



# ORSAM WATER BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin by ORSAM Water Research Programme

Events-News-Politics-Projects-Environment-ClimateChange-Neighbourhoods-Cooperation-Disputes-Scarcity and more



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*17 October 2016 – 21 October 2016*

### **\* Water technology firm Xylem opens plant in Jebel Ali**

Xylem, an American water technology company, opened its manufacturing facility in Jebel Ali yesterday as part of its US\$35 million investment in the region.

The 19,000 square metre plant will make equipment used for wastewater technologies, such as pumping systems. Under the company's expansion plan, facilities will be built across the region over the next two years, using the UAE as its hub. There will also be offices for pump rental and services operation in Saudi Arabia, Oman and Qatar.

The market for water and wastewater treatment equipment is expected to reach \$53.4 billion globally by 2020, according to US-based Global Industry Analysts.

Patrick Decker, Xylem's chief executive, told The National earlier this year that the transport, treatment and testing of water regionally is worth about \$1.8bn a year.

The Mena region only accounts for 5 per cent of the company's portfolio, but Xylem has ambitions to increase that to double digits over the next few years.

"The Middle East and North Africa region has always been a priority market for us," said Steve Leung, Xylem's senior vice president and president of emerging markets.

17/10/2016 online at: <http://www.thenational.ae/business/economy/water-technology-firm-xylem-opens-plant-in-jebel-ali?>

### **\* Palestinian refugees starved of clean drinking water by Israeli red tape**

Denied access to clean water by the indifference of the Israeli authorities, the residents of Aqabat Jaber refugee camp say their children are suffering permanent health damage.

Mohammed is a camp resident and father, and regularly makes a three-kilometre trek to neighbouring Jericho to fill up gallon jugs of clean drinking water.

"We don't have swimming pools, and this isn't Wadi Qelt," he tells the Palestine Monitor, referring to the lush hiking route which follows a stream through a cleft in the surrounding mountains. "We just need water to clean and to drink."



The problem is as clear as running water, but muddied by the silt of bureaucracy. With the support of foreign aid from France, major pipes have already been laid through the West Bank’s oldest refugee camp.

All that remains is to connect these to Aqabat Jaber’s own pump and turn on the taps. According to Jamal Awwadat, the head of the camp’s Popular Committee, this work should take no more than a month.

But until the Israelis give permission for the work to go ahead, the pipes will remain dry. “They said you cannot work here, you cannot build anything, you need permits from 13 different committees,” Jamal tells the Palestine Monitor.

The camp’s estimated 10,000 residents have been kept waiting for three years, following an endless succession of delays and excuses Jamal views as deliberate: “the Israelis tie everything to politics.”

While the Israelis shuffle pieces of paper around, the refugees in the camp are forced to rely on a meager trickle of unsanitary water, provided at a premium by the Israeli company Mekorot. The state-owned company has been accused of operating a system of “water apartheid” by a French parliamentary report, systematically denying Palestinians access to this most basic of natural resources.

“This water [provided by Mekorot]? If you tried to sell it in your country, no-one would buy it,” Jamal says. “If you tried to give it away for free, they wouldn’t take it.”

Though those who can afford an alternative do not drink Mekorot water at all, many children at the camp’s two schools come from families too poor to buy water from Jericho. Even the filthy water intermittently pumped through the camp costs around 3 shekels (\$1) per litre, a significant financial burden for many families.

Jamal shows the Palestine Monitor how salt is crusted around pipes carrying Mekorot water through the camp, looking incongruously like icicles in the desert heat. As a result of this heavy saline content,



doctors have warned that the camp's children are suffering permanent damage to their vulnerable kidneys.

A summer of rampant shortages has seen the price of water increase up to twelve times in parts of the West Bank, as the Israeli government has refused to negotiate a solution with the Palestinians. In Aqabat Jaber, a 24-hour water cut-out on October 2 was just one crisis among many.

