

# Media Update

19 April 2016

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## UNESCO

Press Release

### UNESCO promotes international cooperation on management of transboundary floods

**Lahore:** UNESCO with the financial assistance from the Government of Japan is collaborating with Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) to further improve and strengthen the flood early warning system and management capacity of Pakistan. In this regards, UNESCO and PMD jointly organized a two-day international workshop in Lahore which aimed at standardizing procedures for Transboundary Rivers in the context of flood forecasting. The workshop is part of UNESCO's "Strategic Strengthening of Flood Early Warning and Management Capacity of Pakistan" Project-phase-II which was launched in March 2015 in cooperation with the Government of Japan. The first phase of the project was launched in July 2011 and was completed in 2014 in response to the 2010 devastating flood.

Speaking on this occasion the Chief Guest, Mr. Abid Sher Ali, Minister of State for Water and Power commended the efforts of UNESCO, PMD and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). He highlighted that there is a need to reduce the damages from intense rains and flashfloods, which will happen more frequently due to climate change. He commended UNESCO and Government of Japan's efforts in this regard and urged PMD to make sure that general public benefits from this project.

Dr. Shahbaz Khan, Director, UNESCO Regional Science Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in his remarks mentioned his profound gratitude to the Government of Japan to continue its generous financial and technical support during the first and the second phase of the project. He further said that through the Project, UNESCO in collaboration with its partners especially PMD, FFD, ICHARM, and JAXA will complete the integrated IFAS/RRI system and other water studies covering the whole Indus River Basin and the combined models can be utilized for flood forecasting and early warning for Pakistan. He commended efforts of PMD to develop Automatic Weather Stations which will further help to strengthen the network of rain gauges in Pakistan

Mr. Teppei Nakagawa, First Secretary, the Embassy of Japan said that like Pakistan, Japan is also disaster prone country and in this regard Japanese experience is helping manage disaster risk reduction in Pakistan to decrease the damages.



Ms. Vibeke Jensen, UNESCO Representative to Pakistan in her remarks stressed that facilitation of cooperation on the transboundary water issues in South Asia is increasingly important in the context of the global climate change. She mentioned that UNESCO is supporting international cooperation on flood management with the neighboring countries on flood management and is striving to promote technical collaborations through Pakistan expertise, which was developed under the Project Phase-I and UNESCO's International Hydrological Program (IHP) at the global and region levels.

Dr. Ghulam Rasool, Director General PMD in his welcome remarks extended his gratitude to UNESCO for initiating this project to strengthen flood early warning system of Pakistan. He said that the project has enhanced technical capacity of PMD which enabled the PMD engineers to develop state-of-the-art Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) in Pakistan.

Mr. Hiromu INOUE, Representative of JICA said that they are pleased that Japanese technologies are benefiting people of Pakistan. He shared that as part of the project which was started last year, JICA is working closely with UNESCO, Pakistan and Afghanistan, under which the Afghan engineers will be trained in Pakistan.

The two day international conference is being attended by representatives from national and international partner organizations such as International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM), Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency – JAXA, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs), Federal Flood Commission (FFD), Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), universities, provincial irrigation departments and international experts from Australia, France, Indonesia, Korea and Japan and their expertise will further enhance river modelling and flood forecasting models for Indus and the Eastern Rivers.

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