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Gilgit-Baltistan CM Urges Swift Federal Aid

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On July 26, 2025, Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan, Haji Gulbar Khan, issued an urgent appeal to the federal government for immediate relief to tackle a worsening wheat shortage and the extensive damage caused by recent flash floods. Despite a federal allocation of Rs 20 billion to procure 170,000 tonnes of subsidized wheat, no supplies have yet reached the region. With local wheat reserves fully depleted, many residents are now struggling to afford food from the open market due to rising prices and disrupted transport routes.

The wheat shortage comes at a time when Gilgit-Baltistan is already reeling from the aftermath of severe monsoon floods and landslides. These natural disasters have taken a heavy toll on the region's infrastructure, especially in Diamer and adjacent districts. Several casualties have been reported, including some tourists caught in the floods. Key

infrastructure such as roads, bridges, irrigation systems, and electricity lines have suffered severe damage. This has led to the isolation of multiple villages, disrupting daily life and impeding the delivery of essential supplies.

Chief Minister Khan pointed out that the Karakoram Highway and other major routes remain blocked in several places due to landslides, further delaying the transportation of wheat from federal storage facilities to local distribution centers. This disruption has contributed significantly to the scarcity of food and essential goods. Khan declared several areas in Diamer as disaster zones and announced compensation for families affected by the floods.

In response to the crisis, the Gilgit-Baltistan administration has launched emergency repair operations to restore roads, irrigation channels, and utilities. Efforts are underway to reconnect isolated communities and resume normal services as quickly as possible. The government's immediate priorities include rebuilding damaged infrastructure and ensuring the timely delivery of food and relief materials.

Gilgit-Baltistan's population of approximately 1.8 million is highly dependent on subsidized food supplies and agriculture. The ongoing shortage, combined with infrastructure damage, threatens to deepen food insecurity and disrupt livelihoods across the region. Given Gilgit-Baltistan's strategic location bordering China and its role in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, federal intervention is critical to maintaining stability.

Timely federal support will be essential to avert a full-scale humanitarian crisis, restore public confidence, and sustain development in this key frontier region. Chief Minister Khan's appeal underscores the urgent need for coordinated efforts between the provincial and federal governments to address immediate needs and support long-term recovery.