

Obama's approval rating on US economy hits new low
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WASHINGTON: Approval of President Barack Obama's handling of the U.S. economy has fallen to a new low of 26 percent, according to a Gallup poll released on Wednesday in the aftermath of a bruising fight with Congress over federal spending.

Seventy-one percent of Americans said they disapproved of Obama's handling of the economy, up 11 percentage points from mid-May, when Gallup last questioned people about the issue.

Approval of his handling of the economy fell by 11 percentage points from 37 percent in mid-May.

The president had similarly low approval ratings on other economic issues. Only 24 percent of Americans approved of Obama's handling of the federal budget deficit, while 29 percent approved of his efforts to create jobs.

The poll came two weeks after Congress and the president agreed on a deal to cut U.S. federal spending following a bitter political struggle that took the government to the brink of a potential default.

The president's overall job approval rating among voters questioned Aug. 11-14 was 41 percent, slightly lower than other polls conducted in August.

Approval for Obama's handling of the Afghanistan war was also sharply lower. His ratings have fallen by 15 percentage points since mid-May, when they hit 53 percent after the killing of al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

Since then, however, approval of his handling of Afghanistan has dropped to 38 percent, possibly reflecting public reaction to the downing of a U.S. military helicopter in which 30 Americans were killed, most of them elite special operations forces, Gallup said.

The poll was based on 1,008 telephone interviews with U.S. adults and had a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. – Reuters

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