

ORSAM WATER BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin by ORSAM Water Research Programme

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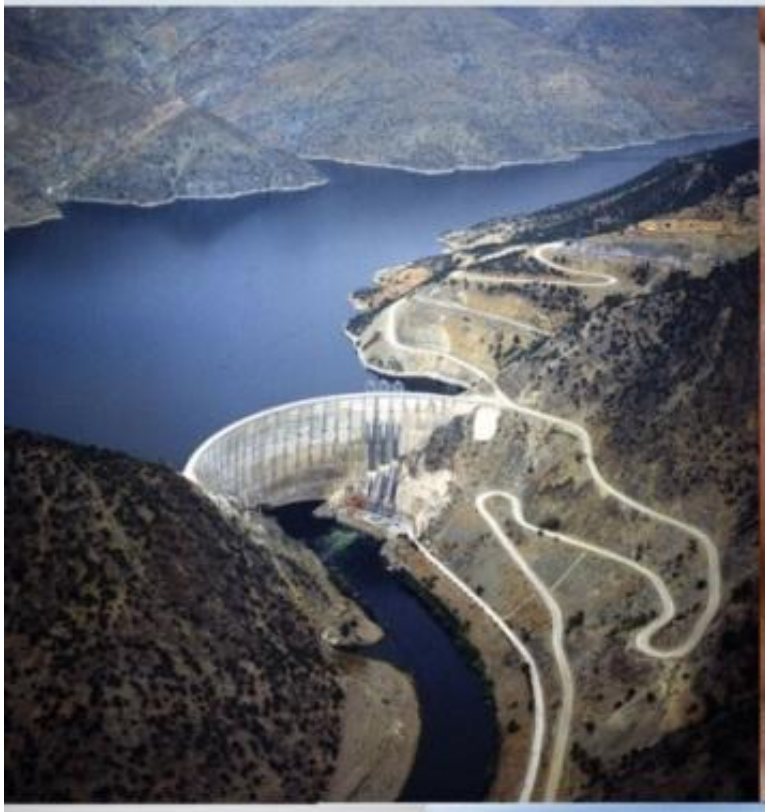



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13 June 2017 - 19 June 2017

Polluted Kirkuk River Poses Risk to Environment

Once a raging river, Iraq's Khasa River in Kirkuk has become a refuse site and a parking lot.

The water in the seasonal river, a tributary of the Tigris River is stagnant with rubbish floating in it, posing an environmental risk and a threat to the wildlife habitat in the area.

"Khasa River represents the history of Kirkuk city, but it has become a place of garbage, as you can see. It was once a flowing river. Now it is a rubbish dump and parking lot," said local Ali Malallah.

Traditionally the Khasa River dries up completely in the summer and turns into a raging river in the winter.

Ashhab Hakim Nader, the director of water resources in Kirkuk, blames both the city's government and citizens for the neglect of the waterway.

"Historically Khasa River is not of a permanent water flow but a seasonable river. Water flows in this river in spring and winter and dries up in the summer. The purpose behind establishing a dam is to store water in the dam and let water flow in seasons of drought into the said river in city of Kirkuk. But the carelessness of government offices and citizens have made the river dirty," said Nader, adding the dam project has not completed due to the financial crisis that Iraq is currently going through.

The lack of funding is also the reason cited by the director of Kirkuk Municipality, Sirdar Ali Hassan, for not being able to clean the river regularly.

"The cleaning of Khasa River is not at the required level due to the multiple works of the cleaning company and lack of money, in addition to the difficulties facing the dump trucks to lift debris and garbage. But we will try to clean the river from time to time," said Hassan.

A recent report by the World Health Organization (WHO) said a quarter of all global deaths of children under five are due to unhealthy or polluted environments including dirty water and air, second-hand smoke and a lack of adequate hygiene.

Such unsanitary and polluted environments can lead to fatal cases of diarrhea, malaria and pneumonia, the WHO said in a report, and kill 1.7 million children a year.

Iraq has two main rivers: the Tigris and the Euphrates. Both have their sources within 50 miles (80 km) of each other in eastern Turkey and travel southeast through northern Syria and Iraq to the head of the Persian Gulf or named Arab Gulf.

14/06/2017 online at: http://www.nrttv.com/en/Details.aspx?Jimare=15019

Syria's major water resources controlled by PKK's Syria affiliate

The PKK terrorist group's Syria affiliate, the Democratic Union Party (PYD) captured the three of the largest dams in Syria, where the terrorist organization already has invaded 23 percent of the country. The Tishrin, Tabqa and Baath dams, all built on the Euprathes River, have the capacity to provide the majority of the entire country's water and electricity supply.

