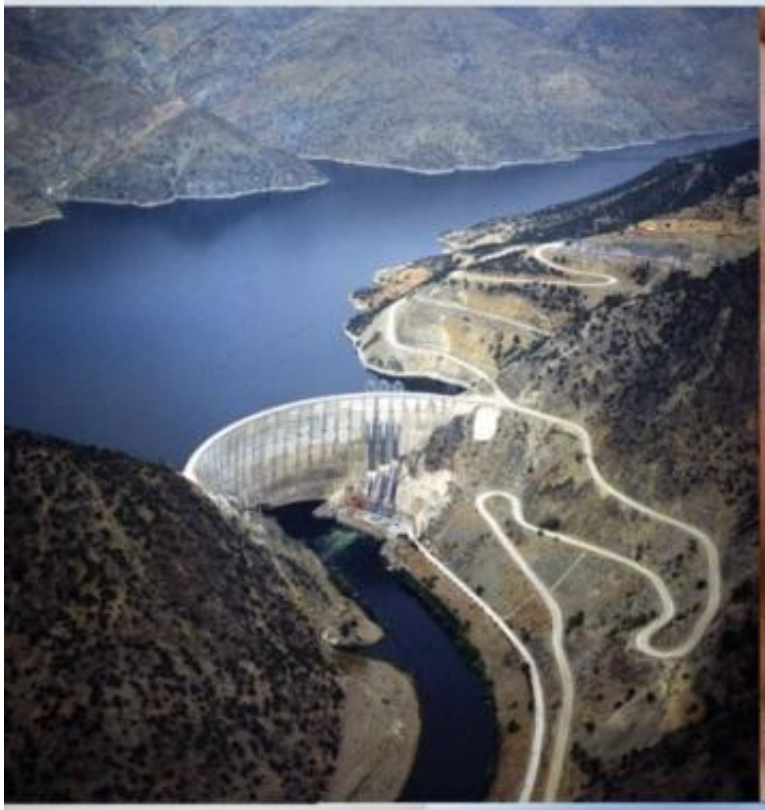


ORSAM WATER BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin by ORSAM Water Research Programme

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





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❖ Turkey's TIKA brings Gaza water fountain back to life

GAZA CITY – The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) on Wednesday reopened a newly-renovated Ottoman-era public water fountain (sabil) in the Gaza Strip.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Turkish Ambassador to the Palestinian Authority Mustafa Sarnic and Gaza Tourism Minister Ali Etarshawi, as well as TIKA officials.

In March, TIKA agreed to fund the renovation of the Sabil of Sultan Abdul-Hamid to the tune of $40,000. The move came upon the request of Gaza's Tourism and Antiquities Ministry.

Sarnic told Anadolu Agency that the renovation of the 500-year-old Ottoman sabil would help protect it from eventual ruin.

He added that the public fountain would serve the people of Gaza and provide them with potable water, noting that the sabil was meant to serve students in from nearby schools along with passersby.

He said he was happy to be part of the fountain's reopening, going on to laud TIKA-sponsored projects in the Gaza Strip – especially the renovation of Gaza's Ottoman-era antiquities.

Speaking at the ceremony, Sarnic said the renovation of the fountain would also contribute to bolstering relations between the Turkish and Palestinian people.

Tourism Minister Etarshawi, for his part, said the renovation of the sabil would also serve to reinvigorate Gaza's antiquities sector.

Built during the Ottoman era, the Sabil of Sultan Abdul-Hamid contains a large drinking basin used by citizens and passersby at that time.

It was named after Sultan Abdul-Hamid, during whose reign the fountain was first renovated.

"Turkey's TIKA brings Gaza water fountain back to life", 07/05/2014, online at: http://www.turkishpress.com/news/404955/

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❖ Syrian rebels cut off water supply to both halves of Aleppo

BEIRUT // Residents of Syria's second city Aleppo have been without water for a week because Islamist fighters have cut supplies into rebel and regime-held areas, a monitoring group said on Saturday.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the Al Qaeda affiliate Al Nusra Front had cut water supplies from a pump distributing to both the rebel-held east and government-held west of Aleppo.

Last month, opposition forces cut the electricity supply to regime-controlled areas of Aleppo and the surrounding countryside.

But the director of the Observatory, Rami Abdel Rahman said, the groups were unable to cut off water supplies to regime areas without also affecting rebel-held neighbourhoods, calling the move "a crime".

Once home to about 2.5 million residents and considered Syria's economic powerhouse, Aleppo has been divided between government and opposition control since shortly after fighting there began in mid-2012.

At least one million people have been displaced from the city since then by fighting and relentless regime aerial bombardments of rebel areas.

Opposition forces also regularly shell regime-held parts of the city in the west.

The Observatory said the week of water cuts had forced residents to queue at wells to collect water, and the Britain-based group warned that some people were drinking unclean water, risking a spread of disease.

Meanwhile, more than 100,000 civilians have fled the eastern Syrian province of Deir Ezzor because of fierce clashes between rival Islamist groups, the Observatory said.

The group said the clashes between Al Nusra Front and the rival Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) had killed 230 militants in the past 10 days.

Of those, 146 were members of Al Nusra and other Islamist brigades, including some who were executed by ISIL.

The clashes between the two groups in the oil-rich province began at the end of April and come after a wider backlash against ISIL that started in January.

ISIL, which grew from Al Qaeda's Iraq branch, has been the target of a joint campaign by moderate and Islamist rebels as well as Al Nusra since early January.

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The campaign has pushed it out of much of Aleppo and Idlib provinces, though it has strengthened its presence in the provincial capital of Raqa province.

ISIL was initially welcomed by some of the Syrian opposition, but its abuses of civilians and rebel forces sparked the backlash that begin this year.

In February, ISIL withdrew from most of Deir Ezzor under pressure, but in recent weeks it has advanced once again, the Observatory said, regaining territory in the west of the province.

The infighting among rebel groups has detracted from their objective of overthrowing the Syrian president, Bashar Al Assad, whose forces have been making gains across the country in recent months.

In a significant victory for the regime ahead of presidential elections on June 3 that Mr Al Assad is expected to win easily, most of the rebel forces in the central city of Homs left last week after holding out against a siege for nearly two years.

On Saturday, hundreds of former residents streamed back into the devastated Old City of Homs, picking through the ruins of their homes after rebels left the area.

They walked, rode bicycles and motorbikes, and pushed strollers down streets strewn with rubble.

Every building bore signs of the conflict, from bullet holes to enormous craters created by the shells that struck almost daily during the nearly two-year siege.

Many were visibly emotional at the sight of their former neighbourhoods, now rendered almost unrecognisable.

“The destruction is just horrible,” said Rima Battah, 37, in the Hamidiyeh district of the Old City.

A final convoy of rebels withdrew from the Old City on Friday, handing control of all but one district of Homs to the government under a deal negotiated between the regime and opposition forces.

As the rebels left, government troops swept the evacuated neighbourhoods for explosives.

The governor of Homs, Talal Barazi, told the state news agency Sana that the areas were now “safe and free of weapons and insurgents thanks to the sacrifices of the Syrian army”.

State television also carried live footage of the influx of residents, interviewing people who offered their thanks to the army and Mr Al Assad.

“Syrian rebels cut off water supply to both halves of Aleppo”, 11/05/2014, online at: http://www.thenational.ae/world/syrian-rebels-cut-off-water-supply-to-both-halves-of-aleppo#ixzz31XBXsQgT

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❖ Iraq denies recapture of Fallujah dam

Iraq's Defense Ministry on Thursday denied reports that Iraqi army forces had managed to recapture a dam in the restive city of Fallujah that has been controlled in recent weeks by militants who the government says are linked to Al-Qaeda.

"Such reports are devoid of truth… and mere lies," the ministry said in a Thursday statement.

"Iraq denies recapture of Fallujah dam", 09/05/2014, online at: http://www.iraqoilreport.com/daily-brief/iraq-denies-recapture-fallujah-dam-12236/

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❖ Iran's water challenge, future crisis

Water, the most precious of resources on the planet, is becoming even more precious than ever, its price exceeding that of oil today.

Experts predict that countries haggling over water rights and struggling for reliable energy resources in the future will be forced to fight for access to water.

And the future is not so far away.

The issue of access to water has reached dangerous levels in a number of countries across the globe. Many countries are taking decisive measures in order to address the problem.

Iran, located in an arid zone, is one of those countries facing severe water problems, such as severe droughts which have plagued the country over the last 40 years.

The drought of 1992-2002 caused a major blow to agriculture. There were quotas imposed for fresh water in several cities, including Tehran.

In order to show the seriousness of the problem, it is enough to refer to the statement of Iran's former agriculture minister.

Former Minister Issa Kalantari told Ghanoon newspaper last year that Iran's water crisis is more of a threat to the country than "Israel, America or political infighting" among Iran's political classes.

Kalantari went on to say that if the water issue is not addressed, Iran could become a place where no one can live.

Recently, Iranian Energy Minister Hamid Chitchian once again warned about the water shortage crisis in the country, saying the situation of water resources in Iran has passed beyond the critical condition.

Chitchian went on to note that during the past decade, precipitations in Iran have declined from 250 millimeters to 242 millimeters.

Iran's Energy Ministry has formed a special committee a couple of months ago to monitor the water crisis and take appropriate decisions.

"At present, 96 billion cubic meters of the country's total 120 billion cubic meters of renewable water resources is being consumed annually," Chitchian said, adding that if 40-60 percent of renewable water resources is consumed in any country, that country is said to be in a critical condition.

A drought has being observed in the country for nearly 13 years. Besides, the demand for water increases with population growth.

The water shortage has reached a critical level in Tehran, Tabriz, Isfahan, Khuzestan, Qum, Mashhad and Hamadan provinces.

The officials also warn about water shortage problem in Iran's capital city Tehran, saying if residents of Tehran and nearby provinces do not reduce their consumption then the city will face great difficulties in that regard.

Officials say if water consumption is not cut back they will consider options such as scheduling water outages for high consuming households, and lowering water pressure in Tehran's pipeline network that serves an estimated 22 million people.

Meanwhile, Tehran is not only city facing a water crisis, as 500 cities in Iran are facing similar issues.

The crisis is also affecting Iran's lakes and rivers. Rivers in central Iran near Isfahan and Ahvaz close to the Gulf have dried up. Hamoun Lake near the Afghan border is now a dustbowl.

Lake Urmia, one of the largest salt-water lakes in the world has dropped about 200-meters, and winds

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blowing dry salt from the lake bed could contaminate nearby agriculture, threatening the livelihoods of an estimated three million people who live nearby.

Over 70 percent of Lake Urmia's water has dried up. The level of the water has been declining since 1995. Experts on environmental issues say that the measures taken by the Iranian government are not enough to save the lake.

UN officials say dust from dried up rivers and lakes is already contributing to air pollution levels in Iranian cities, four of which are classified belonging to the 10 most polluted cities in the world.

Back in 2013, faced with a critical shortage of water, the Iranian government called for water conservation and greater water use efficiency nation-wide. Despite imminent shortages, water use in Iran remains inefficient, with domestic use 70 per cent higher than the global average.

The UN Development Program said the level of Iran's per capita water resources is predicted to fall to as little as 816m³ in 2025, down from 2,025m³ in 1990.

Iran has a national population of 75 million people, 12 million of whom reside in the capital; demand for water is rapidly increasing, even as major lakes and groundwater resources begin to shrink.

The water crisis could also lead to the social unrest in the country.

Hundreds of farmers in Isfahan province destroyed a pipeline in clashes with police that was carrying water away from a nearby river to the town of Yazd. As a result, the city of Yazd reportedly began rationing water.Experts blame population growth, climate change, desertification, poor water management and Iran's propensity to build dams for severing the water shortage problem in the country.

“Iran’s water challenge, future crisis”, 09/05/2014, online at: http://www.today.az/news/analytics/133459.html

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❖ Japan Contributes Funds to Help Save Shrinking Lake in Iran

Japan is contributing funds to help save Lake Urmia, one of the Middle East's largest lakes that has shrunk by 85 percent the past two decades as dams were built and farmers diverted too much water for crops.

A deal signed by the United Nations Development Programme and Iran's Department of Environment will provide $1 million to the UNDP office in Tehran to manage area waters more efficiently, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported.

The lake in northwest Iran has lost size and depth as waters were siphoned off for grains and fruit and amid climate change, state-run Mehr news agency said last month. "Historic" shortages from overusing tap water to farmers drilling wells illegally has prompted President Hassan Rouhani to call for a national water-conservation plan.

The average depth of water in Lake Urmia when it covered 5,000 square kilometers was 6 meters (20 feet). Now that's only 1 meter, IRNA said.

UNDP in partnership with Iranâ☐™s Department of Environment is working on a program to conserve Iran's wetlands, IRNA said yesterday. The project relating to Lake Urmia will seek to introduce sustainable agriculture practices to 40 villages that would lead to a 35 percent water savings, it said.

The project, set to be completed by February 2015, will also review water-harvesting options, IRNA said. Managing water remains one of Iran's main environmental challenges, according to Gary Lewis, the United Nations resident coordinator in Iran.

