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Title: Need to make Mathabhanga river in West Bengal free from effluents discharged by industrial units in Bangladesh.

DR. SUCHARU RANJAN HALDAR (RANAGHAT): I represent Ranaghat (SC) parliamentary constituency in West Bengal. In its eastern part it makes the international border with Bangladesh. At its northern part, the Mathabhanga river from Bangladesh enters in my constituency. This river bifurcates into two rivers (1) Ichhamati (2) Churni at Papakhali in Krishanagunj Assembly Constituency-northern most assembly constituency of my Parliamentary Constituency. Ichhamati river flows down and criss-crosses the international boundary with Bangladesh and drains into the Bay of Bengal. Thousands of fisherman used to earn their livelihood from this river by fishing. However, since partition the river Mathabhanga is having scanty water to feed its two branches as mentioned above. Moreover, while constructing a railway bridge over the Ichhamati at Banpur Railway Station, the water flowing from Mathabhanga was diverted to Churni resulting in complete stoppage of water supply at the head of Ichhamati, thereby causing drying up at its head. Thus the fishermen lost their livelihood.

The river Churni is carrying black poisonous water which is drained into the Ganges. This is because of discharge of waste materials from a sugar factory in Bangladesh causing death of the fishes and all other biological flora in the river.

I urge the Union Government to negotiate with Bangladesh to stop drainage of industrial waste into the river Mathabhanga and also to release sufficient water into the river Mathabhanga so that it can feed both the rivers. The Indian Railways authorities may be approached to open the head of Ichhamati so that water could flow into it also.