

Title: Need to take steps for setting up of an India-Bhutan Joint River Commission to check recurring floods in West Bengal.

SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (JALPAIGURI): Sir, the Dooars of North Bengal is flood prone zone. Since nineties, rivulets, Jhoras which are coming down from Bhutan hills have become the main reason for flood and these rivers ultimately feeding the major rivers, is losing their carrying capacity due to siltation. This siltation is due to deforestation, unscientific mining of dolomite and other human activities. Government of India earns about 2,000 crores of rupees as foreign exchange and about Rs.360 crore as Central Excise duty from the tea industry. State, National Highway which connects Assam and North Eastern States with the rest of India, bridge, culverts, rail line, rail bridge etc. all these are disrupted every year during this flood. This problem could not be tackled without the cooperation of Royal Government of Bhutan as two sovereign countries are concerned with this issue.

I urge upon the Government to open a dialogue with Bhutan to set up an India-Bhutan Joint River Commission for protecting the lives and properties and recurring expenditure in future.