people have been affected by the ongoing flash floods. Some tourists are also reported to have been trapped in the tribal belt of Rajanpur.

The Express Tribune - August 04th, 2013

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Suffers As Down Pours Continue

At least 19 people were killed and dozens injured as torrential rains continued to flood rivers and streams in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Chitral district was the worst affected area, where flash floods in streams caused damage to

property and lives alike. Apart from the loss of seven lives in two days, at least 116 houses were damaged out of which 62 were destroyed. "We are expecting further information from the remote areas of Chitral about flood devastation," the Provincial Emergency Operation Centre (PEOC) official Adnan Khan. In Peshawar, heavy rain water from Khyber Agency flooded Budhni stream, killing at least three people. In Bannu one person lost his life and four others were injured. In Tank, three union councils, Warspohn, Pai and Gullam Imam went under flood water. In the Kari Wam area of Frontier Region Tank, a vehicle slipped into a flooded water channel resulting in five deaths, while 11 people went missing. In Northern Waziristan three people died, according to a report. In Lakki Marwat, a girl was swept away by flood water, while in Southern Waziristan life came to a standstill due to heavy and continuous rain. In Kurram Agency, four members of a family died and one injured in a roof collapse following thunderstorms. According to Flood Control Cell, most of the rivers in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa were flowing at normal or medium level flood condition except Kurram River and Gambela River in Bannu region, which were releasing high level floodwater. In DI Khan, there was a medium level flood releasing 300,000 cusecs water. While due to flood water flow from Chitral into river Kabul at Nowshera and Warsak there is medium level flood. The Met Office has predicted more rains in the next 24 hours in upper areas including Chitral, Dir and Khyber Agency; however floods have not been predicted.

The Express Tribune - August 04th, 2013

Flash Floods Sweep across South Punjab

Heavy rains and flash floods lashed several districts in Punjab, ravaging villages and road and rail networks. At least five people died in rain related incidents, as hill torrents swept across Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur and Jampur districts in southern Punjab. Floods have affected an estimated 100,000 people on Punjab-Balochistan border. At least ten tourists were also reported missing in the tribal belt of Rajanpur, they said. Crops were devastated as around 200,000 acres of farmland was inundated. Road links between towns and villages in southern Punjab, meanwhile, were severed by heavy rainfall continued throughout the day. Despite the downpour, however, residents in many areas were forced on to rooftops as flood water accumulated below. Flood water also entered Fareed Air Base in Rajanpur, as the Kachi canal, which supplies water to Balochistan from the Taunsa Barrage, breached due to heavy rainfall. Dera Ghazi Khan Division Commissioner Chaudhry Muhammad Amin gave eviction orders for flood hit areas and around 800 people have been shifted to safer places. At least 35 flood relief camps have been set up, EDO health Rajanpur. In northern Punjab, Sialkot district's Pasrur tehsil suffered heavily as the Nullah Daik – a seasonal stream that originates in Indian-administered Kashmir swelled up due to flood torrents flowing down from hills. The early-morning deluge devastated 30 villages and disrupted road and rail links connected to the district. A wave of floodwater swept over railway lines and roads linking Pasrur and Narowal. Federal Minister for Science and Technology Zahid Hamid, MPA Rana Mohammad Afzal and senior district administration officials of the area visited the flood-hit localities, where people urged public representatives to declare Pasrur a calamity hit area. Afzal issued directives to remove encroachments and repair a bridge on Nullah Daik. The worst hit area of Pusror is said to be Qila Ahmedabad where houses are inundated by water four feet deep.