According to information gathered from the Assad regime's Irrigation Ministry, the terrorist organization was able to reach the regions of critical importance in terms of water and electricity resources, as well as agricultural fields, thanks to these dams. The dams have the capacity to supply 70 percent of the country's water requirements.

A total 60 percent of the agricultural fields in Syria are also under the domain of the PYD.

The Tishrin dam, which was taken from Daesh in 2015, has storage capacity measuring 40 meters long and provides irrigation to Manbij and Kobani.

However, the Tabqa dam, captured recently last month, has a wide energy and irrigation infrastructure with its electricity production and storage basin that measures 60 meters long. It is the largest water reserve in Syria and has the capacity to irrigate all fields from Manbij and Kobani to the Iraqi border.

Baath is the latest dam captured one among them and has the capacity to produce energy up to 75 megawatts (MWs) for a year.

The Tishrin dam can also produce electricity - to some extent - for the surrounding villages and towns. Tabqa, on the other hand, cannot produce electricity anymore due to damages incurred during conflicts between Daesh and the PYD as well as U.S. bombardments. Local sources, however, inform that the dam which was used for irrigation, has now been taken under the control of the terrorist organization in order to produce electricity. Lastly, the Baath dam is used for the irrigation of surrounding agricultural fields.

The regions in northern Syria lying along the Turkish border include al-Hasakah in the east, Raqqa to the south and Manbij and Afrin of Aleppo which are under the control of the PKK/PYD. The terrorist organization also invades 60 percent of the Turkish-Syrian border.

Turkey considers the PYD and its armed wing, the People's Protection Units (YPG), to be Syrian affiliates of the PKK, a proscribed terrorist organization according to the U.S., Turkey and the EU.

15/06/2017 online at: https://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2017/06/15/syrias-major-water-resources-controlled-by-pkks-syria-affiliate

Vice-president warns against water shortage in Iran

Iran’s First Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri has termed the issue of water shortage in the country serious calling for modifying the consumption patterns.

“The country’s water shortage is serious. We must protect the country’s water resources through modifying the patterns of consumption and harvest,” the official said through a Twitter post on June 18.

The energy ministry earlier in May reported that the country’s dam reservoir input reached 32.69 billion cubic meters during the current crop year, which began Sept. 22, 2016.

According to the report, the figure indicates a 15 percent fall compared to same period of preceding year.

Official IRNA news agency on Sunday suggested that up to 90 percent of the country’s water goes to agricultural sector which must be controlled.

18/06/2017 online at: http://en.trend.az/iran/business/2767809.html

Israeli Separation Wall damages Palestinian water pipeline

The Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) has accused Israel of affecting water access to parts of the central occupied West Bank due to the construction of parts of its illegal Separation Wall, the official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported today.

According to news site, the PWA said yesterday that a water pipeline near Al-Jib in the Jerusalem district was damaged months ago when Israeli authorities built sections of the Separation Wall in the area, adding that the pipeline had not been repaired since.

As a result, PWA Chairman, Mazen Ghneim, said the Ramallah district of the West Bank serviced by the pipeline has since suffered from water shortages, exacerbated during the hot summer months.

The PWA said that, in conjunction with the Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU), it had contacted both Israeli authorities and Israeli water company Mekorot in order to address the issue, adding that it had informed Israel of its willingness to repair the line, without receiving a response.

Ghneim held Israel responsible for any further consequences to the water crisis, and called on the international community to intervene to push Israel to resolve the situation.

A spokesperson for Israel’s Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), the military agency responsible for implementing Israeli government policies in the occupied Palestinian territory, told Ma’an that the damage incurred on the al-Jib pipeline was as “a result of aging and not as a result of the construction work on the security fence.”

The spokesperson added that Israeli authorities were planning on working building a new water pipeline in the area in coming weeks.

14/06/2017 online at: https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170614-israeli-separation-wall-damages-palestinian-water-pipeline/

Ramallah facing severe water crisis; Israel to blame, says Water authority

The Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) Tuesday accused Israel of the new water crisis facing Ramallah and its environs, saying failure to repair a damaged water pipeline has exacerbated an already existing problem.

The PWA said in a statement that a water pipeline near al-Jeep, southwest of Ramallah, that supplies Ramallah with water from Israel was damaged several months ago during Israel's construction of sections of the segregation wall in that area and has not been repaired since then.