"Japan Contributes Funds to Help Save Shrinking Lake in Iran", 06/05/2014, online at:
http://www.businessweek.com/news/2014-05-06/japan-contributes-funds-to-help-save-shrinking-lake-in-iran

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❖ Whose water is it anyways? Resentment pools on Israel-Lebanon border

A Lebanese village well, newly crucial amid water shortages, is on the wrong side of the boundary between Israel and Lebanon, as is an add-on to a riverfront resort.

The Israeli-Lebanese border has enjoyed a rare, eight-year spell of calm, but worsening water shortages threaten to spark tensions once again.

A sealed well used for more than a century by residents of Blida, a small village in southern Lebanon, has found itself on the wrong side of the border as water shortages entice local farmers to tap it. A few miles east along the border, another territorial dispute looms at a Lebanese tourist site beside the Hasbani river, which flows into Israel.

The 24-foot deep well, known as Nabi Sheaib, skirts the course of the Blue Line, the United Nations term for a boundary created in 2000 which corresponds to Lebanon's southern border. Israeli troops were required by the UN to pull out of south Lebanon, to behind the blue line, to end its 1978-2000 occupation of south Lebanon.

Cartographers often struggle with such boundaries because Global Positioning Systems are not precise enough. In 2000, when the blue line was first delineated, the disputed tomb of a Jewish rabbi or an Arab sheikh (depending on the Israeli and Lebanese points of view) was found to lie within the GPS margin of error. Both Lebanon and Israel insisted the tomb remain on their respective sides. UNIFIL instead offered a compromise worthy of Solomon, drawing the line down the length of the tomb.

But such compromises depend on goodwill between neighbors, and that commodity seems to be in short supply between Israel and Lebanon.

The blue line is only a stopgap until there is a formal frontier agreement between the neighbors. In 2009, the UNIFIL peacekeeping force in south Lebanon began physically marking the blue line on the ground in coordination with the Lebanese and Israeli armies. Blida's problem began when UNFIL realized that the Nabi Sheaib well actually lay about three feet on the Israeli side, and therefore was technically out of bounds to Lebanese citizens.

"That well is part of our history and we will never let it go," says Hussein Daher, the mayor of Blida.

The well is covered by a concrete roof and has four metal hatches providing access to the water below. Showing the well to the Monitor, Mr. Daher lifted one of the hatches open, breaching the blue line by a few feet. For now, it is useless – the bottom of the well is full of sand and rock, which need to be cleaned out to access the water below.

Riverside resort

A few miles to the northeast, near Wazzani village, the line follows the middle of the Hasbani river, which separates Lebanon from Israeli-occupied Syria. Little more than a shallow creek, the Hasbani is flanked by dense thickets of oleander and rhododendron bushes and winds through a narrow gorge. In 2010, Khalil Abdullah, a local businessman, and his sister, Zahra, began constructing a tourist complex of swimming pools, chalets, and restaurants on the river bank.

The Qaryat Hosn el Wazzani facility has steadily grown and is a popular spot for relaxing, eating, and swimming in the cool river [waters] during the blazing heat of summer. The Israelis have eyed the expanding tourist site with unease, and soldiers often stand on the river's edge, ending up just a few feet from Lebanese diners and swimmers.

"They try to intimidate us. They curse us and are just looking for trouble," says Zahra Khalil.

She says that the resort wants to clear rocks washed down river by the winter rains that are blocking part of the channel, but that doing so would require using heavy machinery and access to both sides of the river. So far, the Israelis have refused to allow the operation to proceed.

A bigger problem, perhaps, is that a newly built restaurant extending into the river may have actually crossed the blue line. UNIFIL cartographers are trying to assess the exact path, which may have changed because of construction work on the tourist site.

Given that the Israelis cannot use the Nabi Sheaib well because the only access from their side is a steep slope laced with landmines, and the Qaryat Hosn el Wazzani tourist site does not represent a security threat to Israel, it seems like it would be easy to strike a deal.

But a history of distrust hangs over this minor dispute. In 2002, Israel threatened to go to war against Lebanon when a small pumping station was constructed on the bank of the Hasbani to provide drinking water to nearby villages. Israel is sensitive about the Hasbani because it flows into Israel a mile south of the tourist site and eventually feeds into the Sea of Galilee, Israel's largest source of fresh water.

UNIFIL was hoping to quietly resolve the problems at Blida and Wazzani but that hope was dashed when the disputes were picked up by the Lebanese media.

"The Israeli enemy conveyed its decision to prevent the usage of the well via the UNIFIL troops who implemented it, leaving the residents in great agony due to the drought which overburdens them," reported Al Manar television, owned by the militant Shiite Hezbollah, on Tuesday. Mr Daher, Blida's mukhtar, says the village will take its case to UNIFIL. But if the well is not restored to the villagers, they will take action.

"We have made a decision to go and clean the well and get the water," he says. "A large crowd will go there and let the Israelis shoot us if they want."

“Whose water is it anyways? Resentment pools on Israel-Lebanon border”, 06/05/2014, online at: http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2014/0506/Whose-water-is-it-anyways-Resentment-pools-on-Israel-Lebanon-border

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❖ Water tensions beginning to bubble along the Blue Line

BLIDA, Lebanon: The lack of winter rainfall and the onset of the dry summer months is raising concerns that Lebanon and Israel could face renewed disputes over the allocation of scarce water resources along Lebanon's southern border.

Already arguments have surfaced over the status of a well near Blida and the ongoing expansion of a tourist project on the bank of the Hasbani River.

Both issues were raised Wednesday at the monthly tripartite meeting grouping Lebanese and Israeli army officers under the auspices of UNIFIL's commander.

The disputes are small in the greater scheme of things and should be resolvable with some goodwill and common sense. However, past history of water altercations between Lebanon and Israel demonstrates that goodwill is a rare commodity, threatening a potential rise of tensions as the long summer progresses.

The waters of the 6-meter-deep Nabi Sheaib well in Blida have been exploited by residents and surrounding villages of Mhaibib, Mais al-Jabal and Aitaroun for more than a 100 years, according to Hussein Daher, Blida's mukhtar. It was dormant during the years of Israeli occupation but put back into use in 2000. However, the process of physically marking the Blue Line on the ground that began in 2009 has confirmed that the well actually lies about a meter on the Israeli side of the U.N. boundary and is therefore technically off-limits to anyone inside Lebanon.

The Blue Line at this point adheres to the original 1921 Anglo-French border delineation and follows "the thalweg of Wadi Atabeh." A thalweg is the lowest point of a valley or riverbed and is commonly used to delineate borders. A dirt track runs along the thalweg of Wadi Atabeh and the Nabi Sheaib well lies a meter or so on the eastern – Israeli – side of it.

"This well is part of our history, and we'll never let it go," Daher said.

A 20-member Israeli army patrol and two jeeps reportedly deployed near the well on Wednesday night. But any concerns that the Israelis might exploit the waters of the well are probably unfounded.

Between the well and the Israeli military patrol track that runs along the border is a steep 70-meter hill laced with land mines, making it impractical to use the well. Israeli use of the well would also certainly destabilize what has been a calm border since 2006. Presently, the well is full of sand and rocks, which have to be cleared before the water can be reached.

The villagers say they will give UNIFIL a chance to mediate a solution with the Israelis. But if one is not forthcoming, they say they will take action.

"A large crowd will go there and let the Israelis shoot us if they want," Daher said.

The other current water quarrel is along the Hasbani River, the source of several disputes between Lebanon and Israel between 2001-02. This time, the argument revolves around the Qaryat Hosn al-Wazzani tourist site with restaurants, chalets and swimming pools nestled in a narrow gorge amid oleander trees and rhododendron bushes.

The owners of the site want to clear the adjacent river of rocks washed down during winter to improve the flow. The Israelis have rejected the plan, as it would involve heavy machinery breaching the Blue Line in order to access the entire width of the river. There is an additional concern that a newly built restaurant that juts into the river may have inadvertently breached the Blue Line.

The Abdullah family that owns Qaryat Hosn el-Wazzani insist that they are simply running a business and are harming no one with their tourist venture. But Israeli troops often descend into the gorge and stand on the east bank of the river (which is in Israeli-occupied Syria), just a few feet from diners.

"They try to intimidate us. They curse us and are just looking for trouble," said Zahra Abdullah, a partner in the business.

Israel's concern over the Hasbani River runs deeper than potential breaches of the Blue Line. The Qaryat Hosn al-Wazzani facility lies 1 kilometer upstream from the border with Israel. The Hasbani is one of three tributaries of the Jordan River, and its annual flow amounts to about 15 percent of Israel's fresh water supply.

In 2001 and 2002, a series of small pumping projects to irrigate local fields and supply drinking water to villages in the area led to a flurry of bellicose threats from Israel and wildly exaggerated claims that Lebanon was seeking to divert the Hasbani's waters away from Israel. The episodes calmed down when it was pointed out to the Israelis that the amount of water to be extracted was negligible compared to the river's annual flow.

The 1955 Johnston Agreement – which was unsigned, but the closest Israel and Lebanon have ever come to agreeing on sharing the Hasbani's waters – allocated to Lebanon 35 million cubic meters per year to irrigate 3,520 hectares of farmland in the Hasbaya area. But Lebanon is not thought to be utilizing much more than 10 percent of that amount today.

Quibbles over breaches of the Blue Line tend to provoke bouts of posturing and brinkmanship from Lebanon and Israel, although UNIFIL is hoping to reach agreements over the Blida well and the Hasbani with minimum issue. Global Positioning Systems used to measure the Blue Line are not accurate to the nearest meter, which allows for potential compromise for the well.

In 2000, when the Blue Line was originally delineated, it was discovered that a tomb on Sheikh Abbad hill near Houla fell within the GPS margin of error. The Lebanese claimed the tomb belonged to Sheikh Abbad, a local hermit who achieved fame for the quality of the reed mats he and his followers sold beside the Sea of Galilee, and insisted it remain inside Lebanon. The Israelis said that the tomb belonged to Rabbi Ashi, the fifth century editor of the Babylonian Talmud, and were adamant it stay inside Israel.

The solution was provided by Brigadier General Jim Sreenan, the then-deputy commander of UNIFIL, who suggested that the Blue Line run down the length of the tomb, a compromise worthy of Solomon to which both Lebanon and Israel agreed

"Water tensions beginning to bubble along the Blue Line", 08/05/2014, online at: http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Analysis/2014/May-08/255700-water-tensions-beginning-to-bubble-along-the-blue-line.ashx#axzz31TlqhC1j

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❖ Long-awaited cleanup of Hasbani River begins

WAZZANI, Lebanon: The long-awaited cleanup of the Hasbani River in south Lebanon began Thursday after Israel went back on its initial opposition to the process.

A bulldozer belonging to U.N. peacekeepers began removing rocks that were blocking part of the channel after they were washed downstream by winter rains.

Israel initially rejected Lebanon's requests to clean up the river, a demand by the owners of parks, restaurants and resorts that are scattered along Hasbani's western bank.

The cleanup, which was supervised by the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon and the Army, is expected to last three days.

It was carried out by a team from the engineering corps of UNIFIL's Cambodian contingent.

The operation was hailed as a victory for Lebanon.

"The insistence of Speaker [Nabih Berri] and the Lebanese Army have led to the cleanup," said Qassem Hashem, an MP from Berri's bloc, who oversaw Thursday's operation. "Lebanese perseverance and the Lebanese national will have prevailed."

Lebanon has the right to exploit every inch of the southern border, Hashem said, quoting Berri.

The site of the cleanup lies by the tourist village of Hosn al-Wazzani in the south and across from the Israeli-occupied village of Ghajar.

The Blue Line, which the U.N. drew to indicate Israel's line of withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, passes through the middle of the Hasbani River in the area.

Israel has been prohibiting the owners of parks, restaurants and resorts that are scattered along the river's western bank from accessing the eastern side.

Owners of the tourist sites asked to clear rocks washed down the river by the winter rains that were blocking part of the channel. But the work requires access to both sides of the river, and the Israelis had long rejected Lebanon's requests to complete the cleanup.

But an agreement was concluded Wednesday in a periodic review meeting between Lebanese and Israeli officers in the U.N. station in Ras Naqoura that also included UNIFIL Commander Maj. Gen Paolo Serra.

The agreement allows UNIFIL to carry out the river cleanup for a distance of 120m in the dispute area.

The cleanup was attended by the commander of the Lebanese Army's ninth battalion, Brig. Gen. Ahmad Badran, UNIFIL officers and international cease-fire observers.

UNIFIL officers stationed near the occupied village of Ghajar also observed the cleanup, while Israeli military patrols were absent from the scene.

The rest of the cleanup was delayed until Friday as a result of intense rains that swept Lebanon Thursday. Lebanese bulldozers will be used in the process.

"Long-awaited cleanup of Hasbani River begins", 09/05/2014, online at: http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/May-09/255840-long-awaited-cleanup-of-hasbani-river-begins.ashx#axzz31TlqhC1j

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❖ Terror: Beit Chaggai Water Supply Sabotaged Again

Once again Arabs sabotaged the water line to the Southern Hebron Hills community of Beit Chaggai, leaving residents dry.

Water Authority officials report a staggering 2,000 documented water thefts by PA (Palestinian Authority) residents from the Israeli water system in the past year.

While it is Independence Day in Israel emergency repair efforts are hopefully going to take place during the course of the day Tuesday, 6 Iyar.

