

ECNEC approves Rs. 9.23 billion mega completion' project of Mirpur-Islamgarh bridge over Mangla Dam Reservoir: AJK Minister Qasim Majeed

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Altaf Hamid Rao.

Mega Bridge project

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Mangla Dam Reservoir: AJK Minister Qasim Majeed:

MIRPUR (AJK): Sept. 4: ECNEC – Executive Committee of National Economic Council of the

government of Pakistan has approved over Rs. 9.23 billion mega peoject for much-awaited

completion of about 03 Kilometer long Mirpur-Islamgarh (Rathuaa-Harrayaam) Bridge over the

Mirpur-based country's second largest Mangla dam reservoir, it was officially declared.

Disclosing this, Azad Jammu Kashmir Minister for Mangla Dam Affairs and Mangla Dam Housing Authority (MDHA) Qasim Majeed Chaudhry told a news conference at Kashmir Press Club here on Wednesday that following the personal keen interest by Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq for the much-awaited completion of the mega project to bridge Mirpur city with adjoining Islamgarh town sub divisional headquarter, the ECNEC approved Rs 9 billion, 23 crore, 95 lakh, and 34 thousand for the completion of the reconstruction of Mirpur-Islamgarh Rethua Haryam Bridge.

Our Special Jammu and Kashmir state Correspondent Altaf Hamid Rao reports from Mirpur that the construction work for completion of the bridge of exceptional significance was lying abandoned since over a past decade following alleged mismanagement and massive corruption on the part of the concerned functionaries of then AJK regimes.

Describing approval of the project by the government of Pakistan a great gift to the people of Kashmir in general and the people of over a million of UK-based Kashmiri expatriates' native lake district of Mirpur in particular.

The Minister for Mangla Dam Affairs continued that the credit goes to Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, who raised this long-standing issue of Azad Jammu Kashmir before the government of Pakistan and constituting several committees comprising federal and Azad Jammu Kashmir ministers for completion of the project.

Minister Chaudhry Qasim Majid thanked President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif, and all national security institutions for taking special interest in the completion of this abandoned project through ensuring the approval of the ECNEC, he added.

Qasim said that this project will prove to be a gateway to the development and economic activities in scenic Mirpur district since the AJK government, with liberal financial assistance of the government of Pakistan, was determined to turn Mirpur a hub of tourism besides a beautiful and modern city enriched with all amenities of human interest harmonious to the need of latest era, he underlined.

Recalling the tragic history of inordinate delay in completion of this mega big project, launched under the Mangla dam raising project through then AJK government over a decade ago, AJK Minister Chaudhry Qasim Majid said that the Rethuah Harriam Bridge was a project of national importance which was neglected by the previous governments in the region.

“The incumbent AJK government’s top priority was to complete the incomplete projects of national importance first. We worked day and night to remove the obstacles in the completion of the project and entertained its completion as a challenge”, the minister asserted.

He said that many problems arose in the completion of the bridge over time, but Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq led sitting AJK government remained determined to complete it in shortest possible time subject to the final approval of the ECNEC, Pakistan government, he revealed adding “we all including local law makers worked as a team addressing legal, financial, and technical issues one by one.

The Minister further said that the undue hurdles in completion of the project have been removed since AJK official team’s planning had been approved by the Planning Commission and ECNEC, he elaborated.

He said “this grand project will prove to be an identity of Azad Jammu Kashmir and Pakistan in the future, which will promote travel facilities, business, and tourism in the liberated territory. He said that this project will be a source of pride for the people of Azad Jammu Kashmir and Pakistan strengthening Kashmiris deep-rooted ever lasting love and affection for Pakistan, Kashmiris ultimate destination, playing a key role in the development and progress of the State, he concluded.

