

China's proposed Hydropower project in Brahmaputra, Tibet

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China will build a major hydropower project on Brahmaputra river in Tibet and a proposal for this has been clearly put forward in the 14th Five-Year Plan to be implemented from next year, the official media on Sunday quoted the head of a Chinese company tasked to build the dam as saying.

Yan Zhiyong, chairman of the Power Construction Corp of China, said China will “implement hydropower exploitation in the downstream of the Yarlung Zangbo River” (the Tibetan name for Brahmaputra) and the project could serve to maintain water resources and domestic security.

Key Highlights

- Speaking at a conference on Thursday, Yan said the project was clearly put forward in the proposals for formulating the country's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25) and its long-term goals through 2035 made by the Central Committee of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC).
- The 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) and National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 were adopted by Plenum – a key policy body of the CPC – last month.
- Details of the plan were expected to be released after the formal ratification by National People's Congress (NPC) early next year.
- Proposals for dams on the Brahmaputra have evoked concerns in India and

Bangladesh, the riparian states, and China has downplayed such anxieties saying it would keep their interests in mind.

- As a lower riparian State with considerable established user rights to the waters of the trans-border rivers, the Indian 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.
- China has already operationalised the \$1.5 billion Zam Hydropower Station, the largest in Tibet in 2015. About the new dam, speculation about China planning to build a “super hydropower station” in Medog county, where the Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon is located, have circulated for years.

SOURCE: *The Hindu*