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# Media Implications of Water Scarcity in Pakistan

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**Abstract**

*Water Crisis has become one of the most vital challenges for Pakistan because the nation of 220 million people is passing through the worst kind of water shortage from North to East and South to West. The water shortage crisis has a huge range from the very basic need of drinking water to mass level agricultural and industrial needs. Despite of its greatest significance for the future of the nation, it has been completely ignored by the governments during the last seven and half decades. Political and economic instability as well as absence of a great visionary leadership has been a vital cause of this crisis. The 75-year-old rival neighboring country India having almost 2900 kilometer border sharing with Pakistan is one of the biggest reason for this crisis because it has deliberately blocked the natural flow of water from East to West. Huge amount and resources have been wasted on the proposed Kalabagh Dam but it could not be materialized because of the provincial disagreement and weak political will. The former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan Mr. Justice Saqib Nisar launched an international campaign to raise funds for the establishment of new dams in the country but practically nothing has been done. This paper investigates the reasons behind the current water crisis and critically analyzes its impact on the social, political and economic well-being of the nation. The paper also critically analyses the role of media in highlighting the issue of water crisis. It enforces media to play its role in the current wave of dams' construction. It also gives some viable recommendations for moving ahead to achieve the goal to tackle the issue with some viable solution with reference to future challenges.*

**Keywords:** *, : Crisis, political instability, inflation, security issues, extremism, economic debts*

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## INTRODUCTION

Pakistan has been facing a number of problems and challenges including terrorism, extremism, Indian threats, security issues, economic debts, inflation, joblessness and political instability but the challenge of water scarcity has become more important than anything else. Despite its great importance the issue has been highly ignored by policy makers as well as by media organizations. The nation is passing through the hardest level of water shortage in all parts of country. This scarcity varies from the very basic need of drinking water to agricultural requirements of the country. Despite of its great significance for the country and the nation, the issue of water scarcity has been highly ignored by the governments as well as mainstream Pakistani media during the last seven and half decades. Seldom appeared a report or news story about the shortage of water in daily newspapers or television channels contrary to news reports on political and other issues. Media treatment of the issue of water crisis supports the assumption of the Framing theory that presents the idea that media portray some events and issues as important but ignores some other events and issues. The effect of framing happens when media focus on certain aspects of an issue and ignores certain other aspects and efforts are made by media organizations to mold public opinion in certain desired direction. Druckman (2001) argues that some relevant considerations given by media organizations cause media audience to focus on certain considerations during the construction of their opinions. Framing theory is close to the media theories of agenda-setting and gatekeeping which enforce that media play a vital role in shaping and reshaping public opinion and telling people what is important and what is not. Walter Lippman's book, Public Opinion (1922) contains some historical roots of Framing which states that media shapes the pictures in our brains. As a senior journalist, Lippmann was perhaps first person who presented his idea that public attitudes are influenced by mass media messages. He stated that media tell us about the events and issues of the world. Our perception is heavily influenced by the messages delivered by media organizations through their outlets. Same is the case with the issue of water scarcity in Pakistan. Despite its highest-level significance, it has been ignored by media organizations which resulted in ignorance of the issue by general masses of the country.

## WATER SHORTAGE IN PAKISTAN

Water is life because there is no life without water. No nation can survive without water. No development can take place without this basic requirement. The acute shortage of water has become one of the most important issues for majority of people living in Pakistan. There might be several reasons for this shortage but the rapid population growth and urbanization have been two most vital reasons for this scarcity. Poor water management by the authorities and the lack of political commitment has also been among one of the most important hurdles in this regard. The more and more alarming is the fact that underground water level is going down day by day in the whole country because of the sucking of water for daily use by individuals as well as by corporations for different kind of water use. The usage of water is being increased in Pakistan for the last several years. The water intensity rate is the world's highest which suggests that no other country is having

