**Let it rain**

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We had devastating floods in the year 2022. There was widespread devastation, especially in Balochistan, central Sindh and some parts of south Punjab, which affected over 33 million people. The total damage due to flood has been put up to around $31 bn, worst hit sectors include: housing at around $5 billion, agriculture, food, livestock, fisheries at around $ 4 bn, and transport, and communications at around $3 bn.

The Government of Pakistan (GoP) ascribed the floods and the following destruction to global warming and accompanying climate change. The government, while soliciting international aid, argued that despite contributing less than one percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, Pakistan has a high vulnerability to climate change effects. Accordingly, Pakistan took its case to the United Nations (UN), where the UN Secretary-General supported and advocated recompense for the flood devastations. However, of the sum demanded only a paltry fraction has been realized till now; and how much of the received amount has trickled down to the affectees, especially in Sindh, is another question.

[Elton John’s Glastonbury triumph attracts 7.3 million TV viewers](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/elton-john-s-glastonbury-triumph-attracts-7-3-million-tv-viewers)

In 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties (COP) was held from November 6 until November 20, 2022, in Sharm El Sheikh. Our government eagerly participated, with a large entourage, in the conference. Pakistan put forward its point of view on the effects of climate change, and how it’s affecting the environment, especially in developing countries. Even while the main dignitaries left, our entourage stayed behind to do more fieldwork to garner support and money for the country, but which hardly materialized.

We, as a nation, have a short memory. During floods, there was nonstop media coverage of floods and their effects. Then, the media followed the trepidations of the flood affectees: living in mosquito-infested water, suffering from water-borne diseases, and loss of cattle and crops. Where successive governments have always failed, it is a great credit to the ordinary people of Pakistan who always come to the rescue of their brethren in need. The people of Karachi especially contributed heavily to alleviating the immediate suffering of the people of interior Sindh. Since Pakistan has a history of lurching from one crisis to the next, the flood and crises in its wake have been forgotten and new crises have taken centre stage.

[Mitsotakis’s conservatives clinch landslide Greece election win](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/mitsotakis-s-conservatives-clinch-landslide-greece-election-win)

Further, there were many videos on social media, which showed that encroachments, illegal construction, narrowing of river and nullah beds, and lack of drains exacerbated the devastating effects of flood. There are videos which show whole buildings, constructed in riverbeds, being washed away by the flood waters. Similarly, choked drains and nullahs also did not help. Moreover, in Sindh and Balochistan, the river and canal banks were breached, putting a question mark on the quality of work which went into constructing these banks. Similarly, certain embankments were purposely breached to ease water pressure on other strategic embankments. But the whole exercise, generally, misfired and inundated large swathes of land, and displaced thousands. The exercise showed the incompetence of executing authorities at a critical time and questioned the resources and money spent on the administrative setup, which failed to deliver when required.

Thus, in a nutshell, the government might not be able to fight global climate change, but sure needs to explain what it has learnt from the recent floods and what steps have been taken to mitigate the effects of any future floods such as the removal of encroachments on riverbeds, nullahs and appointing capable people who could plan and execute flood control measures effectively. Else, we could expect another déjà vu in the coming monsoons: let it rain, let it rain.