



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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11 April 2017 – 17 April 2017

Turkey to cover clean water demand in northern Syria

Deputy Prime Minister Veysi Kaynak said yesterday that the Turkish government is continuing intense efforts in Syria to help the war-ravaged state regain its functionality in infrastructure, including totally meeting the clean drinking water needs in the country's north, which was liberated from Daesh terrorists with Operation Euphrates Shield.

Speaking to reporters, Kaynak touched upon a possible new cross-border operation in Syria and Iraq, saying that Ankara primarily focused on helping the normalization of civilian life in the areas that have been liberated from Daesh.

"After this time, our duty is accelerating of returning to a normal life. Syrian people have migrated to various countries around the world, notably to Turkey," he said.

"We are coordinating with the Syrian transition government and local administrations, to provide clean water to the region. Agriculture has been reviving and they will harvest in summer. We are also repairing schools. Just in this year, 60,000 children returned to their schools," he added.

Ankara launched the cross-border Operation Euphrates Shield on Aug. 24 last year to secure Turkey's southern border. The operation ended March 29, as officials announced that more than 2,000 square kilometers (770 square miles) of land in northern Syria had been liberated from Daesh, more than 2,500 terrorists were killed and that some 100,000 refugees living in the Gaziantep province are now expected to return to the liberated areas.

After Operation Euphrates Shield, Turkish officials said Ankara can launch a new cross-border operation if needed, even though they did not specify what may prompt Turkish forces to make such a move.

Meanwhile, Kaynak added that he will meet with officials from the United Nations in Geneva on April 25 in order to discuss the construction of temporary shelters for people in al-Bab who do not have accommodation.

"If we can obtain financial support, we will provide at least a temporary shelter for those who have been living in wooded areas. We have already planned the education and health infrastructure of the region. A depot was also constructed in Kilis, near the Turkey-Syrian border, in order to regularly procure food and medicine for these people," he said

12/04/2017 online at: <https://www.dailysabah.com/diplomacy/2017/04/13/turkey-to-cover-clean-water-demand-in-northern-syria>

Israel uproots olive trees to build water supply system serving settlements

Israeli bulldozers Tuesday cut down olive trees to the south of Salfit's Deir Ballout town, to build a new water supply network serving nearby Israeli settlements, according to Wafa correspondent.

Israeli bulldozers, backed by Israeli forces, uprooted 18 fully grown olive trees in an area located to the south of the town of Deir Ballout in order to build a new water supply network that would serve settlers living in nearby illegal settlements, built illegally on the town's land.

11/04/2017 online at: <http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=v40jxCa74433746871av40jxC>

Israeli firm to provide water for India, Vietnam

An Israeli company whose technology made a splash at the recent AIPAC conference has signed deals to produce drinking water—by extracting it from the air—in India and Vietnam, two countries that have long faced shortages.

Water Gen inked an agreement with India's second largest solar company to produce purified water for remote villages in the country. Earlier, the company arranged with the Hanoi government to set up water generators in the Vietnamese capital.

“The government of Vietnam greatly esteems the technological developments in Israel, and I hope that the Israeli technology that we supply to Vietnam will significantly help to improve water conditions in the country,” Water Gen President Mikhael Mirilashvili said after the signing in Hanoi, according to a statement.

The memoranda of understanding are worth \$150-million in total, according to Water Gen, which was founded in 2009 and creates technology that extracts water from the air for use by civilians and soldiers who do not have access to clean sources.

12/04/2017 online at: http://www.jewishvoicesnj.org/news/2017-04-12/Mideast/Israeli_firm_to_provide_water_for_India_Vietnam.html

Arrests made over alleged filthy drinking water business near Jeddah

Several people have been held for investigation for allegedly selling drinking water drawn from a drainage canal near Jeddah, the Makkah Governorate said in a statement on Monday.

It said Jeddah Gov. Prince Mishaal bin Majed ordered an investigation into the issue after a video clip went viral on social media showing water being pumped from a canal in the village of Bahra supposedly as part of the drinking water business.