It said it and the Jerusalem Water Undertaking, which supplies water to the Ramallah area, were in touch with the Israeli authorities in an attempt to solve the water crisis in Ramallah area.

It said they have asked the Israeli water company, Mekerot, to repair the damaged line and to increase the volume of water supply to the Palestinian areas, already considered below the needed level.

It said it informed Israel its readiness to repair the line, but has not yet received any reply.

Mazen Ghuneim, chairman of PWA, stressed that PWA will spare no effort to find a solution to the water crisis in all West Bank districts to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, especially in the hot summer months.

He pointed out that the current water shortage in the Ramallah district was exacerbated by the failure of the Israeli authorities to repair the damaged pipeline.

He held the Israeli authorities responsible for any further consequences, calling on the international bodies to immediately intervene to compel Israel to solve the crisis.

13/06/2017 online at: http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=wjC4h4a91084665606awjC4h4

Jordan gets grant from Japan to enhance water networks

Jordan and Japan signed on Saturday a grant agreement worth 22 million U.S. dollars to support a major water project in the northern parts of the kingdom, state-run Petra news agency reported.

Jordan's Minister of Water and Irrigation Hazem Nasser said the project seeks to improve water supply in communities that host Syrian refugees in northern Jordan.

There are some 1.3 million Syrian refugees in Jordan, according to official figures.

The project entails enhancing water networks, such as extending water pipes, to improve water supply in some areas in the northern parts of Jordan.

The minister also stressed the need for continued support to water projects in Jordan, which is one of the poorest countries in terms of water.

He also reviewed Jordan's water strategy aimed to enhance water supply to all areas in the country.

17/06/2017 online at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-06/17/c_136373551.htm

Irbid water network to be replaced by 2020 to improve supply

The water network in two of Irbid Governorate's towns will be replaced by 2020 to improve supply for over 20,000 people, officials announced on Saturday.

The project will be implemented under a $22-million-grant from the Japanese government to improve water supply efficiency in communities hosting Syrian refugees in the north of the country.

In a statement e-mailed to The Jordan Times, Minister of Water and Irrigation Hazem Nasser said that the ministry is exploring all potential water resources to cope with the increasing demand for water, especially in the north, following the influx of Syrian refugees.

"The ministry is also working around the clock to address the pressure over the water network and disruptions in supply, especially in the north, which have resulted from the Syrian crisis," Nasser said.

The "urgent grant" will support the second phase of a project to improve the efficiency of the water sector in the north, especially in communities hosting Syrian refugees, according to ministry's spokesperson Omar Salameh.

The grant follows the project's first phase, which was implemented with the support of the Japanese government through a 2014 grant worth $25 million, according to Salameh, who said that the project was one of the main strategic water projects implemented in the north.

Japan extended the grant in response to the request made to support Jordan in alleviating the pressures of hosting 1.4 million Syrian refugees as part of the Jordanian Response Plan to the Syrian crisis. The grant will be administered by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

The northern governorates suffer from an acute water shortage caused by limited resources, violations against main water lines and deteriorating networks, while the situation has worsened with the influx of Syrian refugees, according to ministry officials.

In addition, the large number of refugees is placing pressure on the local sewage network, frequently causing it to overflow, ministry officials said.

The total number of Syrians living in Jordan is estimated at 1.4 million, around 550,000 of whom are refugees who arrived in the Kingdom following the onset of the conflict in Syria in March 2011, according to official figures.

Over 70 per cent of Syrian refugees in Jordan live amongst host communities, while the rest is accommodated in refugee camps.

18/06/2017 online at: http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/irbid-water-network-be-replaced-2020-improve-supply

Jordan to receive USD22mn Japanese deal for water project

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation inked an USD22mn Japanese grant deal in order to carry out the second phase of a project to raise the water sector"s efficiency in northern governorates.

Meanwhile, the ministry was working with all resources to overcome the imbalances made by the Syrian refugee crisis, which placed growing pressure on water resources.

In addition, he also offered all the means for a positive and effective approach to emphasize the water supply and sanitation problem in the region.

Moreover, the second phase followed the first phase in an urgent program in order to raise the water efficiency in northern governorates, which was funded by an USD25mn grant from JICA.

