

MCQ Question · mcqquestion.com

# The Brahmaputra River System: One River, Four Names

Free · Share

# The Brahmaputra River System: One River, Four Names

One river, four names, three countries. The Brahmaputra begins in Tibet and ends in the Bay of Bengal.

**At a glance**

Four key facts on this topic

01 **Angsi** Source glacier in Tibet

02 **4** Names along its course

03 **700 km** Braided course in Assam

04 **580,000** Basin area in sq. km

## Source and course

### 1 Where the river begins

#### 1.1 Where does the Brahmaputra begin?

The river begins at the **Angsi Glacier** in Burang County, Tibet. The glacier lies near Mount Kailash.

WorldAtlas gives this source. Some other reports name a different glacier, so use Angsi for exams.



The Brahmaputra in Assam. Photo: Inu Etc, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

## 1.2 How long is it?

WorldAtlas puts the river at more than **3,969 km**. It flows through Tibet, India and Bangladesh.

Older books give shorter figures. The length changes with the source, so learn the route first.

### 1.3 How big is it in the world?

WorldAtlas calls it the 15th longest river and the 9th largest by discharge.

In short, it carries a huge flow of water, even if it is not the longest.

> 11. **Think it through:** Why is it called a transboundary river? See answer ↓

> **Quick check 1.** True or false: The Brahmaputra begins at the Angsi Glacier in Tibet. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sources: worldatlas.com; deccanherald.com

## 2 The river in Tibet

### 2.1 What is it called in Tibet?

In Tibet the river is the **Yarlung Tsangpo**. It runs east for about 1,100 km between the Kailash Range and the main Himalaya.

WorldAtlas says it picks up about 22 major tributaries there.

### 2.2 What is the Great Bend?

The river turns north and then south around the peaks of Namcha Barwa and Gyala Peri. It cuts a gorge called the **Yarlung Tsangpo Grand Canyon**.

WorldAtlas gives the canyon as 504.6 km long. It calls it one of the deepest in the world.

### 2.3 Where does it enter India?

After the canyon it crosses into the north of **Arunachal Pradesh**. Deccan Herald says this is also where the river makes a huge U-turn.

This U-turn is exactly where China plans its big dam.

> 12. **Think it through:** Why does the U-turn matter? See answer ↓

> **Quick check 2.** True or false: In Tibet the Brahmaputra is called the Yarlung Tsangpo. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

## 3 One river, four names

### 3.1 What is it called in Arunachal Pradesh?

Inside Arunachal Pradesh it is the **Siang**. Where it reaches the plains it is the **Dihang**.

Exams often ask which river is known as the Dihang. The answer is the Brahmaputra.

### 3.2 When does it become the Brahmaputra?

The Dihang runs about 35 km south to the head of the Assam valley. There the Dibang and the Lohit join it.

After the Lohit joins, WorldAtlas says the river is called Brahmaputra.

### 3.3 What does the name mean?

Brahmaputra means **son of Brahma**. Brahma is one of the chief gods of Hindus.

In Assam the river also has local names such as Luit and Bor Luit.

> 13. **Think it through:** Can you list the names in order? See answer ↓

> **Quick check 3.** True or false: The Brahmaputra is called the Siang in Arunachal Pradesh. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

## 4 Tributaries to remember

### 4.1 Which tributaries should you know?

On the north bank, the **Dibang** and the **Lohit** join near the head of the Assam valley.

The Jia Bhoreli, also called Kameng, joins in Sonitpur district.

### 4.2 What other streams feed it in Assam?

WorldAtlas lists Subansiri, Dhansiri, Manas, Bhareli, Burhi Dihing and Dikhu.

Many of these are swift streams from the Himalaya.

### 4.3 How many tributaries are there?

A study cited by WorldAtlas counts 22 major tributaries in Tibet, 33 in India and 3 in Bangladesh.

Most of its water therefore comes from rain and snow far from the sea.