dependence on water resources more than Pakistan. International Monitory Fund (IMF) report (2015) states that Pakistan is among 36 most water-stressed countries in the world. Its per capita annual availability of water is 1017 cubic meters while the figure was around 1500 cubic meters in 2009. The country's largest widely circulated English newspaper daily Dawn published a news story in its publication on June 09, 2015 under the title: Water scarcity may threaten National Security" Furthermore, Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) stated in its report issued in 2017 that the country may run dry by 2025 because of acute water shortage. It was further stated that Pakistan reached to the water stress line in 1990 and water scarcity line in 2005. The daily newspaper Express Tribune published a news story based on this report on September 16, 2017 under the heading "Pakistan could face mass droughts by 2025: PCRWR". This is an alarming prediction that the country will face dangerous situation by 2025 if some necessary measures are not taken by the Government institutions responsible to tackle this issue.

What is meant by water shortage? Generally speaking, water shortage is lack of sufficient availability of water resources to meet the demands of its usage within a specific region. It is also lack of freshwater resources to meet demand of people. The synonyms of water shortage are water stress, water scarcity, and water deficit or water crisis. Water shortage is affecting a great majority of the world in almost all continents of the world. The issue of water crisis has been considered of great importance worldwide that enforced world organizations to come forward to play their role to meet the challenge.

UNDP collected data in 2005 about water shortage issues in Pakistan where report stated that water scarcity was the issue neglected and it will spring as conflict in the South Asian region very soon. Moreover, UNDP predicted water war between India and Pakistan due to water scarcity (UNDP, 2005). Chris White (2016) from Australian National University mentioned that the upcoming drought conditions and falling natural water ground resources is a worldwide issue which is leading to lack of fresh drinking water. According to Shamil Shams, (2017), Pakistan's major threat is not Islamist terrorism but water shortage. Unfortunately, terrorism is covered in every day's headlines whereas water shortage is hardly discussed in news and current affair programs of television channels in Pakistan.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ISSUE

In 1903, water issue originated in India when the Indian Irrigation Commission restricted Punjab's region from taking water from Indus without the approval of Sindh. Anderson Committee and Rao Commission settled the issue between the two provinces (Rao, 1975). Anderson Committee in 1935 was set up for distribution of supply from the Indus River from various existing and proposed canals of Khairpur and Bahawalpur states from the Haveli Project (Michel, 1967) whereas, in 1939 Rao Commission was set up. In 1945 the Chief Engineers of the Punjab and Sindh Provinces signed an agreement of sharing of Indus and five Punjab rivers. After the independence, arrangement continued as 'Sindh-Punjab Agreement' of 1945 (Mosley, 1962).

Total water resource of Pakistan is about 220 MAF (million-acre feet) that includes rain, rivers and ground water. Hindu Kush, Korakram and Himalayan Mountains are the only source from where all the rivers and tributaries originate (Gazdar, 2005). After the inception of Pakistan, India stopped water to Pakistan's canals, on the ground that there is no agreement of sharing of water. The issue was resolved by the World Bank in 1960. According to this agreement the right of water of three rivers was given to India. These rivers were Bias, Ravi and Sutlej. Three other rivers were given to Pakistan including Indus, Chenab and Jhelum (Naseer 2013). Furthermore, the Red Crescent Society in its World Disaster Report (1999) predicted that due to environmental change affecting melting down of glaciers in the Himalayas cause 40% loss in the flow to the Indus that could elicit tension between India and Pakistan.

## INDUS WATER TREATY

According to Indus Water Treaty (1960) Pakistan and India share the allocated water resource and fulfill the obligations not to interfere with the flow of water. As discussed above, three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) were allocated to Pakistan and three rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) were given to India. However, India was allowed to use western rivers for irrigation as well. India not only used western water for irrigation but started building dams Kishenganga, Baglihar and Wular barrage for hydroelectric projects (Farrukh, 2010). India started Wular Barrage called Tulbul Navigation Project in 1985 on river Jhelum at the mouth of Wular Lake, near Sopore town in Kashmir Valley that stores 0.30 MAF to utilize it during summer. India started Kishenganga Dam project in 2006 due to delay in completion of Neelum-Jhelum Project on Neelum River by Pakistan because of budgetary constraints. Its live water storage capacity is 0.012 MAF that generate power of 330MW.The purpose to build this was to divert the water of this river into Wular Lake. Its live storage capacity is 0.012 MAF with power generation of 330 MW. According to Amol and Tom 2010, in article "India and Pakistan feud over Indus waters, said, "This project affected Neelum Jhelum Project which is just 70 km downstream of Kishenganga and reduce its hydro-power generation capacity of 969 MW by 11% incurring a loss of around $141 billion annually.

