

21 hydropower dams in the pipeline

[KABUL](#) (Pajhwok): Using its hydel, solar, gas, wind and coal resources, [Afghanistan](#) could become self-sufficient in electricity production and irrigation, an official said Saturday.

Amanullah Ghalib, deputy energy and water minister, told Pajhwok Afghan News the government had completed the feasibility study of 21 small and medium size dams.

He said the government had formulated a five-year plan aimed at controlling the water flow and producing electricity in last two years.

In addition during this time, the public participation law was also completed, with efforts underway to towards self-reliance in power generation.

He said basic studies of large dams in Bagh Dar in central Kapisa province and the Kokcha River in Takhar and Badakhshan provinces, in Sagi area in eastern Kunar province and Sarobai-2 had been completed.

Ghalib said work on the Kajaki-2 in Halmand province where, four additional turbines would be installed, was underway.

According to him, the studies show Bagh Dara dam could produce 250 megawatts of electricity, the Kunar dam 320mw, Kokcha dam 250mw, Kokcha Badakhshan 250mw, Sarwbi-2 200mw and four additional turbines in Kajaki 100mw.

Afghanistan could produce another 500MW of electricity from wind, 100MW from gas and as many from coal resources, the deputy minister said.

He said the mentioned projects were expected to be completed in the next five years at a cost of \$5 billion.

Ghalib said the [World](#) Bank (WB) had assured of providing \$2billion for

these projects and \$1 billion would come from the private sector as per the agreement signed with them.

The remaining \$2 billion would be paid by the government with some assistance from the international community.

Abdul Basir Azimi, the Energy and Water Ministry spokesman, said the Kajaki-2 project would be carried out by a Turkish company by investing \$200 million and the Sarobai-2 would be completed with an investment of \$300 million by the Alokozai Group of Companies.

Besides, Azimi said a local company 'Pawer Bayat' would invest amount \$200 million in the energy sector to produce 50MW of electricity by using coal.

Construction work on the Shah Wa Aros dam in Kabul's Shakar Dara district has been ongoing and work on Bakhshabad dam in Farah and the rehabilitation of Chak dam in Maidan Wardak province would be soon.

According to Da Afghanistan Brishna Shirkat (DABS), 280MW to 320MW of power is currently produced in Afghanistan and 1,000MW electricity is imported from Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

The deputy water and energy minister said Afghanistan currently needed 2,000MW of power, which would be met with implementation of the mentioned projects.

Though master plans and urbanization would increase power demand, Afghanistan has the potential to produce 318,000MW of power.

In the past two years, initial studies on 21 medium and small size dams were conducted in various provinces. The dams would help store water and irrigate fields, Azimi said.

According to him, Shoraba dam in Sar-i-Pul, Chahar Kant dam in Balkh, Dehna Dara dam in Faryab's Pashtunkot district, Aba Kili dam in Samangan's Khuram Sarbagh district, Khanabad Dowam Dam in Kunduz's

Khanabad district, Sori Khola Dam in Chamkani district of Paktia, Kandahar's Arghistan district water storing Lawara dam, Uruzgan's Aghajan Dam in Jora district, construction of the third phase of Kamal Khan Dam in Chahar Borjak district of Nimroz, Khost's water storing dam in Dwa Mandi district, and water storing dam in Alingar district of Laghman are among the 21 dams initial studies of which have been carried out.

Other dams include Paltoni dam in Sharana district of Paktika, Aabtak storage dam in Khoshi district of Logar, Zardalo storage dam in Qarabagh district of Ghazni, Dahnai Ghorbandak storage dam in Shaikh Ali district of Parwan, Aab Gazak storage dam in Yakawlang district of Bamyan, Ghodar storage dam in Shahrستان district of Daikundi, Aab Shora storage dam in Aabkamari district of Badghis, Tirpol hydropower and storage dam in Kohsan district of Herat, Dehnai Boom storage dam in Chaghcharan district of [Ghor](#), and Zara [Mardan](#) storage dam in Bala Buluk district of Farah.

Azimi said a number of companies had shown interest in conducting basic studies of dams. He said it was set contracts for fundamental studies would be signed with companies through bidding in the two next days.

Construction of all the 21 dams would take seven years, he said, adding the cost of the dams would be specified after their fundamental studies. But it was estimated that each dam would nearly cost \$100 million.

Construction of the 21 and some other dams will pave the ground for watering 500,000 hectares of land across the country, Azimi concluded.

According to the Ministry of [Agriculture](#), Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), totally 7.9 million hectares of arable land exists in Afghanistan; but currently 3.6 million hectares of the land is being utilized.