

Minister says drought may hit half of country

ISLAMABAD: Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal has warned that Thar-like drought may hit half of the country if new water reservoirs are not built.

He said the planning commission would hold a Pakistan Water Summit at Islamabad on March 20 in collaboration with the ministry of water and power to work out a

water policy for proactive development and management of water resources.



Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal has warned that Thar-like drought may hit half of the country if new water reservoirs are not built.

Addressing an international workshop on “safe connected communities against floods through remote sensing and GIS tools, organised by UNESCO and Suparco here on Wednesday, the minister said: “Water shortage may turn out to be a worse crisis than the ongoing energy crisis as a phenomenon of climate change may reduce water availability up to 40 per cent, pushing Pakistan to be a water-starved country.”

He said natural disasters were a major risk to the country’s sustainable development and the impact of some of these disasters such as floods could be reduced if accurate and timely forecasts were issued to help in better planning and execution of evacuation and rescue work.

He said that recent advancement in space and remote sensing technologies and its various applications had proved to be valuable tools to help prevent disasters and speed up rescue and relief operations.

Suparco chairman Ahmed Bilal said an integrated flood analysis system (Indus-IFAS) had been completed which would contribute to flood forecasting and early warning.

Mr Iqbal said that in view of recent floods in eastern rivers, there was a need to improve flood management capacity of eastern rivers.

Source: <http://www.dawn.com/news/1092873/minister-says-drought-may-hit-half-of-country>