NATIONAL NEWS

Weekly Cotton Review

Rains adversely affect trade activity

NASEEM USMAN

KARACHI: The country has recorded a significant seventeen percent decline in cotton production, which represents an alarming situation for the agricultural sector. The primary causes of this reduction are attributed to climate change and untimely rainfall.

The cotton trade has been severely affected due to the rainy season, and commercial activities have become limited. Both farmers and traders are facing losses from this situation.

Due to weather conditions, a clear difference has been observed in the quality of cotton crops across various regions. In some areas, rainfall has benefited the crop and cotton production there is satisfactory. However, in fields where water has accumulated, there is a risk of severe damage to the crop. Excessive water can affect the roots of cotton plants, which may have negative impacts on overall production.

According to chairman Cotton Ginners Forum-ul-Haq, for the first time in Pakistan's history, approximately fifty percent of ginning factories in Punjab province have become inactive. This situation is extremely concerning for the industrial sector and may have far-reaching effects on the economy.

Head Transfer of Technology Central Cotton Research Institute Multan Sajid Mahmood, commenting on this situation, stated that a sustainable and comprehensive solution for cotton recovery is only possible through effective government patronage and organized measures. He emphasized that finding an immediate solution to this problem is an urgent necessity of the time.

The Prime Minister has also expressed seriousness about the current devastation of the cotton industry and has sounded the alarm bell. At the governmental level, recognizing the importance of this issue, emphasis has been placed on the need for immediate and effective measures.

This situation is not only causing financial difficulties for farmers but is also affecting the textile industry, which is an important pillar of the national economy. Experts say that if effective measures are not taken immediately, this problem could become even more serious.

The local cotton market witnessed fluctuating price trends throughout the past week, with business operations being significantly affected by ongoing rainfall, though trading volumes remained relatively low.

Textile and spinning mills have adopted cautious purchasing strategies due to the adverse weather conditions, while ginners are also exercising restraint in their cotton procurement activities. The current rainfall situation presents a mixed scenario for crop conditions across different regions. Areas where rainwater has not accumulated are reporting satisfactory crop status, while fields experiencing water logging face potential damage concerns.

The reduced supply of cotton lint due to rainfall disruptions and sluggish business conditions has resulted in an unprecedented situation where approximately 50 percent of ginning factories in Punjab province have remained inactive. This marks the first time such extensive factory closures have occurred in the country.

According to production statistics released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association up to August 15, cotton arrivals in Pakistan dropped 17 per cent year-on-year to 497,400 bales.

In Sindh province, cotton prices ranged from 16,200 to 16,400 rupees per maund based on quality specifications, while cotton Phutti varied between 6,500 to 7,400 rupees per 40 kilograms depending on quality grades.

Punjab province recorded cotton prices between 16,300 to 16,600 rupees per maund, with Phutti trading at 6,800 to 7,600 rupees per 40 kilograms.

Balochistan province saw cotton prices ranging from 16,100 to 16,300 rupees per maund, while Phutti prices remained between 6,800 to 7,500 rupees per 40 kilograms.

The Karachi Cotton Association's Spot Rate Committee closed the spot rate at Rs 16,200 per maund.

Naseem Usman, Chairman of the Karachi Cotton Brokers Forum, reported that international cotton prices maintained relative stability during the recent trading period. New York cotton futures remained within a range of 68.50 to 71 American cents per pound throughout the week.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture's weekly export and sales report, cotton sales for the 2025-26 season reached 105,400 bales during the reporting period. The sales figures demonstrated strong international demand across multiple markets.

Vietnam emerged as the leading purchaser in the international cotton market, acquiring 35,800 bales during the week. Pakistan secured the second position with purchases totalling 28,100 bales, while Bangladesh ranked third with acquisitions of 21,300 bales.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday sounded the alarm over the declining state of Pakistan's once-thriving cotton industry, emphasizing the need for immediate national efforts to revive a sector whose production has dramatically fallen from 14 million bales to just 4 million bales in recent years.

"We must restore our cotton sector. Similarly, there is tremendous potential in livestock as well," the Prime Minister stated while addressing a ceremony marking the departure of an additional 300 students to China for a fully-funded international training program aimed at upgrading Pakistan's agricultural sector.

