

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION  
**RAJYA SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1198**

ANSWERED ON 10.03.2025

**WATER CONTAMINATION & MAHA KUMBH MELA**

1198. SHRI SANJAY RAUT

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

- (a) whether water samples from the Maha Kumbh Mela site and other potentially contaminated sources been tested for *Campylobacter jejuni*, norovirus, and other pathogens;
- (b) the protocols in place to manage sewage and waste disposal at large religious gatherings like the Maha Kumbh Mela to prevent contamination;
- (c) given the reported cases, whether Government will conduct immediate water quality testing in all major cities and pilgrimage sites to prevent further spread; and
- (d) the long-term plans Government has for ensuring safe drinking water across the country, especially in urban slums and rural areas?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI**

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

**(a) & (c)** Water samples from rivers/water bodies etc. and treated waste water samples at outlets of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) are monitored for parameters prescribed by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

Regular manual water quality monitoring of river Ganga is already carried out by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) at 112 locations in five Ganga main stem states through concerned State Pollution Control Boards.

**(b)** For the management of the sewage at Maha Kumbh 2025, the following measures were taken:-

- i. In Prayagraj 10 STPs, having total capacity of 340 Million Liters per Day (MLD) were operational for the treatment of the generated sewage.
- ii. During pre-Kumbh monitoring, 78 first order drains were monitored. Out of these, 44 drains were tapped and 34 were untapped. All the untapped drains were tapped, waste water was diverted and treated through STP or Geo Tube Advance Oxidation technology to ensure that no untreated waste water is discharged to rivers at Prayagraj.
- iii. For sanitation arrangements during Maha Kumbh 2025, adequate number of FRP toilets, prefab steel toilets, urinals were deployed along with arrangements for collection conveyance & treatment of the sewage/waste water through existing STPs and development of fecal sludge treatment plants.

- iv. For the management of solid waste during Maha Kumbh 2025 a comprehensive solid waste management system including waste bins, tippers, compactors with adequate swachhagrahis was deployed. The entire waste management system was monitored through integrated command and control center and third party inspection agencies.
- v. National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) issued an 'Advisory' to the concerned stakeholders towards ensuring continuous and unhindered operations of the sewage treatment plants and sanitation infrastructure while complying with the applicable discharge standards.

**(d)** Under Jal Jeevan Mission, provision for safe & potable tap water supply in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality and on a regular & long-term basis to all rural households is being implemented. Under the mission, as per existing guidelines, Bureau of Indian Standards' BIS:10500 standards are adopted as benchmarks for quality of water being supplied through the piped water supply schemes. Drinking Water being a state subject, the responsibility of planning, approval, implementation, operation, and maintenance of drinking water supply schemes, including those under the Jal Jeevan Mission, lies with State/UT Governments. The Government of India supports the States by providing technical and financial assistance.

Significant progress has been made since the launch of Jal Jeevan Mission, towards enhancing access to tap water to rural households. At the time of announcement of Jal Jeevan Mission in August 2019, 3.23 Crore (16.71%) rural households were reported to have tap water connections in the country. So far, as reported by States/ UTs as on 03.03.2025, around 12.26 Crore additional rural households have been provided with tap water connections under JJM. Thus, as on 03.03.2025, out of 19.36 Crore rural households, approximately 15.49 Crore (80.03%) households are reported to have tap water supply in their homes.

Further, as per the Operational Guidelines, States/ UTs can utilize up to 2% of their annual allocation of funds under JJM for Water Quality Monitoring & Surveillance (WQM&S) activities, inter-alia, which includes setting up and strengthening of water quality testing laboratories, procurement of equipment, instruments, chemicals, glassware, consumables, hiring of skilled manpower, surveillance by community using field test kits (FTKs), awareness generation, educational programmes on water quality, accreditation/recognition of laboratories, etc. To enable States/ UTs to test water samples for water quality, and for sample collection, reporting, monitoring and surveillance of drinking water sources, an online JJM – Water Quality Management Information System (WQMIS) portal has been developed.

The State PHEDs operates a network of 2,182 water quality testing laboratories (1,588 NABL accredited/ recognized). The mission has focused on accreditation/ recognition as per ISO/IEC 17025 of all labs, as it will increase confidence in testing data, personnel performing work and testing reports issued by the laboratories.

In order to empower the communities to monitor the water quality States/ UTs have also been advised to identify and train 5 persons, preferably women, in every village to conduct water quality testing using Field Testing Kits (FTKs) at village level and report the same on the WQMIS portal. So far, as reported by States/UTs on WQMIS, as on date, more than 24.80 lakh women have been trained for testing water using FTKs.

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