

Geography in the News

March 2025

China's next mega dam : Progress or disaster?

Geography in the News aims to stimulate discussion about the relevance of geography to our lives and its importance in helping us to make sense of the world around us. We have selected a relevant news article with links to our A-Level specification and suggested questions you can discuss with your class.



Article: This issue relates to an article, written by senior journalist, Gavin Butler for the BBC.

Introduction

This article explores the potential impacts of the proposed Chinese mega dam in Tibet and its impact on future international relations

[Click here to access the article](#)

Discussion prompts

- Explain how the construction of the dam could affect local communities in Tibet.
- Suggest how the building of the Yarlung Tsangpo dam might have environmental impacts on the surrounding landscape and ecosystems.
- Explain the costs and benefits of hydropower as a renewable energy source.
- Explain why China's control over transboundary rivers flowing into India and Bangladesh is important.

Specification links:

A level

5.2c Humans disrupt the drainage basin cycle by accelerating processes (deforestation, changing land use) and creating new water storage reservoirs or by abstracting water.

5.8c The potential for conflicts to occur between users within a country and internationally over local and trans-boundary water sources.

5.9a The pros and cons of the techno-fix of hard engineering schemes to include water transfers, mega dams and desalination plants.