

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 115**  
ANSWERED ON 18.07.2022

**TASK FORCE ON EMERGING WATER CONTAMINANTS**

115. SHRI S. SELVAGANABATHY

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether Government has planned/is planning to form a Task Force on Emerging Water Contaminants;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

**(a) to (c)** Rivers, lakes, wetlands and other water bodies in the country are polluted mainly due to discharge of untreated or partially treated sewage from cities/towns and industrial effluents in their respective catchments, poor operation and maintenance of sewage/effluent treatment plants, lack of dilution, dumping of solid waste on their banks and other non-point sources of pollution. Rapid urbanization and industrialization have compounded the problems by not only increasing the load of traditional pollutants flowing into the river, but also adding new contaminants like plastics/microplastics, pesticides, antibiotics, etc.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with the State Pollution Control Boards/Committees in different States/Union Territories (UTs) have been monitoring the water quality of rivers and other water bodies through a network of monitoring stations under the National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP). Based on water quality monitoring results, holistic pollution assessment of rivers has been carried out by CPCB from time to time. As per the last report published by CPCB in September 2018, 351 polluted stretches were identified on 323 rivers based on monitoring results in terms of a singular parameter, Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), which is an indicator of organic pollution.

In February, 2022, under 'Namami Gange' programme, a study project has been sanctioned and assigned to CPCB for monitoring the emerging pollutants (EPs), viz. the level of microplastics and twenty types of antibiotics in river Ganga on annual basis, from origin till its confluence into the Bay of Bengal. As stipulated in this project, the data in respect of these pollutants will be collected annually to study their prevalence after standardizing the sampling and analysis techniques. Once the analysis and study report emerge, suitable cognizant action to that would be taken after due diligence and consultation with various stakeholders.

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