"Terror: Beit Chaggai Water Supply Sabotaged Again", 06/05/2014, online at: http://www.theyeshivaworld.com/news/headlines-breaking-stories/229688/terror-beit-chaggai-water-supply-sabotaged-again.html

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❖ Lebanon faces water crisis after record winter drought

Ammiq: Lebanon is bracing for a summer drought, after a record dry winter exacerbated by a massive influx of Syrian refugees and long-standing water management problems.

In Ammiq, in the east of the country, the effects of the dry winter are already visible.

Farmer Khalid Al Kaabi has begun watering his fields a month earlier than usual because the rains that ordinarily feed his lands never came.

"Usually we do this at the end of May, but this year the lack of rain has forced us to do it now," he said as he irrigating rows of wheat for animal feed.

Lebanon's meteorological service says the country has had just 431mm of precipitation since September, less than half last year's 905.8mm and far below the yearly average of 812mm.

The country hasn't seen such low levels since 1932, when just 335mm was recorded, according to Hadi Jaafar, assistant professor of irrigation engineering and water management at the American University in Beirut.

But the increase in the country's population since then makes this year's drought far more serious, he said.

"This year, and although we received a little bit above 400mm, it is far worse," he said.

"Back then, the population was less than half of today's, and so were the agricultural areas," he added.

"Relatively speaking, it is the driest year on record for the inhabitants in this country."

Ordinarily, Lebanese farmers irrigate their fields by digging channels that divert water from local rivers or wells that fill with rainwater.

But the rain and snow that usually feed the rivers and wells never arrived.

"This year, we will have to pump up water from below ground, but if this drought continues next year, there'll only be five per cent of that groundwater left," Kaabi said.

Lebanon has the highest proportion of arable land to residents in the Arab world, but just 12 per cent of the land is cultivated, and agriculture contributes only 11.7 per cent to GDP, behind services and industry.

Still, farmers can ill afford to leave their lands unwatered, despite warnings from Jaafar and others about tapping the country's groundwater reserves.

"The water demand for Lebanon is projected at about 1.8 billion cubic meters per year," he said.

"Most of this water needs to come from groundwater pumping this year...Renewable groundwater resources will all be depleted and we will be tapping from our strategic reserves."

Lebanon's parliamentary committee for public works and energy called in April for the creation of a crisis group to deal with the expected summer shortages.

Fadi Comair, director general of hydraulic and electric resources at the energy ministry, described a "truly dramatic situation," exacerbated by waste and an influx of Syrian refugees.

He said Lebanon could ordinarily expect to have water resources of around 2.7 billion cubic metres in a given year.

Those resources would be sufficient to meet projected annual needs at least until 2020.

"But the influx of Syrian refugees means this balance will tip into the negative by the end of this year," he said.

The UN refugee agency UNHCR warned in February that the presence of more than a million Syrian refugees alongside four million Lebanese would seriously deplete the country's renewable water resources.

Comair says that scenario was only made worse by a winter so dry and unseasonably warm that the country's ski resorts were able to open for just two days.

But even under the best of circumstances, Lebanon fails to manage the water resources it has, according to Comair.

The country has just two dams and some 70 per cent of the water that flows through its 16 rivers ends up in the Mediterranean.

Comair says 48 per cent of the water that is collected is then lost because of poor infrastructure and leakage.

Things are expected to get worse, but farmers are already complaining about crop losses, and in Beirut, residents with the means to do so have been forced to buy water from private suppliers to supplement the flow from the state.

The energy and water ministry has publicly called for citizens to reduce their usage, urging them to avoid washing cars and even to "minimise personal water usage, including showers."

In March, a group of activists and businessmen launched Blue Gold, an initiative to limit water loss and better manage Lebanon's resources.

Its proposals include better storage facilities and monitoring, wastewater treatment and more water efficient households and crops.

But corruption, bureaucracy and the country's perennial political paralysis make the prospects for such changes uncertain.

Comair describes a plan from 2000 to build 27 dams and artificial lakes that has languished unimplemented.

"We haven't been able to carry out more than one per cent of those objectives because there is no political will," he said.

"Lebanon faces water crisis after record winter drought", 09/05/2014, online at: http://gulfnews.com/news/region/lebanon/lebanon-faces-water-crisis-after-record-winter-drought-1.1330213

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❖ West Bank sewage flows untreated as Israeli-Palestinian politics stall treatment plant

JERUSALEM — Israeli settlers and Palestinians in the West Bank rarely mix, but authorities are hoping their sewage will.

The Jewish settlement of Ofra and neighboring Palestinian villages currently dump their sewage into valleys, threatening to contaminate a critical underground water aquifer. So Israeli authorities are advancing plans to solve the environmental mess with a new treatment plant serving both communities.

But in the contentious West Bank, politics can be just as dirty as the sewage.

The treatment plant was originally intended to serve the Jewish settlement only, but Israel's supreme court halted its construction three years ago after determining that it was being built on private Palestinian land.

According to Israeli rulings and international law, private land in occupied territory cannot be confiscated for a public works project unless it benefits the local Palestinian population as well. So Israeli authorities are now trying to legalize the land grab by retrofitting the plant to serve area Palestinian villages, not just Ofra, located about 10 miles (16 kilometers) north of Jerusalem.

But Palestinian officials refuse to cooperate, so as not to lend a hand to Israel's settlement enterprise.

"The Palestinian villages were asked to join in this project with the settlement, but all the villages around rejected the offer following the instructions of the Palestinian leadership," said Abed Rahman Saleh, mayor of the village of Silwad.

Saleh said Israeli officials, for their part, refused to approve a German-funded wastewater facility for the area villages because it would not serve the Israeli settlement. Maj. Guy Inbar, a spokesman for Israel's civil administration in the West Bank, said he was unfamiliar with the claim.

In the meantime, the sewage keeps flowing.

"Over the last 40 years, no one really cared about the Palestinian villages surrounding Ofra," said Shlomy Zachary, an Israeli attorney representing Palestinian owners of the land where the Israeli plant stands half-completed. "Now, in order to shed some quasi-legality on this purification plant, there are attempts to show or to present that this purification plant will serve the Palestinian villages."

The tug of war over the sewage treatment plant reflects the greater fight for control in the West Bank.

For Palestinians, the West Bank is the heart of a future state, but for Israel the land is significant to Jewish heritage and security. Since Israel captured the West Bank in 1967, it has built more than 100 settlements there, complicating any future withdrawal. U.S.-mediated peace talks between Palestinians and Israelis ended last week with no progress on the fate of the West Bank.

Israel has exclusive control of some 60 percent of the West Bank, including the area of Ofra and its surrounding villages. Planning and construction for Palestinian villages in these areas must receive Israeli approval, but Palestinians say they rarely receive such approvals.

Joint efforts on environmental matters like wastewater treatment are also complicated by the need for such projects to receive the approval of a joint Palestinian-Israeli water committee.

Israel began building the treatment plant in 2008 in a verdant, untilled valley near Ofra. In 2009, Palestinian landowners petitioned Israel's supreme court to stop construction, and the court put a temporary stop to the building. In 2011, the court ordered the state not to continue building the plant until it could be done legally.

After three years of planning, Israel's civil administration in the West Bank said that the project is now in advanced planning stages and would be presented for government approval in the coming days.

"When the construction is completed, the facility will be available also for the use of surrounding Palestinian villages," it said in a statement.

The plan is to build an additional facility, alongside the plant already half-built for Ofra, to serve those villages. It is unclear if the court will allow Ofra's sewage to be treated at the plant if Palestinian villages refuse to hook up to it.

"West Bank sewage flows untreated as Israeli-Palestinian politics stall treatment plant", 07/05/2014, online at: http://www.startribune.com/world/258238521.html

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❖ Germany Provides €8.8 Million to Support Water Loss Reduction Program

RAMALLAH, May 7, 2014 – (WAFA) – Jerusalem Water Undertaking and the German Government signed Wednesday a €8.8 agreement to support the water loss reduction Program.

The agreement was signed by Minister of Planning Mohammad Abu Ramadan, Head of Water Authority Shaddad Attili, Chairman of the Board of Directors for Jerusalem Water Undertaking Fawzi al-'Abed, all representing the Palestinian side, and KFW Development Bank Office in the Palestinian Territories Thomas Eisenbach.

Under the agreement, the German government will offer financial support in order to reduce water losses in the West Bank, including C Area, and East Jerusalem.

Abu Ramadan underscored the importance of this agreement noting that the German government and the Jerusalem Water Undertaking would contribute €8 million and €800 thousands in financial aid for the project.

He added that the agreement would contribute to enhancing the quality of services offered to Palestinian citizens through reducing water losses and support the sustainable management of water sources through developing infrastructure that would improve living conditions and water resources in Palestine.

Underscoring the vital contribution of this agreement to leveraging water sector in Palestine, 'Attili was hopeful that more projects would be implemented in the field of water.

Eisenbach stated that this agreement was signed in the framework of promoting German Palestinian cooperation, highlighting the Palestinian government's transparency and integrity in managing development projects.

In 2013 the German government had offered €55 million 40% of which had been earmarked for supporting water and sanitation sector.

"Germany Provides €8.8 Million to Support Water Loss Reduction Program", 07/05/2014, online at: http://english.wafa.ps/index.php?action=detail&id=25109

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❖ In the West Bank, conflict stalls sewage solution

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli settlers and Palestinians in the West Bank rarely mix, but authorities are hoping their sewage will.

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The entire area is in desperate need of a sewage solution — about 55 million cubic meters (72 million cubic yards) go untreated yearly, said Gidon Bromberg of the environmental advocacy group Friends

of the Earth Middle East. Most of that sewage comes from east Jerusalem, which Israel captured in 1967 and annexed — a move that was never internationally recognized.

Sewage from some Jewish areas of west Jerusalem bordering the eastern sector also goes untreated, Bromberg said.

Treatment plans for the area are stuck in the pipeline because Israeli and Palestinian authorities disagree on who should benefit from the treated wastewater, he said.

Only two modern plants treat Palestinian sewage in the West Bank. Other, older facilities dump most wastewater untreated, while sewage in villages drops into cesspits where it mixes with the groundwater, Bromberg said.

Most sewage from about 120 settlements is treated, with some exceptions, Bromberg said. Wastewater from the settlement of Ariel is not fully treated because its plant was built to treat smaller quantities, and wastewater from the settlement of Kiryat Arba flows into the sewers of Hebron, a neighboring Palestinian city, where sewage goes untreated.

When the Israeli settlers of Ofra flush their toilets, their waste dumps into a valley of olive trees nearby. When Palestinians in the neighboring villages flush their toilets, their waste drops into underground cesspits until tankers pump it out and dump it into a valley. All of this threatens a main aquifer that is a critical source of drinking water for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Yitzhak Meyer, head of the Environmental Protection Association, a settler environmental group, said the environment should not suffer at the expense of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"There is no way other than to separate politics from the environment," Meyer said. "I don't know what the final deal will be. I don't know if there will be a final deal in our lifetime, in our generation. In the meantime we need to do things together."

"In the West Bank, conflict stalls sewage solution", 07/05/2014, online at: http://lacrossetribune.com/news/world/middle-east/in-the-west-bank-conflict-stalls-sewage-solution/article_f277134b-991f-5a3f-89f6-2d4deea75544.html

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❖ Naqoura meeting underway to discuss water problems

BEIRUT: The Lebanese and Israeli armies met under UNIFIL Wednesday to discuss a range of issues, including water-related issues in Blida and Wazzani in south Lebanon.

UNIFIL Commander Maj. Gen. Paolo Serra presided over the tripartite meeting that gathered officers from the Lebanese and Israeli armies, in separate rooms.

The Daily Star has learned that the meeting was devoted to discussing the issue of a sealed well in Blida that has been cut off from the small village by the Blue Line and Israel's refusal to allow the clearing of rocks at a tourist site near Wazzani beside the Hasbani River, which flows into Israel.

Owners of the tourist site want to clear rocks washed down the river by the winter rains that are blocking part of the channel, something that requires the use of heavy machinery as well as access to both sides of the river.

"Naqoura meeting underway to discuss water problems", The Daily Star, 07/05/2014, online at: http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/2014/05/naqoura-meeting-underway-to-discuss-water-problems-the-daily-star/

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❖ Freshwater used illegally to irrigate crops

AMMAN — An inspection team on Wednesday discovered two violations on water mains in Jiza in south Amman, according to a Water Ministry official.

The two violations entailed installing illegal pipes to divert thousands of cubic metres of freshwater for the irrigation of crops, the official said on Wednesday.

A joint team from the Water Ministry, the Jordan Water Company (Miyahuna), the Gendarmerie and the Public Security Department inspected the site during a campaign targeting Jiza District to remove violations on the water network and resources, noted the official, who preferred to remain unnamed.

"The first violation entailed the installation of an illegal pipe on a water main that was diverting water to a group of greenhouses located in Jiza," he told The Jordan Times.

Meanwhile, the second pipe was transferring thousands of cubic metres of water to a number of farms in Um Rummaneh in Jiza, according to the official.

He said the offenders were referred to court.

The government recently announced that it was committed to putting an end to all water violations, describing water theft as a form of corruption. To this end, the government drafted new amendments to the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) Law.

Last month, the Lower House endorsed the draft amendments to the law, which grants WAJ and its employees the authority to enforce the law when they detect any water violations without the need to seek police support.

