

Government of India
Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1769
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20-12-2018

Disposal of Worship Idols

†1769. SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of **DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to allocate a separate spot 'Samaagridan' for disposing of items used during worship and immersion of small idols since as per Hindu rituals these are considered holy and cannot be disposed off in dustbins, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether there is ban on disposing of worship material and immersed small idols in the rivers and fence had already been installed along the rivers, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has formulated any new scheme to create awareness among people in the rural areas as it is often seen that the people in the rural areas do not use dustbins; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF DRINKING WATER & SANITATION
(SHRI RAMESH CHANDAPPA JIGAJINAGI)

(a) and (b) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has brought out specific guidelines on prevention and control of pollution in rivers and other water bodies from idol immersion, and have been circulated to all the States and Union Territories for implementation. These guidelines prescribe that the State Pollution control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) conduct water quality assessment of the water body before and after immersions, post the data on internet and help local administration in preparing material for mass awareness for the purpose. Further, the guidelines prescribe that idols be made from natural materials like traditional clay, water soluble and non-toxic natural dyes be used for painting of idols, worship material like flowers, clothes, decorating material (made of paper and plastic) be removed before immersion of idols, biodegradable materials collected separately for recycling or composting, non-biodegradable materials disposed off in sanitary landfills, immersion of idols in river be done at identified idol immersion spots along the river bank in temporary ponds having earthen bunds with removable synthetic liners at bottom, etc.

(c) to (d) Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation as part of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) creates awareness on safe disposal of solid and liquid waste in the villages. Intensive awareness campaigns and interventions are undertaken as part of the program to educate people on safe disposal of solid and liquid waste. Financial assistance to Gram Panchayats are also provided to supplement the efforts of the State Governments to undertake solid and liquid waste management works in Gram Panchayats/villages. SBM(G) guidelines suggests for collection and segregation of solid wastes and disposal of biodegradable waste through composting.