The video clip shows an electric water pump drawing water from the canal. It does not show where the hose leads to.

After confirming the veracity of the video, several people involved in the operation were arrested and referred for further legal proceedings against them, the governorate said in a statement.

Teams from the National Water Company inspected the location and identified infringements, then officially submitted the matter to pertinent authorities to address the situation.

The company said the sewage channel that appeared in the video is a stream for the triple treatment of sewage water coming from treatment stations in Bahra and Arna, and passing through Jeddah city.

The NWC inspected the areas surrounding the channel and the treatment stations in Bahra and Arna to make sure there were no additional infringements.

Bahra is located along the road to Makkah city from Jeddah.

11/04/2017 online at: <http://www.arabnews.com/node/1082621/saudi-arabia>

Houthi Putschists Deprive Eight Yemeni Cities from Water

Yemeni areas under insurgency control continue to register deteriorating humanitarian conditions, with worsening water supply shortages. The internationally backed government estimated that eight Houthi-held areas have poor water supply.

With every day that passes by Yemenis locked in Houthi-held areas face worsening survival conditions with access to drinkable water dropping. High levels of contamination of water sources have been recorded.

The water supply and sanitation ministry in Yemen refrained from declaring a state of emergency, in an aim to curb the outbreak of panic and further disorder in the war-torn country.

Partnered with international bodies, the ministry will spare no effort in the quest to containing the crisis.

Most of the areas suffering water shortages are located in Tihamah which is a Red Sea coastal plain stretching from the Gulf of Aqaba to the Bab el Mandeb Strait, government official Hibatallah Saghir Sharim told Asharq Al-Awsat.

Parched tracts of land include Hajjah Governorate, Hodeida, and Sana'a districts all of which are held under Iran-aligned Houthi militias, the official said.

Local authorities have sent out a cry of help warning the human catastrophe right around the corner.

Water pumping has dropped by a disastrous 50 percent in militia-held areas, the government has been working day and night to enhance water provisions to districts in need. However, water supplies pumped or channeled to insurgency areas are appropriated by militiamen to be sold at rocketing prices to impoverished civilians.

Sharim said that ministerial staffs have contacted a number of international parties officially relaying the growing fears for civilians entrapped in coup-held areas. Some organizations have responded positively to the call for help.

The only challenge remaining at hand is delivering aid and humanitarian assistance to people undergoing a hostile and oppressive insurgency rule.

Yemen will soon be facing the worst drought in almost 70 years with a significant risk of starvation leading to “mass deaths”, the United Nations refugee agency had also warned.

Four countries – Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen – stand on the brink of a new humanitarian crisis brought about by drought and famine.

12/04/2017 online at: <http://english.aawsat.com/s-alabyad/news-middle-east/houthi-putschists-deprive-eight-yemeni-cities-water>

Electricity Minister receives Water Society delegation

Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Dr. Abdulhussain Mirza received members of the Society of Water Science and Technology, headed by Advisory Committee member Dr. Abdul Majeed Al Awadhi and Scientific Committee Chairman Dr. Walid Zabari. Director of the society, Ali Reda, accompanied them.

The visitors thanked Dr. Mirza for his continuous support and for agreeing to deliver the keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the 12th Gulf Water Conference, which was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa.

A large number of stakeholders in the technical and specialized fields of water from within and outside Bahrain took part in the conference that served as a forum for open scientific discussion and exchange of views and experiences among specialists and decision-makers about integrated strategies in the GCC countries.

The conference focused on the development and sustainability of different water sources and legislative, economic and environmental considerations. Dr. Mirza spoke about his interest in encouraging and supporting conferences and symposiums in Bahrain on these important specialized fields and thanked His Royal Highness the Prime Minister for his patronage. He also thanked Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid Bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, for opening the conference on behalf of His Highness the Prime Minister.

12/04/2017 online at: <http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/780357>

Government considers modifying water consumption bills scheme

The Holding Company for Water and Wastewater (HCWW) will present a proposal to change the way of calculating water-consumption bills to the cabinet.

