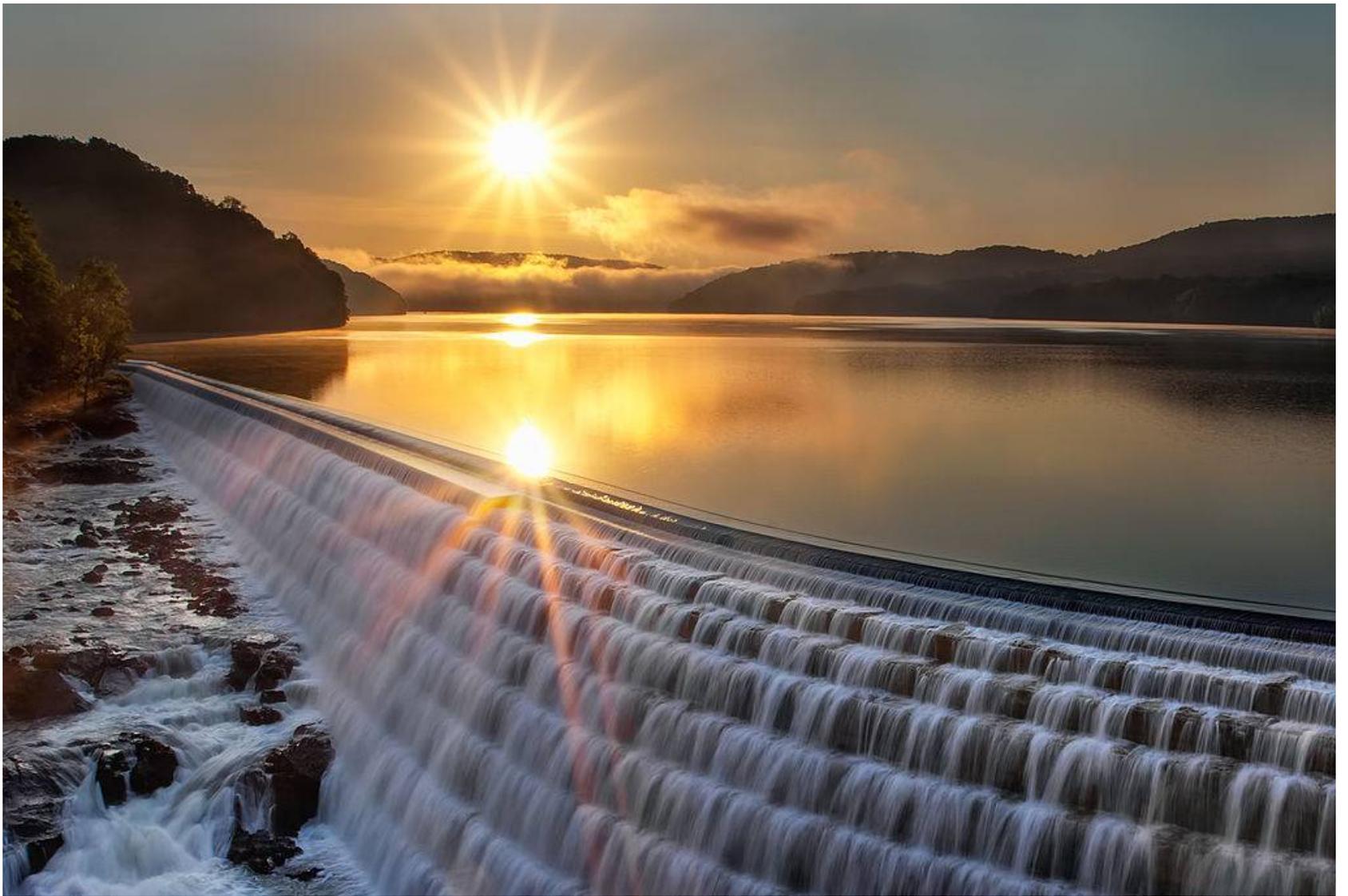


India speeds up rebuilding activity in Afghanistan, offers assistance on Salma dam

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NEW DELHI: India has stepped up rebuilding activity in [Afghanistan](#) in line with its commitment to propel the wartorn nation back on the development track. The move comes just days ahead of a mega multilateral meet that the [Narendra Modi](#) government is hosting in Amritsar to contribute to Afghan stability.

Ahead of the December 4 Heart of Asia Conference on Afghanistan, India has come forward to restart a factory in Mazar-e-Sharif, build a runway at Balkh airport and assist the Afghan government in harnessing the

economic potential of [Salma Dam](#), which was built with India's assistance. A tiles factory in Afghanistan's northern Mazar-e-Sharif city will resume production soon with India's support, said people familiar with the development.

India's Ambassador to Afghanistan Manpreet Vohra recently met [Balkh province](#) governor Atta Mohammad Noor to finalise the project.

Noor, who had helped thwart a terror attack on the Indian consulate in Mazar earlier this year, is a strong proponent of Afghanistan-India ties.

India is also constructing the main approach way to the Balkh or Mazar-e-Sharif international airport. The airport has facilities for up to 1,000 passengers, making it one of the largest airports in Afghanistan. Originally built by the Soviets in 1950s, the new international terminal was inaugurated in 2013.

Delhi has also come forward in boosting agro-related industry in the landlocked nation. Kabul recently launched fish farming in the mega Salam Dam in western Herat province which was built with financial support from India.

The Salma Dam project was inaugurated by Modi and President Ashraf Ghani when the Indian PM visited Herat en route to Qatar, Europe and the US. The dam, with a 640-million cubic metre reservoir, is expected to produce 42 MW electricit, which can help irrigate about 80 hectares of land.

India has played a big role in rebuilding Afghanistan following the fall of Taliban regime in 2001. Since 2002, India has committed \$2 bn for the socio-economic rebuilding.