

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-394
ANSWERED ON- 06/02/2025

CHINA'S HYDROPOWER PROJECT AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIA

394. SHRI SANJAY RAUT

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether China's decision to construct the world's largest hydropower dam on the Brahmaputra river, which flows into India and Bangladesh, has raised concerns about its potential impact on millions of people living downstream;
- (b) the measures Government is taking to engage with China to address ecological and water flow stability in the Northeastern States of India and to ensure adherence to international water-sharing principles; and
- (c) whether Government has raised the issue of the dam's construction with international organizations, such as the United Nations or Mekong River Commission, for collective action?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a to c) Government of India has taken note of China's announcement of a mega dam project approved on the lower reaches of the Yarlung Tsangpo (upper reaches of the Brahmaputra) River in the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Various issues relating to trans-border rivers are discussed with China under the ambit of an institutionalized Expert Level Mechanism which was established in 2006, as well as through diplomatic channels. As a lower riparian state with considerable established user rights to the waters of the trans-border rivers, Government has consistently conveyed its views and concerns to the Chinese authorities, and has urged them to ensure that the interests of downstream states are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas. Following the recent announcement by China of the mega dam project, we have amplified our concerns and demarched them on 30 December 2024, including on the need for transparency and consultation with downstream countries.

The issue was also raised during the visit of Foreign Secretary Shri Vikram Misri to Beijing for a meeting of the Foreign Secretary-Vice Foreign Minister mechanism between India and China. During the visit, India and China agreed to hold an early meeting of the Expert Level Mechanism to discuss resumption of provision of hydrological data and other cooperation pertaining to trans-border rivers. Government of India intends to remain engaged with China on the issue of trans-border rivers to safeguard our interests.

Government carefully monitors all developments relating to the Brahmaputra river, including plans by China to develop hydropower projects, and takes necessary measures to protect our interests, including preventive and corrective measures to safeguard life and livelihood of Indian citizens residing in downstream areas.