Chairperson of the company, Mamdouh Raslan, told Daily News Egypt that the suggestion includes amending the segments so that the first segment ranges from 1 to 10 cubic meters per day, while the second segment would be from 11 to 21 cubic meters, and the third from 21 to 30 cubic meters.

The current scheme is divided into the first segment between 0 and 10 cubic meters per day, the second from 0 to 20 cubic metres, and the third between 0 and 30 cubic meters.

Raslan explained that the application of this proposal will contribute to providing a specific number of meters at a lower price, especially with the anticipated increase in water prices across all segments. The expected increase in the first segment is 5 piastres and goes up gradually with each segment.

He noted that if the cabinet approves the scheme, it will be applicable from the second bill after approval.

Raslan pointed out that lost water accounts for 30% of all water consumed, due to consumption behaviors.

Egypt faces considerable challenges in the water sector, such as the increasing demand on water on the back of growing population rates, along with the limited resources.

Raslan said that HCWW has obtained several loans from different international entities to improve the quality of water, such as the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

He pointed out that 85% of drinking water comes from the Nile, 14% from groundwater, and 1% from desalination plants, adding that the company is implementing a EGP 1bn project to replace and renew the water pipeline.

12/04/2017 online at: <http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/04/12/government-considers-modifying-water-consumption-bills-scheme/>

Pakistan plans water treaty with Afghanistan

Afghan and Pakistani experts are expected to meet soon to exchange water data and the hydrology of Kabul and Kunar rivers, a news report said on Thursday.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has constituted a committee, which met on March 31, to evolve a water-sharing formula with Afghanistan; The News International quoted sources as saying.

After the receipt of feedback from the Foreign Office and other relevant organs, the body may reach a water treaty with Afghanistan.

“The World Bank has also indicated its willingness to broker a water treaty between Pakistan and Afghanistan,” the newspaper said, adding the bank would facilitate negotiations on the issue.

Pakistan and Afghanistan share nine rivers with annual flows of about 18.3 million acre feet (MAF). Kabul river accounts for 16.5MAF and Chitral for about 8.5MAF.

Headed by AGN Abbas, the technical committee on water resources and dams recommended in 2003 a water treaty with Afghanistan to ensure the right of Pakistan.

In a bid to overcome its energy and water shortages, Afghanistan plans building four hydro-power projects in the Panjsher sub-basin, including the Totumdara, Barak and Baghdara projects.

Additionally, four dams are to be built in the Logar Upper Kabul sub-basin (Haijana, Kajab, Tangi, Wardak and Gat) and as many in the Lower Kabul sub-basin (Sarobi, Laghman, Kunar and Kama).

13/04/2017 online at: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/04/13/pakistan-plans-water-treaty-afghanistan>

Pakistan needs to improve water induced production capacities

Pakistan is generating just half a dollar from one cubic meter of water where other countries on average producing wide range of resources worth \$8 from every single cubic meter of water.

“The number inflates to an incredible \$30 in countries as Japan making optimum of the available natural resource,” said Ahmad Jawad, Chairman Regional Standing Committee of FPCCI. Discussing inadequacies in water management, in local context, with a select group of journalists he warned that poor water management and inadequate water storage are fast emerging as serious threat to the country’s agriculture sector.

Sharing details of problems faced by exporters of fruit and agri- products, he said lack of water reservoirs has already caused over a trillion dollars’ worth of economic loss to Pakistan’s economy during past 30 years.

“This currently also manifests itself in severe energy crisis,” he said.

He urged the policy makers in particular and countrymen in general to realize that Pakistan ought to go for viable projects after every ten years in order to conserve the mountainous water gushing fast due to melting glaciers.

“We need to ensure that this precious source is protected and its wastage is minimized to the optimum,” he stressed. He also urged the authorities to accept the fact that regardless of the clauses guaranteed under the Indus water treaty Pakistan may not receive its due share of water.

Ahmad Jawad regretted that Pakistanis as a nation are lenient when it comes to the value of water management – be it for drinking, farming, flood control, improving environment or cost effective power generation.