> 14. **Think it through:** Dibang, Kameng, Lohit: are all three tributaries? See answer ↓

> **Quick check 4.** True or false: The Dibang and the Lohit join the Dihang near the head of the Assam valley. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

## Shape and delta

### 5 A braided, shifting river

### 5.1 What kind of river is it in Assam?

In Assam it is a **braided river**. It runs about 700 km through the valley.

A braided river splits into many channels around bars of sand.

### 5.2 How deep is it?

WorldAtlas gives an average depth of 30 m. The deepest point is 135 m at Sadiya.

Hence a river that looks wide and calm can still be very deep in places.

### 5.3 Why is it shifting so often?

The Brahmaputra is one of the youngest rivers in the world. The valley is also seismically active.

Earthquakes cause landslides and subsidence. They can change the course of the river and its tributaries.

> 15. **Think it through:** What is a tidal bore? See answer ↓

> **Quick check 5.** True or false: The Brahmaputra is a braided river for its whole course through the Assam valley. *(True or False?)*
>
> See answer ↓

## 6 Majuli Island

### 6.1 How is Majuli formed?

Between Lakhimpur and Dibrugarh the river splits in two. The southern branch is the Brahmaputra Channel. The northern branch is the **Kherkutia Channel**.

They rejoin about 100 km downstream.

### 6.2 Why is Majuli famous?

The land between the channels is **Majuli Island**. WorldAtlas calls it the largest riverine island in the world.

Some books add the word inhabited. Check the exact wording in the question.

### 6.3 Why is Majuli at risk?

The island sits in a shifting braided river. Floods and bank erosion keep reshaping it.

This risk is the reason Majuli often appears in current affairs.

> 16. **Think it through:** Is Majuli a delta? See answer ↓

> **Quick check 6.** True or false: Majuli Island lies where the river meets the Bay of Bengal. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

## 7 Into Bangladesh

### 7.1 What happens in Bangladesh?

The Teesta joins the river in Bangladesh. After that the river splits into two branches.

The western branch carries most of the water.

### 7.2 What is the Jamuna?

The main western branch is called the **Jamuna**. WorldAtlas spells it Jomuna.

It merges with the Padma at Goalundo Ghat.

### 7.3 Where does it end?

The Padma-Jamuna flow joins the Meghna near Chandpur. The three rivers reach the Bay of Bengal through the Meghna estuary.

The eastern branch, the Old Brahmaputra, joins the Meghna too.

17. **Think it through:** Is the Padma the Ganga? See answer ↓

**Quick check 7.** True or false: The Brahmaputra is called the Jamuna in Bangladesh. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

## 8 The basin in numbers

### 8.1 How big is the basin?

The basin covers about **580,000 sq. km**. It spreads over China, Bhutan, India and Bangladesh.

The shares are about 50.5% in Tibet, 33.6% in India, 8.1% in Bangladesh and 7.8% in Bhutan.

**Brahmaputra basin by country**

| Country | Share of basin |
|---|---|
| Tibet (China) | About 50.5% |
| India | About 33.6% |
| Bangladesh | About 8.1% |
| Bhutan | About 7.8% |

Source: WorldAtlas. Shares are approximate.

### 8.2 How much water does it carry?

The river gives about half of the 30,770 cubic metres per second flow of the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna system.

That makes the system the joint third largest in the world by discharge.

18. **Think it through:** Why is flooding common? See answer ↓

**Quick check 8.** True or false: Most of the Brahmaputra basin lies inside India. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

## Dams and recap

## 9 The Medog dam row

### 9.1 What is the Medog project?

China is building a **60 GW hydropower project** at Medog in Tibet. Scroll says construction began in July 2025, about 30 km north of Arunachal Pradesh.

Premier Li Qiang led the ground-breaking, as reported by Arise News.

### 9.2 How big is it?

Deccan Herald calls it a $137 billion project. It should produce three times the energy of the Three Gorges Dam.

Xinhua reported its approval in December 2024. Reports of its cost differ, so quote the $137 billion figure with care.

