FORTNIGHTLY DROUGHT BULLETIN

(1st to 15th March, 2026)

National Drought Monitoring and Early Warning Centre

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URL: https://ndmc.pmd.gov.pk/new/

Rainfall Distribution and Anomalies

From 1 to 15 March 2026, light rainfall was recorded in upper parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and parts of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). Whereas, rest of the country remained dry. Figure 1 illustrates the spatial distribution of rainfall, based on data from meteorological observatories.

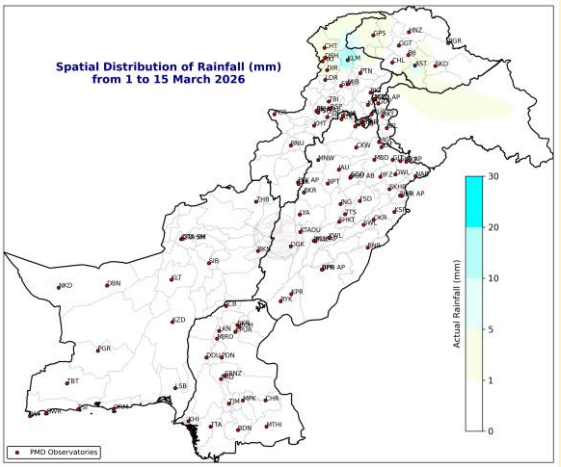

Figure 1: Spatial Distribution of Rainfall (mm)

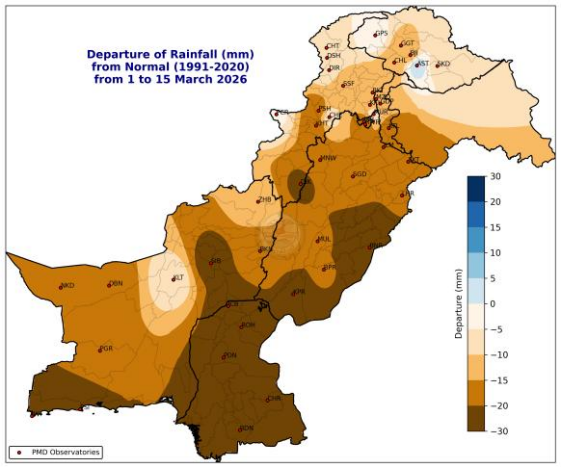

Figure 2: Departure of Rainfall (mm)

Figure 2 illustrates the departure of rainfall from normal (1991-2020) during the first half of March 2026. Below normal rainfall from -15 mm to -30 mm was observed in most parts of the country.

Mean Temperature Distribution and Anomalies

Figure 3 presents the deviation of mean temperature for first fortnight of March, 2026, from the climatic normal (1991-2020), indicating values ranging between 2°C to 6°C in most parts of the country.

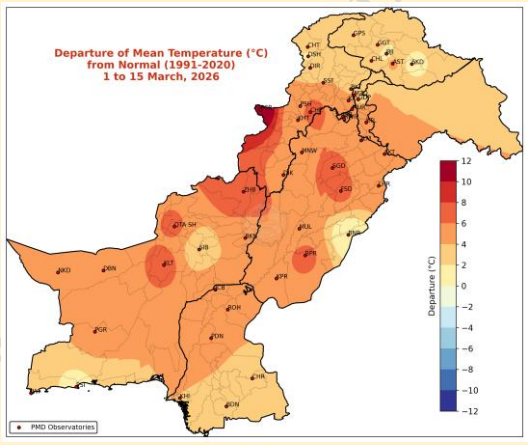

Figure 3: Departure of Mean Temperature(°C)

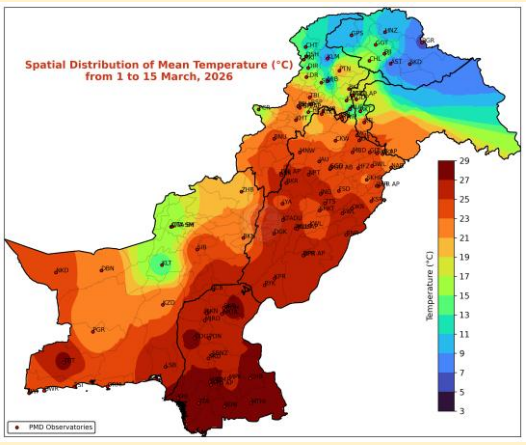

Figure 4: Spatial Distribution of Mean Temperature(°C)

Figure 4 illustrates the spatial distribution of mean temperatures across the country during this period, ranging between 5°C and 29°C. The lowest average temperatures were observed in the upper parts of the country, reflecting cooler conditions at higher elevations. In contrast, moderate temperatures prevailed across central parts of the country. The highest temperatures, reaching up to 29°C, were recorded in southern parts of the country.

Climate Normals: Temperature and Rainfall

Figure 5 presents the long-term average rainfall distribution for 1-15 March, based on 30-year normal (1991-2020). Most of the country typically receive average rainfall of 10 mm to 30 mm. Figure 6 depicts the spatial distribution of mean temperature during the first fortnight of March, based on the climatological period (1991-2020). Mean temperatures range between 3°C and 27°C across the country. The lowest temperatures are observed in the mountainous regions, where values range between 3°C and 15°C, whereas the central and southern regions experience higher mean temperatures, typically between 15°C and 29°C.