Dams on the Indus River like Nimoo Bazgo Project and Dumkhar Hydel Power Project construction started in 2005 on River Indus about 70 kms from Leh District in Indian held Kashmir can restrict water flow to Pakistan (Rizwan, 2010). The other Chutak Hydroelectirc Project on Suru River is also important which is situated in Indian held Kashmir. (Dawn, 2011).

Yet, there is another alarming situation for Pakistan because there are several dams on Kabul River that comes from Afghanistan. In near past, the Ashraf Ghani Afghan government planned to build several other dams on the same river with the help of their Indian counterparts with the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan the conspiracy against Pakistan failed. The construction of new dams on Kabul River could significantly reduce the flow of water to Pakistan (Chaudhry, S.A. (2010). Pakistan has recently given nationality to millions of Afghan refugees. This card should be politically used to gain favor from the Afghan government.

All above mentioned hydropower projects of India are meant to take control over water resource and deprive Pakistan, where 97% of agro-economy is dependent on water for irrigation. India is capable of stopping water during agricultural season and releasing excessive water to damage the production of crop which leads to flood, shutting down of agricultural industry, acute shortage of food and water etc. In 2011, India released 100,000 cusecs of water to River Sutlej without prior warning to Pakistan that resulted flood in dozens of villages of Kasur district perpetrating loss of billions of rupees. A year before 40% decline in flow of Chenab River was observed due to building of Baglihar dam that affected irrigation system of Pakistan badly. In 2008, huge economic loss was bared by Pakistan when India reduced the flow at Marala Headworks during filling period. More than 10.000,000 acres crops in Marala canal command area were affected. Another threat to water resources of Pakistan is that Wular Barrage controls the water of River Jhelum which is disturbing the triple canal project of Pakistan of Upper Jhelum Canal, Upper Chenab Canal and the Lower Bari Doab Canal. Moreover, around 11 % of colossal loss in power generation capacity of Neelum Jhelum project is observed which can lead the Neelum valley into barren (Noor, 2011).

## INTER PROVINCIAL WATER POLITICS

The dispute among provinces of Pakistan prevails on the division of water as per entitlements and sharing of shortages. Punjab and Sindh are suffering since pre-partition era. Balochistan and lower riparian of Sindh are not getting the share due to lack of inadequate infrastructure (Chandio, B.A. & Yasmin, N. 1999). All four provinces have serious dispute on the division of water resources in the country. According to Accord, the provinces of Pakistan are not entitled to share water. Whereas the daily average use, as per system and season water adjustment is still limited. The Punjab province of upper riparian (1977 to 1982) consistently utilizing water after the temporary allocation by the Capital. Sindh government argued and raised reservation on this allocation of water to Punjab as Sindh is getting less than its entitlement. Whereas Kotri barrage on which mangrove forests, livestock and delta farming is heavily dependent on, is a major source of livelihood. If water is not allocated according to the Accord to the regions of Gilgit Baltistan, formerly Tribal Areas, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, and Islamabad, then water war will affect the peace and stability of the huge population. The other threat has been of politicizing the Kalabagh Dam project and its delay in construction of Bhasha Dam reservoir was leading the whole country towards shortage of water for irrigation and cultivation of crop and drinking water in Southern Punjab, Sindh and Baluchistan (Mirjat, M.S. & Chandio, A.S., 2001).

In 2015, National Water Policy was drafted to support the distribution of water among provinces according to the population in twenty three action areas to manage flood water, water harvesting, water management, salinity of water and groundwater recharge in the country. This policy is still not implemented due to the macro environmental factor like instable political scenario and will lead to negative setback on the economy (WHO, 2008).