The Express Tribune, August 04th, 2013

Jhal Magsi Braces for Massive Hill Torrent

As the countrywide death toll from the torrential rains and flooding soared past 80, the hardest-hit Jhal Magsi district of Balochistan braced for a massive hill torrent which could cause widespread damage in the region. Fresh casualties were reported mostly in Karachi, where 20 people died in rain-related incidents overnight and on Sunday, while 10 people – among them women and children – died in Balochistan, taking the two-day tally to 81. Some parts of Karachi received light showers where municipal workers, aided by army troops, were seen pumping out rainwater from different neighborhoods. Twenty deaths were reported in Karachi on Sunday – a day after 16 people were killed in rain-related incidents. The fatalities, mostly women and children, were caused by electrocution and drowning in Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Amroha Society and Saadi Town. Police and rescuers fear the death toll could rise as floodwaters recede. In Balochistan, Jhal Magsi is bracing for a huge hill torrent from the mountainous Jhalawan area. Officials fear the torrent carrying around 250,000 cusecs of water might wash away many more homes and destroy acres of farmland in the district. The top district administrator has ordered the evacuation of the historic city of Ghandawa. People have been advised to move to higher ground as the torrent may hit the city sometime after midnight. The flooding could also engulf the villages of Saifabad, Kot Magsi, Misri Goth and other adjoining areas.

At least 18 people – mostly women and children – have been killed in rain-related incidents in the province over the past 48 hours. The incessant rains in Jhalawan, in central Balochistan, have caused flooding in all seasonal rivers. The surging waters submerged settlements and villages on the banks of these rivers, damaging infrastructures and destroying properties. Khuzdar, the second biggest city of Balochistan, and Karakh, Nal and Zehri areas have been badly affected. Central Balochistan was cut off from upper Sindh after the Khuzdar-Shahdad Kot highway was blocked due to landslide. Heavy rains also lashed Kalat, Mashkhel, Sibi, Panjgur districts where normal life was paralysed and standing crops destroyed, including quality date palms of Panjgur and Mashkhel. Hill torrents from DG Khan and Marri-Bugti hills also caused widespread damage in Musakhel where mud-houses collapsed, communication disrupted and cattle swept away in floodwater. In the Pat Feeder Command area, more than 42 mud-houses collapsed. The Quetta Electric Supply Company (Qesco) has suspended power supply to the region as a precautionary measure.

Overall, the damage to infrastructure is colossal, as most culverts, causeways and bridges in all three regions of the province have been washed away. Thousands of villagers in these areas are marooned. They have taken shelter on high grounds where they are living under the open sky, without food or even water. In Punjab, the southern Dera Ghazi Khan Division has been badly affected by the monsoon rains and ensuing flooding. “All government officials on leave have been called back to expedite relief activities,” Commissioner Muhammad Amin. The Punjab government has set up 15 more flood relief camps in state-run schools and government buildings in the Taunsa sub-district of DG Khan. Flooding in the Indus River submerged several villages and hamlets on its banks. The worst-hit are the villages of Basti Moga, Basit Dakna and Darya Shah. Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Sher Ali Gorchani, who is from south Punjab, visited the flood-hit areas in Rajanpur district to assess the damage. “Army helicopters are involved in rescue and relief activities,” Gorchani to.

Agriculture Secretary Dr Ijaz Munir said that standing crops of rice, cotton, maize and wheat on 80,000 acres of farmlands have been ravaged by the flooding. He feared that damages could be colossal as the department awaits reports from its district officials. Reports and deaths and destructions also poured in from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and adjoining tribal regions. Officials say that six tribesmen have been killed in flooding in North Waziristan Agency and Bannu district over the past two days. Scores of cattle have been washed away and hundreds of acres of farmlands have

submerged. As of now, Chitral is the worst-hit district of the province where hundreds of people have been rendered shelterless. Angered by the inefficiency of the district administration, the affected people from Chaghor staged a demonstration. The protesters dispersed after the top district administrator provided machinery to remove rubble and pump out rainwater from the area.

