

Basra's Shat al-Arab Canal project's corner stone laid

BAGHDAD: The corner stone for a 350 billion dinar Shat al-Arab Canal project, aimed at pumping pure water for Basra Province and irrigation water for 250,000 donums of agricultural lands, had been laid down by the Ministry of Water Resources on Thursday.

"The Irrigation Ministry has celebrated today (Thursday), under the auspices of its Minister, Abdul-Latif Jamal Rashid, the laying of the corner stone for Shat al-Arab Irrigation project in Basra Province, as part of an agricultural initiative by the Iraqi government," an Irrigation Ministry statement said.

Iraq's Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki, had launched a general initiative to raise the agricultural states in the country in July, 2007, with a 10-year plan to achieve self-sustainability from "strategic crops."

The initiative comprised, among other goals, supplying farmers with seeds, fertilizers, agricultural insecticides, as well as lands reforms and guaranteeing the purchase of their so-called "strategic crops," with market prices, along with the observation of agricultural and animal diseases and granting financial assistance for peasants and farmers.