Three-hour water black-outs are a daily occurrence, and water is regularly rationed through the different sections of the camp. Jamal says Aqabat Jaber residents can access only 35 to 50 liters of water a day, a third to a half of the 100 liters recommended as a safe minimum by the World Health Organization.

The aggressive disinterest of the Israeli government is one thing, but the camp's access to clean water is also being dammed closer to home. Israeli settlers in communities such as nearby Erad Yeriho use an average of 370 litres of water each day. Aerial photos of their fiercely-guarded colonies show swimming pools gleaming sapphire among rich vegetation and rolling lawns.

For the last 16 years, Sami has operated a popular, eponymous hostel in the camp, and his name is on the lips of every taxi-driver touting in Jericho.

His hostel provides employment for camp residents and offers tourists a chance to see the realities of life in Palestine while enjoying famous hospitality in the only budget accommodation in the area. But Israeli inertia is squeezing out the profit from his business, as he is forced to shell out 150 shekels a day for low-quality water.

"We take the water from here," Sami explains to the Palestine Monitor, jabbing his finger at the top inch of a water-bottle pressed into service as a model well, "but the settlers can take it from here." So saying, he drags his finger down to the bottom of the bottle.

"If we're lucky then we get some water," he continues, "though it's dirty and salty. And if the water level goes down, then we go without."



For decades, the Israeli government has been systematically draining the Jordan River. Enthusiastically sucking up its waters to fund lucrative agricultural projects in the illegal settlements, they have paid scanty regard to the sustainability of these operations, let alone their short-term impact on the lives of Palestinians.

Jamal shows me photographs from the camp's early days of women bearing baskets of fruit on their head, rich produce grown from the desert soil with the help of canals reaching high into the mountains. But this irrigation system has run dry, and the channels which still run through the camp are clogged with dust and litter.

Even without a degree in hydro-engineering history, the disparity between the pump serving nearby settlers and that serving the camp is clear. The Israeli pump is as thick as a man's torso, the Palestinian pump a malnourished limb by comparison.

Both are fenced off behind barbed wire, and Jamal cautions us not to step too close to the compound. If we do, the Israelis could pick us up on CCTV, mistake us for saboteurs and retaliate with aggressive or even lethal force.

"They take the water from under our feet, they give it to the settlers for free," Jamal says. "But they sell it back to us. Our water, that comes from our land."

17/10/2016 online at: <http://www.palestinemonitor.org/details.php?id=bciqk0a14125sysd6k4v9qc>

\* **East Aleppo water network on verge of collapse: opposition**

The water network in rebel-held Aleppo is on the verge of complete collapse following weeks of intense Syrian regime and Russian bombardment, according to the utilities service in the encircled eastern half of the beleaguered city.

In a statement issued Tuesday, the General Administration for Services announced that "since the start of the [regime's] military offensive 28 days ago, 80% percent of the drinking water network [in eastern Aleppo] is out of service because of heavy shelling and the systematic destruction of water main lines."



“In light of the continuation of this [offensive], we foresee that the entire network will be out of service at the end of this month,” the rebel administrative body warned.

According to the General Administration for Services, regime bombardment has not only targeted the main water pumping stations serving eastern Aleppo, knocking them out of service for days at a time, but also electricity stations powering key points of the water network as well as water wells.

The statement said that infrastructure damage was preventing the arrival of water to 45 neighborhoods in eastern Aleppo, “thus depriving 200,000 civilians from the right of access to safe drinking water.”

Concerns rocketed over the humanitarian conditions in eastern Aleppo after the Syrian army on September 22 announced the start of a military campaign aimed at seizing control over the rebel held districts of Syria’s second city.

The water situation in the city has remained touch-and-go, with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reporting on October 13 that service “improved slightly after an agreement between the parties to the conflict” regarding the Sulaiman al-Halabi and Bab al-Nayrab water stations.

