



The Kakhovka Dam in Ukraine

Why in News?

The **Kakhovka Dam** was a major [hydroelectric power plant](#) and **reservoir** on the Dnieper **River in southern Ukraine**. It was destroyed on June 6th, 2023, in an explosion that caused massive flooding and a **humanitarian crisis in the war-torn region**.

- Ukraine and Russia have blamed each other for the attack, which has escalated the tensions between the two countries.

What are the key Facts About Kakhovka Dam?

- **About:**
 - The **Kakhovka Dam was built in 1956** as part of the Soviet Union's ambitious project to harness the **Dnipro River for irrigation, power generation and navigation**.
 - The dam was **30 meters tall and 3.2 kilometers long**, creating a reservoir that **covered 2,155 square kilometers and held 18 cubic kilometers of water**.
 - The dam also supplied water to the **Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed in 2014**, and to the **Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, which is under Russian control**.
 - The dam was located on the **front line between Ukrainian and Russian forces in southern Ukraine, where fighting has been ongoing since 2014**.



▪ **Ongoing Issue:**

- Recently, an explosion occurred inside the **Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Station**, causing a **breach in the dam and releasing a huge amount of water downstream**.
- The **floodwaters inundated (cover land with water) dozens of towns and villages** on both sides of the river, **displacing thousands of people and damaging infrastructure, crops and livestock**.
- The water level also rose in the **Dniprovsk Gulf, a bay of the [Black Sea](#) near Kherson city**, threatening coastal areas with erosion and salinization.
- The explosion also cut off electricity to millions of people and **disrupted water supplies to Crimea and Zaporizhzhia**.

▪ **Impact on the Russia-Ukraine war:**

- Adding a new dimension to the conflict, the **collapse of the dam has introduced an unexpected element to the ongoing [Russia-Ukraine war](#)**.
- It **remains unclear whether either side benefits from the dam's damage** since **both Russian-controlled and Ukrainian-held lands are at risk**.
 - However, the damage could impede Ukraine's counteroffensive plans in the south and divert the government's attention.

▪ **The Aftermath and Immediate Concerns:**

◦ **Environmental and Social Impact:**

- The flooding resulting from the dam's collapse **has led to homes, streets, and businesses being inundated downstream**.
- Emergency crews are undertaking evacuations, and concerns have arisen about the cooling systems at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and the water supply to Crimea.

◦ **Evacuation Efforts:**

- Approximately 22,000 people in Russian-controlled areas and 16,000 people in critical zones in Ukrainian-held territory are at risk.
- Russian and Ukrainian authorities are facilitating the evacuation of residents.

[Source: IE](#)

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