The Express Tribune - August 05th, 2013

Chitral MNA Seek Emergency Help for Victim Families

Terming the flood in the district as devastating, Member National Assembly (MNA) Shehzada Iftikharuddin on Friday urged the prime minister, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister and all non-governmental organizations to extend all possible help to rehabilitate the affectees. "I have informed all the departments concerned and will visit the affected areas. We desperately need the support of the government and NGOs on emergency basis to deal with the situation," the MNA told reporters by phone. He said the floods had caused a loss of worth billions of rupees to the people. "Over 100 houses were washed away only in Reshun village of Mastuj tehsil and Pharabek village of Lotkoh tehsil," the MNA said, adding that many houses were marooned in Orguch, Jughor and Rumboor as well. He said several link bridges, roads and channels were destroyed that required a huge amount to be rebuilt. The MNA said he had asked deputy commissioner to visit the flood-hit areas and prepare a comprehensive report of flood devastation. "The food and non-food items and tents for the affectees are needed at the moment as people in many areas are living in the open. They have lost all their belongings and are in desperate need of support," he added. The MNA said the flood had also damaged the powerhouse of the Reshun hydel power station, disrupting power supply to the region. Meanwhile, Member Provincial Assembly Ghulam Ahmad has also appealed to the provincial government to announce emergency relief package for Chitral and declare it a calamity-hit area.

Dawn - August 04th, 2013

'Rehabilitation of Flood Victims Government's Top Priority'

Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Shahbaz Sharif has said that the protection of life and property, provision of relief and rehabilitation of flood victims is the top priority of the government. He directed divisional commissioners and DCOs to keep a vigilant eye on the flood situation and personally supervise the areas near the rivers. He further said that no negligence or delay would be tolerated in this regard. He said, "We are standing with the flood victims and no stone would be left unturned for the protection of their life and property." The CM said that all necessary measures would be taken to cope with floods in the coming days and keep the loss at a minimum level. He said that no negligence or laxity would be tolerated in this regard. He further said that people should be timely informed about possible flooding and all arrangements should be complete for their evacuation. The CM said that dry ration, drinking water, medicines, tents and other items should be arranged for the flood affectees. Shahbaz Sharif expressed his deep concern on the increase of water in the River Chenab due to the construction of a new bridge without proper preparation. While taking notice, he directed the Faisalabad commissioner and Jhang DCO to find out a solution to this problem. He said that all necessary steps should be taken immediately for saving Gharh Maharaja from floodwater. During the briefing, the CM was told that at present the discharge of water from Trimu Headworks is 81,000 cusecs whereas during next few days there is a possibility of the discharge of 260,000 cusecs water which would be a medium flood, but there is no

danger as the capacity of Trimu Headworks constructed is 645,000 cusecs. Sargodha commissioner said that due to the flooding in the River Chenab, some areas of Kot Momin are likely to be affected, he added that food, medicine and other items have been arranged at eight relief centers set up for the 5,000 people inhabiting the area.

Daily Times - August 16, 2013

Flooding In Punjab: Floods Swamp Nearly 200 Villages in Chiniot, Sialkot

Nearly 200 villages in Chiniot and Sialkot districts were submerged as close to 600,000 cusecs of water flowed into the River Chenab during the last 24 hours. While the water level in central Punjab and the River Chenab starts to recede and collects in the River Indus, the low-lying areas of southern Punjab were put on red alert: the army has been called in. Ninety villages were swamped in Sialkot. They were literally cut off from the city as the area was inundated due to a breach near the Bajwat Bridge and the doubling of the water level in Aek Nala. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had an aerial view of the submerged areas of Sialkot, Chiniot and Narowal districts on Saturday. Speaking at a briefing after his visit, he announced Rs. 500,000 in compensation for each of the affected families. The government, meanwhile, issued flood warnings for another 150 villages adjacent to Chiniot. However, local administrator Dr Muhammad Irshad voiced hope that with the decreasing water level in the River Chenab, damage would be minimal. This is exactly what happened and by Saturday evening, it was recorded that the water level in the River Chenab began to recede and the flood threat moved south.