A week earlier, an Oxfam report on the dire situation noted that over 1.5 million people in both government and rebel-controlled areas of Aleppo were without running water after the two main stations were shut down due to fighting.

18/10/2016 online at: <https://now.mmedia.me/lb/en/NewsReports/567437-east-aleppo-water-network-on-verge-of-collapse-opposition?>



**\* Iran, Guinea partner in water, energy sectors**

Iran and the Republic of Guinea have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to step up cooperation in water, power and energy sectors, a report said.

The pact includes the construction of power plants and hydroelectric dams in the West African state, the Iran Daily report said, citing Mehr News Agency.

The deal was signed by an Iran-Guinea joint venture and Iran's Power and Water Equipment and Services Export Company (Sunir).

Iran plans to take part in Africa's international tenders, run partnership by financing the projects, form national and international consortiums as well as to exploit capabilities of prominent foreign firms to implement African power and energy projects, Bahman Salehi, CEO of Sunir was quoted as saying in the report.

"With a population of over 1.2 billion in 54 countries and its huge oil and gas reserves as well as water, Africa offers excellent opportunities Iran's water and energy equipment and services industries to undertake energy projects with leading international companies," he said.

Projects in Guinea's energy sector are worth at \$5 billion which provide good prospects for 250 Iranian contractors, Salehi estimated.

18/10/2016 online at: [http://www.tradearabia.com/news/OGN\\_315255.html?](http://www.tradearabia.com/news/OGN_315255.html?)

**\* Dubai Water Canal all set to make a splash next month**

The bridge over Shaikh Zayed Road is already open in both directions, and bridges over Al Wasl Road and Jumeirah Beach Road have been completed.

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There is excitement in the air in anticipation of the opening of the iconic Dubai Water Canal next month. This means the Dubai Water Canal, which stretches 3.2km from the Business Bay Canal up to



the Arabian Gulf via the Shaikh Zayed Road, Al Wasl Road and Jumeirah Road, will be a flowing waterway by year end.

The bridge over Shaikh Zayed Road is already open in both directions, and bridges over Al Wasl Road and Jumeirah Beach Road have been completed. The pedestrian bridges over the canal near Safa Park are almost finished, according to Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA).

The RTA also recently displayed at the Gitex Technology Week an HD pedestrian detection camera system and a smart lighting system with tentative WiFi service installed on the Shaikh Zayed Road bridge over the canal.

Although parks, hotels, restaurants, luxury housing and facilities - including walkways, cycle paths, private marinas for boats and a trade centre at the entrance of the project - are yet to be built, residents have no doubt that the project will add "another excitement to the vibrant city of Dubai".

"It will definitely be a plus for Dubai as the tourism sector will benefit from this future landmark," a resident said.

Property developers are also keeping pace with the "fast construction" of the Dubai Water Canal, with one property group recently announcing that Phase 1 of their project at the waterfront, which includes "the UAE's first-ever water-homes, will be delivered by end of next year".

The group CEO said: "(The residences) which are being built on water with pedestrian and boat access, provide unparalleled direct water views ... and have attracted high-levels of local and international interest enhancing Dubai's iconic status as a preferred place to live, work and visit."

Surrounding developments will also get a boost from the Dubai Water Canal. A property expert told Khaleej Times: "There will certainly be a long-term impact, but this will be driven by the quality of projects being announced and delivered around the canal over the next few months and years. The momentum has already been building up for Jumeirah and City Walk as it becomes one of the prime freehold districts in Dubai. The opening of the canal will crystallise their position."



The Dubai Water Canal, announced on October 2, 2013, at a cost of Dh2 billion, will finally be open next month. It will be the start of a journey of discovery with unlimited options for entertainment, leisure, retail and an active lifestyle.