Describing agriculture as the backbone of the national economy, Shehbaz Sharif stressed the urgent need to modernize this sector to address declining productivity and unlock its vast potential, particularly in cotton and livestock production.

The cotton industry crisis has reached unprecedented levels, with fifty percent of ginning factories in Punjab becoming non-operational for the first time in the country's history due to insufficient cotton sales. This situation has contributed to a continued downward trend in cotton prices across the region.

The challenges facing the cotton sector are expected to intensify as weather forecasts predict additional rainfall in Punjab and Sindh provinces. These anticipated weather conditions pose further risks to both standing cotton crops and the quality of already harvested cotton, potentially exacerbating the industry's current difficulties.

For the first time in history, 50 percent of ginning factories in Punjab have become non-operational due to unsold cotton stocks, leading to a continued decline in cotton prices. The situation has raised concerns about the cotton industry's future, with fears of further quality deterioration due to predicted rainfall in Punjab and Sindh.

Chairman of the Cotton Ginners Forum, Ehsan-ul-Haq, revealed that the declining quality of cotton has significantly reduced its demand, resulting in an accumulation of unsold stocks in ginning factories. This has pushed cotton ginners into a financial crisis, forcing them to shut down operations.

He further explained that the recent appreciation of the Pakistani rupee against the US dollar has also contributed to the drop in cotton prices. Over the past week, cotton prices in Pakistan fell by Rs. 200 per maund, bringing the price down to Rs 16,300 per maund.

The forecast of additional rainfall in Punjab and Sindh has heightened fears of further damage to the cotton crop and the quality of harvested cotton. This could exacerbate the challenges faced by the industry, which is already struggling with unsold stocks and declining prices.

Ehsan-ul-Haq also mentioned that the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) is set to release the country's overall cotton production data as of August 15. However, discrepancies in production figures have caused concern among stakeholders.

According to the PCGA, Punjab's ginning factories received 301,000 bales of cotton by July 31. In contrast, the Crop Reporting Centre Punjab reported that 609,000 bales were produced in the province during the same period, more than double the PCGA's figures. This significant discrepancy has created confusion among cotton stakeholders, making it difficult for them to devise effective strategies.

Discussing the current cotton crisis and its possible solutions in a telephonic conversation with renowned cotton analyst Naseem Usman, Sajid Mahmood, Head of Technology Transfer Department at the Central Cotton Research Institute Multan, stated that in developed countries the system of cotton research and development has always remained under government management. Although public-private partnership is globally regarded as a successful model, even within this framework the role of the private sector largely remains supportive. In these countries the textile industry collaborates with farmers through models such as cluster farming which not only increases productivity but also restores farmers' confidence. Pakistan also needs its textile industry to ensure practical cooperation with research institutions and farmers in large scale so that cotton production and quality can be improved.

Citing past examples he said the textile industry had once established the Cotton Foundation to stabilize cotton production but the experiment failed. Similarly the cotton cess which was the sole financial source for Pakistan Central Cotton Committee the country's largest cotton research institution was suspended in 2016 with outstanding dues now exceeding Rs 2.5 billion. Major textile groups also launched a seed company under the name SANIFA but it suddenly disappeared from the scene resulting in heavy financial losses.

Sajid Mahmood further noted that although some well known local seed companies are introducing new varieties and bringing considerable acreage under cultivation, the overall national production continues to decline which is alarming. The fact remains that cotton production peaked in 2014 at a time when only government institutions were conducting research and the role of the private sector was minimal. International biotech seed companies also failed to provide any sustainable solution. In the past Monsanto's seeds could not withstand Pakistan's harsh climatic conditions while varieties imported from China and the United States proved vulnerable to viruses and local weather impacts. Global seed companies operate solely for commercial interests and their varieties have not proven superior to local seeds.

He added that in large countries like China and the United States both cotton acreage and production are declining proving that there is no global solution to increasing output.

Sajid Mahmood emphasized that in Pakistan cotton related problems are region specific and their solutions can only come from local research and technology. The real crisis stems from low market prices reduced profitability for farmers and insufficient investment in research institutions. In countries like India heavy subsidies are provided to cotton farmers which boost their confidence. In Pakistan the sugar industry provides a parallel example it won the trust of farmers by supplying subsidized inputs and maintaining production continuity. In contrast the textile industry's role has been disappointing as neither direct relief was extended to farmers nor were research institutions provided with practical support. The time has come for the textile industry to adopt the successful model of the sugar industry and ensure genuine collaboration with farmers to overcome the cotton crisis.