19/06/2017 online at: http://menafn.com/1095567093/Jordan-to-receive-USD22mn-Japanese-deal-for-water-project

Saudi Arabia signs eight water contracts

Saudi Arabia’s minister of environment, water and agriculture Abdul Rahman Al-Fadli has signed a a series of contracts to operate and maintain a number of water and sewage projects in five regions of the Kingdom, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

The cost of the water and sewage projects totalled SR146.7 million ($39.19 million), the agency said.

One of these contracts concerns operation and maintenance of a water and sewage project in Qatif province, in the eastern region, at the cost of SR53.7 million to be carried out within a period of 36 months, reported Arab News.

The second contract covers water connection projects in some provinces of Riyadh region at the cost of SR12.6 million over 48 months.

Makkah villages and centers will receive water projects at the cost of SR14.9 million, while Baha villages will receive a water network operation and maintenance project worth SR6.8 million, with an implementation period of 36 months for each project.

Another contract covers a water carrier line from the Abu Marwa wells to a ground reservoir in Dhalm, Makkah region, at a cost of SR20.1 million; another for a water purification plant project in Riyadh province was signed for SR15 million.

Additionally, another two contracts were signed for water projects in Abha and Asir regions at a cost of SR13.3 million and SR10.2 million, respectively, the agency said.

19/06/2017 online at: http://www.utilities-me.com/article-4931-saudi-arabia-signs-eight-water-contracts/

World community must solve Yemen water crisis to halt spiralling cholera outbreak – UN experts

Yemen and the international community must act urgently to provide safe drinking water to halt a spiraling cholera outbreak, UN human rights experts have warned.

More than 135,000 people are already feared to have contracted the water-borne disease, as the country grapples with the ongoing conflict, which has led to the deterioration of water and sanitation infrastructure in Yemen. WHO figures show that more than 950 people have already died, and officials fear an extremely high death toll as the outbreak continues to spread.

“We welcome the efforts being made to mitigate the outbreak, but it is critically important to address the underlying problem of unsafe water supplies, which has a negative impact on the enjoyment of the right to health by the population, in particular children and those in most vulnerable situations,” said Léo Heller, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on water and sanitation, and Dainius Pūras, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on health.

“We urge all stakeholders to strengthen the initiatives to build and repair infrastructures and to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation,” the experts said.

The Special Rapporteur on water and sanitation warned that the lack of good quality, reliable drinking water forces people to get supplies from alternative, unsafe sources. “They are having to buy water from private sellers who use uncontrolled and unreliable sources, such as unprotected wells, exposing them to water-borne diseases such as cholera and other diarrheal diseases,” he said.

The experts added: “Children are at particular risk of contracting water-borne diseases from these unsafe supplies, although the whole population is vulnerable. The spread of cholera has been exacerbated by the breakdown of water and sanitation systems.”

The impact is being felt across the country, with reported cases in Taiz, Aden, Lahj, Al-Hudaydah, Hajjah, Sana'a, Al-Baida and Ibb governorates.

Earlier this year, the Special Rapporteurs contacted the Government of Yemen to seek clarification about the situation. In April, UN experts urged an end to the conflict and blockade, warning that the deliberate starvation of civilians may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity.

16/06/2017 online at: http://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/world-community-must-solve-yemen-water-crisis-halt-spiralling-cholera-outbreak-un

Experts urge UAE residents and businesses to reduce water consumption this summer

Global experts have recommended that UAE should develop water saving strategies for companies as well as individuals this summer, with the recent statistics by Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) showing that the number of water consumers in the UAE rose by more than 36,000 to 666,430 in 2016

The DEWA report also stated that UAE consumed more than 117,300mn imperial gallons of water in 2016, which was a growth of 3,081mn imperial gallons of both groundwater and desalinated water.

With water consumption rising significantly in past 12 months in the UAE, Danfoss, the global engineering firm, emphasized the need for adopting water saving strategies for the UAE on a high-priority basis to save water and energy within water-supply.

“Water sustainability is an important topic, and educating the region is paramount to achieving behavioral change. If businesses and residents make conscious efforts and small changes to their consumption habits, water sustainability in the UAE would increase dramatically,” said Mads Warming, global director of water and waste-water at Danfoss.

Fady Juez, managing director at Metito, a leading water management solution provider, commented, “We need to rationalize the consumption of water starting by raising people’s awareness of the facts and the simple, yet positive impacts that we can result from changing usage habits and consumer mindsets.”

Metito advocated the need for engaging in multi-layered conversations with end users and the public for integrated water management solutions in the UAE.

“From the supply side, companies must continue focusing on water recycling and reuse especially in applications such as district cooling, irrigation and other industrial applications,” pointed Juez.

