

### INTERESTING FACTS

- The name of the River comes from the Sanskrit words *Dama* ("rope") and *Udar* ("belly"), which means "rope around belly"; another name of Lord *Krishna* given by his foster mother, Yashoda, when she tied him with a long rope.
- In the *Matsyapurana* (6<sup>th</sup> century BCE), the Damodar River is named 'Mahagauri' and has been described as *Antasira* (rocky river) and *Durgama* (a river that is difficult to encounter), indicating the upstream bedrock-controlled course of the River.
- Once termed as the "Sorrow of Bengal", Damodar is well-known for its flood-destructive potential. Between 1823 and 1943, the River had 31 significant floods.
- The Damodar River basin is commonly known as the 'storehouse of Indian coal' and accounts for 46% of the country's coal reserves. 60% of the coal consumed by Indian industries comes from the Basin.

### DRIVERS OF RIVERSCAPE CHANGE

- The development of an industrial belt and townships centred around coal mines has put a severe anthropogenic strain on the upper reaches of the Damodar River. Excessive excavation, disposal of oil, fly ash and coal dust has contaminated its waters.
- The direct influx of industrial effluents into the River without treatment has severely degraded the water quality in the upper catchment area, making it one of the most polluted rivers in India.
- Unrestricted sand mining is the primary cause of habitat deterioration in the lower stretch.
- Six major reservoirs, namely Tenughat Dam, Panchet Dam and Durgapur Barrage on the Damodar mainstem; Tilaiya Dam and Maithon Dam on the Barakar River; and Konar Dam on the Konar River, have altered the River's natural flow and aquatic habitat.
- Floods in the lower catchment areas are amplified by the funnel shape of the Basin, with a vast upper catchment and a narrow lower catchment area.

### VIBRANT GANGA



# Damodar River

THE RIVER OF ENERGY



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National Mission for Clean Ganga  
Ministry of Jal Shakti  
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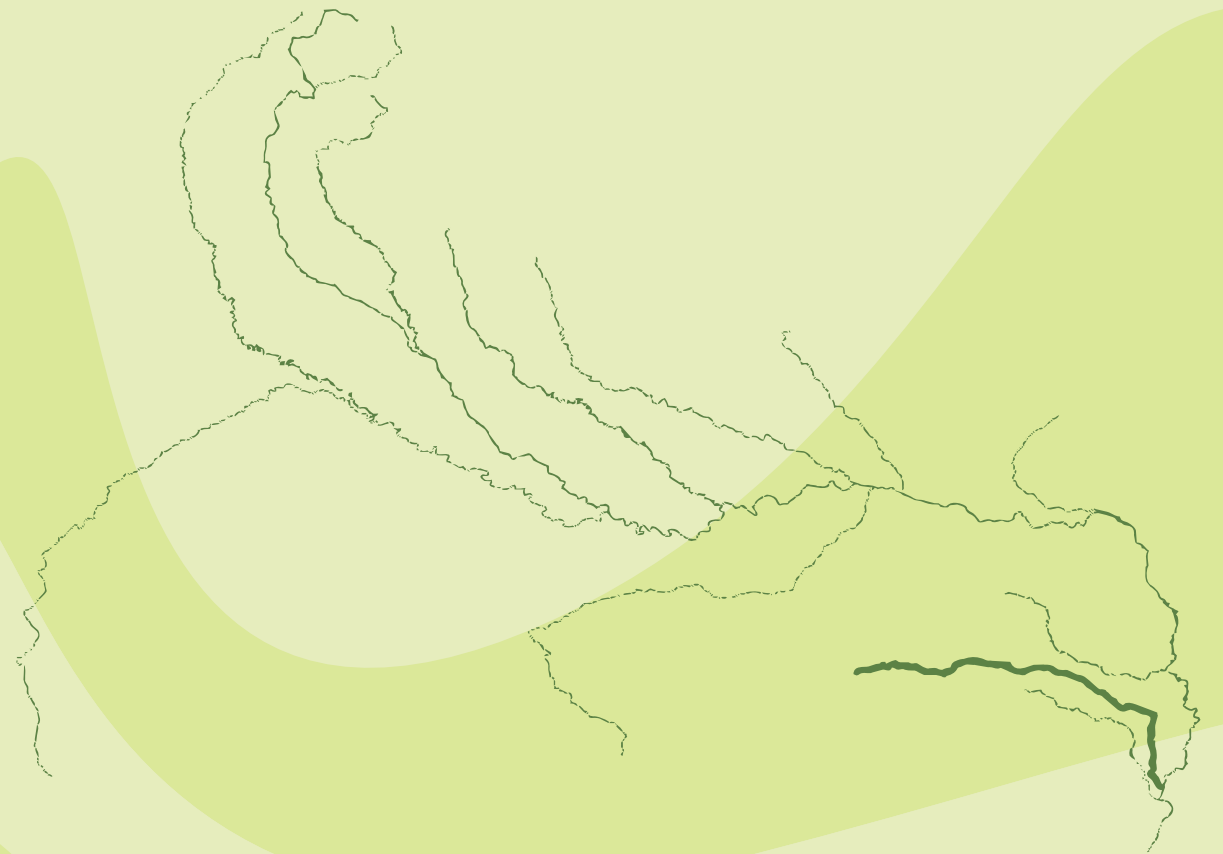
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GENERAL INFORMATION