## COASTAL ECOSYSTEM

The coastal ecosystem is damaged due to Indus withdrawals in Punjab that reduced the outflow to sea resulting disturbance in Coastal ecosystem. The government of Sindh claimed, "over1.2 million acres is eroded land or lost to the sea within Thatta and Badin districts, dislocating a quarter million people, and inflicting financial losses over Rs.100 billion. The sea water had destroyed at least one-third of the land. Twelve recent estimates put the figure at 1.4 million acres of the land lost to the sea. Further, loss of land due to erosion and sea water is not out of the question as the water shortage continues unabated (Memon, 2002).

## SALT WATER INTRUSION

In Pakistan Salt-water intrusion is majorly present at 100 kilometers north of the sea, the Laar area of Sindh that is adversely affected due to lack of appropriate management and infrastructure. This water is a major cause of various diseases like throat swelling. Whereas Indus water flows to sea and sea water is not intrude into surface or subsurface of water resources, resulting useless agricultural land and cause of migration of people from that area. Moreover, surface water shortage had led the pressure on the ground water that is due to lack of recharging becomes less percolated and give rise to saline water to ground surface (Memon, 2002).

## CAUSES OF WATER SHORTAGE IN PAKISTAN

Keeping in view the above discussion there are various causes of water shortage in Pakistan. Some significant causes are being mentioned in the following lines.

### Over population

Over population is a world-wide phenomenon because the world's population is increasing day by day. It is expected that in 2050 it will reach up to 11 billion. They need water to live. This rise in population has increased water demand by many times in the world that is becoming threat for the peaceful coexistence. Pakistan is included in one of the most thickly populated countries of the world, but overpopulation is not only sole cause of water shortage. There are other factors involved which are adding to the scarcity of water (Brisco & Qamar, 2006). According to United Nations Water Needs Report (2017), there is 1000 cubic meter per capita availability of water in the threshold. Whereas, in Pakistan with 115 million of population in 1991, there was 1600 cubic meter per capita availability of water. In 2000, population rose to 148 million and per capita availability of water decreased to 1200. In 2013, population increased to 207 million and water per capita decreased to 850. In 2025 population of Pakistan will be 267 million and availability of water will be 660 cubic meter per capita. It shows that Pakistan is moving towards extreme level water scarcity and water stress condition.

### Water Seepage

A lot of water goes waste into soil. Water seepage is a movement of water from canals to water courses into soil. In Pakistan, total watercourse area and canals

are 1.6 million km and 6073 km, 8 to 10 cusecs per million square feet of the wetted area to 35 to 40% diverted into the canal. In result, total loss 18.3 MAF of irrigation water to the ground from unlined canals and watercourses evaporation and transpiration is observed. So estimated loss is about 25% (26 MAF) through canals and 45 MAF is lost through canals water through overtopping and seepage. If this loss is prevented it can irrigate additional 3.0 million acres annually (Gandapur, 2010).

**Silting of reservoirs**

Water shortage and load shedding both have crippled the nation and causing billion dollars loss to agriculture and industry of Pakistan. Silting has been adding up into the loss. Both the biggest water reservoirs Tarbela dam and Mangla dam have been heavily filled up with silt during the last four decades. This rapid silting has tremendously reduced the capacity of water storage of these dams. Silting of reservoirs is destroying storage capacity of water resulting damage for the economy of the country with reduced electricity production.

**Global Warming and Climate change**

Global warming and climate change both affect crop water requirement. Thus, changing the crop boundaries and shortening the period of growing season resulting, the reduction of water during cropping season. On the other hand, 20% of water is evaporated due to high temperature. That is affecting the sustainability and productivity of crops during the season. The change in climate is affecting the rain pattern as well. The rain is high in magnitude and very low in frequency which does not increase the water level (Banuri,2018).

