

President al-Assad Lays Foundation Stone for Tigris River Water-Drawing Project

Hasaka, northeastern Syria - President Bashar al-Assad on Monday laid the foundation stone for Tigris (Dijleh) water-drawing project at Ein Diwar village in Malkiya area, Hasaka governorate (about 600 kilometers northeast of Damascus).

The project, which has a cost of over SYP 100 billion, aims at drawing 1.25 billion cubic meters of water from Tigris River to Hasaka governorate, irrigating 200,000 hectares of land and providing 125 million cubic meters of drinking water per year, in addition to supporting the Khabour river irrigation networks which irrigate 63,000 hectares.

After laying the foundation stone, President al-Assad attended a presentation on the stages of the project, the estimated timeline for its completion, its goals, and targeted areas that will benefit from it, showing that the project will increase agricultural and livestock production, provide job opportunities, create social and economic stability, and improve the livelihood of people in Hasaka governorate.

Later, President al-Assad was briefed by project supervisors on the work being carried out on the main pumping station.

President al-Assad instructed the parties in charge of carrying out and supervising the project to double efforts in order to finish it within the set timeframe at a high efficiency to achieve the developmental goals of this vital and strategic project.

Afterwards, President al-Assad conversed with governorate dignitaries and representatives of social, cultural and economic activities in it, affirming that this project will receive the necessary attention and supervision due to its considerable importance to the people of Hasaka and all of Syria.

His Excellency expressed confidence that the project will improve the developmental situation of the governorate and develop it on all levels just like the Euphrates Dam did to Deir Ezzor and Raqqa governorates.

President al-Assad also stressed the importance of Hasaka governorate as it represents Syria's food basket, adding that Hasaka and the eastern area in general will witness considerable attention during the upcoming stage to improve the situation of their people.

The project will help limit the effects of the drought that affected Hasaka governorate in recent years, in addition to providing drinking water to the governorate's villages.

The project, which is expected to be finished by 2015, consists of Ein Diwar main pumping station, a 29.8 km open channel with a pumping station, a 19.9 km tunnel channel running through Karatshok mountain, and a 31.5 km closed channel that connects to two smaller open channels, the first being 132.3 km and the second 23 km long, both of which will irrigate lands and transport water to Bassel al-Assad Dam south of the governorate.

The project also includes a pumping station that draws water from the March 8th and April 7th dams to irrigate the lands in the Khabour Project.

Governor of Hasaka Maazi Salloum said the project reflects the interest of the state in developing the Eastern area, adding that its importance lies in expanding the area of irrigated farmland, creating fresh job opportunities to bolster national economy to make residents of drought-stricken areas remain in their lands.

Director of Water Resources in Hasaka Samir Moura clarified the significance of the project and its contribution to reducing unemployment, augmenting investment, carrying out various tourist and agricultural projects and increasing strategic crops production.

In statements to SANA, farmers from the governorate said they are hopeful that the project will curb the effects of drought and alter the agricultural map for the better.

They added that the project augurs well for the governorate, hoping it will be put to investment as soon as possible.