Also under the amendments, WAJ can confiscate any machinery and equipment used by violators to dig illegal water wells. The measure is part of the government's crackdown on water violations.

Under Article 30 of the current version of the Water Authority of Jordan Law, violators are fined up to JD5,000 and jailed for two years, while Article 456 of the Penal Code stipulates that violators of water networks face three- to six-month prison terms and fines ranging between JD100 and JD1,000.

"Freshwater used illegally to irrigate crops – Jordan Times", 07/05/2014, online at:
http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/2014/05/freshwater-used-illegally-to-irrigate-crops-jordan-times/

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❖ FM says Egypt adamant over Nile water

CAIRO, May 10 (KUNA) -- Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy warned on Saturday his country would resolutely tackle the Nile River water dossier, but it would capitalize on all available diplomatic chances in this regard.

Fahmy, who is accompanying an Egyptian cabinet delegation led by Prime Minister Ibrahim Mahlab to Equatorial Guinea, said dialogue, rather than confrontation, is the right way to resolve differences over a controversial Ethiopian dam over the Nile.

"Dialogue is the solution and there is no zero-sum game in a vital issue like the Nile River water," he was quoted by Egypt's official news agency, MENA as saying.

But, the minister regretted that his country had not yet received any practical response from the Ethiopian side to serious negotiations over the issue.

He noted that Uganda and Tanzania had suggested unofficial dialogue sessions among all Nile Basin countries to find a solution to the problem, but no concrete steps had been taken in this regard so far.

Egypt is particularly dependent on water supply from the Nile, and its growing population has been placing that supply under increasing strain.

Ethiopia's underway Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is a USD-4.7-billion project that Ethiopia says will eventually provide 6,000 megawatts of power.

The Egyptian prime minister is in Equatorial Guinea as part of an African tour that already taken him to Chad and Tanzania with a view to promoting Egyptian-African relations. (end) rg.mt

"FM says Egypt adamant over Nile water", 10/05/2014, online at:
http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2376546&language=en

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❖ Fact and fiction: Diverting water from the Congo to the Nile

Talk of diverting water from the Congo River to Egypt is pure fantasy, shifting attention from less costly and more effective strategies for conserving Nile Basin water resources

Some suggest diverting 112 billion cubic metres of water from the River Congo to the Nile, which is utterly ridiculous. How can the course of the Nile, with a revenue of 84 billion cubic metres annually at Aswan, sustain another 112 billion cubic metres?

Others propose digging a new river parallel to the Nile to transfer water from the River Congo to Egypt, which means digging a river or channel that is nearly 35 times longer than the Suez Canal. Some politicians have revisited these ideas as a means to achieve Egypt's water security from a river that has great water capacity (the Congo), without competing with other Nile Basin countries over Nile water revenues that seem trivial in comparison.

In truth, since this idea was thrust into the arena about three years ago I could not glean any scientific or realistic merit to this argument. This theory is an escape from reality instead of facing a complicated situation in the Nile Basin using a comprehensive water strategy for Nile Basin countries.

Reality also requires detailed plans for applying this strategy and fairly and evenly distributing its burdens and benefits among Nile Basin countries by mutual consent. One that takes into consideration the interests of local communities in all the countries where projects will be installed, so that these communities are protective of these projects regardless of political and security conditions.

In order not to jump the gun in judging the idea of diverting water from the Congo to Egypt via the Nile — or through a new watercourse — it is important to look at the different aspects of the theory to make matters clear and judge according to scientific and realistic grounds.

Basic facts about the Congo River

The River Congo is truly an African water kingdom, known to locals as the Zaire River rooted in the word Nazari in local dialect, meaning river.

The river is 4,370 kilometres long, or two thirds the length of the Nile. Its annual water revenues are nearly 1,293 billion cubic metres or nearly 14 times the revenues of the Nile, according to UNESCO data. This makes it the second largest river (in terms of discharge) in the world after the Amazon, which is the emperor of all rivers at 5,600 billion cubic metres of fresh water annually, or 60 times the volume of the Nile annually.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) receives the majority of Congo river water, some 900 billion cubic metres, while the Republic of the Congo and Angola benefit from the remainder. The DRC consumes 12.8 billion cubic metres only of the fresh water, or 1.4 per cent of all water revenues. This leaves 887.2 billion cubic metres to flow from the DRC alone to the Atlantic Ocean without being used.

The Congo has many tributaries, several emerging from Lake Kivu and its basin. Lake Kivu runs between the DRC and Rwanda and its waters were stained with blood during the terrible civil war in Rwanda that killed millions in ferocious fighting between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes.

It also witnessed deadly conflicts on its Congolese sides by tribes and domestic politics in the DRC. The lake covers an area of 2,370 square kilometres, has an average depth of 240 metres and holds 569 billion cubic metres of water despite its small basin.

There are also several tributaries from the western basin of Lake Tanganyika, the largest of the African lakes and the second largest natural freshwater lake in the world after Russia's Baikal River. Lake Tanganyika covers an area of 32,900 square kilometres with an average depth of 574 metres, with a capacity of 17,800 billion cubic metres or about 6.5 times the capacity of Lake Victoria, the primary water source for the Nile River at the Equatorial Lakes Plateau.

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Lake Tanganyika separates DRC on one side and Burundi and Tanzania on the other, with the border running through the centre of the lake. The southern section of the lake is the border meeting point between Tanzania in the East and DRC in the west and Zambia in the south.

While Lake Victoria is known as the largest natural freshwater lake in the world in terms of size, at 68,500 square kilometres, its average depth is no more than 50 metres, which makes its capacity negligible compared to smaller but deeper lakes. It ranks seventh among world lakes in terms of water capacity, and third in Africa after lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa.

One of the River Congo's tributaries emerges from Lake Mweru that separates DRC and Zambia, and is a shallow lake — more like a swamp — with an average depth of seven metres, an area of 4,350 square kilometres and a capacity of 32 billion cubic metres. There are other tributaries that originate at the western slopes of the Muhavura mountain range where in the east emerges Kagera, the first tributary to the Nile River.

Other tributaries emerge at the western slopes of the Rwenzori Mountains which locals call the "Moon Mountains" because of their snowy summits despite their location on the Equator. From the eastern slopes of this mountain range emerge the tributaries of the River Semliki, which is a main tributary of the Nile River. There are other minor tributaries of the River Congo that originate in areas adjacent to the border between the DRC and the Republic of Central Africa.

Diverting water from the Congo to Egypt: Myths and reality

In all the northern and eastern sources of the River Congo the land gradient is at an angle, or a sharp angle, opposite to the land gradient of Nile water, which makes Nile water and its tributaries flow North towards Egypt and its mouth on the Mediterranean Sea. The gradient of the south and west tributaries of the Congo River, meanwhile, flow towards the Atlantic Ocean and the southern ones flow north and join the course of the Congo flowing west in the direction of the Atlantic Ocean.

Any attempt to divert water from Congo's basin would be at a water catchment on the main river or its northern tributaries that rapidly flow south and west. This is opposite the Nile's land gradient, as mentioned earlier.

Thus, diverting water from the basin of the Congo River to the Nile River or even to a parallel course requires lifting a large volume of water at a very high cost to transfer it from the Congolese watercourse to the Nile watercourse, or even a new parallel one. This cost alone would make the diversion absurd because of the price of energy and expected revenues from using diverted water, compared to the cost of transferring water.

Suggestions to divert water from the Congo to the Nile via the Bahr Al-Ghazal basin or directly to the White Nile are also unscientific and absurd, because of topography, direction of slopes of each river, and the capacity of the Nile especially at the White Nile.

The course of the White Nile is shallow and cannot hold any more water without raising the height of its banks. It has a slight sloping gradient and is awash with swamps. It is also quite shallow — about four metres deep in summer, which can increase to six metres in winter. During flood season, it becomes more of a lake when its course increases from 850 metres wide in the northern section to 4,300 metres.

As for projects to develop Nile water revenues by conserving wasted water in the swamps of Kyoga, Bahr Al-Jabal, Mashar and Bahr Al-Ghazal, they require a mega project to raise the banks of the White Nile so it can sustain any increase in Nile revenue. Transferring a large volume of water from the River Congo, even at an impossible impractical high cost, is technically impossible for the White Nile.

Diverting water from the Congo to Egypt through digging a new watercourse parallel to the Nile for a distance of more than 5,000 kilometres and lifting water from the Congo River to this new watercourse is an entertaining reverie that has nothing to do with reality. It is unviable in terms of the cost of digging the watercourse, the time it would take, the cost of lifting the water to it, guaranteeing flow and continuous lifting because of the uneven terrain.

Meanwhile, the fantasy project of diverting water from the Congo to Egypt requires approval from the DRC, the Republic of the Congo, Central Africa, Chad and Sudan, as well as guaranteed political and security stability in these countries so the project and companies working on it and equipment are not sabotaged, destroyed or stolen. That alone is enough reason to end all theories about such a project.

In South Sudan, the Jonglei Canal project was 70 percent complete after spending large funds, but was sabotaged, destroyed and terminated because of political and security turmoil in South Sudan during Sudan's civil war since the mid-1980s.

This demonstrates that putting the fate of a mega project with multiple phases in several countries — each suffering political and security turmoil — is delusional and a premeditated waste of money. Also, environmental groups around the world will fight against any such project even if it were technically sound and economically feasible, because it is an assault on nature and is certain to result in climate changes in several countries.

It is likely that promoting this whimsical project is an attempt to distract Egypt from its water rights that are being violated by the Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam, instead of addressing the issue with various dynamic mechanisms and effective implementation of old agreements that support Egypt's water rights to the Nile River and its tributaries. Egypt must also take advantage of its international and regional relations to block Ethiopia from unilateral actions that harm Egypt and its Nile water rights.

It also requires Egypt to use its water situation and how all life depends wholly on Nile water — human and non-human — to assert its historic right to defend every drop of Egypt's Nile water quota.

Promoting this fantasy also attempts to distract Egypt from striving to ration water consumption, developing new water-saving irrigation methods, seeking to develop Nile water revenues through conservation projects of wasted water at the Kagera River basin. This water does not even enter the

watercourse because of evaporation, seepage and absorption into the swamps of Kyoga in Uganda, the waters between lakes George and Edward, the swamps of Bahr El-Jabal and Nahr Naam, the swamps of Bahr Al-Ghazal in South Sudan, and swamps of Mashar on the border between South Sudan and Ethiopia.

These are more realistic and feasible projects, and their cost and water revenues would be divided fairly among participating Nile Basin countries. This would be part of a strategic water, agricultural, industrial and services partnership between Egypt and the countries of the Nile Basin, based on cooperation, equal mutual benefits under the umbrella of brotherhood in the Nile River.

"Fact and fiction: Diverting water from the Congo to the Nile", 08/05/2014, online at: http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/4/100748/Opinion/Fact-and-fiction-Diverting-water-from-the-Congo-to.aspx

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❖ Geopolitics on Nile Water: Its Implications on South Sudan Conflict

UNT - In Africa, access to water is one of the most critical aspects of human survival. Today, about one third of the total population lack access to water, constituting 300 million people and about 313 million people lack proper sanitation (World Water Council 2006). As result, many riparian countries surrounding the Nile river basin have expressed direct stake in the water resources hitherto seldom expressed in the past.

Historical perspective dubbed ancient Egypt to have natural rights on the Nile River, and principles of its acquired rights have been a focal point of negotiations with upstream states. Egyptian civilization has sustained itself utilizing water management on agriculture for some 5,000 years in the Nile River valley and virtually depends on agricultural-led economy. The fact that this right exists means that any perceived reduction of the Nile waters supply to Egypt is tampering with its national security and thus could trigger potential conflict. Sudan also has hydraulic potential and has created four dams in the last century. This has resulted in the development so far of 18,000 km² of irrigated land, making Sudan the second most extensive user of the Nile, after Egypt, but South Sudan benefited nothing of the Nile water though the water passes through its corridor. Ethiopia's tributaries supply about 86 percent of the waters of the Nile for Egypt's sustainable economic development whilst receives nothing out of its own waters but savagery from the downstream mainly Egypt.

Arguably the lack of common understanding over the use of the Nile basin with respect to whether or not "sharing water" or "benefit" has a tendency to escalate the situation into regional conflict involving emerging dominant states such as the tension between Ethiopia-Egypt over the Nile river basin imminent. The article further contributes to the C-H conflict model in order to analyze the regional challenges, and Egypt's position as the hegemonic power in the horn of Africa contested by Ethiopia. C-H model is used to predict the probable occurrence of conflicts as a result of empirical economic variables in African states given the sporadic civil strife in many parts of Africa. In order to make sense of the analysis, I focused on Ethiopia and Egypt to explicate the extent of water crisis in the South Sudan conflict, which is part of East Africa.

This article examines the water scarcity in the North, Horn and Eastern Africa with an attempt to focus on Egypt, Ethiopia and South Sudan through the C-H model of theory of civil wars in order to

construct the model on water scarcity with an attempt to reconcile the tensions over water resources and its effects on the people of the South Sudan and Eastern African people.