### 9.3 What does India fear?

Deccan Herald says the dam may lower water levels in the Siang and Brahmaputra. Assam's chief minister fears the river could dry up in lean seasons.

India also fears that flow could be used as a lever in a conflict.

### 9.4 What does China say?

China's foreign ministry says the project will not harm the lower reaches. It says the aim is clean energy.

So the two sides disagree.

19. **Think it through:** Why does the lack of a treaty matter? See answer ↓

**Quick check 9.** True or false: India and China have a bilateral treaty on sharing the Brahmaputra's water. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sources: deccanherald.com; scroll.in

## 10 Putting it together

### 10.1 What is India's answer?

India has planned a dam on the Siang in Upper Siang district. Chief Minister Pema Khandu says it is not just about power.

He says it would also help keep the natural flow of the river.

### 10.2 Who opposes it?

Scroll reports that 13 villages in Arunachal Pradesh would be fully submerged. The Adi community grows ginger, cardamom and paddy there.

Local people have protested against the project.

### 10.3 What is the exam checklist?

Remember five points: Angsi Glacier, four names, Majuli, the Jamuna, and the Medog dam.

Add one trap: the Dihang is the Brahmaputra, not a separate river.

20. **Think it through:** Can you tell the story in one line? See answer ↓

**Quick check 10.** True or false: The Dihang is a separate river from the Brahmaputra. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

## Exam Practice

### Remember this

- **Source:** Angsi Glacier, Tibet
- **Names:** Yarlung Tsangpo, Siang or Dihang, Brahmaputra, Jamuna
- **Island:** Majuli between two channels
- **Tributaries:** Dibang, Kameng, Lohit
- **Row:** Medog dam and no India-China treaty

**Explain it back:** What is the Brahmaputra called in Tibet?

## Practice MCQs

**1. What is the Brahmaputra called in Tibet, where it originates at the Angsi Glacier?**

**A.** The Siang

**B.** The Jamuna

**C.** The Dihang

**D.** The Yarlung Tsangpo

See answer ↓

**2. What name does the Brahmaputra take once it enters Bangladesh?**

**A.** The Jamuna

**B.** The Padma

**C.** The Teesta

**D.** The Meghna

See answer ↓

**3. In December 2024, China approved what kind of project on the Yarlung Tsangpo near India's border?**

**A.** A new international airport

**B.** A nuclear power plant

**C.** A high-speed rail line

**D.** The world's largest hydropower dam

See answer ↓

**4. Why does the absence of a water-sharing treaty between India and China raise real concerns over the Yarlung Tsangpo dam?**