20/10/ 2016 online at: <http://www.khaleejtimes.com/nation/general/dubai-water-canal-is-all-set-to-make-a-splash-next-month>

**\* Pakistan warns of action if India breaches Indus Water Treaty**

Pakistan on Thursday warned of “appropriate action” if India violates the Indus Water Treaty and said it is closely monitoring the situation, amid reports that New Delhi may revisit the key water sharing accord. “Appropriate action will be taken in line with the Treaty in case of any violation by India,” Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Nafees Zakaria said at the weekly briefing.

Pakistan was keeping a close eye on the situation, Radio Pakistan quoted him as saying. Zakaria’s remarks come amid reports that India may review the 56-year-old Indus Water Treaty.

He said that India is making “desperate attempts” to divert attention from the “atrocities and human right violations” being committed in Kashmir.

He said Pakistan is highlighting Indian brutalities in Kashmir at world fora and there has been “very substantive outcome” of these efforts but the international community remains concerned about the situation.

Responding to a question, he claimed that India violated ceasefire on the Line of Control for more than 90 times this year.

The notion of isolating Pakistan is “ridiculous”, Zakaria said, adding that India’s “negative attitude” has been exposed which is the biggest hurdle in the way of regional development and prosperity.

He also termed the Indian treatment to the Pakistani artistes as “very disappointing and highly regrettable” as he deplored India’s decision to “use SAARC for its political ambition”, according to the report.



Zakaria also referred to a media report quoting US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who described tensions between India and Pakistan as a “very, very hot tinderbox” and offered to be “the mediator or arbitrator”.

Zakaria noted that though Pakistan does not comment on media reports usually, in this case it welcomed the mediation offer.

“We continue to urge our American friends including those in the administration to play their due role in resolving bilateral issues between Pakistan and India, particularly the Kashmir dispute,” he said.

“And definitely Pakistan has welcomed in the past also any role of mediation, we welcome such offers,” he added.

20/10/2016 online at:<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/pakistan-warns-of-action-if-india-breaches-indus-water-treaty-3093355/>

#### \* **Chinese interested in water sector**

A delegation led by China First Metallurgy Group Vice Chairman Guo Jizhou calls on Punjab Chief Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on Thursday.

The Chinese delegation expressed interest in investment in water sector of Punjab. Talking to the delegation, the chief minister said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has given new dimension to Pakistan-China friendship and China is fully supporting Pakistan’s progress and prosperity.

He said that work is being carried out speedily on the projects throughout Pakistan under CPEC. Energy projects are going to complete in a record period under CPEC and economic corridor project will change the destiny of the region including Pakistan, he added.

CM Shehbaz said that there are vast opportunities of investment in Punjab. He lauded the Chinese investors for expressing interest in water sector of Punjab. He said that the Chinese group should consider cooperation for improvement in industrial waste treatment, sanitation and sewerage.



He directed to constitute a high-level committee, which will present practicable recommendations after reviewing the proposal of Chinese investors. On the occasion, the China First Metallurgy Group vice chairman said that CM Shehbaz has played an exemplary role for strengthening Pakistan-China friendship. He said that he is pleased on speedy and transparent completion of projects under CPEC.

He said that cooperation will be promoted with the Punjab government in water sector. Provincial Minister for Housing Tanvir Aslam Malik, irrigation secretary, Planning & Development chairman, Punjab Saaf Pani Company chief executive officer, Commissioner Lahore Division and concerned officials were also present on the occasion.

Staff Reporter from Islamabad:Arabian multinational TAG-ORG has shown interest in investing in Pakistan. A delegation led by Dr Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, head of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organisation, while visiting Ministry of IT and other offices in capital, expressed the intent to closely work at professional level to tap each other's expertise to achieve mutual goals of achieving the targets under SDGs, said a handout.

Ghazaleh expressed his organization's interest to invest into the IT industry of Pakistan and to open more offices in Islamabad and Lahore. While meeting with State Minister Anusha Rehman, several areas of bilateral cooperation among various entities of the MoIT including Research and Development Fund and Virtual University were explored.