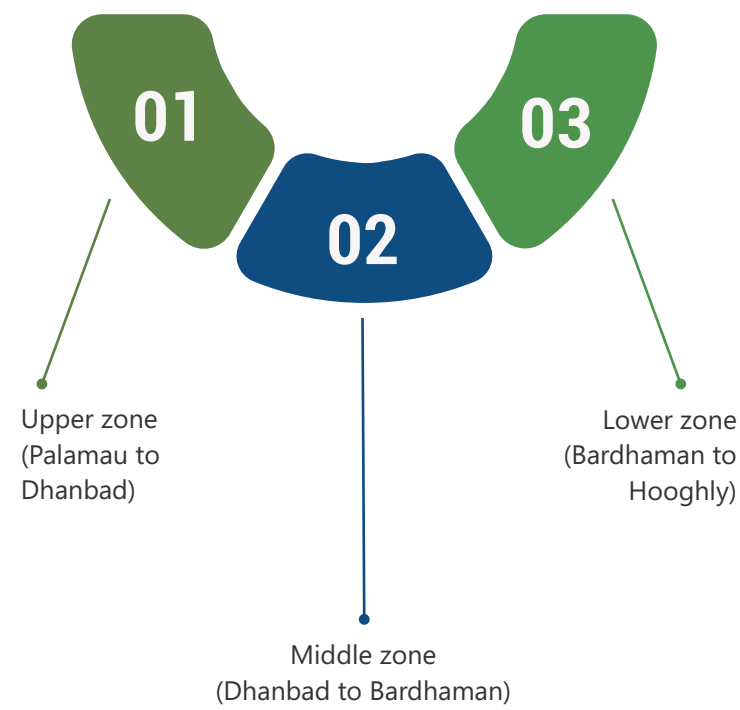
- Damodar River originates from the Sonajuria Falls (Khamarpat Hills) in the Chhota Nagpur Plateau in Palamau District, Jharkhand, at an elevation of 610 m asl, and conjoins the Hooghly River near Shyampur, Howrah District, West Bengal.
- Flowing through two Indian states, Jharkhand and West Bengal, Damodar travels a distance of 540 km, of which 240 km falls in Jharkhand and 300 km in West Bengal.
- The Damodar River basin has a catchment area of 23,370 km<sup>2</sup>, with approximately 74% of it located in Jharkhand and the remaining 26% in West Bengal.
- Damodar is a right bank tributary of the Hooghly River.
- Barakar, Konar, Bokaro, Haharo, Jamunia, Ghari, Guaia, Khudia and Bhera are the major tributaries of Damodar River.
- The Damodar River basin is considered as one of India’s major rainstorm and flood zones.

SALIENT FEATURES

- Damodar River, also known as *Damuda* (Damu means “sacred” and Da means “water”), *Deonad* or *Deonadi*, is a rainfed, shallow and flashy river.
- The River flows through one of the richest mineral belts in the world.
- The Damodar River basin lies in the transition zone between the Bengal Basin Tectonic Plate and the Chhota Nagpur Plateau, where normal tectonic faults, oriented north-south, function as a separating barrier.
- The Basin is dominated by moist deciduous forest and tropical dry deciduous forest types.
- 853 plant species belonging to 535 genera and 137 families have been documented from the Damodar River basin.
- The Basin is home to 24 species of terrestrial mammals, 17 reptiles, and 222 birds.



Damodar River can be divided into three zones, viz.



- In the Damodar River basin, Gangetic dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*) have earlier been reported from the lower stretch near the Damodar and Hooghly confluence, and smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) from Ghagra nallah.
- From Panchet Dam to Basudevpur (confluence of Damodar and Hooghly River), in the lower zone, 44 waterbird species belonging to 14 families have been recorded.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Mammals

Gangetic dolphin

KEY PROTECTED AREAS

Ramnabagan Wildlife Sanctuary

