

## ***Conference on water, energy and food security held at AAUR***

A three-day international conference on 'Asia-Pacific Policy Dialogue on Water, Energy and Food Security for Poverty Alleviation in Dry land Regions,' commenced at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR), here on Wednesday.

The conference is organised by PMAS-AAUR in collaboration with UNESCO with the support of Japan Funds-in-Trust and Malaysia Funds-in-Trust, with an aim to provide an opportunity to policy makers, scientists, academicians, other experts and stakeholders for exploring new dimensions to increase water, food security and alleviate poverty in the resource deficient dry land regions worldwide, in Asia and the Pacific region and particularly in Pakistan.

Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Sheikh Aftab Ahmad was the chief guest at the inaugural session of the conference while The Ambassador of Japan Mr. Takashi Kurai, The High Commissioner of Malaysia Dr. Hasrul Sani Bin Mujtabar, Minister Treasury, Planning & Development and Public Health AJK Dr. Muhammad Najeeb Naqi, Unesco Jakarta, Director Dr. Shahbaz Khan, PMAS-AAUR Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Rai Niaz Ahmad, Unesco Islamabad Director Ms. Vibeke Jensen, Water Expert Dr. Sham-ul-Mulk, progressive farmer Mumtaz Khan Manais, more than 200 participants from Pakistan & other countries including 50 delegates from Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, China, Philippine, Nepal, Korea, Afghanistan, Australia and faculty members & a large number of students were also present.

Federal Minister while addressing said that government has put water, energy and food security sectors at the top of its development agenda in its vision 2025 because these sectors are considered to be life line of any economy and most vital instrument of socio-economic development of a country.

He also said that government is paying special attention to incomplete hydro-electric projects like Diamir Basha Dam project and others to make country self sufficient in energy sector. He informed that changing climatic conditions, especially the natural disastrous, resource base degradation, poverty, low education levels and high disparities in food access are major challenges for food security in Pakistan.

He was of the view that universities are a hub of research and innovation of new technologies positively impacting livelihood of the masses, protecting environment and accelerating growth. He hoped that this conference will help in facilitating the integration of the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals into national development plans of Pakistan and other countries of Asia Pacific Region.

Earlier, PMAS-AAUR, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Rai Niaz Ahmad, in his welcome address informed the gathering that the University is dealing in diversified areas like agriculture, forestry, range management, veterinary & animal sciences, agricultural engineering, basic, applied and social sciences along with management sciences and information technology to achieve a stipulated target of UN Agenda 2030 and Pakistan Government vision 2015 to respond to the ever changing socio-economic conditions and attaining the goal of development.

The Ambassadors Malaysia appreciated efforts of UNESCO and PMAS-AAUR for holding international conference on important issues. He said we have to play our role to create awareness regarding food security and other challenges so that future of new generation could be secure.

The Japan Ambassador said Japan has been providing assistance to Pakistan in various fields. We have been providing support in clean drinking water projects. He said, our priorities are for the implementation of the universal agenda, he said adding, Japan is putting its efforts for the quality growth, health system, education, disaster management and climate change problems. Water and proper sewerage system, food securities are the issues of priority to be addressed into Pakistan.

**Source:** <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/167221-Conference-on-water-energy-and-food-security-held-at-AAUR>

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