Keeping in view the expertise of TAG Org in delivering comprehensive online professional certification programs and several areas of global development outreach of the TAG Org, two MOUs were also signed between the Virtual University and the National ICT R&D Fund.

The guests were also apprised about National ICT Incubation Centre and that government considers ICTs as key enabler to enhance productivity, transparency, and good governance for empowering the people thus, moving forward towards attaining the objectives set under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

21/10/2016 online at: <http://nation.com.pk/business/21-Oct-2016/chinese-interested-in-water-sector?>



**\* Power and Water Ministry fleecing consumers with impunity**

The Power and Water Ministry is overcharging consumers through overbilling. It was revealed in a meeting of the National Assembly's (NA) Sub-committee on Water and Power. The meeting was held under Acting Convener Ghulam Mustafa Shah in Pakistan Secretariat.

The meeting also discussed problems faced by SEPCO and HESCO. A Water and Power Ministry official admitted that overbilling worth Rs 40 million was being done in SEPCO monthly, which has been discontinued. "We are striving hard to end more overbilling."

Kazim Ali Shah said that settlements upon settlements were wiped out during floods in Pir Kot and even then electricity bills were served on the consumers of these areas.

The ministry officials told the committee that kunda system was widely used in SEPCO and HESCO and recovery level was disappointing.

"All the endeavours are being made to overcome these problems. If parliamentarians extend help then these difficulties can be reined in," he added.

The committee said that enacting law is the committee's domain and implementing these laws is the duty of law enforcers.

The acting convener flayed the ministry and said that if any transformer goes out of order in rural areas it is repaired forthwith, but when transformers become dysfunctional then consumers are heavily charged and no measures are taken for repair of these defective transformers. The stealing of private transformers is on the rise as well. The transformers are taken out and then are sold out but no action is taken in this respect.

The ministry representatives told the committee that action is underway against such gangs and it is doubtless to say that WAPDA employees are also involved in such thefts. As many as 60 SEPCO meter readers involved in tampering mobile reading system have been removed while XEN and SDO from Muzaffargarh and Leyyah have also been suspended. Mobile reading system is being improved in HESCO and SEPCO and efficiency will improve by 70 percent until December.

About delay in installation of transformers, SEPCO told the committee that SEPCO DISCO is facing shortage of transformers and poles and it will take at least three months to overcome this deficiency.



The authorities, however, admitted that they are facing difficulties in taking action against power pilferers because the WAPDA employees are involved in minting of money.

The committee recommended that SEPCO and HESCO should improve their performance so that consumers could get relief and those who are not involved in power theft could get benefit.

21/10/2016 online at: <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/21-Oct-16/power-and-water-ministry-fleeing-consumers-with-impunity>

\* **Water shortage in Jeddah**

Despite the increase in water charges, most areas in Al-Faisaliyah District are not receiving water through government connections and residents are forced to pay extra money for water tankers and it takes a number of days to arrange for these tankers.

The relevant authorities should take notice of the situation and take necessary steps to ensure proper supply of water to this area. The officials should also look into the possibility of corruption in this regard. Many people claim that water shortage is created to help boost the tanker business.

I urge the National Water Company and other relevant departments to take immediate action to address the issue as the condition is becoming unbearable and it is putting an extra financial burden on area residents. In addition to that some mechanism should also be devised to prevent building owners or landlords from fleecing tenants on account on water charges.

21/10/2016 online at: <http://www.arabnews.com/node/1000316/columns>

\***Efforts afoot to overcome water shortage in capital**

The government is mulling to supply water to the metropolitan from Ghazi Bharotha reservoir aimed to overcome shortage of clean drinking water issue in the federal capital, says an official of Capital Administration and Development Division(CADD).

He said currently the Simli Dame fed the federal capital but its supply could not cater to the requirements of residents.

Thus, as an instant solution, tube wells were being installed to overcome water shortage in addition to moving forward on a plan to lay pipeline from Ghazi Bharotha dam.



