

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES,
RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2141
ANSWERED ON 08.03.2018

NGT DIRECTIONS ON GANGA RIVER FLOW

2141. PROF. SAUGATA ROY

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

- (a) whether the National Green Tribunal has issued any orders/directions to ensure substantial flow of water in Ganga river;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the diversion of water from Ganga river causes problems to the wildlife and river ecology; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken /to be taken in the matter?

ANSWER

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

(DR. SATYA PAL SINGH)

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. The National Green Tribunal (PB) vide its order dated 13.7.2017 in the matter of O.A. 200/2014-M.C. Mehta Vs. Union of Indian and Ors. and other connected matters has inter-alia issued directions in regard to environmental flow of the river. It has been stated in that order that as an interim measure, while diverting the water from Haridwar to the Ganga canal or even otherwise, the minimum E-flow in the main stem does not fall below 20% of the average monthly lean season flow, which will be referable to the status of the river at Haridwar pre-diversion. Also, the extent of diversion of water of river shall be adequately reduced and/or adjusted, in the event the flow falls below 20%. In another matter O.A. No. 498/2015-Pushp Saini Vs. Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change & Ors, the NGT has directed vide its order dated 9.8.2017 that all the rivers in the country shall maintain minimum 15% to 20% of the average lean season flow of that river.

(c) & (d) The reduced flow may fragment and degrade the habitat of aquatic wildlife of the Ganga River including the Gangetic river dolphins, otters, breeding birds, freshwater turtles and fishes and may affect the flow of other ecosystem services from the river. The flow reduction may also increase the sedimentation in riverbed and dilution factor for pollution in the downstream areas that may adversely affect the natural self-purification process of the river.

To mitigate the impact of water abstraction on aquatic wildlife the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (MoWR, RD & GR) has instituted the National Mission for Clean Ganga which is working on the maintenance of Aviral Dhara (Continuous flow) and Nirmal Dhara (Clean flow) of the Ganga River through forestry interventions and restoration of aquatic biodiversity along with other interventions. Regular monitoring of aquatic wildlife of the Ganga River through support from the MoWR, RD & GR is being carried out by several agencies of repute to detect any change in the population of aquatic wildlife in the Ganga River.