“Despite being potentially the richest nation in the subcontinent, the country, since independence, had been unable to protect water in its river channels,” he said mentioning that the attitude has enabled neighbors to overstep their bounds, sparking disputes in an already heated arena.

“Despite being an agrarian country ours is a strange approach as we appear to be little interested in protecting the backbone of our economy,” said the business leader representing an important group of stakeholders in the country. Ahmad Jawad took strong exception that no mega dam has been built in the country during past several years.

In reply to a question, he said Indian, as part of its first agenda had established an organization International Commission for Irrigation and Drainage all the way back in 1950.

“They from the very onset had realized the importance of water for economic growth and since then have positioned themselves at a level of great influence with multilateral institutes and government agencies worldwide,” he said.

12/04/2017 online at: <http://pakobserver.net/pakistan-needs-improve-water-induced-production-capacities/>

WWF-Pakistan, LUMS sign MoU to work on water security issues

World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan) and Centre of Water Informatics and Technology (WIT) of Lahore University of Management Science (LUMS) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to create responsible strategies and work towards increasing water security and stewardship in the country.

The formal agreement was signed by WWF-Pakistan Director General Hammad Naqi Khan and LUMS Rector Dr Sohail Naqvi. The MoU forges a partnership of two years between the organization and the institute, starting from April 2017 and ending in December 2019.

According to the MoU, WWF-Pakistan will extend opportunities for collaboration in water stewardship and water security issues pertaining to agriculture, habitats, and engagement in the Indus basin.

Furthermore, the organization will collaborate with LUMS in initiatives regarding policy level advocacy, flood and disaster management and the possibility to implement studies conducted to ensure environmental flows in all rivers across Pakistan.

This collaboration is expected to materialize over the period of time to build on WWF-Pakistan’s existing knowledge of water stewardship and security and to further extend the concept in industries, multinational corporations, the legal fraternity, academia and NGOs.

WWF-Pakistan DG Hammad Naqi Khan, speaking on the occasion said, ‘It is a matter of great pleasure, that two leading organizations are forging collaboration for research and knowledge sharing in the field of conservation. WWF-Pakistan believes that water resources should be managed intelligently and, through the organization’s Freshwater programme, promotes sustainable development and efficient use of water.

“I am optimistic that the collaboration between WWF-Pakistan, a science-based organization, and LUMS, as a resource base of global expertise, will explore new avenues together regarding water conservation and will introduce best water practices through result-driven initiatives”, Naqi added.

LUMS Rector Dr Sohail Naqvi expressed his pleasure over becoming part of the noble mission of conservation. “I welcome this opportunity, of WWF-Pakistan and LUMS coming together, to address the water woes of the country. Our institute offers its vast resource base in

terms of students and youth to become torchbearers of reforms in the field of environmental conservation”, he maintained.

14/04/2017 online at: <https://en.dailypakistan.com.pk/pakistan/wwf-pakistan-lums-sign-mou-to-work-on-water-security-issues/>

Sindh's water being stolen by rulers from Lahore, says Nisar Khuhro

PPP's senior lawmaker Nisar Ahmed Khuhro on Saturday said Sindh's water was being stolen at "the behest of rulers from Lahore".

The senior provincial leader alleged the province's agriculture has been destroyed and added that Sindh's was being deprived of its due share of natural resources, including natural gas.

Khuhro was leading a sit-in of local party supporters on the road linking Badin with Karachi.

"The people of Sindh are facing a worsening energy crisis," said the lawmaker and added the people of the province would never allow the rulers to steal the water of the province.

Khuhro also demanded that close aides of former president Asif Ali Zardari be presented in court and further said such tactics would never deter PPP workers.

Referring to the prime minister, Khuhro said he was only interested schemes which benefited his business partners and is not concerned for the real issues of the country.

"Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has failed to get any response from Sindh and is now desperately announcing fake packages in the towns of the province," said the PPP leader referring to the premier's recent announcement of a Rs1 billion package for Jacobabad district.

He claimed Zardari had "saved the country" after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto.

15/04/2017 online at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1327167>