

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2448
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.08.2023

Extinction of Yamuna

2448. DR. AMEE YAJNIK:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that due to illegal sand mining in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, the bio-diversity of Yamuna is getting badly affected and Yamuna is on the verge of extinction, if so the details thereof along with the steps taken by Government to stop illegal mining;
- (b) whether the NGT has constituted an inquiry panel for illegal mining in Yamuna on Haryana-UP border, if so, the findings of the inquiry; and
- (c) whether Government has consulted environmental experts and biodiversity experts regarding sustainable mining, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) to (c) Sand is a minor mineral and its mining including extraction from river is regulated in terms of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 [MMDR Act] and the Mineral Concession Rules framed by the concerned State Governments / Union Territories (UT) Administrations under section 15 of this Act. Moreover, Section 23C of the MMDR Act, empowers the State Governments / U.T Administrations to make rules for preventing illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals and for the purposes connected therewith and to also enforce the various provisions related to sustainable sand mining guidelines.

As informed by National Mission for Clean Ganga, an Original Application (OA) number 268/2021 was filed before the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT) alleging that unscientific and illegal mining by M/s Star Mines, Saharanpur was obstructing the flow of Yamuna River in Village Belgarh, Uttar Pradesh. After consideration of the matter, the Hon'ble NGT constituted a ten Member joint Committee headed by an Officer of the rank of Joint Secretary, nominated by Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, with four nominees each of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh Governments representing Irrigation Departments, Revenue Departments nominated by the District Magistrates Saharanpur and

Yamunanagar, Member Secretaries of Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) and Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB) and State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) of two States and one nominee of IIT, Roorkee. The Committee was directed to undertake the site visit. The Joint Committee submitted its report to Hon'ble NGT on 07.04.2023. The report highlighted that mining has already been done up to a depth of 3 meters and no further mining can be done without fresh appraisal as per law. The OA was disposed of by the Hon'ble NGT vide its order dated 08.05.2023.

Further, Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has issued the Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining in January, 2020, supplemental to Sustainable Sand Management Guidelines, 2016, to regulate the Sand Mining in the Country.

In addition, requirement of prior environmental clearance has been made mandatory as per Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), notification, 2006 as amended for 38 categories of projects. This includes appraisal on the basis of submission of Environmental Impact Analysis reports and Environmental Management Plans by the project proponents comprising environmental safeguards to be put in place for preserving wildlife, biodiversity, ecosystem and prevention of pollution.
