One Day Colloquial on

WATER CRISES AND CHOICES: A POST-FLOOD SCENARIO

January 10, 2011

Brief

In order to meet the demanding food and fiber needs vis-à-vis the growing population of Pakistan, it is imperative to convene all the stakeholders for finding sustainable solutions to the issues being faced by the agriculture sector. Water, however, is the prime input to agricultural production and efficiency of all other agricultural inputs also depends on the adequate water availability to the plants. Although the country has been blessed with all the natural resources of land and water along with four seasons making it the most suitable food basket of the Asia, nevertheless, as a nation, we have not been much successful in meaningful utilization of these resources for ensuring food security and alleviating poverty. This situation stipulates that all the possible measures be adopted so that existing resources can be consolidated to produce enough food grains not only to fulfill our own requirements but also help the neighboring countries overcome food shortages.

The agriculture sector is the major component of our national economy, contributing 22% of the GDP, providing employment to 70% of its workforce and providing raw material to all the agro-based industry of the country. Moreover, this sector has the potential to bring revolution in the national economy by increasing unit land and water productivity. Our crop yields are much lower compared with the international benchmark and those produced by other countries, regardless of the fertile land, strong network of mighty river Indus along with its five tributaries to provide excellent quality of water to these lands. The failure lies in not exploiting these resources up to their achievable optimal potential. The situation has reached to such a level that even international organizations and personalities have started saying that there is tremendous wastage of water on our part. Pakistan has not been able to build even a single dam after commissioning of Tarbela in 1974 whereas the requirement of the Indus Irrigation System was to add at least one big dam after every 15 years. Each such dam has the potential to increase national GDP by 4 to 5%.

In 2010, we have exceptionally very high flood of having about 300 years return period. This flood displaced more than 20 million people damaged million hectares of cropping land and destroyed number of cities and houses. This devastating flood, no doubt, caused trillion dollar damage, but at the same time it has provided an opportunity for us to get united and turn this tragedy into a prosperous agricultural opportunity. The gathering of experts, followed by technical session, is planned to provide an opportunity to develop such a framework whereby such catastrophe can be averted.

This Colloquial has convened a galaxy of national water experts to have brainstorming session for devising strategies to ensure food security coupled with water security. It would also provide an opportunity for all the stakeholders for sharing their experiences, knowledge and expertise for betterment of the agriculture sector by pursuing towards water security. The stakeholders will have exchange of ideas on various issues being faced by the agriculture sector in the wake of diminishing water resources as well as occurring of flood scenario and natural calamities.

Organized by:
Pakistan Society of Agricultural Engineers
University of Agriculture, Faisalabad
One Day Colloquial on
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PROGRAM

Inaugural Session (09.30 to 10.45 am)

09.30 - 09.35 am  Recitation from the Holy Quran
09.35 - 09.45 am  Welcome Address by Prof. Dr. Rai Niaz Ahmad
                  Dean, Faculty of Agri. Engg. & Technology
09.45 - 10.00 am  Keynote Address by Prof. Dr. Iqrar Ahmad Khan
                  Vice Chancellor, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad
10.00 - 10.15 am  Address by the Guest of Honor, Eng. Shamas-ul-Mulak,
                  Ex-Chairman WAPDA and Ex-Chief Minister KPK
10.15 - 10.30 am  Address by Chief Guest Mr. Salman Taseer
                  Chancellor of the University/Governor of the Punjab
10.30 - 10.45 am  Vote of Thanks by Mr. Mushtaq Ahmad Gill,
                  President, Pakistan Society of Agricultural Engineers
10.45 am          Refreshment (STC Hall)

Technical Session:
Chair: Eng. Shamus-ul-Mulak,
Co-Chair: Mr. Mushtaq Ahmad Gill

11.30 - 11.40 am  Rao Irshad Ali Khan, Chairman, IRSA
11.40 - 11.50 am  Dr. Asif Khan, Director, National Center of Excellence in Geology,
                  University of Peshawar
11.50 - 12.00 pm  Inam-ur-Rehman Naqvi (Food and Water Reservoir)
12.00 - 12.10 pm  Prof. Dr. Zakir Hussain, Vice Chancellor, GC University Faisalabad
12.10 - 12.20 pm  Dr. Muhammad Hanif, Director, National Weather Forecasting Centre, Islamabad
12.20 - 12.30 pm  Prof. Dr. Bakhshal Lashari, Director, Institute of Irrigation & Drainage Engineering,
                  Mohran University of Engineering & Tech., Jamshoro, Sindh
12.30 - 12.40 pm  Prof. Dr. Muhammad Jamal Khan, KPK Agricultural University, Peshawar
12.40 - 12.50 pm  Mr. Mushtaq Ahmad Gill, Ex-Director General,
                  On-Farm Water Management, Punjab
12.50 - 01.45 pm  Discussion and Q&A
01.45 - 02.00 pm  Closing Remarks by Eng. Shamas-ul-Mulak,
                  Ex-Chairman WAPDA, Ex-Chief Minister, KPK
                  (New Rest House, UAF)
02.00 pm Lunch