**A.** It only affects fishing rights in Tibet

**B.** It has no bearing on either country's interests

**C.** It raises the risk of 'hydro-leverage', control over downstream flow during droughts or floods

**D.** It automatically triggers UN sanctions

See answer ↓

**5. Which of the following is/are tributary/tributaries of Brahmaputra?**

**1. Dibang**

**2. Kameng**

**3. Lohit**

**A.** 1 only

**B.** 2 and 3 only

**C.** 1 and 3 only

**D.** 1, 2 and 3

See answer ↓

**6. Which one of the following rivers is also known by the name of "Dihang" in Northeast India?**

**A.** Subansiri

**B.** Brahmaputra

**C.** Teesta

**D.** Dikhow

See answer ↓

# Answer Key

1. **D.** The correct answer is **The Yarlung Tsangpo**. WorldAtlas says the river starts at the Angsi Glacier and is called Yarlung Tsangpo inside Tibet. Siang and Dihang are its names in Arunachal Pradesh. Jamuna is its name in Bangladesh. Memory hook: Tibet is Tsangpo. ↑ Q1
2. **A.** The correct answer is **The Jamuna**. In Bangladesh the main flow is called the Jomuna or Jamuna. It later merges with the Padma. The Padma is the Ganga's lower course. The Meghna is a separate river. The Teesta is a tributary that joins the Brahmaputra. Memory hook: Bangladesh means Jamuna. ↑ Q2
3. **D.** The correct answer is **The world's largest hydropower dam**. Xinhua reported the approval in late December 2024. Deccan Herald calls it a $137 billion project at Medog County. It is not an airport, a rail line or a nuclear plant. Memory hook: Medog means mega dam. ↑ Q3
4. **C.** The correct answer is **It raises the risk of 'hydro-leverage', control over downstream flow during droughts or floods**. China and India have no bilateral treaty on sharing river water. Deccan Herald notes India fears Beijing could use control of the flow during conflicts. The other options are not real effects of a missing treaty. Memory hook: no treaty, no guard. ↑ Q4
5. **D.** The correct answer is **1, 2 and 3**. WorldAtlas says the Dibang and Lohit join the Dihang near the head of the Assam valley. The Jia Bhoreli, also called the Kameng, meets the Brahmaputra in Sonitpur district. All three are tributaries. Memory hook: Dibang, Kameng, Lohit all feed it. ↑ Q5
6. **B.** The correct answer is **Brahmaputra**. WorldAtlas says the river is called Siang inside Arunachal Pradesh and Dihang where it reaches the plains. Dikhow, Subansiri and Teesta are different rivers. Memory hook: Dihang becomes Brahmaputra. ↑ Q6

## Quick-check answers

1. **True.** WorldAtlas names the Angsi Glacier in Burang County. ↑ 1
2. **True.** WorldAtlas uses this name inside the Tibet Autonomous Region. ↑ 2
3. **True.** WorldAtlas gives Siang for the river inside the state. ↑ 3
4. **True.** WorldAtlas says the Dihang is joined by both rivers. ↑ 4
5. **True.** WorldAtlas describes a braided river across the 700 km valley. ↑ 5

6. **False.** WorldAtlas places Majuli between two channels in Assam, far inland. ↑ 6
7. **True.** WorldAtlas calls the main western branch the Jomuna or Jamuna. ↑ 7
8. **False.** WorldAtlas puts about 50.5% in Tibet and 33.6% in India. ↑ 8
9. **False.** Deccan Herald says they have no such bilateral treaty. ↑ 9
10. **False.** WorldAtlas says the Dihang becomes the Brahmaputra after the Lohit joins it. ↑ 10
11. **Think it through.** It crosses the borders of more than one country. The Brahmaputra flows through China, India and Bangladesh. ↑ 11
12. **Think it through.** A river that drops fast through a narrow gorge holds a lot of energy. That is why engineers want a dam there. ↑ 12
13. **Think it through.** Think of a ladder. Tibet is Yarlung Tsangpo. Arunachal is Siang, then Dihang. Assam is Brahmaputra. Bangladesh is Jamuna. ↑ 13
14. **Think it through.** All three feed the Brahmaputra. A question that says ‘1, 2 and 3’ is correct. ↑ 14
15. **Think it through.** It is a wave of rising tide that moves up a river against the flow. WorldAtlas says the Brahmaputra is one of the few rivers that show it. ↑ 15
16. **Think it through.** A delta forms where a river meets the sea. Majuli lies between two channels of the same river, far inland. ↑ 16
17. **Think it through.** in Bangladesh the lower Ganga is called the Padma. So the Ganga and the Brahmaputra meet there. ↑ 17
18. **Think it through.** Snowmelt in early summer and monsoon rain in late summer both feed the river. From June to October the valley is highly prone to floods. ↑ 18
19. **Think it through.** China and India have no treaty on sharing river water. So there is no agreed rule or guard on how much flows downstream. ↑ 19
20. **Think it through.** A river is born at Angsi, turns at the Great Bend, becomes the Brahmaputra in Assam and the Jamuna in Bangladesh. ↑ 20

**Curated by Arsalan Zuberi · mcqquestion.com**



Scan to read online

https://mcqquestion.com/articles/the-brahmaputra-river-system-one-river-four-names/