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Outlook for December-January-February (DJF), 2025-26

1. Current meteorological conditions

During the September–October–November (SON) season, rainfall across most parts of the country remained normal to below normal. A few episodes of heavy rainfall occurred during the first half of September, primarily affecting Sindh, northeastern Punjab, Kashmir, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Following the retreat of the monsoon in the latter half of September, rainfall activity steadily decreased, and much of the remaining season was predominantly dry across Pakistan. Temperature conditions during SON were normal to slightly above normal, with the highest positive anomalies observed over Gilgit-Baltistan and Balochistan (Table 1).

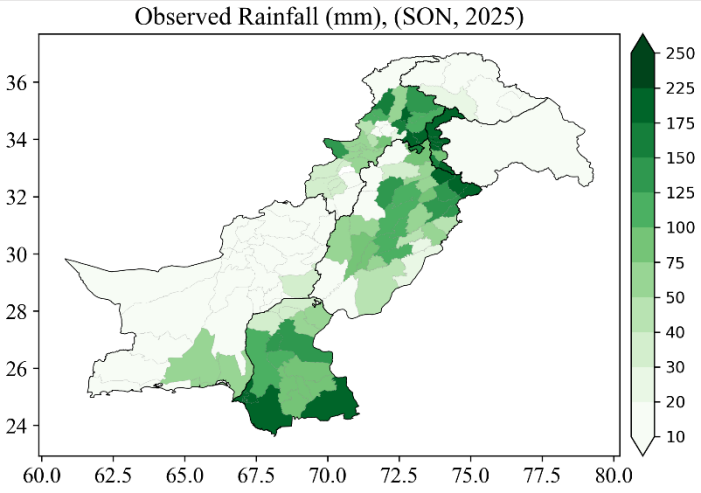

Figure 1: Observed rainfall (mm), SON 2025

Table 1: Summary of the SON 2025 Observed Rainfall and Temperature

Region	Total Rainfall (mm)	Normal* Rainfall (mm)	Rainfall Departure (%)	Mean Temp (°C)	Anomaly (°C)
Pakistan	66.3	70.3	-5.7	23.1	0.5
AJK	150.6	184.1	-18.2	21.06	0.8
Balochistan	8.6	14.8	-41.9	25.0	0.9
Gilgit-Baltistan	17.4	33.1	-47.4	16.7	1.3
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	87.8	120.3	-27.0	20.8	0.7
Punjab	104.2	102.1	2.1	24.1	-0.1
Sindh	67.9	30.1	125.6	27.2	-0.1

* Normal Period (1991 – 2020)

2. Seasonal Rainfall Outlook:

The seasonal outlook is based on the outputs of nine global seasonal prediction models with optimal skill. The models' outputs are combined using the Multi-Model Ensemble (MME) technique to generate operational outlooks for seasonal rainfall and temperature. Currently, the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is in a neutral phase and expected to remain in a neutral phase during the season. Likewise, the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO), currently in a marginally negative phase, is expected to shift to a neutral phase towards the end of the season.

Given these conditions, the forecast indicates a general tendency for **below-normal*** rainfall in most parts of the country with the highest deficits expected over northern Punjab, Northern belt of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. In contrast, the south-eastern regions especially the southern Sindh are expected to experience rainfall that is closer to normal, with a reduced negative anomaly as per the region's climatological patterns during the season DJF 2025-26 (Figure 2, 3). Overall, the DJF 2025–26 seasonal outlook suggests a drier start to the season in December 2025, followed by a return to normal or near-normal rainfall during late January and February 2026.

