

Pakistan Affairs
Q: Critically Analyse the key causes of delaying construction of DAMS in Pakistan. Give some suggestions to revert this collateral loss.

1. Introduction

Dams are an important source of managing and storing water; one of the most important natural resources. They are fundamental assets for a country to run its agricultural, industrial and domestic domains/sectors. Pakistan There are a number of dams which are under construction, such as Mohmand and Dasu dams, but due to various factors, Pakistan lags behind in their construction, including the political, social and economic challenges. However, if the country paves way to overcome and control the obstacles, the country would be a prosperous one in terms of removing the water scarcity in the near future.

2. Major causes of delay in the construction of Dams in Pakistan:

Among the various causes which prevent the country to continue

with the construction of dams and water reservoirs, the most notable ones are:

- 1- Political instability
- 2- Financial constraints
- 3- Shortage of skilled labour
- 4- Poor site management
- 5- Natural disasters
- 6- Corruption and RedTape-ism.

i. Political instability in Pakistan:

Pakistan has been a victim of political instability since its birth. The projects and contracts/policies ~~start~~ initiated by one government or leader just end-up with his reign, since no government has ever completed its tenure of 5 years. Each new government brings its own priorities regarding the continuation or cessation of the projects or the funds collected for building ^{new} dams.

For example:

The political clashes have restricted the construction of Kalabagh dam (Dawn, 2018).

ii. Financial constraints as a hindrance to dam construction:

The economic hurdles and financial constraints have obstructed the construction of dams across the country as it is facing economic crisis. The governments either restrict the amount or stop the projects to as because they lack the capacity to continue the construction.

IPRI: The federal government has decided to drop financing of 39 power projects and construction of dams under Public Sector Development Programme because of financial crisis.

iii 3. Shortage of skilled Labour prevents Dam construction:

Pakistan is a developing country and many projects are on-going at a time so construction industry is facing problems of shortage of skilled labour. Construction of dam projects are mostly in hilly and remote areas, so here the availability of skillful workforce is crucial. As The Express Tribune shared the headline

"Mohmand Dam construction to employ at least 6000 workers" so it is evident that such large number is unable to be skilled for the construction purpose.

iv) Poor site management as a hurdle in delayed dam construction:

The work is not properly managed at site sites. The contractors and engineers ~~for~~, having poor managerial skills, do not bother to allot time ~~for~~ for the construction, ecological conditions, consider environmental factors or technological factors.

The use of outdated equipments is the real hurdle as a backdrop in this sector.

v) Nature Disasters - A cause behind ~~construction deadlock~~ in Pakistan: Construction deadlock

The environmental hazardous pose a great threat to the ~~depr~~ progression in dam building in Pakistan. Natural disasters like heavy rains, floods and ~~eg~~ earthquakes can stop the construction activities at site which causes delay in the construction of dam projects.

Sometimes weather impact can also delay time duration or approved time of the project.

The floods and rains hindered the progression of construction projec-

vi) Corruption and Red tape-ism preventing dam construction in Pakistan:

Elements of corruption and red-tape-ism in the matters of planning and implementing huge projects like Dam construction are another reason behind the said delay.

The Elite capture — having active say in construction affairs and other mafias ~~being~~ prove to be strong restraints in the long-term projects with promise more public good and ~~others~~ offer little personal benefits.

PAC member and Pakistan's National Assembly Member Mr. Barjees, ~~error~~ as per DAWN report claimed that Rs 9 billion had been collected as donations for dam, but Rs 14 billion ~~were~~ was spent as advertisements on it.

This is how uneven distribution of wealth poses a threat to dam construction in Pakistan.

3- Suggestive measures to revert the collateral loss in the construction of dams:

- 1- Political stability and consensus.
- 2- Enhanced funding.
- 3- Investment in ^{Res} Research and Development.
- 4- Improved Project Management.
- 5- Implementation of ~~Estimate~~ Disaster management strategies.
- 6- Accountability and Transparency.

i) Political stability and Consensus in combatting construction ~~defi~~ downfall:

Ensuring political stability and fostering consensus among political parties on the importance of dam construction can maintain continuity in project implementation.

ii) Enhanced Funding to overcome construction hurdles:

Allocating sufficient funds and exploring alternative financing options such as public-private partnerships or international collaborations can help overcome financial constraints and expedite dam construction.

Pakistan embassy ~~that~~ reported that former Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan urged overseas Pakistanis to donate for Diamer Bhasha Dam and Moh

mand Dam Fund 2018.

This was a positive step towards the construction of Dams in Pakistan.

iii) Investment in Research and Development to boost construction of dams in Pakistan:

Investing in Research and Development to address the technical challenges and explore innovative solutions can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of dam construction.

iv.) Improving project management to foster favourable construction:

Implementing effective project management practices, including regular monitoring, timely decision making, and efficient coordination among stakeholders, can help streamline the construction process and minimize delays.

v- Implementation of Disaster Management Strategies:

Implementing a strong Disaster Management policies and strategies can

reduce the barriers ~~constructing~~ confronting dam building in Pakistan. To combat and mitigate environmental hazards, ~~by~~ the authorities should take bold steps and make pre and post disaster strategic planning in order to counter it.

vi. Accountability and Transparency:

Accountability and Transparency must be ensured to construct dams in Pakistan. Pakistan launched a program 'Water Resources Accountability in Pakistan' to ensure transparency in effective construction.

4. Conclusion:

Dams ~~are~~ in Pakistan serve crucial role as they ought to reduce the water crisis which is a looming threat currently. Moreover, they are vital for irrigation purposes. But ~~they~~ there are a number of different challenges in the way of construction of dams in Pakistan ~~may it be~~ ^{including} social, political and economic constraints. They should be countered by strong policies ~~to~~ for effective construction.