Juez and Warming agreed that adjustment to individual routines with simple techniques like taking shorter shower, minimizing AC usage whenever possible, turning taps off and doing less laundry, can result in less water wastage in the UAE throughout the summer.

Warming added, “The mutual dependence of water and energy and the increasing global demand for each has an enormous impact on economic growth, environmental sustainability and our future.”

13/06/2017 online at: http://www.technicalreviewmiddleeast.com/power-a-water/water-a-environment/experts-urge-uae-residents-and-businesses-to-reduce-water-consumption-this-summer

Egypt looks to the sea to meet its need for water

There’s a trend in Egypt that seems to be all-round good news. But let’s make sure the costs are justified.

Over the past few years, the country has been rapidly turning to desalination to meet its most pressing water needs. It started when the government put developers on notice that if they wanted to build seaside tourist resorts they would have to come up with their own water: the government would no longer build pipelines to deliver water from the Nile.

This spawned dozens of small-scale and privately built desalting plants up and down the Red Sea coast and across along the Mediterranean west of Alexandria. A typical plant might produce anywhere from 500 to 7,000 cubic meters a day using reverse osmosis technology, in which high-pressure pumps push seawater through membranes to remove the salt.

Among the main suppliers were Dubai's Metito and Ridgewood Egypt, a subsidiary of a US venture capital company.

Industry also got in on the act, especially along the Suez Canal.

With Egypt's population having more than doubled in the past 25 years, its water supply is increasingly scarce. The country is allowed to draw 55 billion cubic meters a year from the Nile, which is pretty well tapped out by the time it reaches the Mediterranean. It gets another 5 billion cubic meters from aquifers and rainwater.

Ethiopia is about to begin filling the reservoir of its Grand Renaissance Dam, which, depending on how quickly it is done, could reduce the flow of the Nile by as much as 20 per cent over the next few years.

With a scenario such as this, desalination begins to look extremely attractive. The cost of desalting seawater has fallen to between US$0.50 and $1 per cubic meter worldwide and looks set to get even cheaper.

New industries and other facilities setting up in the Suez Canal Economic Zone are now expected to get the bulk of their water from desalination.

Last year, the army commissioned construction of three 140,000 cubic meter per day plants. One will be at the southern entrance of the Suez Canal at the new city of Al Galala being built on a mountain overlooking the Gulf of Suez. A second will be at the canal's northern entrance near the industrial zone of East Port Said and the third near El Alamein on Egypt's north coast.

"Egypt is going fast in desalination," says Hosam Shawky, a director at the Egyptian Desalination Research Centre. "It plans to reach 500,000 cubic meters of capacity in three years and 1 million cubic meters in seven years."

The government has also been installing a series of plants along the Mediterranean coast at Marsa Matruh, which has little fresh water of its own. A pipeline delivers Nile water to the city but people have been tapping into and pilfering from it – as a result, only 40 to 60 per cent actually reaches Matruh. Three of the plants will have a daily capacity of 24,000 cubic meters. One came on stream in 2013, a second is due this summer while the third is still in the planning stage.

Even if the water is sold at the international rate of between $0.50 and $1 per cubic meter, desalted water is far more expensive than what Egyptians are used to paying and the water will only be practical at the high end, such as residential and industrial use. Desalinated water is far too expensive for agriculture.

The government charges a typical household about 1 Egyptian pound for a cubic meter and often much more in the new satellite cities that have been built around Cairo. Farmers, who consume 70 per cent of all water, get theirs for free.

A way to drive down the price of desalinated water, says Mr Shawky, would be to reduce the amount of power needed to push it through the reverse osmosis membranes. Newer membranes need less pressure and thus less power, which makes up 35 to 40 per cent of the water's cost. A cubic meter of water can now be produced with 3.5 to 4 kilowatt hours of power, down from 6 to 6.5 kilowatt hours 20 or 30 years ago. Companies are working on ways to increase the lifetime of membranes and get them to work under even less pressure.

Egypt's future is almost certainly in desalination. But the government should eventually begin charging more for traditional sources of water to reflect its real value, something that will not be popular among a population that has enjoyed free water for millennia.

At the same time, it must monitor desalination plants, whose brine and hot run-off can harm the marine environment, to ensure their negative effects are minimal.

14/06/2017 online at: http://www.thenational.ae/business/economy/egypt-looks-to-the-sea-to-meet-its-need-for-water

Nile 2050: A billion people at risk from floods and droughts

The Nile – source of water for millions – is under severe pressure.

