

Need to declare Teesta flood as a National Disaster-laid

SHRI RAJU BISTA (DARJEELING): Over 500 families living along Teesta river in Darjeeling and Kalimpong Districts have been impacted due to the floods in river Teesta. People have lost their homes, agricultural land, livelihoods, and even their lives. Major portions of NH-10, which is the only highway connecting our border region of Kalimpong, Sikkim and Darjeeling is damaged in many places. Despite the scale of the disaster, neither the West Bengal Government has not taken any steps to assist the people, nor have they been able to fix NH-10, which is under WB PWD NH Division.

We are also part of India; we also pay taxes. Revenue from Teesta's hydro-dams alone exceeds Rs 750 crores annually, totaling over Rs 7500 crores in the past decade. WB Government is the sole beneficiary of this revenue collected. Yet, they have not taken any steps to rebuild or resettle the people. I request the Central Government to declare Teesta Floods as National Disaster, West Bengal Government to ensure adequate compensation, and take steps for their rehabilitation; and NH-10 be handed over to BRO/NHAI or NHIDCL, so that connectivity to this strategically important road is restored at the earliest.