



Issue Brief

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Kachhi Canal Project

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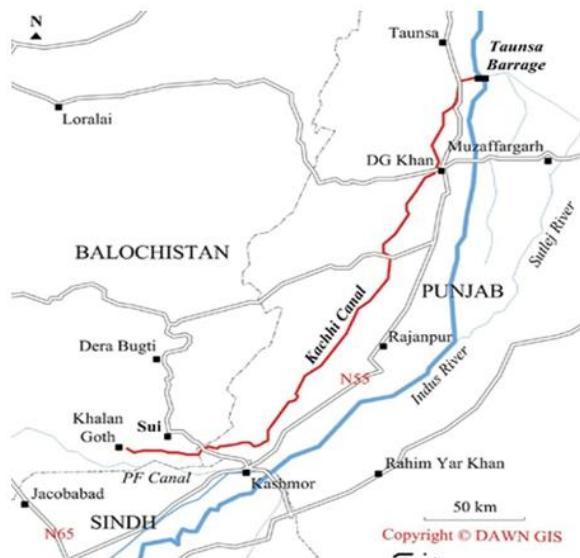
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Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi inaugurated the 1st phase of 300 km long Kachhi Canal Project in the Sui area of Dera Bugti on September 14, 2017. It starts from Taunsa Barrage at Indus River and stretches to Sui, Baluchistan. The discharge capacity of the main canal is 6000 cusecs.¹

The Kachhi Canal Project was started in 2002 by Water & Power Development Authority (WAPDA), and built at a cost of Rs. 80 billion. The project is expected to irrigate around 72,000 acres of barren land in the Sui tehsil area of Baluchistan and more than one million people will benefit from this canal. The project is scheduled for three phases.²

- Phase-I - in district Dera Bugti (will irrigate 72,000 acres)
- Phase-II - in district Bolan & Naseerabad (will irrigate 216,000 acres)
- Phase-III - in district Bolan, Naseerabad and Jhal Magsi (will irrigate 344,000 acres)

This project would change the fate of the residents of districts of Dera Bugti, Naseerabad and Jhal Magsi. Being rich in natural gas, Dera Bugti is the least developed district of Baluchistan. Pakistan National Human Development Report in 2003 ranked Dera Bugti as the least developed district in Pakistan with a human development index (HDI) of 0.285.³ Kacchi Canal will play an important economic role to establish the agriculture sector in the area as an efficient source of income and would help in making thousands of acres of barren land cultivable. A strong road network is in progress connecting Dera Bugti with Sibbi and Kohlu-Barkhan. These road networks (farm to market roads) will help the agriculture products of the farmers reach the markets in time. By and large, the canal will have great economic



Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1357790>

¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1357640/balochistan-will-soon-become-pakistans-richest-province-pm-abbasi>

² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1357790>

³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/683813>

impact and will improve the living standard of the people in these areas. It would also help to improve the law and order situation of the area. Sense of deprivation and less economic activity in Dera Bugti was the major cause of instability.

Agriculture which will take place through this canal will cater to the demand in Baluchistan and some areas in South Punjab as well. The main crops of these areas include cotton, wheat, tomato, onion and green chillies. Abundant water resources through Kacchi Canal will make agriculture production more vibrant and cattle farming more convenient. People of the above mentioned areas could generate handsome income through canal water resources. Baluchistan makes up for 43 per cent of Pakistan's land mass and is the richest province in terms of mineral resources. But due to negligence of previous governments, the people of these areas are living under extreme conditions of poverty. Sui is supplying the natural gas to whole of Pakistan since 1952 and according to Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, "Pakistan owes it to people of Sui as the entire country benefits from its natural gas." Kacchi Canal is mega project for these areas as it will enhance the sources of income and improve the living conditions of the people of Baluchistan.