According to UN estimates, the population of countries in the Nile river basin is expected to more than double in the years to 2050 to nearly one billion, putting scarce water resources under ever greater strain.

Now a new report indicates that climate change is going to add to what is a fast developing crisis along one of the world's great rivers.

Global warming means the river's water levels will become ever more unpredictable says the report by academics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), resulting in what could be devastating floods one year and withering drought the next.

Growing variability in water levels is already taking place: in 2015 and early 2016, there was intense drought in many countries in the Nile basin, followed by widespread flooding.

"It's not abstract," says Professor Elfatih Eltahir, one of the report's authors. "This is happening now."

Not so pacific impact

Eltahir and his fellow researchers say the main cause for this growing variability in the level of the Nile's waters lies thousands of miles away, in the Pacific Ocean.

Global warming, primarily the result of the millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions and other greenhouse gases we are loading into the atmosphere each year, is causing an increase in the intensity and duration of the Pacific Ocean phenomenon known as the El Nino/La Nina cycle.

This cycle is a big influence on annual rainfall patterns in the highlands of Ethiopia and adjacent areas – regions which generate about 80 percent of the Nile's total flow.

The annual flooding of the Nile, bringing precious silt down to fertilize lands in the Nile Delta and elsewhere, has been part of the rhythm of life in the region for millennia. In ancient times, high priests of Egypt's temples constructed a series of measuring devices or nilometers to predict and monitor water levels.

Climate change is now disrupting those age-old ways.

The MIT report says that if the world continues on a "business as usual" trajectory, with no major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions over coming years, it's likely that changing rainfall patterns will lead to an average increase of between 10 and 15 percent in the Nile's annual flow.

This could be a bonus for water-scarce countries such as Egypt, with its 91 million people overwhelmingly dependent on the Nile for drinking water. The Nile is also vital in order to sustain the country's agricultural and industrial sectors.

Yet unless water levels are properly managed and storage and releases from the various dams and reservoirs along the Nile are coordinated, there will be flooding in many areas.

Beyond the dam

The MIT report warns that there will be substantially fewer "normal" years when the Nile flows conform to traditional patterns – there will be greater extremes and more years of drought say the researchers.

Professor Eltahir and his fellow researchers hope their findings will lead to long-term policies for managing the river.

But battles for control of the Nile have been going on for many years. The river, the world's longest, flows through 10 countries. Africa's largest dam, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, or GERD, is now being built near the border between Ethiopia and Sudan.

The GERD is a cause of friction between Ethiopia – emerging as one of Africa's leading economic growth areas – and Egypt. Farmers in Egypt fear for the future, saying the Ethiopian dam will mean they will have less water for irrigating their crops.

The MIT report says that instead of arguing about the dam, more focus should be given to the potential impacts of climate change and population growth along the Nile.

“We think that climate change is pointing to the need for more storage capacity in the future,” says Eltahir. “The real issues facing the Nile are bigger than that one controversy surrounding that dam.”

15/06/2017 online at: http://www.middleeasteye.net/columns/nile-hit-rapid-population-growth-and-climate-change-1517439877

Egypt's FM heads to Uganda for Nile Basin summit

Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry is to fly to Entebbe, Uganda, on Monday for ministerial meetings involving the Nile Basin countries, the ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

Senior government officials, including ministers of foreign affairs and water, are due to attend two-day preparatory meetings on 20-21 June in the run-up to a presidential summit scheduled a day later.

The presidential gathering, which Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi will attend, is the first such summit to bring together all Nile Basin countries, with a population of over 500 million.

The ministry says the "historical" gathering will "open the way to exploring broad areas of cooperation in many development areas beyond the field of water," according to spokesman Ahmed Abu Zeid.

During this week's meetings, Egypt aims to "work towards bringing the views and positions on the Nile water closer by focusing on prospects for cooperation and achieving common goals, as well as expanding the scope of cooperation ... to include cultural and security cooperation and political coordination," the ministry statement read.

Last week, Sisi and his Ugandan counterpart Yoweri Musevini discussed preparations for the summit in a phone call.

Officials had said earlier that the upcoming summit would look at the results of earlier meetings as well as points of contention on the Entebbe agreement.

Uganda is the current chair of the Nile Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). Egypt froze its NBI membership in 2010 over disagreements about the Cooperative Framework Agreement, more commonly known as the Entebbe agreement.

