

KHANPUR DAM WATER PROJECT FACES DELAY

By

Aamir Yasin

The Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has sought Rs. 80 million from the Federal government to complete the third phase of Khanpur Dam Water Supply Project by next year.

A senior official of the RCB told Dawn that RCB had requested the Federal government to release the funds before second quarter of fiscal 2012-2013 otherwise the Rs. 700 million projects would delay and increase its cost.

The Federal government had allocated Rs. 405 million for the project under Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for 2012-2013, but the government has not released its first installment as yet.

The project kicked off in December 2010 and had to complete by the end of 2012 but due to non-availability of funds, the project delayed for a year.

“The work on the project was already moving at snail’s pace and if the Federal government failed to release the amount this fiscal the project would delay till 2014, said an official”.

He said that the cantonment areas relied on water from Khanpur Dam because the supply from Rawal Dam was not enough to meet the requirement of the cantonment areas.

The Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) and Military Engineering Services (MES) were getting water from Rawal Dam to fulfill the requirement of garrison city and its 46 union councils.

According to the project, the 20,942 metre-long water supply lines would be installed in Rawalpindi cantonment areas. Ten overhead water tanks having a storage capacity of 0.2 million gallons would be constructed in Afshan Colony, Burfkhana Chowk, Allama Iqbal Colony, Tipu Road, Dhok Syedan, Adra, Adiala Road near 502 Workshop, Naseerabad, Dhok Kashmirian, Aliabad and Dhoke Chiraghadin.

However, the RCB has so far managed to construct only four overhead water tanks at Naseerabad, Adra, Dhoke Chiraghadin and Tipu Road and three underground water tanks at Naseerabad, Aliabad and Adiala Road near 502 Workshop.

The RCB officials said that in the absence of enough water storage capacity in the cantonment areas, the project was important to meet drought like situation.

They said that at present the cantonment areas had six overhead water tanks at Siham Saddar, Gawalmindi, Chaklala Scheme-I, Chaklala Scheme-III and Lalazar. They said that there were only 50 tube wells in the cantonment and there was a dire need to complete the project as soon as possible.

They feared that by year end Rawalpindi would go dry as after October the Khanpur Dam would not have enough water to meet the requirement of the city.

They said, had the RCB had water storage tanks there would not have been any water shortage during crisis period. They said that water table was also receding with each passing day.

When contacted, the RCB water supply branch incharge Attique ur Rehman said the RCB had completed 60 percent work and was awaiting funds to complete the project.

He said the RCB had constructed four overhead and three underground water tanks and started to store water.