He further stressed that despite rising agricultural costs and inflation cotton prices in Pakistan remain tied to the global market. Although the Government of Pakistan has repeatedly invited international companies to establish research systems here no foreign company has yet shown practical interest.

Sajid Mahmood further remarked that when discussing the decline in cotton production, comparisons are often drawn with India, whereas our resources are closer to those of Cambodia, yet expectations are set as high as China's production. Unless this gap is addressed, our cotton and the entire cotton sector will continue to remain in decline.

Concluding the discussion Sajid Mahmood stated that the fundamental condition for success in reviving cotton is competitiveness. For this it is essential that the textile industry and private seed companies establish their own parallel research systems so that farmers have access to diverse high quality seed varieties and a sustainable research framework can be developed. Ultimately the reality remains that a sustainable and comprehensive revival of cotton is only possible through government patronage and effective management since the challenges facing cotton stretch across the entire value chain from field to fabric.

Cotton arrivals in Pakistan dropped 17 per cent year-on-year to 497,400 bales as of Aug 15, primarily due to a sharp decline in Punjab's output, raising concerns over the country's domestic production outlook.

According to data released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) on Monday, Punjab — once showing a 3pc increase in arrivals by July 31 — witnessed a reversal by mid-August, with arrivals now 8pc lower than the same period last year. In contrast, Sindh, which was lagging 47pc behind last year's figures at end-July, has narrowed its shortfall to 24pc.

Industry attributes the slump to recent rains, which have damaged quality, reducing demand from textile mills and forcing many ginning factories to halt operations. Ehsan-ul-Haq, Chairman of the Cotton Ginners Forum, remains hopeful that with improved conditions, ginning activity in Punjab will resume soon.

Glacial Lake Outburst Flood

PM invites heroes of G-B to Islamabad

RECORDER REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Mohammad Shehbaz Sharif has invited heroes of Gilgit-Baltistan, who saved 300 lives, to Islamabad. On the directives of PM Sharif, Wasit Khan, Amar, and Muhammad Khan have been invited to Islamabad, the spokesperson said.

In recognition of their efforts to warn local communities in Gilgit-Baltistan about a potential Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (Glof) and save hundreds of lives, Prime Minister will honour them with a special award.

Prices of essential food items remain steady

AMJAD ALI SHAH

PESHAWAR: Prices of essential food items remain stable during the previous week as compared to preceding week, said a weekly survey conducted here on Sunday.

Shoppers say prices are reaching out purchasing power with each passing day. They complained that local authorities failed to implement an official price list and keep check on rising prices.

Residents of Peshawar are voicing their frustration with the local district administration's inability in controlling food prices that have failed to reduce even after record reduction in fuel prices.

According to the survey, the price of sugar, cooking oil/ghee, flour, live chicken-meat, vegetables and other items keep rising in the open market whereas the shopkeepers also charged consumers with self-imposed rates.

A one-kilogram live chicken/meat was available at Rs465 per kilogram in the retail market, while the price of farm eggs being sold at Rs360 per dozen, the survey said.

Cow meat without bone was available at Rs1100 and cow meat with bone is being sold at Rs1000 per kilogramme against the official rates announced by local authorities concerned, according to the survey. Mutton beef was being sold from Rs2500 to Rs3000/kg in the open market.

Tomato is being sold at Rs100 per kilogram in the open market whereas onion was being sold at Rs70-80/kg in the previous week. Ginger and garlic remained unchanged as being available at Rs600/kg and Rs200 and Rs300/kg respectively. Green chilli was being sold at Rs120/kg. Lemon is being sold at Rs400/kg in the retail market, the survey said.

Peas was being sold at Rs200 per kg, capsicum at Rs100-120/kilo, ladyfinger Rs100-150 and Rs200/kilo, Arvi Rs150-200/kilo, turnip at Rs150/kg. Eggplant (bringle) Rs100/ kilo, Zucchini (tori) Rs100-120/kilo, Tinda Rs100/kg, cabbage at Rs100/kg, red-coloured potatoes available at Rs75/ kg while white-coloured potatoes are sold at Rs50/ kg in the retail market, the survey said.

