

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2305
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.03.2026

Curbing industrial discharge

2305. SHRI A. A. RAHIM:

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

- (a) the number of cases registered during the last five years against the industries discharging waste into river bodies or public spaces, year-wise and State-wise;
- (b) the types of pollutants and scale of pollution identified;
- (c) the action taken against defaulting industries during the same period;
- (d) the measures taken to curb industrial discharge into water bodies and public spaces, including monitoring systems and industry guidance; and
- (e) whether any assessment has been conducted on persistent non-compliance and repeat violations and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e): The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) regulate air and water quality by enactment of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and notified different Rules, Regulations based on the said acts to implement various Schemes for protection and development of air and water bodies.

State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees, through Consent mechanism under Water Act, 1974 and Air Act, 1981, monitor the establishment and operation of industries and polluting activities through prescription of pollution control measures and monitoring the compliance of environmental standards.

As per the information received from SPCBs/PCCs, there are total 4,498 Grossly Polluting Industries (GPIs) in the country. Out of which, 3,637 industries are operational. Among these operational industries, 601 industries were found non-complying with environmental standards, against which

actions by SPCBs/PCCs (Closure Directions: 29; Show Cause Notices: 571; Directives: 1) were taken as per the provisions of the Environmental laws.

The water quality data under National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP) is utilized for identification of PRS based on the level of organic load which is measured in terms of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) concentration. Locations/stretches of rivers which are not meeting the Primary Water Quality criterion for outdoor bathing for Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) parameter (indicator of organic pollution) are identified as polluted location/stretches. The PRS are classified under Priority Class I to Priority Class V, Priority I being most polluted with BOD value of more than 30 mg/l and Priority V being least polluted with BOD ranging between 3 – 6 mg/l.

CPCB at present monitors water quality of aquatic resources in the country in association with the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) at 4922 locations including 2265 locations on Rivers, 587 on Lakes, 143 on Ponds, 102 on Tanks, 1271 Ground Water locations and 554 monitoring locations on other water bodies under National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP). Monitoring is carried out with a frequency on monthly, quarterly, half yearly and yearly basis.

Earlier, based on water quality data of year 2016 & 2017, CPCB identified 351 polluted river stretches (PRS) including major rivers during the year 2018. By analysis of water quality data of 623 rivers for the years 2022 and 2023, 296 polluted river stretches have been identified by CPCB on 271 rivers during the year 2025 based on exceedance of Bathing Water Quality Criteria parameter of BOD (exceeding 3 mg/L).

These action plans were prepared and implemented by River Rejuvenation Committees (RRC's) constituted by the respective State Government/ UT Administration and monitored by Central Monitoring Committee (CMC) constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Jal Shakti at Central Level.

In addition, preventive and compliance measures taken to curb industrial discharge into water bodies and public spaces, is enclosed as Annexure-I.

Annexure-I

1. To strengthen enforcement and ensure compliance with environmental standards, CPCB has issued directions u/s 18(1)(b) of the Water and the Air Act to all SPCBs/PCCs to inspect Red, Orange, and Green categories of industries at a minimum inspection frequency of 6 months, 1 year and 2 years, for verification of compliance of environmental norms. In addition, common waste management/treatment facilities such as STPs, CETPs, CBMWTFs etc., and 17 categories of high pollution potential industries are to be inspected on quarterly basis by SPCBs/PCCs.
2. CPCB has mandated installation of Online Continuous Effluent/Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS) in 17 categories of industries and common waste management/treatment facilities to strengthen environmental surveillance and ensure continuous compliance of environmental norms. OCEMS also help industries to self-regulation.
3. CPCB also carries out surprise inspection-cum-monitoring of 17 categories industries and common waste treatment facilities, which are selected randomly based on SMS alerts, generated through OCEMS, installed in these industries.
4. In case of non-compliance, action is taken as per the provisions of the environmental laws, which include issuance of Show cause notice, closure directions, levying of environmental compensation, directions to take corrective measures, etc. Further, stringent action including levying of deterrent Environmental Compensation on the repeated offenders/violators as per the CPCB guidelines on Environmental Compensation, is taken.
5. Real-time emission and effluent data generated from these OCEMS are transmitted 24×7 to servers of CPCB and State Pollution Control Boards. Centralised software of CPCB analyses the data, and automatic alerts are issued to industries and regulators whenever pollutant levels exceed prescribed norms, enabling immediate corrective action and strengthening regulatory oversight.
6. The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India notifies “Standards for Emission or Discharge of Environmental Pollutants from various Industries” under Schedule-I of the Environment Protection Rules, 1986. The industrial sectors, for which specific standards are not available, general standards as notified under Schedule-VI of the Environment Protection Rules, 1986 are applicable.
7. MoEFCC has notified “Environment (Protection) Second Amendment Rules, 2024” vide notification no. S.O. 3864(E) dated 09.09.2024. Wherein, the rules introduced amendments to standards for discharge of environmental pollutants from CETPs and regulations of CETPs.
8. All the GPIs are required to be provided adequate pollution control system for effluent as well emission. It is obligatory on the part of industries to install effluent treatment plants (ETPs) to comply with the effluent discharge standards as notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the Rules framed thereunder and also to meet the consent conditions granted by SPCBs/PCCs. After meeting the consented conditions then only industries are allowed to discharge the treated effluents to Inland surface water/Land for irrigation.
9. CPCB developed Charter in consultation with the major industrial sectors like pulp & paper, sugar, distillery, textile and tannery resulting in reduction in fresh water consumption, waste water discharge & pollution load and improvement in compliance.
