

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2467

ANSWERED ON 10.08.2026

SAFETY AND STRUCTURAL REVIEW OF DAMS IN THE VIDARBHA REGION

2467 # Smt. MAYA CHINTAMAN IVNATE:

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

- (a) whether Government proposes to conduct a comprehensive safety and structural review of the old and major dams in the Vidarbha region;
- (b) if so, the proposed timeline and the details of the concerned agencies;
- (c) whether risks related to ageing infrastructure, siltation or maintenance have been identified in previous studies; and
- (d) the steps being taken to ensure long-term dam safety in view of climate change and rainfall uncertainty?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) & (b) Dam safety is a continuous process and is governed by the provisions of the Dam Safety Act, 2021. As per the Act, the primary responsibility for ensuring the safety, surveillance, inspection, operation and maintenance of specified dams rests with the respective dam owners. Accordingly, comprehensive safety and structural assessments of specified dams, including those located in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra (covering approximately 654 reported specified dams), are undertaken periodically through regular periodic pre and post monsoon inspections, instrumentation monitoring and Comprehensive Dam Safety Evaluations (CDSEs), as prescribed under the Act and the regulations framed thereunder.

The Government of Maharashtra through its State Dam Safety Organisation (SDSO), is responsible for implementation of the provisions of the Dam Safety Act, 2021 in the State. The National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) provides overarching policy guidance, technical support, and oversight to ensure uniform compliance with the Act across all States and Union Territories. In parallel, the Central Water Commission (CWC) supplements these efforts by extending specialized technical assistance, including the preparation of guidelines, manuals, and the conduct of capacity-building programmes for dam safety professionals.

Further, out of the 654 specified dams located in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, 453 dams are owned by the Water Resources Department, Government of Maharashtra, 193 dams are owned by the Soil and Water Conservation Department, Government of Maharashtra, and the remaining 8 dams are owned by other agencies.

In accordance with the Dam Safety Act, 2021, Comprehensive Dam Safety Evaluations are undertaken by Panels of Experts constituted by the respective dam owners. The statutory deadline for completion of all CDSEs is December 2026.

(c) Periodic inspections, Comprehensive Dam Safety Evaluations, investigations and safety assessments carried out by dam owners, State Dam Safety Organisations and Panels of Experts have identified, in certain ageing dams, issues such as deterioration of concrete and masonry, seepage through dam body or foundation, distress in spillway and outlet structures, deterioration of hydro mechanical components, deficiencies in monitoring instrumentation etc. Sedimentation studies undertaken for reservoirs have also indicated loss of storage capacity in some reservoirs due to siltation, which may affect reservoir operation and flood moderation.

Wherever deficiencies are identified, dam owners are required to undertake appropriate remedial measures, including rehabilitation, strengthening, repairs, modernization of appurtenant works, sediment management studies and improvements in operation and maintenance practices, based on technical recommendations.

(d) To ensure long-term dam safety in the context of climate change and increasing hydrological variability, the Government has initiated several measures under the Dam Safety Act, 2021 and the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP). These include periodic dam safety inspections, Comprehensive Dam Safety Evaluations, installation and modernization of dam instrumentation, development and updating of Emergency Action Plans and Operation & Maintenance Manuals and coordination with State Disaster Management Authorities, preparation and revision of reservoir Rule Curves, strengthening of hydrological and meteorological monitoring networks, adoption of real-time monitoring systems, enhancement of flood forecasting and early warning systems, risk assessment studies, capacity building of dam safety professionals and dam operators, promotion of climate-resilient design standards and adaptive reservoir operation protocols, and implementation of rehabilitation and risk mitigation measures wherever required.
