

# With love from Kabul: This is how Afghans thanked India for Salma dam

Afghan residents in the western Herat province are delighted as the Salma Dam - India's major reconstruction project in Afghanistan - is nearing completion, and water has started filling up its reservoirs.

Kabul/New Delhi: Afghan residents in the western Herat province are delighted as the Salma Dam - India's major reconstruction project in Afghanistan - is nearing completion, and water has started filling up its reservoirs.

Earlier this week, grateful residents of the area went to the Indian consulate there to express gratitude to the Indian officials for the key role played by the country in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Many Afghans expressed thanks on Twitter to India for its reconstruction help.

Local musicians sang Indian songs, including Bollywood number "Yamma Yamma", and also presented flowers to workers of the consulate.

The Afghans also carried a 100 metre tricolour, along with their own national flag, on the streets of Afghanistan.

Herati youth celebrate Salma dam progress [#Salmadam](#) [@MEAIndia](#) [@IndianDiplomacy](#) [@IndianEmbKabul](#) [@SenseandC\\_sense](#)

— India in Herat (@IndianConsHerat) [4:10 AM - 10 Aug 2015](#)

India is spending USD 300 million on the dam project, expected to

produce 42 MW of electricity and water nearly 80,000 hectares of farmland.

The reservoir, which is 20 km in length and 3 km in width, started filling up last month and is expected to be completed in around 9-12 months.

Salma dam reservoir [@pajhwok](#) [@dlafghanistan](#) [@khaama](#)  
[@TOLONews](#) [@1TVNewsAF](#) [@RadioFarda](#) [@bbcpersian](#)

— India in Herat (@IndianConsHerat) [12:15 AM - 12 Aug 2015](#)

The reconstruction of Salma dam started during the tenure of Sardar Mohammad Dawoud Khan decades ago, but the project was halted because of the war in the country.

The project was restarted in 2005 and is scheduled to be completed in 2016.

The hydroelectric and irrigation project is being constructed on the Hari Rud river in Chiste Sharif district.

It is the flagship infrastructural project of India's developmental assistance programme to Afghanistan.

The project includes construction of a 107.5-metre-high and 550-metre-long rock-filled dam and other typical components of the hydroelectric power project such as spillways, powerhouse, switchyard and transmission line.

The dam is of immense importance to Afghanistan and will be greatly beneficial in solving the issue of electricity generation in the country.

The dam construction faced some tough times.

According to a statement by the Consul General of India in Herat, the dam faced many logistical constraints and security challenges contributing to a delay of many years.

Salma dam was initially built in 1976 on the Hari river basin, but was damaged during the war in Afghanistan.

The rebuilding of the dam was first started by an Indian company (WAPCOS Ltd) in 1988, but the project was left incomplete for a significant period of time due to the instability caused by the war.

In 2006, India committed to funding the completion of the dam at an estimated cost of USD 200 million.

Earlier, India's Consul General Amit Kumar Mishra said the project passed a critical stage on July 26 with the closure of the diversion tunnel gate and the start of filling of the reservoir.

India's assistance programme in Afghanistan stands at around USD 2 billion, making India the fifth largest bilateral donor.

(With IANS inputs)