There have been several applications and interpretations of the earlier conflict theorists propounded by earlier scholars such as Karl Marx, Lenin, and Weber. Collier-Hoeffler, also known as the C-H model is one of such interpretation of recent times. The analysis on conflict is based on the framework of many variables such as tribes, identities, economics, religion and social status in Africa. Subjecting the data to a rigorous econometric regression analysis of the many variables identified in Africa concluded that based on the data set that economic factor rather than ethnic, or religious, identities are the base of conflicts in Africa. In complementing this model with the earlier conflict theory propounded by Karl Marx recognized the significance of the social and interactions within a given society. These interactions according Karl Max are characterized by conflicts. Hence, the conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of the capitalist system forms a synthesis of the forces of the interaction within the system.

Marx, again reiterated the fact that these social and human interactions is dialectical in the sense that when a dominant nation seeks to control dependent nations or peripheral countries what yields in consequence is the tension to rebel against the oppressor by dependent states in order to agitate for equitable and fair share of national resources. This point is consistent with the C-H model when they argued with empirical data on the causes of conflicts in Africa, and concluded that economic factors are the significant predictor of conflict in many parts of the African continent. Therefore, according to C-H, economic reasons contributed to a large extent the greater portion of conflicts in Africa constituting the physical involvement of Egypt into current South Sudan conflict. While these economic reasons are varied and numerous due to the resources available in a given region and the allocation of resource whether naturally endowed or man-made, any form of competition to control these resources or allocation of resources will naturally generate two outcomes: tension and potential conflict, and cooperation. In this case, Egypt's sole access to the Nile for centuries now has invariably gratified itself as the sole control of the Nile water resources without considering the real damage imposed on the upstream countries.

The manifestation of the greed of Egypt on the Nile water reflected on the army involvement in the South Sudan current conflict and the agitation of other negative forces opposing to the EPRDF rule. There is now military coordination between Cairo and Juba to fight the rebel as the proxy war against

Ethiopia to back down from constructing the Grand Renaissance Dam. The imminent concern of Egypt over the political tension and instability in South Sudan stems from its interests in the Nile waters. For Cairo, South Sudan is the most important strategic Nile basin country because of the possibility of implementing projects to increase Egypt's share of the river's water by harnessing water currently lost on South Sudanese territory to swamps but channel through Jonglei canal direct to Egypt, a project that was halted in 1984 after the inception of the SPA/M. Egypt's current shaky relations with the Sudan and Ethiopia are also a key factor in the desire to expand ties with Khartoum's South Sudan rival.

In 2002, a senior Kenyan minister Raila Odinga, called for the review and renegotiation of the 1929 treaty, which gave Egypt the right to veto construction projects on the Nile river basin, and said "it was signed on behalf of governments which were not in existence at that time." In actual fact, the accords are signed in the absence of the upstream countries including among other, Ethiopia, South Sudan just emerged, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi, which Egypt put on the radar in case there are capital projects impeding the flow of the waters down Egypt. This implies threat to Egypt's national security and basic livelihoods.

Cascao, argued that the asymmetrical flow of water resources in the Nile river basin and the access to physical flow of the blue Nile by Egypt and Sudan in the downstream has extremely heighten hydro-political tension over the Nile. These tensions have attracted the United Nations organizations interventions and other international organization on matters concerning the distribution and allocation of water resources in the Nile river basin and in which compensation are offered to other riparian countries unequal access to the distribution of water resources, especially those on the upstream who only benefit rainfall.

As already mentioned and by extension Herodotus comments on Egypt as "the gift of the Nile," has been extrapolated by Egypt in order to exercise hydro-political power in the Nile river basin for several decades. This status Egypt has enjoyed for some time now without allowing any riparian countries along the Nile to negotiate any form of control on water resources and development projects such as hydroelectric power by neighboring countries. The asymmetrical flow of water resources in the Nile has also afforded Egypt a position of dominance compared to other riparian countries situated upstream on the Nile.

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With emerging hydro-political powers in the region, Ethiopia and Egypt could dominate other countries and for that matter wage physical wars in order to control water resources. The recent demonstration in Ethiopia by Oromo students through the long hand of Egypt is the clear violation of the sovereignty of Ethiopia. On the basis of the above discussions, it can be safely concluded that the nature of tension in North Eastern Africa most, especially the Nile riparian countries are on a brink of conflict over the control and use of Nile water resources. As already pointed out, and by extension Collier-Hoeffler's economic analysis of conflicts in Africa did not cite the potential trigger of conflict as a result of the Nile, what is significant about his model is the paradigmatic nature upon which his theory of analysis are based. And since water is a vital part of the economic resources of Africa, this article concludes that the water resources just as any other economic resource has a full potential of tension and conflict over the Nile river basin by riparian states.

Sharing such a vital and potentially scarce resource as water is seldom easy. In the case of the Nile, water management has always been a delicate exercise. With a combined population of nearly 430 million spread over eleven countries (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR. Congo), Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda), the Nile is one of Africa's most complex cross-border river basins. From the historical point of view Burton and Speke in February 1858, discovered Lake Tanganyika as the main source of the Nile but the expedition extended by Speke, who had by now recovered from ill, set off in command of a small party and in August 1858 came upon what he later described as 'a vast expanse' of 'the pale-blue waters' of the northern lake, which was named Lake Victoria and believed, correctly, that it was the source of the Nile. However, there were long delays before the same explorers reached Gondokoro (in Juba), 750 miles south of Khartoum, in February 1862, believed to be the source of the Nile. In the bid of the above analysis, one conclude that Egypt manipulated the upstream countries together with British denies these countries their rights of water utilization and these agreements between the two states signed without the consent of the countries in question. Therefore, fighting the war against Egypt is justifiable and direct compensation would be required from the British as stakes getting high.

However, Ethiopia's decision to continue with the construction of the so-called Grand Renaissance Dam has recently heightened disputes over water security. The dam is set to become one of Africa's largest hydroelectric plants, but some studies indicate it could have a major impact on the whole basin and significantly affect the water supplies of neighboring countries. As an effort to settle the disputes, a 'Tripartite Technical Committee' was created to assess the dam's impact in Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan excluding South Sudan. At this juncture Egypt dominant strategy came into play and able to stretch its long hand reaching out to the desperate government of South Sudan militarily. The inclusion of high-level NBI representatives in the Committee is worth noting, but its limited technical mandate may hamper its capacity to provide political solutions.

In recent years, the politics of water sharing and its related diplomatic frameworks have become less predictable. The resignation of Hosni Mubarak in 2011 and the death of Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in 2012 removed two old regional hands, raising many questions about the future. Domestic instability has come to characterize also the DRC, Eritrea, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Somalia and at the crossroad South Sudan. Inter- state tensions remain dormant, but could suddenly reawaken despite the formal end of the conflict in 2000, relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea remain shaky; South Sudan has recently declared its intention to use the Nile to develop its hydropower potential, which may revive disputes with Sudan; and cross- border tensions over the Great Renaissance Dam are far from abating.

Water politics in the Nile may thus be reaching a critical juncture, especially if local political 'entrepreneurs' decide to use the Nile as a 'trump card' in elections. If this is the case, the stability of the whole region may then be put at stake. Egypt with no doubt exploited the South Sudan conflict supporting government of Salva Kiir Mayardit through military hardware and supplies, evidently the capture of 12 Egyptian fighters (their names are as follow: Aches Ahmed Gou, Capt. Abaur Ahmose, Amran Saleh, Amum Thori, Abduraman Petei, Salatis Omar, Osman Gosh, Abdulahi Said, Mohamed Raad, Yusuf Abdu, Capt. Ali Semut and Shemstedin Tihrak) as POWs in the recent battle in Ayod County of Jonglei is a significant prove. The offensive launched by the government and allied forces on rebel position meant to push them deep into the Ethiopian territory as planned by the government of South Sudan and Egypt, the consequences will have direct bearings on the construction of the Ethiopia Grand Renaissance Dam. In this regard groundwork is already prepared and this position

will be used as a launching pads for Egypt to strike on the Ethiopia Grand Renaissance Dam. The government of Ethiopia should not fold its hand watching the looming threats towards its territory by Egypt and South Sudan as if the war is between the rebel and the government of South Sudan.

Multiply interests plays in and those interests group should protect their sovereignty, territorial integrity and the national constitution with the great intention of safeguarding their national interests of either Ethiopia or the Sudan. It should be noted that South Sudan together with Ethiopia should see the Nile water as a binding constraint for stability and development in the region and work for mutual benefit, but Salva Kiir should not be victim for short sighted political benefits vis-à-vis Egypt's hegemonic power against the Nile water, and should refrain from opening a space for destabilizing forces that would have a spillover effect to regional peace. In this brief analysis, Ethiopia should stand tall to defend the aggression by the Egypt in the overcoat of supporting the government of South Sudan in the fight against the rebel.

"Geopolitics on Nile Water: Its Implications on South Sudan Conflict", 06/05/2014, online at: http://www.upperniletimes.net/details/749

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❖ The rejuvenation of Egypt's hydro political short-termism

May 6, 2014 - Born out of Ottoman Empire's and British colonial rule's historical revulsion to the development of up-streamers over the Nile, Egypt's recent revolutionary tide against the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is storming regional and international diplomatic fields with ill-founded and spurious forecasts of the menace of the project on the lives and livelihoods of Egyptian people. Fettered by the stubborn adherence to British and Ottoman's "own will," Cairo's polity is now incapable to put a bridle on its political officials' fickle, whimsical hydro-diplomatic acts to halt Ethiopia's move in making the project a reality.

Cairo's hydro-diplomacy single-mindedly and glaringly roams hither-and-thither to whittle away Ethiopia's determination, heavily leaning on its time-honored dependency on outsiders' to extend its interests. Egyptian foreign ministry spokesperson's recent remark is a case in point to illustrate Egypt's hydro political dependency to cripple Ethiopia's march to accomplish its Dam and perpetuate its insatiable interests over the Nile. Badr Abdelatty told Reuters on 23 April, 2014 that "We have contacts with everybody….with Russia, with China, you name it….,"to bar them from supporting and financing Ethiopia's efforts to accomplish the grand project, stressing that the GERD was a 'violation' of Egypt's interests.

This attempt is extremely antithetical to Ethiopia's stance over the intent of the construction of the GERD. Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn epitomizes the GERD as "a real expression of the nation's commitment to a project which demonstrates the determination of the people and the government to win the war against poverty whatever the cost." In deed, Ethiopians have committed themselves that wails of indignity, famine and war will not wither their eyes along the banks of the tributaries of the Blue Nile, Barro-Akobo and Tekezze including various tributaries Wanqa, Bashilo , Walaqa , Wanchet , Jamma , Muger , Guder , Agwel, Nedi, Didessa, Dabus, Handassa, Tul, Abaya, Sade, Tammi, Cha, Shita, Suha, Muga, Temcha, Bachat, Katlan, Jiba, Chamoga, Weter and the Beles. They have also affirmed that the GERD will turn the Nile into a passage of light conquering the roots of mistrust, suspicion, underdevelopment and Egypt's exclusive mastery over the resources of the River for the shared benefit of all Basin countries. The GERD is an emblem of national project incorporated in the country's five year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP).

Egypt's deaf ear to Ethiopia's calls for genuine discussion is a reminiscent of its historic, deep-rooted hydro-political dependence on the shoulders of the major traditional super powers, including Ottoman Empire (as its province), British Empire (as its colony), America (as its Cold War client

state in the MENA and the Horn regions during the reign of President Sadat), and the Soviet Union (as a client in the Middle East and Africa).

In the mean time, Egypt is also wooing its traditional patrons and new emerging powers, including the US, EU, Russia, China, as well as many other major powers, to eternize its long-cherished geo-political goal—"Controlling the Nile"— and immortalize or keep alive the legacy of British colonial rule and Ottoman Empire's path towards the development, utilization and use of the waters of the Nile River. Blown by the waves of its long-term dependency syndrome and driven by the de facto ruler, Cairo is pursuing another hydro-political card to outsmart Ethiopia's march towards inclusive prosperity and common will, upholding the recently often-repeated second Cold War rivalry (the US and Russia) to project its unilateral securitization of the Nile and transcend its short-term interests over the Nile Valley.

After Egypt's independence from colonial rule, the country's leaders sought support from foreign powers to deter Ethiopia's development projects over the Blue Nile, Tekezze and Barro-Akobo. In fact, they were, according to Professor Yacob Arsano, successful in crumbling the Abbay (Blue Nile) Master Plan Study (1958-64). They made a quintessential role in crushing the Gilgel Abbay Project (1960s). More ominously, President Sadat also obliterated Ethiopia's Tana-Beles Development Project (mid 1980s) to salvage millions of people from Wello, Tigray, Gondar, Haddya, and Kambata from famines as a result of frequent droughts. Additionally, when President Nassir built the Aswan High Dam, the Soviet Union together with its Hydro project Institute provided billions of dollars, technicians and heavy machineries to the realize Egypt's symbol of power.

Egypt's hydro political dependency on outsiders is firmly rooted from its history as a province of Ottoman Empire and later as a colony of British colonial rule. Its dependency is not only confided to hydro politics but also its overall development direction. The dependency has taken root from the institutions which were developed by first Ottoman Empire and then British colonial rule. In this regard, James A. Robinson and Daron Acemo?lu assert that "the development path forged largely by the history of Ottoman and European rule" impedes Egypt from independently crafting its way to prosperity and development. They go on to say that leaders of post-independent Egypt "followed the former colonial world by developing hierarchical, authoritarian regimes with few of the political and economic institutions" to achieve the development goals.