**Misuse and Polluted Water**

Misuse of water means mismanagement of water resources due to poor policy, corruption, unequal distribution of water to provinces, lack of storage capacity and infrastructure and unavailability of sufficient dams and also linked with the individual and community behavior as well. Water is a basic human need for every individual as well as it is required for every home, every industry, every vehicle and most of the machinery. Animals and birds are in billions and they cannot live without water. A lot of water goes in the air through natural process of vaporization that is beyond the control of human being. Furthermore, Pakistan is an agricultural country and water is basic need for agriculture. Agriculture needs a lot of water. Refining of gasoline needs a huge quantity of water. Thermal conversion of every kilowatt of energy generation needs water. The demand is far higher than the available water resources. The available water as described above is 125.56 MAF of which 80 percent of water is unsafe whereas water required is 164.48 MAF and shortage is 38.92 MAF. 60% of water is wasted during use of tap at home, in washrooms, washing households, in shops, hotels, restaurants, washing floors, cars etc. Pakistan is at number 80 out of 122 countries with respect to unhealthy drinking water containing microbial and synthetic contaminations. 5000 children die every year in Pakistan due to contaminated unhealthy polluted drinking water (Fasih, 2018).

## Destruction of Water Catchment Areas

The deforestation is also a cause of global warming and available water evaporation. The population increase and urbanization are the major causes of congestion in the living areas in Pakistan. To settle the influx of population in cities, deforestation occurred rapidly causing destruction of water catchment areas. Thus, resulting the disturbance in ongoing process of water storage and causing disturbance in ecosystem as well. (Hill Country Alliance, 2018).

## National Security and Water

National sovereignty and security are highly dependent on the natural resource of water which is going to be diminished day by day. There is serious relationship of water with the foreign policy of the country. The largest source of water in Pakistan is river Indus that flows from North to South. It starts from the hills of Indian occupied Kashmir and after passing through the whole country it falls into Arabian Sea. Kabul river is one of the major sources of water for this river which comes to Pakistan after passing the whole country of Afghanistan. Pakistan is heavily dependent on the water of river Kabul. According to several reports India is continuously convincing Kabul to build dam on this river that will reduce the flow of water in the river Kabul. Eventually, this will be havoc for Pakistan which is already facing water scarcity. On the other hand, Pakistan is already facing acute shortage of water because of Indus Water Treaty with India which gives right of water of three major rivers of Pakistan to India. The treaty was signed in 1960 with the efforts of World Bank. According to this treaty India got the right of water on three rivers flowing in Pakistan. These are Ravi, Sutlaj and Bias. These rivers were a natural baseline for Pakistan' economy and agriculture but these huge rivers have become only small streams with only a little water which cannot be used for any purpose. On the other hand, the Indus Water Treaty gives ownership of water to three rivers of Pakistan. These are river Indus, Jhelum and Chenab. In recent years India's construction of dams on the origins of these dams has raised serious threats for Pakistan. As a result, the water level in these rivers has been significantly reduced. Keeping in view these developments, water has become a vital issue between India and Pakistan as well as it has got a central place in Pakistan's foreign policy. India is taking benefit of several ambiguities of the Indus Water Treaty. The acute shortage of water has badly affected the agriculture of the country as well as availability of drinking water for people of the soil. This is the responsibility of the government of Pakistan to take bold steps to overcome this issue and keep this issue on high priority.

## Shortage of Water storage reservoirs

There is a significant shortage of water reservoirs in the country. The country has been in a dire need of new water reservoirs since the existing dams do not have the capacity to reserve water for a longer period. The two biggest dams, Tarbela and Mangla dams have been filled with mud and their capacity for water storage has been significantly reduced during the last few decades. There has been a great need to build new water reservoirs but the efforts to construct new dams

have been sacrificed to narrow provincial politics. During the last five decades one of the most vital issues of this country remained construction of KalaBagh Dam to store water for production of electricity, agriculture, industry and other uses. Hundreds of meetings held, and billions of Rupees were wasted and all of these efforts eventually resulted into nothing. Ethnic and provincial politics became the worst hurdle in the construction of the dam and all efforts went in vain. Former President General Pervaiz Musharraf announced several times that the dam will be constructed but he could not succeed practically. Now the plan of this dam has been left and there is no alternate arrangement of the construction of dams to store water. At certain occasions water comes and goes to sea and we cannot store it. Even a layman wonders that why governments are unable to store water when it becomes flood, and we cannot control and store water. This is a strange reality that Pakistan face two extremes: one is the shortage of water and the other is the abundance of water which becomes flood and destroys everything that comes on its way. Until and unless we do not build big water reservoirs, the shortage will remain there. The present and the former governments have announced construction of several dams, but no practical development could be witnessed.