Spokesman Abu Zeid said Egypt hopes the upcoming summit will "come up with a common vision to re-launch the initiative based on the principle of the mutual interests of all countries."

In July, Egyptian irrigation minister Mohamed Abdel-Ati attended the 24th annual meeting of the NBI’s Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-Com) in Uganda after an absence of several years, a move seen as a partial return of the North African nation to active participation in the group.

The NBI comprises 10 permanent members: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Eritrea has observer status.

In March, Egypt's water resources Minister Mohamed Abdel took part in talks held by NBI's council of ministers in Uganda's Entebbe that addressed Cairo's concerns over the Nile Basin Initiative and the Entebbe agreement.

By 2011, six Nile Basin nations had signed the agreement, which was developed over more than a decade: Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

Egypt and Sudan have declined to sign the treaty -- which sets out the principles and obligations of member states regarding the use of the basin's water resources -- citing concerns about its reallocation of water quotas and other provisions.

Historic water-sharing pacts between Egypt and Sudan continue to govern the distribution of Nile water between the two countries.

18/06/2017 online at: http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/271150/Egypt/Politics-/Egypts-FM-heads-to-Uganda-for-Nile-Basin-summit-.aspx

Morocco promises no water shortages in Al Hoceima

The Moroccan government has promised that there will be no water crisis or shortages in the turbulent Al Hoceima until 2035.

The promise was made yesterday during a meeting held by a delegation led by the Minister of the Interior, Abdelouafi Laftit, the Secretary of State for Water, Abdelkader Amara, minister of equipment, and the director general of the National Office of Electricity and Drinking Water (ONEE).

The delegation devoted the agenda of its meeting to the question of water as the province experiences a shortage which worsens during the summer months.

The delegation took stock of the state of progress of the water infrastructure strengthening projects which received nearly $1 million in funding.

President of the region, Ilyas El Omari, told HuffPost Morocco that he took advantage of the meeting to draw attention to the problem of access to drinking water in the entire region. “I have intervened to remind you that not only Al Hoceima, but also other provinces in the region, do not yet have access to drinking water,” he said.

In Chaouen, the situation is more alarming than in Al Hoceima, where 50 per cent of the city’s population does not have access to drinking water, [which is] about 200,000 people.

According to El Omari, the inhabitants of the region have suffered greatly from the shortage of water accentuated by the drought in Ouazzane and Chaouen. “Several residents of the region complained about this situation last year,” he recalled.

For El Omari, the origin of this situation also lies in the lack of financial developments in the region. “The transfer of the powers to the regions has not yet been made … we receive from the government a percentage of the taxes of a value of 400 to 450 million dirhams [around $40 million per year],” he said, stressing that at the next session of the regional council in July it is expected that the region will get better and more involved in the supply of water and electricity by giving financial support to the municipalities.

Secretary of State, Charafat Afailal, said in a statement to the press that “this dam will strengthen the water infrastructure and meet the province’s drinking water needs.”

14/06/2017 online at: https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170614-morocco-promises-no-water-shortages-in-al-hoceima/

Pakistan eyes 2018 start for China-funded mega dam opposed by India

Pakistan expects China to fund a long-delayed Indus river mega dam project in Gilgit-Baltistan, part of disputed Kashmir, with work beginning next year, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said in an interview.

Pakistan has been keen for years to build a cascade of mega dams along the Indus flowing down from the Himalayas, but has struggled to raise money from international institutions amid opposition from its nuclear-armed neighbor India.

Those ambitions have been revived by China's Belt and Road infrastructure plans for Pakistan, a key cog in Beijing's creation of a modern-day Silk Road network of trade routes connecting Asia with Europe and Africa.

The $12-$14 billion Diamer-Bhasha dam should generate 4,500 megawatts (MW) of electricity, and a vast new reservoir would regulate the flow of water to farmland that is vulnerable to increasingly erratic weather patterns.

Iqbal, the Islamabad lead on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), said a Chinese company from a Beijing-picked shortlist and a local partner would build the dam over a 10-year period, and work should begin in the "next financial year", which begins in July.

"This water reservoir is most critical for food security in Pakistan, so is a very high priority project for Pakistan," Iqbal told Reuters late on Monday at his ministerial home in Islamabad.

China and Pakistan signed a memorandum of understanding in December for Beijing to help fund and develop Pakistan's Indus Basin dams, though no timelines have been released. Pakistan estimates there is 40,000 MW of hydro potential.

