

Central Water Commission
Technical Documentation Directorate
Bhagirath(English)& Publicity Section

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Subject: Submission of News Clippings.

The News Clippings on Water Resources Development and allied subjects are enclosed for perusal of the Chairman, CWC, and Member (WP&P/D&R/RM), Central Water Commission. The soft copies of clippings have also been uploaded on the CWC website.

S. Maheshwari
30.11.17
SPA (Publicity)

Encl: As stated above.

Deputy Director (Publication) on leave.

Director T.O.

Subba
30/11

For information of Chairman & Member (WP&P/D&R/R.M.), CWC and all concerned,
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The Hindu
Rajasthan Patrika (Hindi)
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Blitz

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Land sharkseating into East Kolkata wetlands

SLOW DEATH Realtors pump out water, fill land and sell them as plots at a premium

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KOLKATA: In 2014 Asit Mondal who is in his forties and a real estate promoter purchased a pond spreading over 12 bigha from Ganesh Naskar. The deal was of ₹1.45 crore, of which Mondal paid an advance of ₹0.1 lakh. Naskar paid off about a dozen workers of the fishery and pumped out water to create a level plot.

But, it triggered suspicion among a few locals, who conducted their own investigation and found out that the land belonged to the state government and the occupants—the Naskars only has user rights. The locals also found that the government vested the land back in its entities. The Naskars sold the pond using land records previous to the vesting.

"I never knew I was walking into a trap. Later I came to know that conversion of land character in this area is illegal," Mondal told HT. In September, Mondal sought refund of the advance amount after angry locals filled up the tank again with water and released fishlings there.

Welcome to the new pattern of illegal land sale in East Kolkata Wetlands (EKW). How are fishery ponds being sold to realtors? HT investigation revealed a pattern: the owner strikes a deal with realtors, uses the advance payment to compensate workers at the fishery pond, pumps water out of it, waits for a few months and then starts filling it with soil, rubbish and garbage. Then the land is divided into plots and demarcated with small concrete pillars.

Declared a wetland of global importance by the Ramsar Convention in 2002, the EKW is considered an ecological wonder sprawling across 125 sq km that not only treats most of Kolkata's waste water but also provides the city a lot of fish and vegetables.

The ecological soft spot EKW has attracted attention of real estate operators, thanks to Kolkata's locational disadvantage.

TAKING A LOOK AT THE ECOLOGICAL DISASTER



Fishery ponds, the nucleus of the ecosystem, are the most vulnerable spots.

What is it: A system comprising canals and fishery ponds that treat Kolkata's sewage through pisciculture

Area: 125 sq km

Uniqueness: The area produces fish and vegetables that are sold in Kolkata markets

Importance: Ramsar Convention calls it "one of the rare examples of environmental protection and

SAURAV MAITY PHOTO

development management" and "a wetland of global importance".

The problem: Fisheries are being converted for sale for real estate.

In 2014, Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) survey claims number of fishponds have gone down from 264 to 202.

Administrative apathy: No survey yet to find out loss of waterbodies to real estate.

EXPERT SPEAK

EWK which is a Ramsar site, is being converted for real estate. The entire battle for the wetland is illegal. It is a very precious illegal sale producing a ecosystem will go if old documents has been tampered with.

Strangely, when local residents want to modify or expand their own houses, police army and harass them. But when bidders come to convert waterbodies into plots, police are nowhere to be seen.

Dhrubajyoti Ghosh, environmentalist

The metropolis cannot expand to the west where the Hooghly river acts as a natural boundary. Its expansion to the north and south is also quite saturated. EKW forms the eastern fringe, the only expansion zone.

"There are rules on restrictions construction here, so much

discovered the uniqueness of EKW in the 1980s.

Fishery ponds—the nucleus of the ecosystem—are the most vulnerable spots. They are changing hands despite a ban on change of character since 1992.

Ganesh Naskar selling the tank is not the only example. At Bhagabpur mouza within Kheyadah II panchayat jurisdiction, a 30-bigha fishery pond known as Khetror Khola was sold using documents predating the vesting of land. There are many more such instances, locals say.

"The entire battle for saving this precious ecosystem will go in vain until fulfilled wetlands are not restored," said Ashesh Sengupta of Kolkata Commons Centre for Inter-Disciplinary Research and Analysis, which along with EKW Management Authority (EKWMA) organised a meeting in Kolkata, attended by senior Ramsar authorities, in February this year.

"The EKWMA, which is responsible for the protection of the wetlands, denies allegations of negligence. Conversion of land character is illegal. The illegal sale producing old documents has to be checked by the local self-governments. In case anyone has information of land character being converted, we request them to tip us off and prompt action will be taken," said Sandip Mukherjee, chief technical officer of the authority.

Environment minister Suvendu Chatterjee told Hindustan Times that action was being taken to protect the wetland.

Incidentally, there has been no survey yet to find out how much waterbody has been lost to real estate activity over the past few years. But, one can see offices of agencies dealing in land and supply of building materials have mushroomed in EKV.

"Whenever we lodge a complaint with EKWMA, they lodge FIR with the local police and ends there," said Bonani Kakkar of non-government organisation PUBLIC.

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चिंता में प्रशासन अरुणाचल की नदी हुई काली, शक चीन पर



गवाहाटी @ यात्रका। अरुणाचल प्रदेश के लिए सख्ती से पानी का सुख जरिया रही रसियांग नदी अन्नानक काली हो गई। इस मामले में शक की मुई चीन की ओर बढ़ रही है। पर्वत रसियांग जिले के प्रशासन ने जड़ी कांडानी इस्तमाल में करने की ज्ञेतावनी दी है। जिले के डिटी क्रमिशनर ने बताया, पानी में सोयेट जैसा कुछ मिला है।

पढ़े अरुणाचल @ पृष्ठ 02

अरुणाचल ...

रसानाय लोगों के अनुसार नदी का ऐसा रा पहले कभी नहीं हआ। केंद्रीय जल आयोग पानी को जोच कर रहा है। चीन सुरक्षा बनाकर इस नदी का बहाव तिब्बत से मोड़कर शिनजियांग को और काना जाहता है, यह भारत की जड़ी चिंता है। तिब्बत से निकलती है और नदी बट्टपुत्र से निकलती है और भारत में अनें से पहले इह दक्षिण तिब्बत में करोब 1,600 किलोमीटर तक चलती है। दक्षिण तिब्बत में इस आलंग जलपाने का आलंग जागरूक हो जाता है। भारत में हस्तिलगा जल कहा जाता है। भारत में 230 किमी जहर के बाद लोहित में मिल जाती है। यहाँ सियोग जिले में यासी घाट में 35 किमी दूरी के बाद बट्टपुत्र नदी में बदल जाता है।

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