## Water and Economy

Water plays significant role in a country's economy, but it becomes more vital when it comes to Pakistan because Pakistan's economy is highly dependent on water resources. Basically, Pakistan is an agricultural country and agriculture is totally dependent on water especially in the barren areas. The most badly affected sector of water scarcity is agriculture where cost of production has been increased many times, but its production has been reduced heavily and the most important factor for this terrible situation is shortage of water. Most of the areas of country are arid with no water facility at all. These areas are dependent on the water of rain. If it comes on time, the crops flourish but if not, everything destroys. Most of the times, rains do not come when they are needed and when they come, they are not needed. This situation brings negative impact on the agricultural production. Many areas of the country especially Southern Punjab and Sindh have a good canal system but due to acute shortage of water in the rivers, the supply of water has been significantly reduced. Resultantly the agricultural production has been reduced affecting the economy of the country. Furthermore, many other sectors like livestock, Fisheries etc. are heavily dependent on water and the water scarcity is directly badly hitting these businesses and professions. Many other industries are dependent on the availability of water, and these suffer a lot because of its unavailability or short supply. Hence the economy of the country is badly affected by the shortage of water. A country like Pakistan needs water to flourish its economy and develop lifestyle of its citizens. Water is a basic human need, and this is the fundamental right of people to have sufficient availability of water for their daily use.

## Water, Future and War

Water is one of the most significant disputes and core issues between India and Pakistan. Unfortunately, water of all rivers of Pakistan comes from India. The origins of the rivers Ravi, Sutlaj, Bias, Chenab and Jhelum are in India. India started to stop

water of Pakistani rivers soon after independence. As already mentioned, a treaty was signed between the two countries with the efforts of World Bank in 1960. India got the right of water on three rivers of Pakistan, but it started to violate the treaty by diverting water of other rivers. The construction of Baglihar and Krishanganga dams is a clear violation of the Indus Water Treaty but the international community expressed no concern on this vital issue between the two hostile countries. Now many other dams are being built by Indian authorities on the origins of water flowing in the rivers of Pakistan. Hence, India will not only be able to stop water flowing in the rivers of Pakistan, but it will have a great storage of water and this storage will be highly dangerous for the people and land of Pakistan. Any intentional or unintentional effort can bring huge disaster for Pakistan in shape of flood. Jalil Abbas Jilani wrote an article in weekly Hilal in which he argued that water dispute between the two countries may lead both countries towards war. He wrote that India's plan of the construction of 155 hydropower projects will bring serious implications for Pakistan while 33 projects are near to complete (Jilani, 2018). The circumstances are very dangerous which may lead both countries towards a water war. Surprisingly, the international powers are silent on the violations of India. Indian Prime Minister Modi threatened Pakistan several times to stop water. In a speech at Bhatinda, he said, "We will soon turn Pakistan into a desert. We will stop every drop of water going from India to Pakistan." The statement clearly depicts the aggressive tone of Indian government for Pakistan. These irresponsible statements can pave path for war. Pakistan is facing water insecurity and the nation is facing acute shortage of water while international powers and the World Bank have become completely silent on the issue.

## Former Chief Justice Movement for Construction of Dams

The issue of water shortage has never been a top-priority agenda in Pakistan until 2018 when the then Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Pakistan Mr. Justice Saqib Nisar initiated the movement for fund raising for the construction of new dams like Diamer-Basha dam and Mohmand dam. The movement attracted citizens of the country including expatriates and got huge momentum not only in Pakistan but in the whole world. The movement for fund raising for dams got full support of the Pakistan Army as well as the new Government of Pakistan with Imran Khan as Prime Minister. People of Pakistan devoted their full support for the movement and they donated huge amounts as per the limitations of their resources. Employees of the Federal and provincial governments donated their two days salary to the fund while thousands of public and private organizations have deposited their generous donations in the account for the purpose. A tremendous unity and solidarity could be seen in the whole nation on this issue and their emotional attachment with their land remained highly laudable. A significant amount was deposited in the account of contributions for the construction of dams. The government is committed with the support of Pakistan Army and judiciary to build new dams as water reservoirs. It is hoped that some solid measures will be taken for the construction of new dams in different parts of the country. Hopefully, these measures will pave path for storage of water that will eventually strengthen the agricultural economy of the nation.