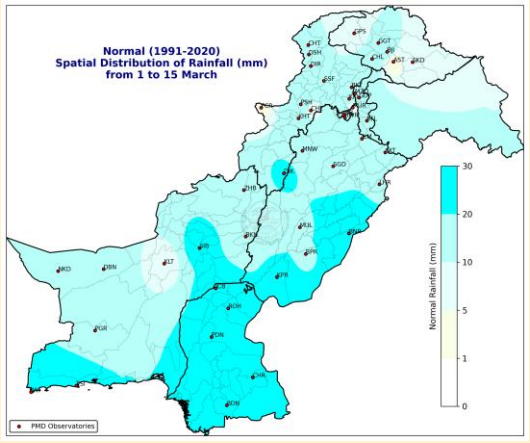

Figure 5: Normal Distribution of Rainfall(mm)

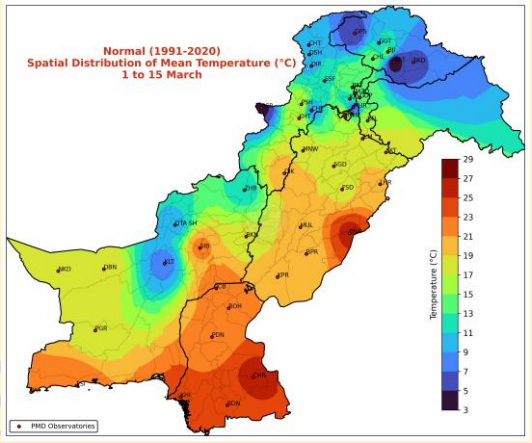

Figure 6: Normal Distribution of Mean Temperature(°C)

Maximum Length of Consecutive Dry Days (CDD)

The Consecutive Dry Days (CDD), calculated for the period from 1st January 2026 to 15th March 2026, are illustrated in Figure 7. The maximum CDD was recorded at Hyderabad (74 days), Chhor and Badin (73 days each). In contrast, CDD values across most parts of the country range up to 30 days.

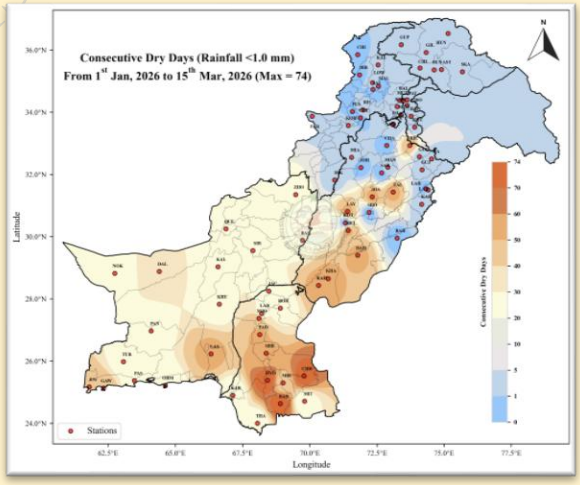

Figure 7: Spatial Distribution of Consecutive Dry Days

Reservoir Water Level Dynamics in Early March, 2026

During the first fortnight of March 2026, water levels in Rawal, Simly and Khanpur dams almost remained constant whereas, gradual decrease was recorded in Tarbela and Mangla dams. The current level (ft) as of 16th March, 2026, in Tarbela, Mangla, Khanpur, Simly and Rawal is 1144.2, 1190.8, 1955.1, 2284.1 and 1745.9 respectively.

Weather Forecast for the Second Half of March

More rain/wind/thunderstorm predicted in the country from 17th (evening/night) to 20th March partly cloudy to cloudy weather is expected in upper parts of the country while rain wind thunderstorm is likely in Balochistan and adjoining areas during Eid days. Additionally, more rain/wind/thunderstorm (with isolated hailstorm) predicted in the country from 24th (evening/night) to 30th March with occasional gaps.

Summary

During the first half of March 2026, light rainfall was recorded in most parts of KP and GB whereas, rest of the country remained dry. Consequently, negative rainfall anomalies prevailed over the country where anomalies reached up to -30 mm. Mean temperature anomalies indicated positive deviations from the climatic normal, with most parts of the country experiencing temperatures ranging from 2°C to 6°C above normal in most parts of the country. Dry conditions were further reflected by the Consecutive Dry Days (CDD) analysis, which showed a maximum CDD of 74 days recorded at Hyderabad, while CDD values across most other parts of the country ranged up to 30 days. Water levels in reservoirs including Khanpur, Simly, and Rawal remained almost constant, whereas a gradual decrease was recorded in the major Tarbela and Mangla dams.

Overall, the prevailing rainfall deficits, above normal temperatures and extended dry spells in specific regions highlight the continued need for close drought monitoring and proactive water resource management, particularly in dry regions.

For drought update, visit NDMC official website: *https://ndmc.pmd.gov.pk/new/*