

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1424
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.07.2021**

DAMS BY CHINA

1424. SHRI MANISH TEWARI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India is aware that there are now multiple operational dams by China in the Yarlung Tsangpo basin and has ambitious plans with more dams commissioned and under construction and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Ministry has taken up with China, the severe economic costs of these projects, considering that it ecologically affects one of the most sensitive zones and such projects will lead to massive degradation of the entire basin and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether damming this perennial river not pose a geopolitical threat as there is the potential to significantly change the flow rate during times of standoffs and high tensions where close to a million people live; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the steps the Government is planning to take against the ambitious dam construction projects?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]

(a) to (d) Government carefully monitors all developments relating to the Brahmaputra river, including plans by China to develop hydropower projects.

A hydropower project at Zangmu was declared fully operational in October 2015.

In its 12th Five Year Plan for the period 2011-2015, China planned to develop three more hydropower projects on the main stream of Brahmaputra River in Tibet Autonomous Region. Of the three, the first unit of the hydropower project at Jiacha was operationalised in August 2020.

Further, in March 2021, China adopted its 14th Five Year Plan which mentions plans for hydropower development on the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra river.

As a lower riparian state, with considerable established user rights to the waters of the trans-border rivers, Government have consistently conveyed our views and concerns to the Chinese authorities. Government have urged them to ensure that the interests of downstream states are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas. The Chinese side has conveyed to us on several occasions that they are only undertaking run-of-the-river hydropower projects, which do not involve diversion of the waters of the Brahmaputra.

Various issues relating to trans-border rivers are discussed with China under the ambit of the institutionalized expert-level mechanism as well as through diplomatic channels. We intend to remain engaged with China on the issue of trans-border rivers to safeguard our interests.
