

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2805

ANSWERED ON 18.08.2025

AGREEMENT WITH BHUTAN FOR FLOOD MANAGEMENT IN NORTH BENGAL

2805. SHRI PRAKASH CHIK BARAIK:

Will the Minister of **JAL SHAKTI** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India has any existing agreements or dialogues with Bhutan regarding flood control or water discharge management of Bhutan-origin rivers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, whether Government proposes to initiate talks with Bhutan for joint flood mitigation measures?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) Yes, there exists bilateral cooperation between Government of India (GoI) and Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) on issues related to flood forecasting and flood management on trans-border rivers originating in Bhutan.

(b) & (c) Both the countries have entered into bilateral cooperation on flood related issues, which consist of a Joint Group of Experts (JGE) & a Joint Technical Team (JTT) on flood management and a Joint Experts Team (JET) on flood forecasting. These expert groups meet at regular intervals to discuss issues related to trans-border rivers. The details of these are as below:

(i) Cooperation on Flood Forecasting:

A scheme titled “Comprehensive Scheme for Establishment of Hydro-meteorological and Flood Forecasting Network on rivers Common to India and Bhutan” under this Ministry has been in operation since 1992. At present, the network consists of 36 hydro-meteorological stations located in Bhutan, which are being maintained by the RGoB. These stations are located in the catchments of trans-border rivers Sankosh, Manas, Raidak, Torsa, Jaldhaka, etc. and their tributaries. Out of these 36 stations, GoI provides funds for the operation and maintenance of 27 stations. The data received from these 36 stations is utilized in India by Central Water Commission for formulating flood forecast during flood season.

A Joint Experts Team (JET) consisting of senior officials from GoI and RGoB continuously reviews the progress and other requirements of this network. So far, JET has met 38 times alternately in India and Bhutan since its reconstitution in 1992 and the last JET meeting i.e. 38th meeting was held at Mandarmani, West Bengal during 10-11 December, 2024.

(ii) Cooperation on Flood Management:

A Joint Group of Experts (JGE) consisting of senior officials from Government of India, respective State Governments and RGoB has been constituted in 2004 to discuss and assess the probable causes and effects of the recurring floods and erosion in the southern foothills of Bhutan and adjoining plains in India and recommend to both Governments, appropriate and mutually acceptable remedial measures. Eleven meetings of JGE have been held so far, with the last meeting held during 14-15 May, 2025 at Paro, Bhutan.

Further, in accordance with the decision taken during the first meeting of JGE, a Joint Technical Team (JTT) has also been constituted to assess the field situation and provide technical support to JGE on flood management by carrying out joint field visit to border areas affected by flood and erosion issues. Eight meetings of JTT have been held so far, with the 8th meeting held during 18-20 November, 2024 at Chalsa, West Bengal.
