**Why Pakistan Needs Kalabagh Dam**

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Pakistan does have severe problems with water, including a scarcity of water, inadequate methods for managing it, rising electrical costs, and a growing population that raises demand. Building huge water reservoirs is crucial and important to solving these problems since it will increase the amount of water available for domestic, industrial, and agricultural use, store more water for storage, availability of affordability electricity and mitigate the effects of floods and droughts.

In the early 1950s multipurpose hydroelectric project, Kalabagh Dam, was proposed on the Indus River. The concept of building a dam at Kalabagh was first proposed as a way to harness the water resources of the Indus River.

A suitable location for a large dam was discovered in Punjab’s Mianwali District, near the town of Kalabagh. Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) conducted extensive technical feasibility studies in the 1970s. These technical investigations aimed to assess the project’s viability from an environmental, technological, and economic perspective. The outcomes highlighted the potential benefits of the dam in terms of water storage, flood prevention, and hydroelectric power generation. As per record, the federal government initially provided great support for the Kalabagh Dam project. After seeing its potential advantages, several administrations incorporated the dam into their development plans. Detailed engineering designs were produced, and funding methods were also examined and even some ground constructions were developed at site but due to the lack of political and government leaderships, which has sparked a complicated and multifaceted debate. Actually, this Dam provides a classic illustration of development versus sustainability and centralization versus regional autonomy.

It is now high time and in the lager interest of the country and citizens to move Kalabagh Dam project forward with a just, honest, and transparent plan.

Pakistan has a water deficit, as evidenced by several studies, which is made worse by the nation’s growing population and rising agricultural needs. By collecting and holding onto extra water during the monsoon season and releasing it during dry spells, the Kalabagh Dam will aid in the better management of water resources. Without a question, the Dam has a great deal of potential to assist Pakistan in solving its energy and water issues, encourage the expansion of its economy and agriculture, and make the nation more resilient to natural calamities. The dam was designed to be a sizable hydroelectric facility with important advantages for water storage and electricity production. Everyone should be concerned, though, as a farmer is currently unable to fund the dam due to the recent spike in electricity bills.

The Dam, with its planned hydroelectric capacity, might play a significant role in stabilizing and diversifying Pakistan’s energy mix. Increasing the amount of hydroelectric power generated by this Dam can significantly reduce Pakistan’s carbon footprint and aid in the fight against global. This dam’s construction not only will improve the local economy but will minimize the effects of migration on urban areas, and raise living standards. When everything is taken into account, the dam would help regulate the seasonal variations in water availability, ensuring a more consistent supply of water for residential and agricultural use. An estimated 3,600 MW of energy will be produced by the dam. In a country where energy is scarce, having this additional capacity to generate power would be extremely beneficial, perhaps reducing the frequency of power outages and fostering industrial and economic growth.

Controlling floods is one of the Kalabagh Dam’s many important advantages. The dam could lessen the destructive effects of floods, which have over the years caused substantial loss of life and property in Pakistan, by controlling river flow. Better irrigation using the water that has been saved might raise agricultural output, which would improve food security and boost Pakistan’s agrarian sector, which is the foundation of the country’s economy.

Industrialization requires a steady and dependable electrical source. The power produced by the dam may promote economic development, draw investment, and encourage the expansion of industry, all of which will increase national prosperity. Numerous jobs will also be created throughout the Kalabagh Dam’s construction and operation, promoting socioeconomic development. Other energy and infrastructure projects will also benefit from the infrastructure and skills established throughout this process.

Kalabagh Dam will help with rural electrification initiatives by boosting the overall electrical supply, which will enable the provision of cheap electricity to isolated and underserved communities. This can lessen the strain from urban migration, promote local economic development, and enhance quality of life. The country’s electricity and water demands will be significantly met by Kalabagh Dam, which will also foster unity and cooperation among its many regions of Pakistan.

Before making any decisions that will impact these numerous variables, it is important that all relevant parties involved in the construction of the Dam must have extensive discussions and work towards consensus. This is because there are many potential benefits in terms of energy generation, agriculture production, flood control, and water management.

The consensus on the subject can be achieved through legislative and technical debates, interprovincial councils, public awareness, community participation, and other democratic forums for the sake of Pakistan future. Since the major political parties today priorities the development of affordable energy and flourishing agriculture, whether it is at the federal or provincial level, it is imperative to create and foster political will and consensus at the local, provinces and federal levels on Kalabagh Dam otherwise the vicious circle of circular debt of electricity now reaching upto Rs 2200 billion will continue and ultimately will lead to country in economic disaster.

It is now the high time and the lager interest of the country and citizens to move Kalabagh Dam project forward with a just, honest, and transparent plan. Therefore, our Political and government leaders should demonstrate a genuine desire to find a conscensus-driven solution and launch an impartial national debate forum where views and concerns may be freely aired, rather than using the problem as a political tool and to make sure that every province is represented, particularly the ones that have reservations, such as Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

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