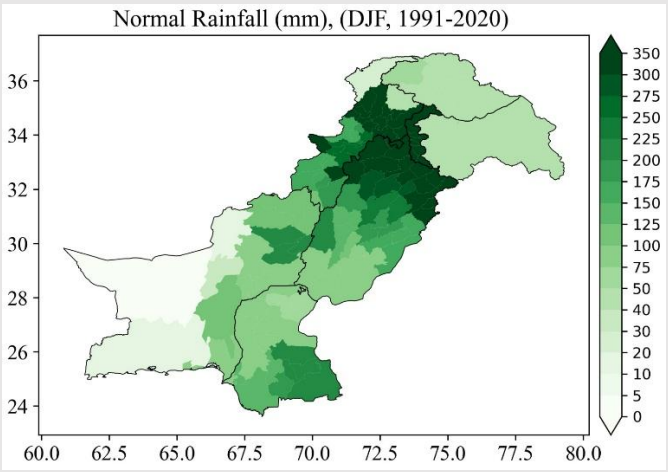

Figure 2: Normal (1991-2020) rainfall (mm) for DJF

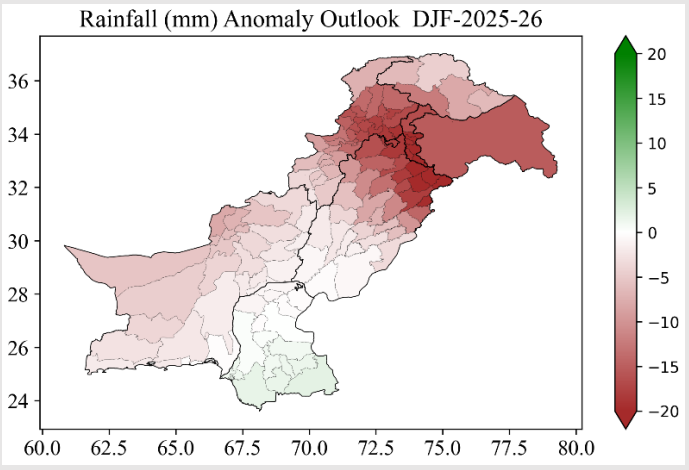

Figure 3: Monthly rainfall (mm) anomaly for DJF 2025-26

The probabilistic rainfall outlook reflects a consensus among all models used in the ensembles. The tercile probability output (Figure 4) indicates that most ensemble members predict the likelihood of below normal rainfall in northern parts of the country, whereas, the southern regions, including Sindh, Balochistan and southern Punjab and its adjoining areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are likely to receive near normal rainfall during the season DJF 2025-26.

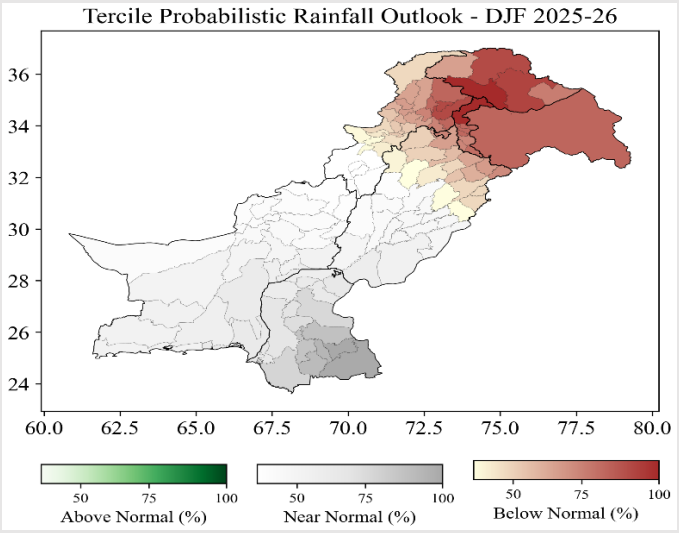

Figure 4: Probabilistic (%) rainfall outlook for DJF 2025-26

* Normal = 30-years average climatology

3. Seasonal Temperature Outlook:

Mean temperatures are expected to remain **above normal*** throughout the country, with maximum departure over eastern Gilgit Baltistan during DJF 2025-26 (Figure 5, 6).