He also said roads of the Islamabad sectors were being refurbished, adding strict measures would be taken against encroachments at those roads especially at business centers of the capital.

He said policy with regard to slum areas which had been categorized, was being implemented in letter and spirit and compensation in this regard was paid after pursuing a transparent procedures. He added during last two years 4650 electrical and mechanical related complaints of Sector G 6/1-4 were received, out of which 4440 were attended.

The services wing received 13953 of complaints related to Sewerage, Welding/repair, etc. were received, out of which 13852 of complaints were disposed off during said period.

The E&M Wing received 25 complaints registered in Sector G-6/1-4 Inquiry related to replacement of fans, burners etc. could not be attended due to non-availability of funds, adding the same shall be attended during current financial year 2016-17 subject to availability of funds.

The Services Wing 101 complaints related to general repair were pending due to shortage of funds and non availability of store material.

21/10/2016 online at: <http://nation.com.pk/islamabad/21-Oct-2016/efforts-afoot-to-overcome-water-shortage-in-capital?>

**\* Iran, Netherlands boost coop. on energy, water management**

Iranian Energy Minister Hamid Chitchian and his Dutch counterpart Melanie Schultz van Haegen, Minister of Infrastructure and the Environment, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Sunday, aiming to boost cooperation in solar energy as well as water resources management.

Pointing to various ways of cooperation between Iran and the Netherlands, Chitchian said the atmosphere for further cooperation provided by JCPOA and the meeting between the foreign ministers of the two countries could help restore ties between Iran and the Netherlands.

Environmental issues, water management and energy in industrial and agricultural fields can be an important incentive to improve relations between the two countries, he noted.

"Both countries have held numerous talks aimed at boosting mutual ties and cooperation in different areas and in this regard, Iran-Netherlands Trade and Culture Center was officially inaugurated in Hague recently."



Chitchian underlined that the Netherlands possesses high-tech machines dealing with water as it is a country with many water resources. Banking cooperation between the two countries is of great importance and with removal of the existing obstacles, good cooperation will ultimately lead to the intensification of economic relations between the two countries, Chitchian noted.

Melanie Schultz van Haegen, for her part, reiterated that the signing of the memorandum of understanding would strengthen cooperation between Iran and the Netherlands in the areas of water technology. "Netherlands can hold good cooperation with Iran in the field of desalination and the use of wastewater in agriculture," she added.

She also referred to the issues including river, flood and water shortages management, knowledge-based cooperation and training managers in Dutch scientific and educational institutions as incentives to provide the grounds for enhanced cooperation between the two countries.

23/10/2016 online at: <http://en.mehrnews.com/news/120754/Iran-Netherlands-boost-coop-on-energy-water-management?>

**\* UAE gets 137 applications for global water award**

The UAE Water Aid Foundation (Suqia), under the umbrella of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives (MBRGI), has received 137 applications to participate in the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Water Award.

The award is worth \$1 million and aims to find solutions to the global problem of water scarcity. Suqia announced that registration for the award is now closed, following the deadline being extended to September 30,2016. The award gained interest from leading corporations, research centres, institutions and innovators from around the world to compete to find sustainable and innovative solar-energy solutions for water scarcity.

“The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Water Award has gained local, regional, and international attention throughout the various campaigns we have organised, especially in the Netherlands, India, Germany, UK, Italy, and China,” said Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, chairman of Suqia. “This has added to the coverage of the Award with international events such as COP21 in Paris, the Solar Decathlon in California, the Carbon Ambassadors Programme in Dubai, and other activities that coincide with the 70th session of the UN General Assembly in New York, in addition to a number



of universities in the UAE. “Suqia is a beacon of the UAE’s attempts to help the planet, by providing sustainable solutions for water scarcity to reduce contamination of drinking water throughout the world. Suqia also participates in international efforts to supply clean water, and eliminate water-related life-threatening diseases, while protecting clean water from being polluted,” added Al Tayer. A majority of the applications for the award were put forward by 26 UAE-based applicants. This reflects the commitment of all government and private organisations to achieve the vision of the wise leadership. Suqia also received 14 applications from Egypt and 10 from India, 5 each from Saudi Arabia, The Netherlands, and South Korea, 4 applications each from the United Kingdom, Kuwait, and Italy, 3 applications each from Bahrain, South Africa, France, Brazil, Qatar, Japan, Greece, and the United States of America, and 36 applications from other multinational organisations.