Currently, Cairo's hydro political short-termism vows to view Africa as a strategic and security ally to enshrine its Nile factor in the African diplomatic circle and put aside the imaginative and self-

induced fear of the Cooperative Framework Agreement. Reformulating its strategic goals and objectives, the post-Revolution Cairo's officials are stepping into the long-neglected African circle to seek the hand of the Nile Basin and other African countries to cement ways to have mastery over the geopolitical hemisphere of the Nile Valley and prevent up-streamers from using the waters of the Nile for the absolute use and benefit of Egyptian people. Beyond his calls for Egypt's membership in the African Union, Egyptian Prime Minister's visit to African countries succinctly entails Egypt's dependency on African circle to downplay the future development of up-streamers' peoples to utilize their water resources.

Now sounds pretty clear that Cairo's dependency and short-termism on the legacy of British and Ottoman rule transcends many ages and comes to the 21st century. In deed, the incumbent government in Cairo sticks to Britain's accords, which cultivated the imperial political supremacy than the integration of the Eastern Nile Basin countries. Their yearning to continue the legacy of British colonial rule, Ottoman Empire and Cold War rivalry over the use of the waters of the Nile is now calling for Russia, America and the EU to help sustain the dream of the founder of modern Egypt-Muhammed Ali-controlling the head waters of the Nile waters.

Al Sisi's recent visit to Russia was intended to make the US and the EU switch sides with Cairo's new roadmap on its future standing in regional and global affairs. He is also successful in pressing Obama administration to release $650 million of the total $1.5 billion aid allocated to Egypt. His cautious move is a reminiscence of the Cold War rivalry to extend the old state's interests. America and the EU have come on board to help support the coming Al Sisi's Government's fight against terrorism and legitimize Sisi's coup at the expense of democracy and human rights.

To the dismay of Egyptian politicians, up-streamers are committed to proactively engage and play their part in the making of today's and tomorrow's drama of regional and global affairs. They are now rethinking Egypt's unremitting hegemonic reign over the utilization of the Nile River. They offer another alternative—the mutually cooperative partnership over the development, management and utilization of the Nile— to fairly and equitably channel the waters of the River for the mutual development and transformation of the Nile Valley region and for the realization of the priorities of African Renaissance and Pan Africanism.

Having understood the failure to modernize their country and its severe repercussions on their ancestors, Ethiopians are today financing the GERD, reiterating the late Prime Minister's remark: "we not only have a plan, but we also have the capacity to assert our rights." They are also committed

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to end one of the knottiest ironies of the world, as the Wall Street Journal put, "the land that feeds the Nile is unable to feed itself." What Egypt needs to do is to reinvent its foreign policy direction towards the Nile abandoning its interest to preserve the needs of the old state institutions implanted by British and Ottoman rule. Again, it should also give a passage to interdependence than dependence on alien forces to maximize its interest to rectify the wrongs of yesterday and build a better tomorrow.

"The rejuvenation of Egypt's hydro political short-termism", 06/05/2014, online at: http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article50901

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❖ Al-Sisi urges Ethiopia to understand Egypt water concerns

Egypt's presidential election Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi has called on Ethiopia to understand the Egyptian concerns about the Nile water.

"There must be a mutual understanding between the two countries," al-Sisi said during a meeting with an African media delegation on Tuesday, according to his official election campaign.

Al-Sisi, who led the army to unseat elected president Mohamed Morsi last July, said that Egypt understands the Ethiopian development aspirations.

"However, the Ethiopian side should understand that there are 90 million Egyptians who live on the Nile water, which is a life-or-death issue" he said.

Relations between Egypt and Ethiopia soured last year over Ethiopia's plans to build its Grand Renaissance Dam on the upper reaches of the Nile River – Egypt's main source of water.

The controversial project raised alarm bells in Egypt, the Arab world's most populous country, which fears a reduction of its traditional share of Nile water.

Ethiopia, for its part, is determined to build a series of dams in order to generate electricity, both for local consumption and export.

Addis Ababa insists the new dam will benefit downstream states Sudan and Egypt, which will be invited to purchase electricity thus generated.

Water distribution among Nile basin states has long been regulated by a colonial-era treaty giving Egypt and Sudan the lion's share of river water.

"Al-Sisi urges Ethiopia to understand Egypt water concerns", 07/05/2014, online at:
http://www.worldbulletin.net/world/135670/al-sisi-urges-ethiopia-to-understand-egypt-water-concerns

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❖ Ethiopia arrests 3 Egyptians near S. Sudan border

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopian security forces have arrested three Egyptians in Ethiopia's westernmost Gambela region near the border with South Sudan, a senior security source said.

The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said two were arrested while trying to board a public bus bound for Assosa in the Benishangul-Gumuz Region, where Ethiopia is building the multibillion-dollar Renaissance hydroelectric dam on the Nile River.

The third, he added, was seized by Ethiopian citizens while taking pictures of a new dam being constructed on the Baro River, a tributary of the Nile River.

According to the security source, the three Egyptians are currently in police custody in Gambella where they are being interrogated.

He said they had been arrested earlier this week, declining to give their names for security reasons.

The trio was found to have entered Ethiopian territory illegally without registering at any of the four border crossings between Ethiopia and South Sudan, the source said.

They are expected to face charges of illegally entry, holding forged visas and threatening the country's vital facilities, the source said.

The arrest comes amid heightened tension between Egypt and Ethiopia over the Renaissance dam.

The project has raised alarm bells in Egypt, the Arab world's most populous country, which fears a reduction of its historical share of Nile water.

Water distribution among Nile basin states has long been regulated by a colonial-era treaty giving Egypt and Sudan the lion's share of river water.

However, citing its need for development, Ethiopia says it must build a series of dams to generate electricity, both for local consumption and export.

Addis Ababa insists the new dam will benefit downstream states Sudan and Egypt, both of which will be invited to purchase the electricity thus generated.

"Ethiopia arrests 3 Egyptians near S. Sudan border", 08/05/2014, online at: http://www.turkishpress.com/news/405057/

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❖ Egypt to use 'eye-in-the-sky' to monitor their water security

Water security in the Middle-East is of the utmost importance. In this region of the world, the use, supply, control, and allocation of water has been politically motivated, as well as a defining issue in many conflicts.

Because the Middle-East is an extremely water-scarce region, any loss of a country's water supply would impact the health of the population as well as the bio-diversity and eco-systems of the country.

In most cases, getting a fair share of the water rights from river systems running through or bordering a country is an elaborate process usually accomplished in three stages. First, a country must assert its claim to the water rights. Then they must receive recognition by the other countries who also use the waters. The final step would be a country finally attaining those water rights, but over the years, this last step has usually ended in political strife, so much so that "non-agreed" water sharing has become the reality.

It has been reported in Al-Monitor this week that the Egyptian government, along with a number of Egyptian research institutes, has announced they will start using satellite technology for the development and monitoring of underground water supplies and coastal regions endangered by climate change. The primary motivation in getting a satellite up is Egypt's concerns over Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam impacting their water security.

Alaa al-Nahri, the head of the research department and vice president of the Authority for Remote Sensing, said "Studying the effects of the Renaissance Dam on Egypt is the most important issue for the Authority for Remote Sensing right now. The new satellite's imagery is expected to yield data and information pertaining to the dam's design and the volume of water that it will trap, to determine the flow rate of water to Egypt and the direct impact on the valley and the Delta."

This announcement also reveals Egypt's ongoing attempts to get their space program up and running. The country's first attempt at a space program was initiated in 1960, but it was put on the back burner until 2000, when an independent budget was adopted following the launch of their first satellite,

NileSat 101 in 1998. On April 14, this year, Egypt launched their EgyptSat 2 satellite from Russia's Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan,

Egypt's political leaders are in favor of the establishment of a space agency, and especially in the satellites being used in any number of development fields. It is understood that the president will sign a law establishing Egypt's first space agency soon. The country is already planning to launch another satellite in 2016 with financial aid from China. "EgyptSat 3 is expected to launch in early 2016 and will be 60% made in Egypt. Financing it will not be a problem because China will contribute a significant portion of its funding," Nahri said.

Baheyeddin Arjun, the former director of Egypt's old space program, explained that Egypt still lacks the scientific expertise and technology to analyse satellite imagery properly. "Effectively making use of satellite technological applications is the main challenge faced by Egypt in space. We currently do not possess enough scientific centers to make use of and analyze satellite imagery. There also is a deficiency in the number and level of expertise of people working in this field inside Egypt."

Arjun also said funding would not be a big hurdle, because satellite imaging technology is relatively inexpensive. But he said a decision would have to be made as to the positive benefits from implementing the technologies. But even with all this hype, Egypt is most interested in how much Ethiopia's dam is going to impact the water security of their country.

"Egypt to use 'eye-in-the-sky' to monitor their water security", 09/05/2014, online at: http://www.digitaljournal.com/science/egypt-to-use-eye-in-the-sky-to-monitor-their-water-security/article/383326

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❖ What water wars? 'Think water cooperation', expert says

BOGOTA (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Back in 1995, Ismail Serageldin, then World Bank vice president, warned that: "Many of the wars this century were about oil but those of the next century will be over water."

It's been a common refrain ever since with experts predicting that rapid urbanisation and population growth coupled with the impact of climate change would increase demand for water and the likelihood of countries fighting over the precious commodity.

But which nations have gone to war over water in the nearly 20 years since the World Bank raised the alarm, or indeed, the past century?

That's a question Asit Biswas, who co-founded the World Water Council and founded the Mexico City-based Third World Centre for Water Management, often asks.

For nearly five decades, Indian-born Biswas, who has advised numerous governments, U.N. agencies and multinationals on water issues, has been challenging the conventional wisdom that water wars are imminent.

"No two countries have ever gone to war directly over water," he told me in a recent telephone interview from Singapore.

"It's highly unlikely that countries will go to war over water during the rest of the 21st century. And if it does happen, water will be the secondary or tertiary cause not the primary cause," he said.

Biswas argues the world has enough water to support its rising population and in turn, our growing demand for food and energy.

But water is wasted. The water crisis today is about water management and not water scarcity.

"It is not the lack or absence of water that is the problem but how you manage it. Water management practices in most of the world's countries have been historically poor and continue to be poor. Water is being used very inefficiently," Biswas said. "It depends more on how you manage the water you have than how much freshwater per capita you have."

Water conflicts are often a reflection of longstanding political tensions between countries and are used as a pawn in disputes between nations.

"Water ... isn't the direct cause of conflict," Biswas said. "The short-term benefit for politicians is to blame others and other countries for their water problems and play to their national galleries."

SACRED WATERS

One reason why the idea of water wars has become a popular belief stems from our "emotional attachment to water", which distorts the way we think about water, Biswas said.

From the Ganges river flowing through India and Bangladesh, to the Jordan river in the Middle East, water is regarded as a sacred resource like no other.

"Human beings' relationship to water is very different to any other natural resource. Water has a very important place in all religions, including Islam, Hinduism and Christianity," he said.

Because people often have an "irrational and emotional response", they often forget that water is a renewable resource.

"Water can be re-used and re-used. It’s not like oil or coal. With good management of water there are no limits to its re-use," Biswas said.

WATER COOPERATION

Biswas sees water as a source of cooperation between nations rather than conflict.

Over 90 percent of the world's population lives in countries that share river and lake basins and 148 countries share at least one transboundary river basin, according to UN Water.

This means countries have had to share and manage their joint water resources. Nearly 450 agreements on international waters were signed between 1820 and 2007, the United Nations says.

For Biswas, a shining example of water cooperation is India's relationship with its small, landlocked neighbour, Bhutan.

Thirty years ago, when most of Bhutan was in darkness and cut off from the world, the country asked for India's help to develop its huge hydropower potential by building dams and plants, Biswas explained.

It was a win-win situation for both countries. Bhutan sold India electricity, propelling its economic and social development, while India got the energy it needed.

"The case of India and Bhutan shows that with political will it is possible for two countries to collaborate on water resources that are mutually beneficial," Biswas said.

Another often cited case of two countries cooperating over water is Bolivia and Peru, whose borders share Lake Titicaca, the largest freshwater lake in South America.

In 1996, Bolivia and Peru created a joint entity to manage, use and conserve the lake, and in turn avert conflict over their shared water resource, experts say.

There's also the Indus Water Treaty, signed between Pakistan and India in 1960. The treaty divides up control between India and Pakistan of several rivers draining into the Indus river basin. It has survived two wars between the countries and is still in force today, the United Nations notes.

In addition, the Mekong River Commission, set up in 1995 and run by Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam, tackles flood prevention and management, water use in agriculture, hydropower,

fishing and irrigation, along one of the world's longest rivers flowing through six countries.

In the water-scarce Middle East, countries have addressed water shortages by setting up the Arab Water Ministerial Council in 2008 and the Arab Water Council to improve management.

"There is water cooperation but the media prefers to jump on the concept of water conflicts," Biswas said.

"What water wars? 'Think water cooperation', expert says", 08/05/2014, online at: http://www.trust.org/item/20140508141227-4naeg

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❖ Chinese city suspends water supplies over "quality abnormalities"

May 9 (Reuters) - Authorities in the eastern Chinese city of Jingjiang have suspended water supplies after quality abnormalities were detected, state media said on Friday, with hundreds of thousands of people affected in China's latest water pollution scare.