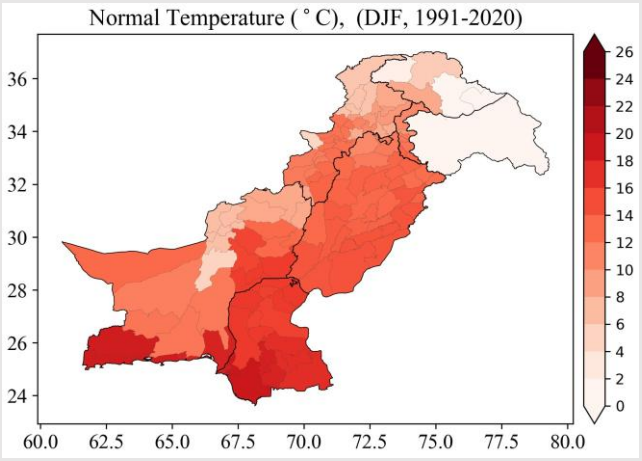

Figure 5: Normal (1991 - 2020) temperature for DJF

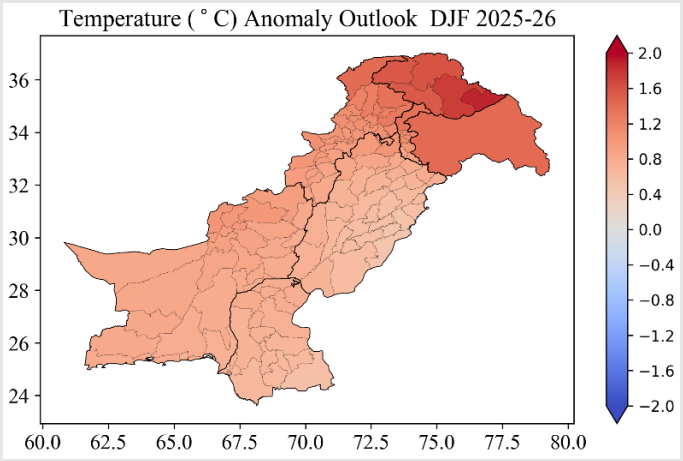

Figure 6: Monthly temperature anomaly outlook for DJF 2025-26

The tercile probabilistic temperature outlook (Figure 7) shows that most models predict above-normal temperatures across the country, with the highest likelihood over northern parts (Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir and northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and southern parts (southern Balochistan and south-western Sindh) during the forecast season.

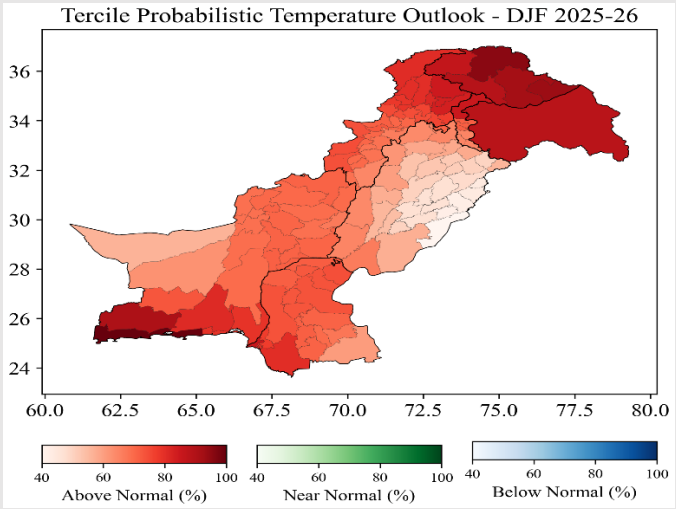

Figure 7: Probabilistic (%) temperature outlook for DJF 2025-26

4. Impacts:

- Below-normal rainfall in early season will likely lead to reduced soil moisture in KP, Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan, potentially impacting germination and early growth of Rabi crops. Farmers may need to rely more on irrigation where available to support crop development. As conditions improve in late January and February 2026, a return to normal or near-normal rainfall may help stabilize soil moisture levels and support mid-season crop recovery depending on crop type, planting time, and the intensity of early-season moisture stress

- Below normal rainfall in rain fed areas may lead to reduced water availability for irrigation. Therefore, the reliance on supplementary irrigation could increase costs and would deplete water resources.

- The above-normal temperatures may promote pest and disease activity in winter crops, necessitating proactive pest management particularly in the plains of Punjab, Sindh, and parts of KP where warmer, dry conditions could stress crops.

- Warmer-than-normal temperatures, particularly in central and southern regions, may extend dengue season conditions, warranting public health preparedness. However, the drop in temperature during January and February 2026 is likely to limit mosquito breeding, leading to the end of the dengue season.

- Prolonged dry spells early in the season may lead to an increased risk of fog and smog formation in plain areas, potentially resulting in deteriorated air quality and causing respiratory problems and reduced visibility. But, the rainfall activity in late January and February 2026 could help limit the persistence of fog and smog.

- Below-normal rainfall in December 2025 may temporarily reduce water replenishment in reservoirs, potentially affecting water availability for agriculture and the power sector. However, the return to normal or near-normal rainfall in late January and February 2026 could help restore reservoir levels, easing pressure on water resources.

Note: The Seasonal Outlook is updated monthly in the first week of the month. The forecast reliability varies with location, time of year, and global ocean/atmospheric conditions. It provides general trends using probabilities rather than precise predictions and compares expected conditions to historical averages. For better decision-making, it should be used alongside short-term forecasts and other climate data issued by PMD.