“The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Water Award has three categories. These are the Innovative Projects Award for Small and Large projects, the Innovative Research and Development Award for National and International institutions, and the Innovative Youth Award. The names of the winners will be announced during the first quarter of 2017. The criteria for the evaluation includes technology, design, environmental alignment, creativity, innovation, health and safety, and sustainability,” said Mohammed Abdulkareem Al Shamsi, acting executive director of Suqia.

The Innovative Projects category is for organisations that succeed in innovating distinguished projects to produce, desalinate, or purify water using solar power. This category consists of two sub categories: the Small Projects category is for projects by for-profit or non-profit companies, and government or non-government organisations. Projects must have a capital expenditure of up to \$10 million.

The Large Projects category is for projects by for-profit or non-profit companies, and government or non-government organisations. Projects must have a capital expenditure exceeding \$10 million. Applicants for the Innovative Research and Development category must submit innovative technologies or a prototype for using solar energy to produce, desalinate, purify, or effectively manage water resources. This has two sub-categories: The National Institutions category is for educational or non-profit institutions and research centres in the UAE. The International Institutions category is for educational or non-profit institutions and research centres outside the UAE. Applicants for the



Innovative Youth Award must present innovative technological solutions to address water scarcity exclusively using solar energy to produce safe drinking water. Applicants must be younger than 40. The project must be developed and implemented by individuals, not groups.

23/10/2016 online at: [http://www.tradearabia.com/news/HEAL\\_315499.html](http://www.tradearabia.com/news/HEAL_315499.html)?

**\* Egypt limits area for rice cultivation in 2017 to preserve water**

Egypt will decrease land area used for rice production in the 2017 season with a decrease of 34.6 percent, according to a decree issued by the Ministry of Irrigation and published in the Official Gazette on Sunday.

In an attempt to preserve scarce water resources, the Ministry limited the cultivation of the water-consuming crop to 6 governorates covering an area of 704.5 thousand feddans in comparison to 1.076 million feddans in 2016 season.

The only governorates that will be allowed to cultivate rice are Beheira, Kafr El-Sheikh, Daqahliya, Damietta, Port Said, and Sharqiya.

The ministry will provide water for rice fields in the selected governorates from May - August 2017.

Rice, a key staple foodstuff for millions of Egyptians, consumes 9,500 to 11,000 cubic metres water per hectare, a much higher average compared to other crops.

Per the decree, rice production would be banned in unauthorized fields with violators subjected to fines.

Egypt has long outlawed rice exports to preserve stocks for the local market and combat rising prices.

In August, the Egyptian government said it aims to procure up to 2 million tonnes of rice from farmers by purchasing long grain rice at EGP 2,300 per tonne and short grain rice at EGP 2,400 per tonne.

According to the US Department of Agriculture's Grain and Feed annual report issued in October, post forecast for milled rice production is at 4.0 million metric tonnes with a post forecast for rice consumption at 3.5 million metric tonnes in 2016/17.



In recent months, rice has been among the essential food stuff facing price hikes as a result of low supply due to traders holding stock.

Earlier in October, Egypt's Supply Ministry Mohamed Ali El-Sheikh said the government will hold an international tender for rice seeking to purchase a minimum of 500,000 tonnes in order to secure rations for consumers who receive food subsidies.

The minister said during a press conference on sugar scarcity last week that President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi has ordered the managing of essential foodstuff reserves to cover six months.

