

**PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT (PUBLIC)
PRESS WING**

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ISLAMABAD: MARCH 19, 2019: The President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan has been blessed with plenty of surface and sub-surface water resources and it has the largest contiguous irrigation system in the world. But still we are facing water shortage due to lack of effective policies and management, he added.

The President said this during a presentation by the Secretary, Water Resources Irfan Ali and Chairman WAPDA Lt. Gen. (R) Muzammil Hussain at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad on Tuesday.

The President pointed out that the great Indus river system has historically been the lifeline of the Indus valley civilization. He noted, however, that today Pakistan's water economy is in acute danger of running dry, as per capita surface water availability has declined from 5,260 cubic meters in 1951 to around 1,000 cubic meters in 2016. He stated that this is likely to further drop to about 860 cubic meters by 2025 marking our transition from a "water stressed" to a "water scarce" country.

The President pointed out that Pakistan is ranked among top ten countries vulnerable to climate change. He further added that water resources are inextricably linked with climate and the impending climate change scenario has serious implications for Pakistan's water resources. He noted that in the past comparatively less priority at political level was given to water sector projects, resulted in continuously dwindling allocations from as high as 13% of PSDP to minuscule 3.7% in FY 2017-18.

The President underscore that the salient features of the NWP such as water uses and allocation of priorities, development of water resources, environmental integrity of basin, impact of climate Change, trans-boundary water sharing, require special attention and timely implementation to augur fruitful outcome for the communities. He urged that the Strategic Priorities set out in the National Water Policy (NWP) should be implemented holistically and efficiently to ensure country-wide Integrated Water Resource Management. He stated that the quantifiable targets kept in the Policy for the next twelve years, if achieved, should result into overall well refined Water Regime.