Heading South

With the water level rising to 500,000 cusecs in the River Indus in Rajanpur district, major areas of south Punjab have been handed over to Pakistan Army. Multan is most at risk as the River Chenab and its water bodies surround the city from three sides. Officials say that the next 24 to 48 hours would be crucial. Already 16 villages are inundated in the Shujabad sub-district of Multan. DCO Gulzar Shah has asked for more troops in Shujabad and Jalalpur Pirwala. Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) officials told that two companies of Pakistan Army have been deputed on the Shershah and Bosan dyke, which are at risk from the overflow in Chenab. Northeast of Multan, in Sahiwal district, almost 13 rural settlements submerged as the banks of River Ravi brimmed over. More than 1,200 people have been evacuated and moved to relief camps set up by the government in the upper sides of the river. In Layyah district, situated in the low-lying area east of the River Indus, the government has evacuated and sent around 10,000 people to safe places during the last 48 hours.

On the west of the Indus, all rural areas of Rajanpur district have been vacated. The district is just north of Chachra Sharif, the collection point of all the four tributaries into River Indus. This area is at extremely high risk as the rising water level is accumulating here. Another accumulation point under watch is the Head Panjad Barrage, near Alipur, where all public activity has been banned. Meanwhile, in Rahim Yar Khan, the district government is convincing residents of 148 villages to evacuate before the 600,000-cusec flood swell of River Indus sweep away the settlements. South Punjab has the biggest irrigation network for more than two million acres of agricultural lands in almost 18 districts. Its population could be at risk.

Other Areas Taking Precaution

Even though Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar face no direct threat due to the current water flow in River Sutlej, Bahawalpur DCO Asadullah Khan said that the district government was taking

precautionary measures nevertheless. Health department teams have been stationed in these areas, while livestock department teams are vaccinating cattle, Khan told reporters.

What Flood and Why?

South Punjab is vulnerable because of the impending overflow of most of the province's rivers, namely Ravi, Sutlej, Chenab and Indus. Perhaps the most devastating flood spells may come through River Indus, which could hit. There are two causes of the flood in the region. The first reason is the rising level of water in rivers that inundates surrounding areas and swamps the temporary and permanent settlements in and around the dykes. The second cause of the flood is a breach in the bunds – usually old and damaged ones – that allows a torrent of water into the villages earlier protected. Villagers in the city flood-relief camp, sector two, at the Government Girls High School, Layyah, protested against the Punjab government for not repairing the Layyah bund in time, despite reminders.

No Food, No Information

Experts believe that another looming threat, along with this rising level of water, is a food crisis – agricultural lands have been devastated in the floods earlier this month. Cotton, rice and sugarcane crops will suffer the most and an estimated area of 150,000 acres of cropland has been affected so far. When DCOs across Punjab were asked how many people have been affected and how many more would be vulnerable, they just shrugged their shoulders. Rahim Yar Khan DCO Nabeel Javed later explained that it is hard to figure out how many would be affected.

Sindh

Most of the katcha areas between Guddu and Sukkur barrages have also been submerged and residents of Kashmore, Ghotki, Sukkur and Khairpur have been moved to the safer places via boats. But the damage is expected to be minimal as most of the bunds can withstand the pressure of the rising water level as they were repaired last month, Mohammad Rafiq Deedur, the Guddu Barrage Superintendent Engineer told The Express Tribune.

The Express Tribune - August 18th, 2013

Monsoon System Weakening: Flood in Three Rivers Damages Crops, Houses

The weather system generating widespread rain in the country for the past four days weakened on Saturday but the floods it triggered in the Indus, two eastern rivers and their tributaries in the Sialkot region continued to play havoc with crops and settlements along their embankments. Lahore received more rain and four people, including a minor girl, died as the roofs of their houses collapsed in different localities. The Met office said the monsoon low over Bahawalpur and Indian Rajasthan had weakened. The westerly system converting moisture into rain too went away from over the northern areas. Therefore, there will no longer be heavy rain in the country. "However, some cities in Lahore, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi and some other divisions may have scattered rain because of the low temperatures and residual moisture in the air," Flood Forecasting Division chief Riaz Khan said.

