GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES,
RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †1718
ANSWERED ON 28.12.2017

PRENSENCE OF ARSENIC IN GANGA AND YAMUNA RIVER

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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the level of arsenic in the water of major rivers of the country including Ganga and Yamuna has reached an alarming stage due to discharge of industrial waste and fly ash from thermal power plants therein; and

(b) if so, the details of the measures taken by the Government to check the increasing level of arsenic in the said rivers?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION & HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

(DR. SATYA PAL SINGH)

(a) & (b) Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is monitoring water quality at 3000 locations in 29 States and 6 Union Territories spread over the country, of which 1533 locations cover 540 rivers including River Ganga. Arsenic is one of the parameters analysed in water samples. Monitoring of water quality does not indicate detectable presence of Arsenic at any of monitored locations on rivers of the CPCB network.

However, the Central & State Pollution Control Boards are implementing the Water Act, 1974 to restore water quality and following important steps are taken to prevent and control water pollution.

1. During year 2016-17, monitoring network was expanded from 2500 to 3000 locations by addition of 500 new monitoring locations.
2. Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) has been prepared and shared with all the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) on monitoring, analysis, parameters, frequency and data reporting etc.
3. Online web based portal developed for quick data transfer and retrieval as Environmental Water Quality Data Entry System (EWQDES).
4. CPCB identified 302 polluted river stretches in 275 rivers in the country.
5. CPCB issued Directions under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 regarding ‘Treatment and Utilization of Sewage for Restoration of water quality of River’ to Municipal Corporations of 46 Metropolitan cities and 20 State Capitals in October, 2015.

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6. CPCB issued Directions under Section18 (1) (b) of the water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 regarding treatment & utilization of sewage to SPCBs/PCCs.
7. CPCB issued Directions under Section18 (1) (b) of the water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 regarding untreated sewage and industrial effluent and disposal in coastal towns in India.
8. CPCB prepared a reference document as a model plan for restoration of river stretches and communicated to all the SPCBs/PCCs for preparation of detailed project report.
9. Model plan for restoration of River Hindon by incorporating assessment of point sources of pollution (Industrial and Municipal wastewater discharge) has also been prepared and suggested measures were shared with local administration for providing technical support from CPCB.
10. Ministry of Environment Forest & Climate Change has notified standards for treated effluent of Sewage Treatment Plants on dated 13 October, 2017 for adherence.
11. With respect to industrial effluents, consent management for compliance of standards is being enforced by SPCBs/PCCs to improve the water quality of the rivers.
12. With respect to industrial units in the country CPCB has given directions under Section 5 of E (P) Act, 1986 for setting up of online Continuous water quality monitoring system to check the effluent quality being discharged. Subsequently non complying units in failure of installation of online monitoring system have been identified for action.
13. Common effluent treatment plants for cluster of Small Scale Industrial units have been established. Directions under Section 5 of the E (P) Act, 1986 is also given to all Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) to install continuous effluent monitoring system to comply with the stipulated standards.

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