

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 90

ANSWERED ON 01.12.2025

FLOODS IN PUNJAB AND POOR RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT AT DAMS

90. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of **Jal Shakti** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the recent floods in Punjab were aggravated due to poor reservoir management at Dams such as Pong and Bhakra;
- (b) whether Government has identified responsibility of agencies which failed to maintain water buffer levels before heavy rainfall;
- (c) the steps being taken to strengthen embankments, drainage systems, and flood forecasting mechanisms to prevent such disasters in future; and
- (d) whether Government proposes to set up a joint control mechanism between Centre and States for dam water release management?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) & (b) Recent floods in Punjab were not aggravated due to poor reservoir management at major dams Pong and Bhakra. In the year 2025, there were extensive rains in the catchments of Pong and Bhakra dams leading to huge inflows of 3,49,522 and 1,90,603 cusecs into the reservoirs of two dams respectively. The reservoir regulation was done to achieve maximum moderation/absorption of floods. The releases were made as per decisions taken by Technical Committee comprising members from partner States i.e. Punjab, Haryana & Rajasthan, Central Water Commission (CWC) and Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB), keeping in view rule curve, dam safety aspects and constraints of limited carrying capacity of river Sutlej/Beas downstream of Bhakra and Pong dam respectively. The releases from dams are made after giving minimum advance notice of 24 hours.

The reservoir level/storage in dams before the onset of monsoon were very much in the range of average values and requisite buffer levels/storage were in place.

(c) Flood management measures like strengthening embankments and improving drainage system are implemented by concerned State Governments as per their priority.

As per the provisions of Dam Safety Act, 2021, for the establishment of early warning systems and the creation of frameworks to enable real-time exchange of hydrological and meteorological data, including

information on reservoir inflows and outflows, National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) has issued directions to concerned dam owners to ensure the prompt, accurate and regular sharing of real-time 3-hourly reservoir inflow/outflow data to the concerned.

Further, as per the provisions of Dam Safety Act, 2021, mandating all the Specified dam owners to have coordinated operations of cascading dams, NDSA has issued directions to State Dam Safety Organisation(s) and Owner(s) of the Specified Dams for effective communication with all stakeholders to effectively manage the flood-related disaster and to minimize the consequences and make communities more disaster resilient. NDSA has also issued directions to all the State Dam Safety Organisations to ensure strict and scrupulous adherence to the approved "Reservoir Rule Curve" while operating their respective dams during the year as well as special compliance and monitoring during the period of high flood spells.

Ministry of Jal Shakti has continuously impressed upon the States the need to adopt flood plain zoning approach as a non-structural measure of flood management in the country. A technical guideline on Flood Plain Zoning have been prepared and circulated to the States/UTs in August, 2025 by the Ministry.

(d) The existing mechanism i.e. constitution of Technical Committee (TC) is very much a joint control mechanism between centre and state for regulating and managing waters of dams.