According to the FFD, the Indus at Chashma, Taunsa and Guddu, the Chenab at Khanki and Qadirabad and the Ravi at Balloki and Shahdara are in medium flood. The Indus at Kalabagh and Sukkur, the Kabul at Nowshera, the Chenab at Marala, the Ravi at Jassar and the Sutlej at Sulemanki are in low flood. The Chenab will be in medium flood at Trimmu on Sunday and Monday. Its peak of 300,000 cusecs was crossing the Chiniot Bridge. The Indus will be in high flood at Guddu on Aug 20 and 21. The tributaries of the Chenab and Ravi are still flooded because of the rain in the region and

the adjoining Jammu. The FFD said high to very high flood would continue to affect life and property along the tributaries. The floods in the rivers and the tributaries are affecting life, property and crops over thousands of acres in the riverine areas and along their embankments in Gujranwala, Sialkot, Chiniot, Hafizabad, Sheikhpura and Multan.

The medium flood in the Ravi at Shahdara created panic among people, displacing hundreds of nomads settled in its bed. Nazir and his son Rashid of Kot Lakhpat's Farid Colony were killed when the roof of their house collapsed. Three other members of the family sustained injuries. Samrin, 5, was killed when then roof of her home in Nishter Colony collapsed. Her parents and other family members were injured. Shakil Masih, 32, of Wandala Dyal, Shahdara, was killed in a similar accident. The Met office said that Kakul received 57mm of rain, Okara 44, Lahore Airport 39, Murree 35, Rawalakot 29, Lahore city 20, Sahiwal 10, Badin eight, Jhelum seven and Islamabad Airport, Faisalabad and Balakot 4mm.

Dawn – August 18th, 2013

Flash Floods 2013: Life Swept Away

Rain may have brought joy to some. But as one of the 100,209 Pakistanis whose lives have suffered at the hands of the 2013 floods, for Mehr Nigar rains spelt nothing but devastation. She lost all her savings and assets thanks to the monsoon. "On that Ramazan morning, it was raining heavily. I was getting ready to prepare sehri when I suddenly heard a thumping sound. Next I saw all of my belongings falling into the nala. I screamed for help and quickly ran to save my son who was sleeping," said Nigar, the trauma still fresh. Headline after headline about the devastation caused by floods is seen, but each stricken person's story is a story of loss of stability and belonging, like this resident of Noori Bagh Mohalla which is located on the bank of Bari Imam nala. Ironically, it is just a few kilometers away from the Prime Minister's Secretariat. For a family who saves every penny to buy the basics, losing assets like jewelry, clothes, fridge, television, bedding and the very roof over their head is a huge loss. "All I am left with is my 16 year old son and a charpai on which we both spent nights under the open sky," said Nigar while eating stale bread with half-cooked potato peels which she gathered from the neighborhood. Her slippers, feet and hem of her shalwar were stained with mud. Her son Danish, who is mentally ill, did not have enough clothes on him to cover his body. Nigar's husband is suffering from physical disability and is under treatment in Gujranwala. Her husband's pension is the only source of income.

Nigar had spent the rest of Ramazan mostly getting food from the nearby Langar. "On Eid I boiled potatoes and kept on eating the same for days. The clothes I am wearing now were given to me by one of my relatives who came from Peshawar," she said. "I am helpless because I am poor. There is no one who could feel my pain and help me rebuild my room or get back what I have lost," she said. Nigar, appealed to the government and philanthropists for financial assistance. Just like her, other families residing in her neighborhood have also lost their belongings in the flash floods. There is no electricity in the area. "During heavy rains, the army and rescue officials helped people in the city area but no one came here to assist us. Even the media covered only urban areas and not places where poor people like us live," said Razia, a disgruntled neighbor of Nigar.