The Diamer-Bhasha dam and reservoir would displace more than 4,200 families in nearby areas and submerge a large section of the Karakoram Highway to China, Pakistan's Water and Power Development Authority estimates.

Iqbal said Pakistani and Chinese engineers are also surveying other projects, including the 7,100 MW Bunji hydro power project that will be the first in the cascade that stretches down to the Tarbela Dam near Islamabad.

India's foreign ministry and ministry for water resources did not respond to requests for comment.

India has previously opposed any construction in the Indus Basin it claims as its own, and has criticized CPEC because the $57 billion corridor runs across disputed territory.

India this year fast-tracked $15 billion worth of dam projects on its side of Kashmir, despite fears from Islamabad that the power stations will disrupt vital Indus water flows into Pakistan.

Iqbal, a close ally of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, said India needs to "stop its myopic thinking towards CPEC" and accept the Chinese-funded project is going ahead. Better still would be for India to become part of Beijing's Belt and Road plans, he said.

"$20 BILLION PLUS"

Future CPEC plans are increasingly focused on how Beijing can help build up Pakistan's ailing industries, creating special economic zones and opening up sectors from mining to agriculture to Chinese firms.

But Iqbal said infrastructure construction won't stop, with contracts set to be signed for roads and for mass rail transport systems in Quetta, Peshawar and Karachi.

He said about $10 billion in new deals should be signed in the next year on top of Chinese pledges topping $50 billion, and that was likely to double by 2020.

"I would say conservatively $20 billion plus (in new investment by 2020)," Iqbal said, adding this would also include private investment.

13/06/2017 online at: https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-china-silkroad-pakistan-dam-idUKKBN1941PN

K-water soon to complete water plant in Pakistan

Korea Water Resources Corp., or K-water, said it will soon complete the construction of a water plant in Pakistan, K-water’s first investment project overseas.

The state-run water resources developer said the Patrind Hydroelectric Power Plant will be completed this month. The company is simultaneously operating water projects in 11 countries including the Philippines.

The hydro power plant in Pakistan broke ground in 2009 with an aim of producing 641 gigawatt-hours of electricity, which can be consumed by 90,000 people at the same time. The size of the plant is about 75 percent of the capacity of Korea’s largest Soyanggang Dam. The company said the plant will benefit Pakistan, which suffers from chronic power shortages.

K-water has more than 50 years of expertise in water management and resources development.

Since embarking on an overseas project in 1994, it has either completed or is operating 81 global projects in 30 countries to date.

K-water's 13 global projects, currently underway in 11 countries need a total of 2.3 trillion won (US$2 billion) of spending, according to the company.

In the initial stage of the global projects, the focus was more on official development assistance.

However, the company is now expanding to investment projects, officials said.

The global water market is expected to grow to 1,000 trillion won in 2020 from 800 trillion won in 2016, according to data from K-water. Among them, 78 percent will be involved in integrated water supply and sewage, the company said.

16/06/2017 online at: http://www.theinvestor.co.kr/view.php?ud=20170616000773

Governor announces support for NGO working for water in slums areas

Governor of Sindh, Muhammad Zubair has announced to extend all possible support to a local NGO working on installation of a network of RO plants so as to provide potable water to the inhabitants of slums and remote areas across the country.

Talking to a delegation of Saylani Welfare International Trust led by Maulana Bashir Farooqi, he said governments as well as people are indebted to philanthropists and relevant organizations working genuinely and with absolute sincerity to meet basic needs of resource-less sections.

Assuring that, he in his individual capacity too was committed to support the cause, Sindh Governor said the aspiration to serve people selflessly is a blessing that needed to be streamlined.

He appreciated that Saylani Trust was also working for economic empowerment of the downtrodden people besides working in health, education and provision for basic necessities as clean water.

The delegation that also included Muhammad Yousuf Lakhani, Amjad Chamadia, Muhammad Ghizal and Rafiq Suleiman informed the Governor that their organization was serving in 63 different sectors.

"Our focus is on marginalized sections with equal attention towards poverty stricken people based in remote parts of the country," said Maulana Bashir Farooqui,

It was claimed that Saylani Welfare International Trust ensures regular audit of its accounts enhancing public confidence in terms of donation collection as well as transparent use of the same.

The delegation mentioned that Information Technology Laboratories have already been established in Karachi and Faisalabad while more are planned to be set up in other cities.

18/06/2017 online at: http://pakobserver.net/governor-announces-support-ngo-working-water-slums-areas/