

Re: Need to declare floods caused by river Teesta as a national disaster-laid

SHRI RAJU BISTA (DARJEELING): In October 2023, massive floods on River Teesta severely impacted nearly 500 families, causing loss of homes, agricultural land, livelihoods, claiming 12 lives in Darjeeling and Kalimpong. Despite this, the State Government has refused to recognize it as a 'disaster' because of which, people have been deprived of PMNRF and SDRF support. Now Teesta is flooding again, the river-bed has risen by over 20 feet. In fact, our region contributes the highest amount of revenue per capita to the State. Revenue from Teesta's hydro-dams alone exceeds Rs 750 crore annually, totaling over Rs 750 crore in the past decade. This is why, people have been demanding a Separate State of Gorkhaland. People feel that they are discriminated. I request Central Government to declare Teesta Floods as a National Disaster and provide Central Support to the people, not only in Sikkim but also in Darjeeling and Kalimpong.