More to Come

The Director General Pakistan Meteorological Department, Arif Mahmood said that the monsoon season will come to an end within two days. However the rains will continue till the second week of September. He said on August 19 and 20, high floods are expected at the Guddu and Sukkur barrages when around 625,000 cusecs of water will be passing through them. He said that in the next 48 hours scattered rainfall and thundershowers with isolated heavy falls are expected in

Northeast Punjab which includes Gujranwala, Lahore divisions and Kashmir. Isolated rain and thundershower are also expected in Bahawalpur, Sahiwal, and Faisalabad, Islamabad/Rawalpindi, Hazara divisions and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The Express Tribune - August 17th, 2013

Floods Ravage Punjab amid Fresh Rains Forecast

While central and southern Punjab is braving and Sindh is bracing for devastating floods triggered by incessant downpours, officials warned that another weather system could bring more widespread rains in the country. The deluge damaged infrastructure, swamped villages and destroyed crops, especially in central Punjab, uprooting thousands of people from their homes. The floods headed for southern Punjab and northern Sindh, leaving a trail of destruction in Punjab. "The recent rains affected 305,642 people, killed at least 106 people and wounded 108," National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) spokesperson Brigadier Kamran Zia. He added that the current weather system has already weakened and the authority was worried about a new system which could bring more widespread rains, especially in northern and central Pakistan. A high intensity flood was likely to pass through Guddu Barrage on August 20-21 where mass evacuations have already been ordered. "Now, we are not worried about the current system which has already weakened. It's the new monsoon system that worries us," said Brig Zia. "The new system will start on August 25."

The NDMA spokesperson wouldn't say how long the new weather system would last. However, he said that it would bring medium to heavy rains for 10 or more days. The new system would target the northern parts of the country, but considering the recent erratic weather patterns, some areas of central districts, including Dera Ghazi Khan, Dera Murad Jamali and adjacent areas might also be affected, Brig Zia said. "The new system would particularly affect Azad Jammu and Kashmir as it is the catchment area besides targeting the main districts of Lahore, Gujranwala and other parts of central Punjab." About the ongoing floods, the NDMA spokesperson said water was receding in Narowal district, while the breaches that swamped Chiniot district had been plugged. According to the NDMA statistics, 2,400 houses have been destroyed and 2,648 damaged by the floods. Similarly, 592 villages have been affected where 44 relief camps have been established.

Meanwhile, high floods reached upper parts of south Punjab. Though precautionary evacuations have been ordered, the authorities said the situation was under control. The district administration has shifted around 14,000 people from villages on the bank of the River Chenab to higher ground with the help of Rescue 1122. "At least 20 relief camps have also been set up on the confluence of Multan-Muzaffargarh border," Gulzar Shah, the district coordination officer of Multan, told The Express Tribune. "However, some villagers are reluctant to leave their homes. We're trying to convince them to shift to the relief camps," he added. The district administration in Vehari declared a state of emergency and evacuated 50 villages as a high flood, carrying 350,000 cusecs of water, was expected in the rivers Sutluj and Chenab near Kabeerwaala and Mian Channu. In Rahim Yar Khan District, the police shifted more than 4,501 people and their 2,943 cattle to the 17 relief camps set up for flood affected people in anticipation. In Rajanpur, the ground channels of six union councils remained terminated and the rehabilitation of 30,000 affected people could not be started.

The Express Tribune - August 19th, 2013

Looming Threats: Even Medium Rainfall Can Unleash Floods in Sindh, Says PRF Report

Sindh is under threat of the fourth consecutive flood and if the torrential rains continue to hit parts of the province and the water level increases in the Indus River, several areas would be inundated and unprecedented damage could occur – leading the government to declare emergency in upper and lower areas of Sindh. According to the recent report of the Pakistan Relief Foundation (PRF), threats of upper terrain and its total dispatch through Sindh has created vulnerability and raised major concerns in Katcha areas of the province. Recent flooding has been sweeping rural and non-planned bands in other parts of Pakistan. The showers are pressuring the Guddu Barrage while the situation developing in Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa have increased threats of the fourth consecutive flood in Sindh. “Previous heavy rains had created havoc in rural and urban areas of Shikarpur, Jacobabad, Kashmore-Kandhkot, Sukkur, Khairpur Mirs, Sanghar, Umerkot and Mirpurkhas,” the report stated. Haleem Adil Sheikh, the chairperson of the PRF, assumed that the government must have taken measures to avoid the fourth consecutive flooding in Pakistan, especially in Sindh. “The flood 2013 will be more dangerous than the previous ones,” he predicted.

