

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 259

ANSWERED ON 02.02.2026

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND GANGA REJUVENATION

259. Dr. SIKANDER KUMAR:

Will the Minister of **Jal Shakti** be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of specific features and capabilities of newly inaugurated Aqua Life Conservation Monitoring Centre for Ganga and other rivers, particularly its labs for ecotoxicology, aquatic ecology, spatial ecology, and microplastic analysis;
- (b) beyond the Dolphin Rescue Ambulance, the other specific infrastructure or equipment that have been established for rescue and rehabilitation of threatened species like turtles and gharials; and
- (c) whether there is any plan for national or international collaboration with other river conservation programs, following the UN's recognition of Namami Gange Programme as a top restoration initiative, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI RAJ BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY)

(a) The newly inaugurated Aqua Life Conservation Monitoring Centre for Ganga and other rivers, inaugurated on 13.01.2026, has been established at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, as a specialised facility for research and monitoring of riverine and associated freshwater ecosystems and their biodiversity.

The Centre is equipped with laboratory facilities in ecotoxicology, aquatic ecology and spatial ecology. The Ecotoxicology Laboratory undertakes assessment of the presence and distribution of pollutants in river systems. It also supports studies using non-invasive approaches for evaluating contaminant exposure in aquatic fauna, including species such as the Gangetic dolphin and otters. The Aquatic Ecology Laboratory supports analysis of riverine biodiversity, including molecular-level studies related to freshwater organisms. The Spatial Ecology Laboratory facilitates spatial analysis relevant to river conservation and freshwater ecosystem management. The Centre also houses a library functioning as a resource centre for river and freshwater ecosystem studies.

(b) A Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) laboratory has been established in the National Chambal Sanctuary to support digitised patrolling and monitoring of rivers and wetlands. The system assists field-level monitoring of aquatic fauna and their habitats, including gharial and turtle populations.

One rear-and-release facility (enclosure) has been refurbished at National Chambal Sanctuary, Etawah, to support recovery programmes for endangered turtle species, including the Red-crowned Roofed Turtle.

In addition, a transit and holding facility (enclosure) has been created along the Saryu River in Bahraich district for triage and treatment of confiscated turtle cohorts and rescued gharials.

Six aquatic species rescue and rehabilitation centres have been established in the Ganga River Basin in collaboration with State Forest Departments. These centres are located at Narora and Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh), Barhi and Deori (Madhya Pradesh), Bhagalpur (Bihar), and Barrackpore (West Bengal). The facilities provide infrastructure for conservation breeding, husbandry and veterinary care of aquatic wildlife, and are manned by trained personnel, including qualified veterinarians.

(c) The United Nations (UN) has recognized the NamamiGange initiative to rejuvenate India's sacred River Ganga as one of the top 10 World Restoration Flagships from over 150 such initiatives from 70 countries across the globe to revive the natural world in the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) in Montreal, Canada.

Following the UN's recognition, NMCG has imbibed best international practices in the field of Water Resources Development and Management. Illustratively, following international collaborations are shown:

- i. The Smart Laboratory for Clean Rivers (SLCR) has been set up under the Green Strategic Partnership between India and Denmark to bring global solutions on current challenges in the field of clean river water, conduct collaborative research and development to fit in real environment through Living lab approach and creation of platform between Government authorities, academic institutions and technology providers for knowledge sharing and co-creation to achieve clean river water.
- ii. An agreement has been signed between the Government of India and the Government of Germany for Technical cooperation to Support Ganga Rejuvenation (SGR) project and work has been done to strengthen the quality infrastructure for water monitoring of the River Ganga.
- iii. Centre of Excellence on Water has been set up under the Strategic Water Partnership between India and Netherlands on Water Safety, Water Availability, and Water Quality. It has been established to identify, showcase, and implement advanced water technologies, particularly from the Netherlands and other global leaders, and pilot projects to promote cutting-edge water solutions.
