

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS**  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**QUESTION NO 06.12.2010**  
**ANSWERED ON**  
**POLLUTION IN RIVERS .**

378

SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government has spent ` 26 billion on cleaning 38 major rivers of twenty States during the last ten years but not even a single river could be made pollution free despite incurring such a heavy expenditure; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) & (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) & (b) of Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 378 to be answered on Monday, the 6th December, 2010 on "Pollution in Rivers".

(a) & (b) Pollution load on rivers has increased over the years due to rapid urbanisation and industrialization. Abstraction of water for irrigation, drinking, industrial use, power etc. compounds the challenge.

Conservation of rivers is an ongoing and collective effort of the Central and State Governments. The Centrally sponsored scheme of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) has been started to supplement the efforts of the State Governments in this regard. The objective of NRCP is to improve the water quality in the polluted stretches of the major rivers in the country through implementation of various pollution abatement works. River conservation projects such as creation of civic infrastructure for sewage management and disposal are also being implemented under other central schemes, such as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns, as well as under State sector schemes.

The NRCP presently covers polluted stretches of 38 rivers in 178 towns spread over 20 States. An amount of ` 2610.74 crore has been released to the State Governments during the last ten years by the Central Government. The water quality in terms of Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) values for major rivers is reported to have improved as compared to the water quality before taking up pollution abatement works under NRCP, based on independent monitoring undertaken by reputed institutions. However, the levels of bacterial contamination in terms of fecal coliform are reported to be exceeding the maximum permissible limit at a number of locations. Sewage treatment capacity of 4064 mld (million litres per day) has been created so far in the country under the Plan. However, there is still a large gap between sewage generation and the treatment capacity. Inadequate operation and maintenance (O&M) by the Urban Local Bodies, under-utilisation of the Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), delay in acquisition of land, litigation etc. have been the major shortcomings in the implementation of the Plan. Compliance of effluent discharge standards by industries also needs to be more strictly enforced by the State Pollution Control Boards to improve the river water quality to desired level.