Sheikh said that the flood water will not exceed beyond 600 thousand cusecs, adding that this will be called a medium flood in Sindh. “Even normal rainfall is a visible threat to emergency as the previous floods have weakened the bands and precautionary measures are still lacking,” Sheikh said. “We have to take appropriate measures so that loss of life could be avoided.” The three last floods in Sindh caused persistent damage to public and private infrastructure, displacing millions and causing losses of hundred billions of rupees. Earlier, the civil society and other officials had demanded the government to improve major infrastructures to prevent failures in the wake of extreme weather conditions.

The report suggests that emergency should also be declared in departments as this approach will enhance emergency initiatives. “It is essential to include the federal government to manage disasters and as per need, we should declare emergency in health, education, agriculture, irrigation, local government, social welfare, relief and rehabilitation, revenue and police departments to respond the disaster as one.” He pointed out that the country should not forget its internal resilience to disasters. “At such times, we could have started looking for community support, national giving, national funds for disasters and national and provincial relief funds,” the report suggested. Sheikh said that flood-affected people tried to snatch food items and other necessary items during relief work, adding that such behavior frustrates volunteers and relief officials. “All rescue and relief operations should be coordinated with law-enforcement agencies for appropriate measures.”

The Express Tribune - August 19th, 2013

Humanitarian Assistance: UN Allocates \$10m to Assist IDPs

The United Nations’ Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has allocated \$10 million for humanitarian assistance to more than one million displaced persons in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata). The funds will support the provision of food aid and water, sanitation and hygiene services for 900,000 people, emergency primary health care for 350,000 people and nutrition services for 39,000 people, including malnourished children. The funds will also facilitate aid agencies in providing emergency shelter and non-food items and responding the educational needs of those affected. “Despite dwindling resources, over a million people affected by the emergency in North-Western Pakistan are still receiving humanitarian assistance from various organizations,” said UN Pakistan Resident Coordinator Timo Pakkala. “This CERF contribution is very timely. However, we must do more to meet the immediate humanitarian

needs of the most vulnerable displaced people," added Pakkala. In June and July, over 67,000 people returned to safe areas in Bajaur, Kurram, Mohmand and South Waziristan agencies in Fata. Humanitarian partners provided them with transport, food and basic services. Humanitarian partners in Pakistan have so far received \$191 million since January this year for essential operations in K-P and Fata. An estimated \$129 million is still required to cover the provision of basic services to the affected people till December. Overall, CERF has provided \$13.9 million for K-P and Fata in 2013. Pakistan is the fifth largest recipient of CERF funding with \$158 million. For 2013, donors have so far pledged over \$420 million in support of the fund.

The Express Tribune - August 20th, 2013

Eight More Dead As Deluge Moves To South Punjab

The water level increased in the Sutlej River on Monday as India released 115,590 cusecs water from the Harike, causing surge in the water flow up to 20 feet. Meanwhile, flood in the Chenab and Ravi rivers and their tributaries, after playing havoc in various areas of central Punjab, moved to south Punjab inundating cropped lands and settlements while its intensity would increase during the next two to three days. Rain and flood related incidents claimed eight lives, including four in district Gujranwala, two in Kasur and two in district Jhang. Meanwhile, due to the ongoing rain spell, the roof of a house collapsed in village Mahalam Kalaan of Jhang, killing two brothers, Allah Wasaya (25) and Mohammad Saleem (12) on the spot. Two women were also killed in flood-related incidents in the same district. According to Rescue 1122 sources, Kaniz Bibi of Chak Mighiana died of electric shock when she stepped on accumulated floodwater while 13-year-old Rubina, resident of Mauza Jindran, slipped into floodwater and drowned. According to the Irrigation department, the flood damaged thousands of acres of rice, maize, fodder and other crops besides destroying several houses in the bed and banks of the River Sutlej. People are migrating to safer places due to the continuous increase in water in Sutlej. Meanwhile, the district administration made all the arrangements and established nine relief camps across the district. About 20 localities had been affected by the floodwater so far.

