

Construction of Big Dams

1048. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Commission on big dams ha advocated against construction of big dams because of the great harm caused by them to the environment and its negative socio-economic ramifications;

(b) if so, the number of big dams under construction at present in the country, State-wise;

(c) whether Government propose to review its policy of construction of big dams;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Yes, Sir. The World Commission on Dams (WCD) an NGO funded by International agencies in its report has, *inter-alia*, stated that the impact due to large dams are more negative than positive and have led to the impoverishment and suffering of millions of people.

(b) The number of big dams under construction (as per National Register of Large Dams published by Central Water Commission, 1994), in the country, State-wise, are given in the Statement enclosed. (See below)

(c) to (e) There is no proposal to review the policy of construction of big dams in the country as a result of the WCD report. Keeping in view the socio-economic ethos of the country, Government of India has already framed and adopted a National Water Policy, which provides guidelines for various facets of water resources development. To ensure continued self-sufficiency in foodgrain production and also to meet the energy, drinking water and industrial needs of our growing population. India proposes to continue with its programme of dam construction to create another 200 billion cubic meters of storage in the next 25 years. Development as well as efficient

management of existing resources are equally important. Keeping this in view, major medium and minor irrigation projects, including sustainable groundwater exploitation, alongwith rainwater harvesting using indigenous techniques are all integrated in the planning approach. India has enshrined environmental protection in its constitution and there is a well laid out legislative and institutional mechanism to implement these provisions. The guidelines for development suggested by World Commission on Dams in their final report are Utopian in nature and are incompatible without national development imperatives.

Statement

The Number of Big Dams (State-Wise) under construction in the Country

Sl. No	State/Organisation	No. of Dams under construction
1.	Andhra Pradesh	26
2.	Bihar	33
3.	Gujarat	71
4.	Karnataka	28
5.	Kerala	16
6.	Madhya Pradesh	147
7.	Maharashtra	300
8.	Orissa	18
9.	Rajasthan	4
10.	Tamil Nadu	13
11.	Uttar Pradesh	22
12.	West Bengal	5
13.	Other States	12
TOTAL:		695