The survey noted the price of sugar remained unchanged as it was available at Rs180-200/kg in the open market.

The survey noted the price of cooking oil/ghee of various brands and quality remains stable.

Buyers say prices of food grains, especially those which were daily use items in the kitchen, were beyond their purchasing power. The soaring prices continue to break the back of the common man, they said.

Price of flour was stable in the retail market as a 20-kg fine flour sac was being sold at Rs1750-Rs1600/sac and brown-coloured flour sac at Rs1400/sac in the open market. Wheat flour and other products like maida, suji and choker flour also remained high in the retail market.

According to the survey, prices of all brands and qualities of beverages also remained high in the local market. Black tea was being sold at Rs1400-1500 per kg, the survey added.

The survey said good quality rice (sela) was available at Rs360/kg, while low quality rice was available at Rs300-320/kg, while tota rice was available at Rs200-220/kg.

CEJ at IBA celebrates its 10-year journey in meaningful manner

KARACHI: Centre for Excellence in Journalism (CEJ) at IBA celebrated its 10-year journey of shaping the future of Journalism in Pakistan with a grand event titled, "A Decade of Excellence" held at the JS Auditorium, City Campus. The event brought together distinguished journalists, media professionals, academics, diplomats, and students to commemorate IBA-CEJ's contributions in strengthening ethical, innovative, and impactful journalism in Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi, emphasized IBA-CEJ's importance in academia and media practice. He appreciated the continued support of the U.S. Consulate in Karachi. Reflecting on the past decade, he noted the rise of Artificial Intelligence and emphasized the need to re-examine the state of journalism in Pakistan. He hoped this milestone would encourage meaningful dialogue between jamhooriyat (democracy) and sahafat (journalism), for the greater good of the public and the country.

Scott Urbom, US Consul General in Karachi, acknowledged the Centre's long-standing partnership with the US government in promoting press freedom and empowering journalists, praising CEJ as a leader in advancing professional journalism, nurturing the next generation of dedicated and courageous Pakistani journalists, and fostering transparency, skills development, and citizen empowerment. He reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to supporting institutions like IBA-CEJ that uphold freedom of expression and help build stronger ties between nations.

Renowned journalist, Hamid Mir, reflected on the challenges faced by Pakistani media and the way forward. He emphasized that Journalism in Pakistan has become increasingly challenging in recent times, with both overt and subtle forms of censorship restricting open dialogue. In some cases, interviews and programs are unable to air due to various pressures and threats. Such constraints not only limit press freedom but also raise concerns about the broader implications for democratic values and governance. —PR

روزنامہ نئی بات کراچی
Daily Nai Baat

سیلابی صورتحال انتظامی نااہلی و ناکامی ہے، الطاف شکور

کراچی کو ایک "اکھوری ڈیزائن" کی ضرورت ہے، جس کے تحت جہاں ممکن ہو قدرتی آبی راستے بحال کیے جائیں، چیئرمین پاسبان ڈیموکریٹک پارٹی

پی پی حکومت تعلیم کو تباہ اور کرپشن کے نئے راستے کھولنا چاہتی ہے، کاشف شیخ

امت مسلمہ کو ہمیشہ سلطان صلاح الدین ایوبی پر ناز رہے گا، ملک قاسم

ٹی ایم سیز ریٹائرڈ ملازمین کی پینشن کا اجرا کروا کر دم لیں گے، سید ذوالفقار شاہ

پاکستان اور امریکہ کے درمیان تعلقات تاریخ کی بلند ترین سطح پر ہیں، شیخ امتیاز حسین

بزنس کمیونٹی کو اپنی سائبر سیکورٹی کے نظام کو مضبوط بنانے کی ضرورت ہے، فہد اقبال

چیئرمین یوسی 7 ملیر امام بخش ڈوگی کی زیر نگرانی 48 انچ سیوریج لائن کی مرمت

شہر اس وقت بنیادی مسائل کے انبار تلے دبا ہوا ہے، شمسہ مہ جبین

کرنٹ سے لوگوں کی ہلاکتوں کی ذمہ داری انتظامیہ پر ہے، ایاز میمن

تاریخی اور شایان شان انداز میں میلاد مصطفیٰ منایا جائے گا، سلیم ترابی