Over 115,000 cusecs floodwater passed through the Ganda Singhwala areas, while 90,000 cusecs water was recorded at the Ferozepur Headworks. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif is expected to visit the areas affected by the River Sutlej on Tuesday (today). Dozens of villages were inundated by floodwater, which was rapidly increasing till the filing of this report. People with their cattle and families were migrating from their houses after red alert was announced by the district administration. In Toba Tek Singh, District Coordination Officer Dr Farah Masood directed the education executive district officer to shift all the schools affected by the floodwater to places where residents and their children had been shifted so that studies were not affected. She asked the departments concerned to shift all the residents of the flooded localities to safe places. Meanwhile, the dyke along the River Ravi from Chichawatni Bridge to Head Sidhnai was also being strengthened by the Irrigation department. In Muzaffargarh, District Coordination Officer Farasat Iqbal Chaudhry said that people were being evacuated from flood-hit areas and shifted to relief centers set up by the district administration. He was talking to journalists during his visit to Seetpur, Alipur Tehsil, on Monday. He said the district administration had closed three main canals – Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan, and TP Link – due to the threat of flood. He said about 80 villages from the bed of the River Chenab had been vacated. In the Alipur Tehsil, the water level in the River Indus at Sarki was high and it entered dozens of houses. The administration deployed five Rescue 1122 teams at Sarki and two teams at Rangpur to shift people to safe places.

Meanwhile, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Sikandar Hayat Bosan said that two flood waves would reach the River Chenab in Multan district during the next three days,

however, it posed no threat to the city but would aggravate the situation in 116 villages already hit by floods. Addressing a press conference at the Canal Rest House near Nawabpur embankment, he told reporters that a comprehensive three-phase flood safety plan was already in progress, with assistance from the Pakistan Army, to help around 25,000 people in 116 villages earlier hit by a previous 150,000 cusec flood wave some days ago. In Jhang, the River Chenab was in high flood and 167,200 cusecs was passing through the Trimmu Headworks on Monday. A spokesman for the Irrigation department said that so far there was no threat to the structure of Trimmu Headworks. Meanwhile, floodwater inundated several villages in the district. The floodwater entered villages, including Lohawala, Kachaywala and Jhumat. Sources said that all the trapped people had been shifted to safe places after a rescue operation. Over 200 villages of the district have so far been inundated by floodwater. Scores of cattle heads drowned in different areas of the district. In Burewala, as many as 25,000 people belonging to 32 villages of Burewala sub-division have been evacuated from the flood affected areas, said Vehari DCO Jawad Akram.

The News - August 20th, 2013

Number of Flood-Hit Now 1.5m: NDMA

Floods and heavy monsoon rains have killed 178 people and affected 1.5 million across the country in three weeks. "At least 178 people have died and 1,503,492 others affected by recent monsoon rains and floods across the country," a National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) official said, citing updated figures. He said that the rains had wounded 855 people, affected 5,615 villages and destroyed 20,312 houses. The figures stood at nearly one million people affected and 139 dead. Nearly 350 relief camps had been set up to help people, mostly in Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan, the official said. Further heavy monsoon rains were expected next month, but the NDMA was fully prepared, he said. The Indus was in medium flood at Sukkur and in low flood at Chashma, Guddu and Kotri. The Sutlej was also in low flood at Sulemanki and Head Islam. According to the Flood Forecasting Division, the Indus is likely to be in high flood at Guddu. Several villages were inundated in Toba Tek Singh, Kamalia and Pir Mahal because of the Ravi flood. Floodwaters from the Chenab inundated Basti Bakhtiari and adjoining villages around Panjnad. At least 24 villages of Muzaffargarh's Alipur tehsil were flooded. Dozens of villages around Nau Raja Jhota, near Jalalpur, and Pirwala, Multan, were inundated by the raging Sutlej. The FFD said there was no immediate threat of any more flood-generating rain. It nevertheless forecast scattered thundershowers in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, Malakand, Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Kashmir for the next 24 hours.

Dawn - August 26th, 2013