23/10/ 2016 online at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/246422/-.aspx?>

**\* UN calls for effective means to resolve Afghan water dispute for economic growth, avoiding conflict**

A new United Nations report has underscored the need for more “effective and transparent” means of resolving high stakes water-rights disputes in Afghanistan resulting from the demand for water to support agricultural development in the conflict-plagued country.

“As this report clearly outlines, the stakes involved in water disputes are high,” the Secretary-General’s Special Representative for the country Tadamichi Yamamoto, said in a statement on Sunday.

“Resolving these disputes peacefully is of critical importance,” added Yamamoto, who also heads the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Outlining the importance of water to the country’s economy, the UNAMA report, titled Water Rights: An Assessment of Afghanistan’s Legal Framework Governing Water for Agriculture report, notes that formal and informal means are used to resolve water-related disputes in the country, including the 2009 Water Law, along with traditional customs and practices associated with the longstanding authority and community respect for water masters, or mirabs.

One key finding is that water users continue to rely predominately on local water masters to resolve disputes, largely due to gaps in the Water Law’s scope and associated administrative structure.



Michael Hartmann, Director of UNAMA’s Rule of Law Unit, stated that this finding “confirms that the challenge is not with the law as written but, rather, with the law as implemented,” and that “UNAMA will continue to assist in achieving broader implementation of the Water Law.”

Almost 80 per cent of Afghans derive their livelihood from the agricultural sector. Many rural communities depend on reliable access to water sources to grow the crops and nourish the livestock on which their lives and livelihoods depend.

The report documents the results of a field study designed to assess the effectiveness of dispute-resolution mechanisms, and also provides practical recommendations to facilitate the resolution of disputes without escalation to violence.

The recommendations include:

The Water Law’s administrative structure should be fully implemented in all water basins by establishing the councils, sub-councils, and user associations the law anticipated;

The Supreme Council of Water Affairs Management, which the Water Law established to improve coordination and implementation of water resource programs, should utilize its authority to streamline the management of water resources among the responsible ministries and departments;

The process for dispute resolution with the possibility of judicial review thereafter should likewise be streamlined so that administrative decisions may be implemented without interfering with crop growth or harvesting. Temporary orders or forms of relief should be fashioned to ensure that crops are not lost due to delays in resolving water rights;

To ensure adequate remedies for those whose water rights have been violated, administrative or judicial officials should award financial compensation for direct and consequential damages, including fair market value of any crops lost, resulting from the violation;

To promote greater transparency, the traditional practices and customs relating to water rights, such as the Taximot Hakobe Ab, should be made publicly available to all water users through provincial and district libraries or the Internet, along with copies of formal and informal decisions made by administrative bodies, courts, and mirabs.

24/10/2016 online at: <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/10/24/foreign/un-calls-for-effective-means-to-resolve-afghan-water-dispute-for-economic-growth-avoiding-conflict/>



\* **'85% of mineral water brands unregistered'**

As many as 1,500 brands of different pure waters are available in the market, and 150 of them claim to be mineral water, but more than 85 percent of them are unregistered.

This was stated by Patients Rights Forum chairman and renowned pharmacist Noor Mehar while talking to APP on Sunday. He said that there were 32 tests of mineral water to get certification for its fitness but unfortunately, over 85 per cent of all brands being sold in the country are unregistered.

As per law, it is mandatory for water companies to get registered their brands with the Drug Regulation Authority Pakistan (DRAP). Noor Mehar said that some companies had started selling their bottled water under 'pure water' brands instead of mineral water to avoid fitness test mandatory for mineral water. He also cited the example of the USA Food and Drug Authority, which issues certificates after complete tests for the sale of water or any other product relating to food or medicines.

24/10/2016 online at: <http://dailytimes.com.pk/punjab/24-Oct-16/85-of-mineral-water-brands-unregistered?>