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IRAQ

IRRIGATION PROJECTS FIRST PHASE COMPLETED IN KIRKUK

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[Article by Ala Khalil Nasser]

[Text]

On November 4, 1983, Mr Taha Yassin Ramadhan, First Deputy Prime Minister, opened the first phase of Saddam Irrigation Project passing through the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, Ta'mim Province. The project is included in the five-year development plan, 1980-1985. This irrigation project, the biggest of its kind in Iraq, will irrigate, when finally implemented, one million donums of land.

Planning sources at the project said the first phase had been implemented six months ahead of schedule.

In his speech in the opening ceremony, Mr Ramadhan said that the Iraqi people, for the first time in their history had realized outstanding development in spite of the war they were engaged in for more than three years. He pointed out that 1981, the second year of the war had recorded the highest allocations within the development plan.

Irrigation Minister Mr Abdul Wahab Mahmoud Abdulla, announced during the opening ceremony that the government had allocated ID.465 million (about 1.435 million dollars) for major irrigation projects in 1983 a big jump from ID.120 million (about 400 million dollars) in 1978.

The first phase of the project which covers 25,000 donums of land includes a 67 kilometre (42 miles) canal, four large regulators, 65 small regulators, four siphons, 950,000 metres long of asbestos pipes.

The 67 km. main canal which carries water from the Lower Zab River has a capacity to deliver 278 cubic metres of water per second. The canal is coated with concrete and other materials such as plastic sheets and tar.

Civil engineer, Miss Sabah Mohammed, who supervised the execution of the canal, said that the work has been

done systematically and successfully. In the first year her job was to supervise the process of mixing concrete, later on she supervised the coating of the canal with concrete and tar. Six other women engineers worked in the first phase of the project as well as many men and women engineers, workers and technicians.

The irrigation project consists of a wholly underground network of pipes. A water pumping station in every 160 donums of land is provided. These stations help to bring water from the pipes up above the ground.

To bury these pipes and build the stations, 16.5 cubic metres of soil were removed said Mr Abdul Majeed Rashid, the director of the project.

He further added that there were a number of factors which made the project

successful such as the availability of water resources in addition to the fertile land and the suitable local weather conditions which fit various kinds of agricultural crops.

The project included construction of seven modern villages comprising 577 houses, roads, four farms to carry out agricultural researches and experiments, a sugar cane farm and a fully automatically operated water control system.

The project also houses a maintenance and repair workshop run by a mechanical engineer, Mr Farah Karim. He said that many kinds of heavy machines, vehicles and other equipment were used on the project. Operators of these equipment have had, according to Mr David Elias, various training and technical courses held for them.