

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES,
RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2809
ANSWERED ON 04.01.2018

CONTAMINATION OF SIANG RIVER

2809. SHRI NINONG ERING

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any construction activities are being or have been undertaken on river Brahmaputra/Siang by China and if so, the details thereof along with its impact on the water of said river;
- (b) whether the water quality of this river is or has been contaminated and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps the Government has taken to bring the river back to its natural condition; and
- (d) whether the Government is planning to compensate the State and local fishermen, farmers and the forest department for the loss, if any and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION & PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) As per the information provided by MEA, according to reports, Zangmu hydroelectric project has been operationalized by China on Brahmaputra River in October 2015. Reports indicate that it is a 510 MW run-of-the-river project. According to reports, China is also undertaking construction of other dams on the River. The Chinese side has conveyed to us on several occasions that they are only undertaking run-of-the-river hydropower projects which do not involve diversion of the waters of the Brahmaputra.

(b) The water samples collected and tested by CWC during the month of November, 2017 and December, 2017 at TUTING and Passighat Hydrological observation sites on Siang River have been found to be highly turbid in nature. In addition, results of water quality tests conducted by Public Health Engineering and Water Supply Dept., Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh from samples of Pasighat shows turbidity and Iron limits in excess of permissible limits. Beside this Physico- chemical analysis of water samples collected from Siang river across Pasighat and Jonai conducted by North Eastern Regional Institute of Water and Land Management (NERIWALM) shows higher concentration of Aluminium and Iron beyond acceptable and permissible limit for drinking water. The reason for change in water of river Siang may possibly be because of any land slide/earthquake/any other activity in upstream region of Tuting site across the international border with China

(c) During the recent visit of Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China to India on 11 December 2017, matters concerning trans-border rivers, including the recent reports about unusual changes in the water of Siang River, were raised with the Chinese side. Government has seen media reports drawing possible linkage between the recent deterioration in the quality of Siang/Brahmaputra River and the infrastructure construction activities on the River in China. In this regard, Government has noted Chinese Foreign Ministry's statements denying any such link and stating that the situation was caused by an earthquake in the region and was not a man-made incident. As a lower riparian State with considerable established user rights to the waters of the trans-border rivers, Government has consistently conveyed its views and concerns to the Chinese authorities, including at the highest levels, and has urged them to ensure that the interests of downstream States are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas.

(d) No such loss has been reported to the Ministry.