Officials in Jingjiang, a city on the Yangtze River in Jiangsu province, did not offer any further details about why the water was shut off, the official Xinhua news agency said.

"The government has started an emergency response plan," Xinhua said, citing a brief government microblog post.

State broadcaster CCTV said 680,000 people had been affected by the shut-off. It quoted other domestic media as saying supplies would resume later on Friday.

Concern over water quality in Jingjiang comes soon after the cancer-inducing chemical benzene was found to be 20 times above national safety levels in the western city of Lanzhou in April.

That prompted a rush on bottled water in the heavily industrialised city of 3.6 million people in Gansu province, one of China's most polluted cities.

In 2005, water supplies to the northeastern city of Harbin were cut off after an explosion at a chemical plant spilled benzene into the Songhua River, pushing levels to more than 100 times safe limits.

Beijing has identified the environment as one of its top priorities after years of unfettered economic growth, but the government has struggled to make regional governments and industries comply with laws.

"Chinese city suspends water supplies over "quality abnormalities"", 09/05/2014, online at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/09/china-water-idUSL3N0NV2AV20140509?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=2038fe5350-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-2038fe5350-250657169

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❖ 1.2 mln affected by drought in SW China

KUNMING, May 7 (Xinhua) -- Almost 1.2 million people are facing a shortage of drinking water due to a severe drought that has hit southwest China's Yunnan Province, local authorities said Wednesday.

The drought had affected about 190,000 hectares of cropland and 625,500 head of livestock in the province, a statement from the provincial flood control and drought relief headquarters said.

The drought in Yunnan has been persistent and severe, with only 73.8 mm of rainfall in the first four months in 2014, about 37 percent less than the annual average for the period.

Due to the lack of precipitation, water is no longer flowing in 102 medium-sized and small rivers in Yunnan, and 69 small reservoirs there have dried up.

The provincial water resources department has allotted 223 million yuan (35.7 million U.S. dollars) in drought relief funds and sent equipment for digging wells and pumping water to alleviate the drinking water shortage.

"1.2 mln affected by drought in SW China", 07/05/2014, online at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-05/07/c_133316994.htm?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=c328c06040-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-c328c06040-250657169

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❖ White House unveils dire warning, calls for action on climate

(Reuters) - The Obama administration on Tuesday released an updated report on how a changing climate has touched every corner of the country, from oyster growers in Washington State to maple syrup producers in Vermont, and said that urgent action is needed.

"Climate change, once considered an issue for a distant future, has moved firmly into the present," it said in an update to the third National Climate Assessment.

Some environmental and public health groups hailed the report as a possible "game changer" in building support for efforts to address climate change, in part because it makes the outcomes less abstract to many Americans.

Unlike a major United Nations report on climate released earlier this year, which looked at North America as a whole, the vast U.S. report outlines in detail the effects on different geographic regions and segments of the economy.

For example, while residents of the coastal Northeast could face bigger storm surges and coastal areas around the country risk more flooding, the southwestern United States is likely to confront more wildfires and severe water shortages.

"It will help put their own experiences in context, and we think that is important in generating interest and action on the issue," said Lyndsay Moseley, director of the American Lung Association's Healthy Air campaign.

The report, more than 800 pages long, detailed how consequences of climate change could play out on several fronts, including infrastructure, water supplies, and agriculture.

Severe weather and other impacts of climate change also increase the risk of disease transmission, decrease air quality and can increase mental health problems, among other effects, the report said.

That could mean that over time the demand for certain medications could rise, for example, along with more severe seasonal allergies. And a changing climate that thrusts U.S. corn production further

northward could alter the transportation patterns needed to move agricultural products to market, boosting road and rail construction.

Thirteen government departments and agencies, from the Agriculture Department to NASA, were part of the committee that compiled the report, which also includes academics, businesses, non-profit organizations and others.

By highlighting issues in each corner of the country, the administration hopes to garner support for federal and state actions, including measures already under way and some that are pending.

"They get that climate change is happening, they get that it is caused by human activity and support the solutions to climate change but they don't feel that sense of urgency," John Podesta, an adviser to President Barack Obama, told reporters Tuesday.

Podesta said cabinet members will fan out across the country in coming weeks to discuss the report's findings.

POWER PLANT POLLUTION RULES AWAITED

The report includes "a huge amount of practical, usable knowledge" that state and local decision-makers can use, Podesta said, adding that it also helps make the clear case for the need for regulating carbon pollution.

The president's Climate Action Plan, which was unveiled in June 2013 and focuses on executive actions Obama can use to rein in polluters, will enter a new phase in June when the EPA proposes new emissions limits for the country's power plants.

Many Congressional Republicans oppose those plans, and on Tuesday some accused the administration of favoring politics over science, at the expense of jobs and the economy.

"Definitive policy decisions and regional planning based on far too many uncertainties could hurt our nation's economic viability and competitiveness," said Senator David Vitter, a Louisiana Republican who is the ranking member of the Senate environment committee.

United Nations climate chief Christiana Figueres said the report could lend a hand to UN efforts to strike a global deal in 2015 on tackling climate change, by issuing a clarion call to other countries.

"The essential reality of this report is that no country, powerful or poor, will escape unchecked climate change," Figueres told Reuters.

"White House unveils dire warning, calls for action on climate", 05/05/2014, online at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/06/us-usa-climatechange-idUSBREA4503Q20140506?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=993291e0de-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-993291e0de-250657169

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❖ California drought: Plan would reverse aqueduct flow to send water back to farms

SAN FRANCISCO -- Water has flowed from Northern California's snow-capped peaks to the south's parched cities ever since the California Aqueduct was built in the 1960s. Now, amid one of the worst droughts in history, state officials are considering an audacious plan to send some of the water back uphill.

State water engineers say using pumps to reverse the flow of the aqueduct would be a first in a drought. It would also be a complex engineering challenge, requiring millions of dollars to defy gravity.

Still, water agencies in the desperately dry farmlands around Bakersfield say the investment is worth it to keep grapevines, pistachios and pomegranate trees alive. Agencies as far north as the San Francisco Bay Area are talking about a similar project.

"There is no place on planet Earth where an aqueduct is designed to go backwards," said Geoff Shaw, an engineer with the state Department of Water Resources who is reviewing the proposal. "But they have a need for water in a place where they can't fulfill it, and this is their plan to fix it."

The plan the department is evaluating was drawn up by five of the local agencies, or districts, that sell irrigation water to farmers. They would bear the cost of the project, which they have estimated at $1.5 million to $9.5 million.

They hope to get approval from the state in June and start pushing the water uphill later in the summer.

Long celebrated as an engineering marvel, the California Aqueduct is a 420-mile system of open canals and massive pipelines that serves millions of Californians, including those in the state's biggest population centers: the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles and San Diego.

Under the plan, water districts would be allowed to pump into the aqueduct the emergency supplies of water they store in underground reservoirs in Kern County, about two hours north of Los Angeles. That banked water and other extra supplies would raise the level of water within a small, closed section of the aqueduct.

Then, pumps powered by diesel engines would push the water over locks and back upstream, against the southward pull of gravity. Farmers upstream could then pump the water out to their fields.

All together, the districts want to move 30,000 acre-feet of water along a 33-mile stretch between Bakersfield and Kettleman City. An acre-foot is enough water to cover an acre to a depth of one foot.

Even if water is pumped upstream, some will still flow south, so no customers downstream will be harmed, state officials said.

The water districts came up with the idea after a bleak February forecast showed the Sierra Nevada snowpack was so thin that those who depend on the state system would get no water delivered this year.

A rash of spring storms improved the picture, but only slightly. Districts will now receive 5 percent of the water they would get in a normal year, and the supply won't arrive until September.

"Our crops need some amount of water just to keep alive," said Dale Melville, manager-engineer of the Fresno-based Dudley Ridge Water District, one of the agencies proposing the project.

The flow has been reversed only once before -- in 1983, when heavy rains forced state officials to operate emergency pumps to send floodwaters northward, Shaw said.

Water agencies in the San Francisco Bay Area want to take part in a similar project that would push water along a 70-mile stretch.

"This is a year where you really have to look at every single possible way to move water around to where it's needed," said Joan Maher, operations manager for the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

As the project awaits final approval, water districts are already ordering pumps and making arrangements to get diesel engines.

Nearly half the water Dudley Ridge hopes to receive would irrigate the orchards of Paramount Farms, owned by Los Angeles billionaires Stewart and Lynda Resnick, who produce POM Wonderful pomegranate juice and Wonderful pistachios.

If it doesn't rain much next winter, the districts might seek to continue pumping the water backward in years to come, Melville said.

"Ideally we would hope it's a one-time thing," he said, "but it would be worthwhile to have this as an insurance policy."

"California drought: Plan would reverse aqueduct flow to send water back to farms", 06/05/2014, online at: http://www.mercurynews.com/science/ci_25709331/california-drought-plan-would-reverse-aqueduct-flow-send?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=c328c06040-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c1265b6ed7-c328c06040-250657169

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❖ More than 400 dams planned for the Amazon and headwaters

Rainforest under threat from a "hydrological experiment of continental proportions" as well as oil, gas and mining, says repor

412 hydroelectric dams will be built across the Amazon basin and its headwaters if current plans are fulfilled, it was announced on 25 April in Lima, potentially leading to the "end of free-flowing rivers", contributing to "ecosystem collapse", and causing huge social problems.

Of the 412 dams already in operation, under construction or proposed, 256 are in Brazil, 77 in Peru, 55 in Ecuador, 14 in Bolivia, six in Venezuela, two in Guyana, and one each in Colombia, French Guyana and Surinam, said anthropologist Paul Little at the launch of the English version of his report *Mega-Development Projects in Amazonia: A geopolitical and socioenvironmental primer*. According to Little, 151 of the 412 dams involve five of the six main rivers that drain into the Amazon after birthing in the Andes.

"The construction of many large-scale dams in the vast headwaters region of the Amazon Basin – encompassing parts of Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia – will produce critical changes in continental water flows, with little knowledge of the ecological consequences of this policy," the report states. "This new wave of dam building in the headwaters of the Basin is a "hydrological experiment" of continental proportions, yet little is known scientifically of pan-Amazonian hydrological dynamics, creating the risk of provoking irreversible changes in rivers."

The report, co-authored and circulated by Peruvian NGO DAR, divides "mega-development projects" into two kinds: 1) infrastructure, such as the transport and electricity sectors, which in turn includes hydroelectric dams and 2) extractive, such as oil, gas and mining. The focus is on the number of current projects, the larger global financial, regional and geopolitical contexts, and the potential social and environmental impacts. It states:

The weight of these socioenvironmental impacts is distributed in an extremely unequal manner. The majority of the benefits derived from the construction of megadevelopment projects accrue to economic and political actors external to Amazonia, such as large multinational corporations, the administrative apparatus of national governments and financial institutions. The majority of negative impacts of these same mega-development projects are borne by indigenous peoples, who suffer from

the invasion of their territories, and local communities, which suffer from the proliferation of serious social and health problems.

Part 2 of the report acts as a kind of "Users' Guide" to what can be done to counter such projects and the impacts they may have, and includes proposals for a "pan-Amazonian agenda for an alternative model of development."

Here's a selection of some of the report's most startling figures, as well as those included in an "infogram" shown by Little at the launch:

1.6 million – km2 of the Amazon covered by mining concessions.

1.1 million – km2 of the Amazon that is or is set to be included in oil and gas concessions.

407,000 – km2 of mining zones in the Amazon in indigenous territories.

281,000 – km2 of mining zones in the Amazon in "protected areas."

61,487 – km2 of the Amazon involved in the exploratory phase for oil and gas by Brazilian state company Petrobras, which has more of the Amazon than any other company.

52,974 – number of mining concessions in the Amazon.

412 – number of dams in operation, under construction or proposed in the Amazon and its headwaters.

327 – number of oil and gas blocks in the Amazon.

300 – % increase in proposed dams versus existing dams in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

263 – number of oil and gas blocks involving the Amazon in Andean countries.

256 – number of dams in operation, under construction or proposed in the Brazilian Amazon.

151 – number of proposals for the construction of dams in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

84 – % of the Peruvian Amazon under oil and gas concessions in 2009, marking a threefold increase since 2004.

81 – number of proposed dams for construction in the Maranon River basin alone.

80 – % of total Amazon mining concessions which are in Brazil.

40 – % of Colombian Amazon open for oil and gas development.

25 – % of oil and gas blocks in the Amazon that are currently in production.

21 – % of Amazon basin covered by mining concessions.

19 – % of mining areas in the Amazon that are in indigenous territories.

17 – number of large-scale dams planned for the Amazon.

15 – number of large-scale dams planned for the headwaters of the Amazon basin under the 2010 Peru–Brazil Energy Agreement.

15 – % of mining areas in the Amazon that are in "protected areas."

15 – % of the Amazon that is or is set to be included in oil and gas concessions.

11 – % of total Amazon mining concessions that are in Peru.

7 – number of "primary socioenvironmental impacts" caused by mega-development projects, including "potential for ecosystem collapse", "the end of free-flowing rivers", "genetic erosion", and "the forced industrialization of the jungle."

