

Next phase in Ethiopia's hydro scheme up and running

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The third dam in Ethiopia's hydro-power plant complex, Gilgel Gibe III, which will provide 1,870MW of clean energy, came on line last week.

The Gilgel Gibe III dam is a 243m high roller-compacted concrete dam with an associated hydroelectric power plant on the Omo River in Ethiopia. It is located about 62km west of Sodo in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, and was built at a cost of 1,5bn Euro - of which 40% was financed by the government and the remaining in loan from Industrial and Commercial Bank of China.



Source: *Ethiopian Tribune*

It is the third largest hydroelectric plant in Africa and will more than double total installed capacity in Ethiopia from its 2007 level of 814MW.

The Gibe III dam is part of the Gibe cascade, a series of dams including the existing Gibe I dam (184MW) and Gibe II power station (420MW) as well as the planned Gibe IV (1,472MW) and Gibe V (560MW) dams.

Inaugurating the dam, the tallest in the world, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn indicated apart from feeding the growing energy need of the country, it would also boost hard currency earning exporting energy to neighbouring countries.

He also said the dam project is eco-friendly and allows downstream regulated flow all the year round. In addition, inhabitants would benefit from fishery and the accompanying infrastructural facilities undertaken in the area.

Ethiopian Electric Power CEO and Gibe III managing engineer Azeb Asnake, said the project will boost regional economic integration. It is also a manifestation of the country's tangible commitment to attain green development endeavour, she pointed out.

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