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## Neelum Jhelum Rehab Vital for Energy Security: WAPDA Chairman

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WAPDA Chairman Lt Gen (retd) Muhammad Saeed has stressed the urgent need to accelerate the rehabilitation of the Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Project, describing it as essential for Pakistan's water, food, and energy security.

Chairing a meeting at WAPDA House on Wednesday, the chairman reviewed the status of the organisation's ongoing and completed projects and called for enhanced coordination and timely execution of national infrastructure developments.

During the briefing, the WAPDA chief was updated on the authority's mandate, the completion of major hydropower and water storage initiatives, and the impact of these projects on Pakistan's socio-economic growth. He was also informed about the current pace of construction activities across multiple ongoing schemes.

The Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Project, located in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, was commissioned in 2018 and has a generation capacity of 969 megawatts. However, due to geological complications identified in recent years, a rehabilitation phase was initiated to restore and strengthen parts of the project infrastructure. WAPDA has been working with local and international experts to carry out the necessary repairs and ensure the plant's long-term operational stability.

Chairman Saeed emphasised that the timely completion of this rehabilitation phase is vital, not only for uninterrupted power supply but also for ensuring a balanced energy mix in Pakistan. He added that such projects contribute significantly to reducing reliance on imported fuels and enhancing local energy resources.

He further highlighted that WAPDA's broader strategy involves the development of both water storage and hydropower projects, which are aligned with national development priorities. Among the key completed initiatives discussed were the Tarbela Fourth Extension, the Mangla Refurbishment Project, and the Mohmand Dam currently under construction.

WAPDA is also continuing its work on the Diamer-Bhasha Dam and Dasu Hydropower Project, two major undertakings that are expected to significantly increase water storage and power generation capacity upon completion.

The chairman reaffirmed WAPDA's commitment to playing a central role in addressing Pakistan's water scarcity and energy challenges through the completion of reliable and efficient infrastructure. He called on all teams involved in the projects to maintain high standards of quality and efficiency while adhering to defined timelines.

WAPDA's initiatives are viewed as a cornerstone of the country's long-term energy planning, aimed at securing sustainable development and strengthening national resilience against climate-related challenges and increasing power demand.