PRESS RELEASE

INDUS RIVER SYSTEM AUTHORITY (IRSA)

Dated: The 2nd of October, 2024

IRSA Advisory Committee (IAC) meeting was held on October 2nd, 2024 to approve the Rabi 2024-25 *Anticipated Water Availability Criteria* from October 1st, 2024 to March 31st, 2025 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Abdul Hameed Mengal, Chairman IRSA / Member IRSA Balochistan at IRSA HQs Islamabad. The meeting was participated by IRSA Members; Engineering Advisor (Civil), MoWR; Secretaries PIDs of Punjab and Sindh; senior Technical Advisors of WAPDA; senior representatives of Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma Reservoirs, T4 and T5 HPPs, senior representatives of Provincial Agriculture Departments and Director (Opr) / Secretary IRSA, along with senior technical personnel of IRSA.

2. IAC reviewed the Kharif 2024 system operation and observed that the actual Rim-Station inflows of 105.84 MAF till 30th September were 1% more than the maximum forecasted volume of 104.60 MAF and 7% more than 10-year average of 99.34 MAF. The overall provincial canal withdrawals were 19% short with respect to shares. Indented supplies as per Para 2 shares were released to the provinces as per IRSA decision 13.05.2024. Less utilization by provinces from Aug 01 to Sep 20, 2024 was due to heavy rainfall & flooding. The actual system losses were 11.90 MAF as compared to maximum anticipation of 14.80 MAF. Downstream Kotri releases were 21.52 MAF. IAC was informed that due to better inflows and efficient regulation of available supplies, the storage volume available for transfer to Rabi 2024-25 was 10.577 MAF, which was 6% more than 10-year average and about 9% less than last year.

3. IAC discussed the recommendations of IRSA Technical Committee (ITC) meeting held on 26.09.2024 and approved the likely Anticipated Water Availability at the four Rim-Stations of 21.98 MAF for Rabi 2024-25 which was about 15% more than previous year and also about 1% more than 10-year average. The breakup of the anticipated total availability, including Eastern Rivers Component (E/Rs) is as below: -

a)

			MAF
i.	Indus @ Tarbela	=	8.41
ii.	Kabul @ Nowshera	=	5.00
iii.	Jhelum @ Mangla	=	4.62
iv.	Chenab @ Marala	=	3.96
v.	Eastern Rivers Component	=	1.00
vi.	**Total**	=	**22.98**

b) Based on the above Rim-Station Inflows, the expected water balance equation for whole of Indus Basin would be: -

System Parameters	(MAF)
1. Rim stations Inflow (Including ERs Component)	22.98
2. Storage (-) / Releases (+)	9.58
3. System Losses	-1.36
4. Kotri Below (unavoidable - during Canal Closures)	0.07
5. Availability @ Canal Heads (1+2+3-4)	31.14
6. Less Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa + Balochistan	1.87
7. Balance for Punjab & Sindh (5-6)	29.26
8. Shortage - Punjab & Sindh (%)	-16%

c) The anticipated provincial availability under likely scenario, approved at the respective provincial canal heads was as below: -

			MAF
1.	Punjab	=	16.68
2.	Sindh	=	12.58
3.	Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (CRBC)	=	0.70
4.	Balochistan	=	1.17
5.	Total	=	31.14

4. The above-mentioned likely availability at the canal heads of 31.14 MAF was about 2% and 6% higher than last year's actual availability of 30.59 MAF and 10-year average of 29.24 MAF, respectively. The Basin-wise shortage for Rabi 2023-24 was approved as 16%.

5. IAC also approved the anticipated Indus and JC Zones losses as 6% and 0%, respectively, subject to the condition that they would be reviewed ending October 2024, in the 1st week of November 2024, taking into consideration the actual system losses and accordingly updated, if required. IAC also allowed the provinces indented supplies for the maturity of Kharif Crops & sowing of Rabi Crops during the month of October 2024, which will be adjusted towards the overall provincial shares for Rabi 2024-25, later-on during the season.

6. IAC was informed that the forecast and anticipated system operation was conducted by utilizing the Water Apportionment Accord (WAA)-Tool, developed jointly by MoWR, IRSA, PIDs and WAPDA under technical and financial assistance from the Australian Government through its agencies, namely, CSIRO and ACIAR. The Chair apprised the forum that the funding for improvement of WAA-Tool by inclusion of Mid-Season / Intra-season planning module had been approved by the Australin Government. The Chair informed that the focus was on extending the WAA-Tool to allow for changes to be made during the planning season, i.e., intra-season, to include combination of actual, forecasted and projected inflows so as to reduce the variability / fluctuations in water releases for the provinces. It was further explained that the planned enhancement in the Tool would retain the equity principles as set-out in the WAA 1991 and that its scale would be extended down to canal headworks, as well. The Chair said that the outcome of the planned enhancements would only be realised once the WAA-Tool was deployed for pre- and intra-season water allocation planning. IAC thanked the Australian Government for providing assistance through CSIRO and ACIAR for Climate Resilient and Adaptive Water Allocation in Pakistan. The provincial stakeholders and WAPDA also committed to provide their necessary inputs for the intended purpose through the already formed joint working group.

7. Additionally, IAC approved Chashma Barrage Closure as requested by WAPDA for a period of 20 days extendable for 5 days subject to annual canal closures, from 26 December, 2024 to 14 January, 2024, which would be synchronized with Canal Closure schedules of Punjab and Sindh canals. During the Closure, Chashma Reservoir would be constrained between levels 638.15 ft to 640.00 ft with the Reservoir outflow restrictions between 15,000 cfs to 30,000 cfs.

8. On WAPDA Representative's request for raising of Mangla Reservoir's Minimum Operating Level (MOL) from present 1050 ft to 1070 ft based on latest Bathymetric Survey 2024, IAC directed the dam authority to put-up the matter in the forum's next meeting in the 1st of week of November 2024.

9. WAPDA imparted detailed briefing to the august forum regarding Tunnel 5 HPP of Tarbela and ensured that the works would be completed during the approved closure period of 33 months. WAPDA representatives also assured that IRSA's provincial irrigation demands placed on Tarbela would be fulfilled during Rabi 2024-25. Regarding operation of T4-LLO, WAPDA informed that the outflow structure would be inspected in November 2024 for any necessary repairs. Hopefully the structure would be available for operation during Kharif 2025 after completion of remedial / remaining works in March 2025. WAPDA Representatives were optimistic that the Tarbela Auxiliary Spillways would be operable in high flow period of Kharif 2025. IAC, however, expressed serious concern over the overlapping of T3/T4 & T5 works and the lagging physical progress of T5 works of only 32% as compared to planned progress of 50% and showed apprehensions that the T5 works could spill beyond the approved period. IAC, therefore, requested WAPDA to provide firm assurance and contingency plans of completion of the T5 works within the approved 33 months through Chairman WAPDA in the next meeting of IAC, as the resultant restriction of the Reservoir outflows would in turn constrain the provincial supplies and would impact the filling of Dams.

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