

Teesta River

Published On: 22-08-2024

Why in news?

The Interim government of Bangladesh has stated that it may consider approaching an international platform for resolving the Teesta waters dispute. And a major landslide has hit 510 MW hydro power project in Teesta river.

About Teesta river:

- The *Teesta River* (or *Tista*) is a river in the Indian state of Sikkim. It is *309 kilometres* (192 miles) long.
- Teesta River originates from the Tso Lhamo Lake at an elevation of about 5280 m in the North Sikkim district.
- The **Teesta river starts at Pahunriglacier**, and flows south throughrapids in the Sikkim Himalaya. The river goes by the town of Rangpo.
- It is the right bank major tributary of the Brahmaputrariver system. Like many other major Himalayan rivers of India, like the Ganga, Teesta is a glacier-fed river.
- It changes course southwards flowing into West Bengal, before joining the Brahmaputra River.
- In Bangladesh, the Teesta joins the Brahmaputra on its right bank, from where the river is known as the jamuna. Then, it finally merges with the river Padma, which falls in the Bay of Bengal
- Historically, the Teesta river system was considered the *major tributary of the Ganges*
- The major portion or the greater part of the river basin lies in India and only 17% of it is in Bangladesh
- Teesta basin is home to around 30 million people, 2% in Sikkim, 27% in West Bengal; and 71% in northwest Bangladesh.
- There are two major large barrages on Teesta that diverts water for mainly irrigation purpose:
- Gajoldobhain India
- Duaniin Bangladesh.

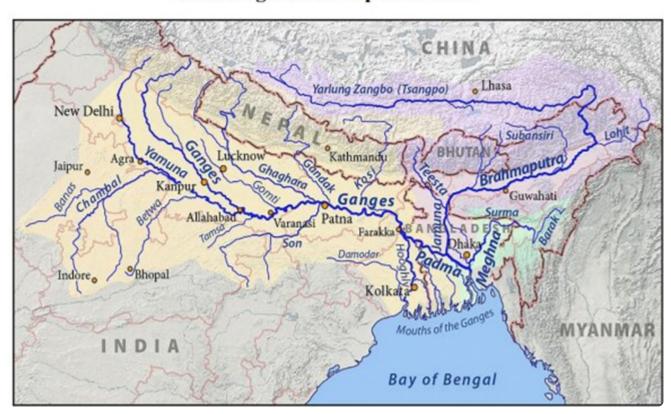
Major tributaries of Teesta river

- The tributaries on the eastern flank are shorter in the course but larger in number whereas the tributaries on thewestern flank are much longer with larger drainage areas, consequently contributing much more amount of discharge to the main Teesta river.
- The left bank tributaries originate from semi-permanent and much smaller snowfields as compared to right bank tributaries. Right-bank tributaries drain heavily glaciated areas with large snowfields
- Major Tributaries of Teesta River
- Left-bank Tributaries: Lachung Chhu, Chakung Chhu, Dik Chhu, Rani Khola and Rangpo Chhu.
- ?Right-bank Tributaries: ZemChhu, Rangyong Chhand Rangit River.

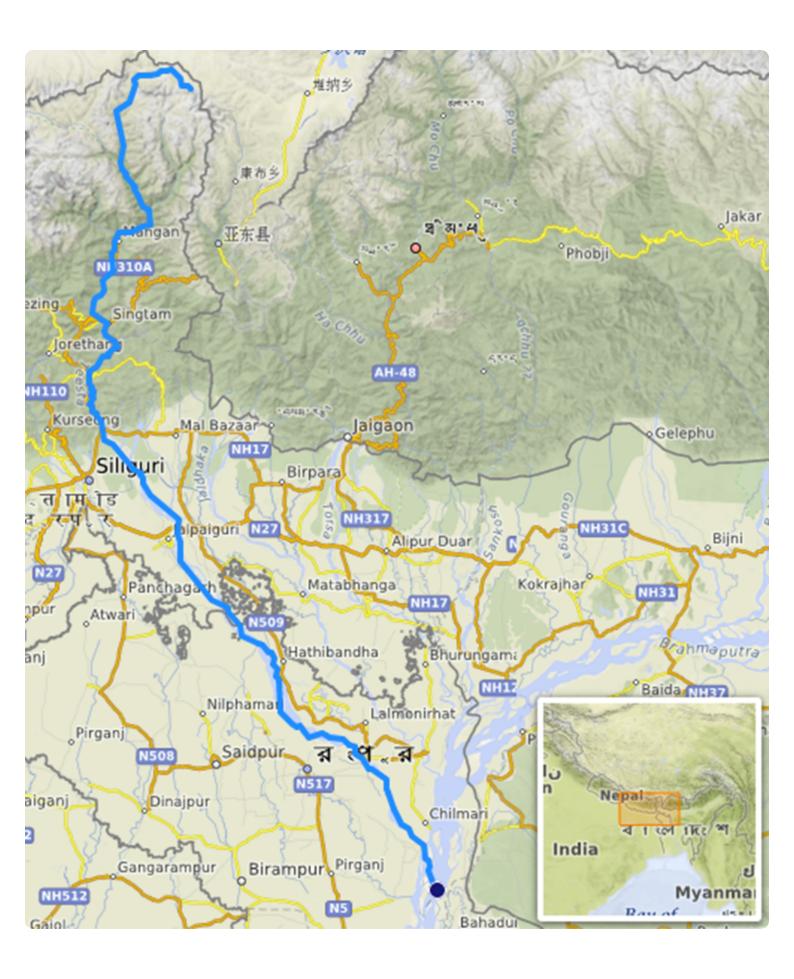
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The Ganges-Brahmaputra Basin



Left-bank Tributaries	Right-bank Tributaries
1. Lachung Chhu	
2. Chakung Chhu	1. Zemu Chhu
3. Dik Chhu	2. Rangyong Chhu
4. Rani Khola	3. Rangit River
5. Rangpo Chhu	



Water sharing conflict

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Disputes over the appropriate allocation and development of the water resources of the river have remained a subject of conflict between India and Bangladesh for *almost 35 years*, with several bilateral agreements and rounds of talks failing to produce results.

Negotiations have been going on since 1983.

In 1983, a temporary solution had been worked out—Bangladesh would get 36%, India would get 39% while the rest of the water remained unallocated.

Both countries *signed a water sharing treaty in 1996* which would look into water sharing between the two countries.

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