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Pakistan

State Neglect and Corporate-Driven Development Deepen Rural Devastation: Punjab faces unprecedented flood challenge

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Two million people have been impacted, 2200 villages and millions of acre of agri land are under water. Unprecedented Flood water now moving toward Sindh endangering lives of millions.

The Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee (PKRC) expresses deep concern and outrage at the ongoing devastation caused by the 2025 floods across northern regions in Punjab Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir & Sindh. Once again, it is peasants, small-scale food producers, sharecroppers, landless workers, and rural women who are paying the heaviest price for a crisis they did not create.

Massive Losses, Unequal Burdens

Since late June, unprecedented monsoon cloudbursts and glacial hazards have triggered deadly flash floods and landslides. Entire villages were swept away within minutes in Buner and Swat; South Punjab's cotton, rice, and mango crops stand submerged; and in GB, terraces and irrigation channels have collapsed.

More than 1100 lives have been lost, hundreds remain missing, and thousands of homes, roads, and bridges destroyed. National figures confirm over 10,000 livestock deaths. For small farmers, the disaster has wiped out their seed stocks, crops, and animals—destroying both immediate harvests and future planting.

A Disaster Made by Climate Injustice and State Neglect

Pakistan contributes less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions but is once again on the frontlines of climate collapse. These extreme floods are climate-amplified, fueled by warming-driven intense rainfall and glacial lake outburst risks.

But the scale of destruction is not “natural.” It is the direct result of decades of state neglect, broken priorities, and neoliberal policies. Instead of investing in early-warning systems, embankments, and flood-resilient rural infrastructure, successive governments and the military elite have diverted resources to mega-canals, corporate farming zones, export crops, built housing societies on the path of rivers and military-led agribusiness projects under the Green Pakistan Initiative.

Ravi Urban Development (RUDA), a mega housing scheme on about 100,000 acre of land on both sides of River Ravi, played an important part in drowning almost 1/6th of Lahore under water. The land from small farmers was acquired forcefully using a colonial law that still exists.

These choices leave peasants unprotected while public wealth is funneled into corporate schemes. Relief and recovery measures remain slow, top-down, and exclusionary, once again abandoning the rural poor.

The 2025 floods are not an accident of nature. They are the outcome of state neglect, elite greed, and global capitalist exploitation. Each time, it is peasants and rural workers who lose everything, while those responsible enrich themselves. Relief alone is not enough. What is required is justice: redistribution of land and resources, recognition of

peasant rights, and a decisive break from fossil fuel-driven, corporate-controlled models of development.

Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee (PKRC) calls on all progressive forces—political parties, labour groups, women’s movements, and international allies—to stand with peasants in demanding a new social contract rooted in land, popular agrarian reforms, food sovereignty, dignity, and climate justice.

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PS:

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