## Media Implications

Media organizations have a vital role in our lives today. They have played significant role in political and social uplifting of the Pakistani society and created awareness among people of Pakistan. Unfortunately, media have ignored the issue of water scarcity in the country. It was responsibility of the media organizations to highlight the future challenges for shortage of water. It was their duty to convince governments of the past to do something to reserve water for future generations. This is a well-established fact that the need of water has been increased many times, but its availability has reduced sharply. In this situation, there is a great need for print and electronic media to come forward and to make this issue as the top priority agenda of the nation. They should go side by side with the movement for construction of new dams. It's a positive development that now media organizations have realized their responsibility on this front, and they have started to support this issue with prominence. Public and private television channels, national and regional newspapers, magazines and online outlets are giving coverage and great prominence to the issue of water crisis. Now, it seems that media is on the same page with the government and the nation at large regarding movement for construction of new dams to store water. It is hoped that media will extend its continuous and sustained support to government in this regard.

## Recognition of the Water Shortage at Global Level

The water scarcity issue has been realized at various forums in near past including United Nations. An international conference was held in January 2015 under the title "2015 UN-Water Annual International Zaragoza Conference. Water and Sustainable Development: From Vision to Action". It was recommended in the conference that water shortage should be given highest place in the global agenda. The conference proposed a post-2015 agenda on water and sustainable development. The key-Note speakers stressed on the idea that a huge amount of water is wasted in washing different commodities. This phenomenon should be discouraged. They proposed alternative technologies for washing commodities like vehicles to save water on the globe. The research and publication on 'Water Communication, Analysis of Strategies and Campaigns from the Water Sector' was developed to fill this gap. It includes a general outlook and retrospective of the history of the water sector in terms of communication, the landscape of organizations communicating on water and classification of topics, the differences between communication, information, mediation, raising awareness and examples of communication campaigns on water. Findings include a stereotyped way of communicating water, less related to social aspects, as well as the importance of aligning our messages in different fields: an opportunity to better explore is the linkages with the climate change sector. The participants and the speakers expressed their concerns about the role of media in creating and disseminating awareness among massed for the careful usage of water. A unique concept od "Water Communication" was emerged in the conference which focused on planning careful strategies to save water for the survival of humanity on the planet. On the recommendations of the International Conference the United Nation launched UN-Water Decade Program on Advocacy and Communication.

The 193 member nations of the UN are bound to follow its measures to overcome the global challenge of water scarcity. This is the duty of all nations to play their active role in this regard.

## CONCLUSION

Keeping in view the needs and requirements for the present and future generations of Pakistan Water shortage is one of the most significant challenges for the whole nation of 220 million people. The issue has been ignored by the governments and media during the last seven decades. Now, this is time for the government institutions as well as media organizations to move forward and to do some practical measures for the construction of new water reservoirs. There is no way other. It's a matter of life and death for the whole nation because of the acute shortage of water. Furthermore, delay in this regard will be highly dangerous. Media should not only support the movement for construction of new dams rather they should play active role in promoting awareness among social circles as well as they should extend continued support and enforcement to the government to give high rank in the priority agenda of the government. This is a ray of hope in the dark. There is a need to obtain international funding for the construction of new dams in the country. Technical support may be obtained from the technologically advanced countries in this regard. With the collaborative efforts of the governmental institutions and media organizations as well as from the international donors and with the whole nation on the back, the final objective can be achieved to make this country a safe and secure place on the planet where our future generations can live peacefully with sufficient water resources on the land.

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