"More than 400 dams planned for the Amazon and headwaters", 06/05/2014, online at: http://www.theguardian.com/environment/andes-to-the-amazon/2014/may/06/more-400-dams-amazon-headwaters

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❖ UN Millennium Development Targets for Water and Sanitation Will Expire in 2015... So What's Next?

Every year, more people die from water-related illness than all forms of violence combined. Polluted water is deadly, and it is the poor in developing countries, and children in particular, that suffer most from unclean water and inadequate sanitation.

In Ethiopia, more than 60 percent of the population lacks access to clean drinking water. Most Ethiopians must therefore buy expensive water from private vendors, or collect water from untreated sources, putting them at risk of contracting life-threatening diseases like cholera and typhoid.

We have the know-how to solve these water challenges and save millions of lives. What's needed is global political will and public pressure for clean water infrastructure. Fortunately, world leaders have a vital opportunity to transform the global water policy agenda with the expiration of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) next year.

In 2000, world leaders committed to halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation through the MDGs. Although this target has been achieved -- more than 2 billion people have gained access to improved drinking water since 1990 -- 1.1 billion people still live without clean drinking water and 2.5 billion people lack basic sanitation. Furthermore, the MDGs have failed to bring clean water to the poorest countries. While millions in Latin America, Asia, and the Pacific have gained access to clean water in recent years, Sub-Saharan Africa has been left behind. Today, over 40 percent of all people that lack access to clean drinking water live in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The privatization of water supplies is partially responsible for Sub-Saharan Africa's lack of progress on the MDG for water and sanitation. Although the UN Task Force on the MDGs has avoided taking a firm position on privatization, the UN has given the World Bank and other major donors the authority to finance water projects in developing nations. The World Bank avidly promotes water privatization in Sub-Saharan Africa as a means of meeting water-related MDGs. The World Bank invests directly in corporate water giants like Biwater and Suez, which have been behind failed privatizations in Tanzania, South Africa, and other countries. These companies use the rhetoric of the MDGs to justify private sector involvement in water services, even while they prioritize profit and shareholder interests over affordable water access.

Private sector involvement in the supply of water in Sub-Saharan Africa is problematic because it has failed to extend clean, affordable water infrastructure to the poor. For instance, when the city government of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania handed its water system over to Biwater, many Tanzanians experienced soaring water bills and mass disconnections from the network. Rather than paying high prices for water that had previously been provided for free, many low-income families instead decided to consume contaminated well water. Thus, water privatization can be financially crippling and life-threatening for the urban poor of Sub-Saharan Africa. While there is a role for international financial institutions and the private sector in the fight for clean water, there is no justification for international agencies and corporations to continue promoting water privatization.

With the expiration of the MDGs in 2015, world leaders have the power to create a new set of water policies that prioritizes extending clean, affordable water to the poor. In place of the current MDGs, new action-oriented Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are being drafted as part of the UN's Post-2015 Development Agenda. The SDGs have the potential to address many of the shortcomings of the MDGs, such as their neglect of the poorest countries and most excluded people, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The dire need for better access to clean water and sanitation is an important part of the SDGs discussion. The SDGs Open Working Group has identified water and sanitation as potential focus areas for the SDGs, and has outlined actions such as expanding wastewater treatment infrastructure, and ensuring safe access to safe and affordable drinking water for all. However, in its most recent proposal for the SDGs, the Open Working Group included a provision for greater involvement of the private sector in the implementation of the SDGs. This agenda is shared by the World Bank, which, as the largest external source of financing for water projects around the world, will have a big say in the creation of a new SDG for water. But it's critical that the world's poor have an even bigger say in the water policies that will affect their livelihoods and their health.

Under the current MDGs, corporate-driven, World Bank-backed water projects are allowed to prioritize profit over people's needs for access. But water management must be returned to public hands, democratically accountable to the people whose interests are at stake. Around the world, public investment and management has been proven to be a more successful model for developing

water delivery systems than privatization. And although financial institutions like the World Bank are big and powerful, it's possible to change their agendas. One organization, Corporate Accountability International, is already at the front lines, challenging corporate abuse of water, forging alliances with grassroots water organizations abroad, and working with legislators to challenge the World Bank's water policy.

The post-2015 SDGs are a major chance for world leaders, the UN, and the World Bank to join this fight for the human right to water and advocate for democratically controlled public water systems in developing nations. By enshrining support for human rights and publicly controlled water systems in the new SDGs, we can ensure that the needs of the poor are prioritized over corporate interests and the agendas of financial institutions like the World Bank.

The UN General Assembly will meet to discuss the first draft of the Open Working Group's SDGs in September, so there's still plenty of time for you to voice your support for public water policy in the nations that need it most.

"UN Millennium Development Targets for Water and Sanitation Will Expire in 2015... So What's Next?", 07/05/2014, online at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mackenzie-klema/un-millennium-development_b_5281338.html

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❖ TERI University and Coca-Cola Join Hands to set up Department of Regional Water Studies

Report by India Education bureau, New Delhi: TERI University has joined hands with The Coca-Cola Foundation to launch the 'Coca-Cola Department of Regional Water Studies'. Dr. Leena Srivastava, Vice-Chancellor of TERI University and Asim Parekh, Vice President, Technical and Supply Chain, Coca-Cola India and South West Asia launched the program at the TERI University Campus, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi.

The National Water Policy (2012) issued by the Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India lists some key areas of resource and capability scarcity in the management of water resources. The Policy states the 'The lack of adequate trained personnel for scientific planning, utilizing modern techniques and analytical capabilities incorporating information technology constrains good water management.' It also states that 'A holistic and inter-disciplinary approach at water related problems is missing' and that 'The public agencies in charge of taking water related decisions tend to take these on their own without consultation with stakeholders, often resulting in poor and unreliable service characterized by inequities of various kinds.'

Coca-Cola and the TERI University have come together to set up an academic department to respond to these needs of creating new knowledge and capacity in water related issues. To be named the Coca-Cola Department of Regional Water Studies, it will examine water issues in an interdisciplinary framework, bringing in cultural, educational and scientific factors as well as religious, ethical, social, political, legal, institutional and economic dimensions towards a better, holistic approach to water management.

The Program aims to develop a globally competitive cadre of young water management professionals, scientifically manage water resources in the country with the help of research, development and new technologies, as well as build capability for various stakeholders who can influence policy and implement research effectively.

Courses Offered:

· M. Tech Programme

· M. Sc Programme

· PG Diploma

· Certificate Course

Duration of courses offered

· 2 Year Full Time Degree

· 1 year Full Time Diploma

· 6 Month Certificate

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

· Graduate or equivalent from any branch of engineering

· Postgraduates in any of the following disciplines or equivalent:

Environmental science, physics, mathematics, statistics, chemistry, geology, atmospheric science, economics, geography

· CGPA not below 60% / 6.75 CGPA on a 10 point scale with mathematics at 10+2 level

Last date of Application submission for 2014 Academic Session

· June 16, 2014

"India needs to urgently build the capacity to conserve, manage and efficiently utilize all its available water resources, including in the remotest parts of the country and across boundaries. Policies, regulatory frameworks, financial mechanisms, access and equity issues all have to be aligned to urgently reduce our water vulnerabilities while enhancing our food and energy security. The Coca Cola Department will strive to respond fully to these needs". said Dr. Leena Srivastava, Vice-Chancellor of TERI University.

"For The Coca-Cola Company, water is central not just to our business, but to the societies in which we operate. As part of our global framework of sustainability, Coca-Cola places a high importance on WATER, WOMEN and WELLBEING." said Asim Parekh, Vice President, Technical and Supply Chain, Coca-Cola India and South West Asia. "We believe that through this partnership with TERI University, we can contribute to the creation of human resource capital in the area of water management as well as help in research and development on water management. This partnership brings together the Golden Triangle of Government, Business and Civil society with Academia and we hope that this department will lead in the field of water governance. " he concluded.

The Department will act as a center for integrative, assimilative and inclusive knowledge creation using an interdisciplinary approach to address complex water sustainability issues. Students can apply to either an MTech or an MSc two-year, full time degree program in Water Science and Governance. In addition to the two year full time course, candidates will also have an option of registering for a one year PG Diploma programme or a six month certificate programme in either MTech or MSc. Applications for these programs are now open and will be received at Teri University, 10 Institutional Area, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi until 16 June 2014.

Some of the core courses that will be offered will include courses on water law and policy, Water quality monitoring and assessment, water and sustainability science, Water planning and management as well as Water economics and financial management to Water disasters: management and planning. Depending on the candidate's area of study and degree type, specified courses that will be offered include courses on applied hydrology, industrial pollution control, water audit and demand management, wetland conservation and management, integrated watershed and river basin management etc.

"TERI University and Coca-Cola Join Hands to set up Department of Regional Water Studies", 07/05/2014, online at: http://indiaeducationdiary.in/Shownews.asp?newsid=29199

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❖ CESI Middle East signs contract with DEWA

CESI Middle East, a technical consulting and engineering company, has signed a contract with Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) to provide consultancy services related to connecting renewable energy generators to the DEWA grid.

The main objectives of the project are to assist DEWA with launching its distributed renewable connection program and further stabilising Dubai's energy supply.

In three stages, CESI will provide strategic counseling on numerous components of grid management and distributed renewable connectivity to solar energy from DEWA's distribution grid, and will create DEWA 's in-house ability to manage the interaction of its grid with renewable energy projects.

"CESI is honored to assist DEWA with this strategic step in the development of Dubai's energy strategy," said Dr. Matteo Codazzi, CEO, CESI. "This agreement clearly proves that DEWA strongly supports making renewable energy a key component of the Emirate's energy supply mix, reflecting a praiseworthy long-term commitment to significant investments that will maximise the potential of its power grid."

"Leveraging on its established expertise in the Middle East, and on its global network of skilled professionals, CESI will help DEWA in ensuring that the integration of renewable energy projects best serves the goals of the Dubai Government's green agenda, through further contributing to the energy stability and sustainability of the region," Dr. Codazzi said.

According to DEWA, the deal with CESI is part of one of three key initiatives taken by the company to achieve the vision of UAE vice president and prime minister and ruler of Dubai H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum to transform Dubai into "the smartest city in the world".

"DEWA is actively contributing to building Dubai as a smart city through three new smart initiatives to achieve sustainable development in the emirate of Dubai," said H.E. Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD and CEO, DEWA.

"These three initiatives are firstly, solar panels on roofs," Al Tayer explained. "To encourage households and building owners to install photovoltaic solar panels to produce electricity and use it locally in buildings, DEWA will connect these panels to the grid and buy any excess generated; encouraging the use of renewable energy and increasing its share in the energy mix."

"Secondly, smart grids and smart applications will speed up connections and ensure faster response through immediate reconnection, while conserving the smart consumption using smart meters to enhance happiness and prosperity of all citizens and residents, promoting resources sustainability," he added.

"Thirdly, DEWA will construct and install charging stations for electric vehicles. The infrastructure and locations will be identified in coordination with the relevant authorities. This initiative puts Dubai as the first in the region and promotes the emirate's role in energy sustainability," Al Tayer concluded.

"CESI Middle East signs contract with DEWA", 06/05/2014, online at: http://www.constructionweekonline.com/article-27950-cesi-middle-east-signs-contract-with-dewa/

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❖ Metito receives new $30mn financing deal

Water management solutions provider Metito has received a $30mn syndicated loan from Bank of China and International Finance Corporation (IFC) to help expand its essential services in the Middle East, North Africa and Asia regions.

Metito is the first company to obtain long-term financing from Bank of China as part of the IFC B Loan program, a syndicated loan structure that introduces new banking relationships to the borrower. The investment is part of IFC's wider efforts to help companies expand into emerging markets, to transfer knowledge and expertise and improve access to essential infrastructure.

The loan will help Metito as it develops water treatment projects across the MENA region and parts of Asia, which will increase the availability of drinking water, improve wastewater treatment infrastructure, reduce waste costs, and decrease health risks to local communities.

"With support from IFC and Bank of China, we'll be able to embark on new projects, providing quality water treatment solutions in water scarce areas," said Rami Ghandour, managing director, Metito.

"Access to water is a fundamental challenge to economic development and growth," said Chunyan Cai, SEO of Bank of China Middle East (Dubai) Limited, covering the MENA area. "With this long-term investment, which is hard to obtain in challenging markets, Bank of China will help support Metito as a leading provider of essential water and wastewater management solutions in water stressed regions."

"This partnership demonstrates the potential for infrastructure investment in MENA, one of the most water scarce regions in the world," said Mouayed Makhlouf, IFC regional director for the Middle East and North Africa. "Water scarcity is a global concern and IFC will continue to help boost water efficiency to meet the growing demand."

Earlier, in June 2013, IFC had provided $50mn in loans to Metito and arranged another $20mn from the German development finance institution, DEG, to strengthen the company's capital structure and support its expansion.

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector. Working with private enterprises in more than 100 countries, IFC uses its capital, expertise, and influence to help eliminate extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity.

Established in 1912, Bank of China provides a full range of financial services in China's mainland, Hong Kong, Macau and another 31 countries.

Metito is headquartered in Dubai and is active throughout the MENA region, Indonesia, and China. The company also owns and operates six wastewater treatment plants in China, with four more projects under construction

"Metito receives new $30mn financing deal", 11/05/2014, online aty: http://www.constructionweekonline.com/article-28041-metito-receives-new-30mn-financing-deal/

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