

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †1635
ANSWERED ON 29.07.2021

WATER LEVEL AND QUALITY OF RIVERS

†1635. SHRI VIJAY BAGHEL
SHRI ARUN SAO

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a huge decline in water level and water quality in the rivers of the country during the last few years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has given any instruction in this regard, if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure smooth flow of small and major rivers in the country along with the progress made in this regard so far; and
- (e) the details of the funds spent on cleaning of such rivers during each of the last three years and current year, river and State-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI & FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
(SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL)

(a) & (b) The flow in a river is a dynamic parameter and depends on many sub-parameters such as rainfall, its distribution, duration and intensity in the catchment, health of catchment area, vegetation and withdrawals/utilization of water. While reports by some experts have expressed concern about reduction in water flow in rivers, the annual average flow data maintained by Central Water Commission (CWC) for last 20 years for major/important rivers in the country does not indicate any significant decline in water availability. However, as per CWC, the per capita annual water availability in the country has progressively reduced due to increase in population, urbanization, improved lifestyle of people, etc.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committee (PCC) have been monitoring water quality of rivers and other water bodies in the country through a network of monitoring stations under the National Water Quality Monitoring Programme. Based on water quality monitoring results, pollution assessment of rivers has been carried out by CPCB from time to time. Rivers in the country are polluted due to discharge of untreated and partially treated sewage from cities/towns and industrial effluents in their respective catchments, problems in operation and maintenance of sewage/effluent treatment plants, lack of dilution and other non-point sources of pollution. Rapid urbanization and industrialization have compounded the problem. Based on monitoring results in terms of Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), an indicator of organic pollution, the polluted river stretches identified by CPCB from time to time are given below:

Polluted river stretches	Report publishing year	Water Quality Monitoring (Sampling period Year)
302	2015	2009–2012
351	2018	2016 – 2017

The 351 polluted river stretches have been categorized into 5 Priority Classes, based on BoD levels as under:

Priority	BOD level in mg/l	No. of polluted river stretches
Priority I	exceeding 30	45
Priority II	between 20-30	16
Priority III	between 10-20	43
Priority IV	between 6-10	72
Priority V	between 3-6	175
Total :		351

It is the responsibility of the States/UTs and local bodies to ensure required treatment of sewage and industrial effluents to the prescribed norms before discharging into water bodies, coastal waters or land to prevent and control of pollution therein. For conservation of rivers, this Ministry has been supplementing efforts of the States/UTs by providing financial and technical assistance for abatement of pollution in identified stretches of rivers in the country through the Central Sector Scheme of Namami Gange for rivers in Ganga basin and Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) for other rivers.

NRCP has so far covered polluted stretches on 34 rivers in 77 towns spread over 16 States in the country with the sanctioned cost of projects as Rs.5965.90 crore, and sewage treatment capacity of 2522.03 MLD created. Under Namami Gange programme, a total of 346 projects including 158 projects for sewage treatment of 4948 MLD and sewer network of 5213 km, have been sanctioned at a cost of Rs.30235 crore.

In addition, sewerage infrastructure is created under programs like Atal Mission for Rejuvenation & Urban Transformation (AMRUT) and Smart Cities Mission of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

As per the Provisions of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution), Act 1974, industrial units are required to install effluent treatment plants (ETPs) and treat their effluents to comply with stipulated environmental standards before discharging into river and water bodies. Accordingly, CPCB, SPCBs and PCCs monitor industries with respect to effluent discharge standards and take action for non-compliance under provisions of these Acts.

Steps taken by the Government to stop discharge of industrial effluents into rivers inter alia, include issuance of notification of specific discharge standards, revision of the criteria for categorization of industries and issuing directions to all State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) to adopt the same, issuance of consent to establish / consent to operate by the

SPCBs/PCCs, based on Comprehensive Environment Pollution Index (CEPI) critically polluted areas are identified to take necessary measures through time-targeted Action Plans, regular inspections of Grossly Polluting Industries (GPIs) by CPCB for compliance verification, installation of Online Continuous Effluent Monitoring System (OCEMS) for assessment of effluent quality and compliance status. In addition, the industries are encouraged to reduce their waste water generation by technological advancement, reuse/recycle of wastewater and maintain Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) where ever possible.

(c) & (d) In compliance of the orders of National Green Tribunal (NGT) in Original Application No.673/2018 regarding rejuvenation of polluted river stretches in the country, States/UTs are required to implement approved action plans for restoration of the polluted stretches in their jurisdiction as identified by CPCB in their report of 2018 within the stipulated timelines, including maintenance of environmental flows. As per the orders of NGT, regular review on implementation of action plans is undertaken in the States/UTs and also at Central level.

Government of India, vide Notification dated 9th October, 2018, has notified minimum environmental flows to be maintained in river Ganga from its origin to Unnao in Uttar Pradesh. The notified environmental flow regime is monitored and supervised by Central Water Commission.

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in the Standard Terms of Reference (ToR) for conducting the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies for any proposed River Valley and Hydroelectric Project have mentioned the norms for release of environmental flows which is 30% in monsoon, 20% in lean season and 25% in non-monsoon & non-lean season to be followed corresponding to flow of 90% dependable year. These norms along with the site specific requirements for environment flow releases as per the studies are then stipulated in the Environment Clearance (EC) letter for compliance.

With regards to the monitoring of the environmental flow releases, the Regional offices of MoEF&CC and CPCB along with the State Pollution Control Boards concerned have been mandated for monitoring of all the environmental aspects of the Hydro Power Projects.

(e) Details of State-wise and year-wise funds released to the State Governments/Union Territories during last three years under NRCP and Namami Gange programme is given at **Annexure**.

ANNEXURE

Annexure referred to in reply to part (e) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. †1635 to be answered on 29.07.2021 regarding “Water Level and Quality of Rivers”.

(a) Details of State-wise and year-wise funds released to the State Governments/Union Territories during last three years, including current year, under NRCP (excluding river Ganga and its tributaries)

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	State/UT	River	Funds Released			
			2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 (30/06/2021)
1.	Gujarat	Sabarmati, Mindola&Tapi	63.00	96.89	27.26	25.00
2.	Jammu & Kashmir	Devika&Tawi	30.00	-	20.00	-
3.	Manipur	Nambul	3.00	15.00	20.00	-
4.	Sikkim	Rani Chu	42.00	10.00	20.00	10.00
5.	Nagaland	Diphu&Dhansiri	5.00	10.00	5.13	14.87
Total			143.00	131.89	92.39	49.87

(b) State-wise details of funds released to various States under Namami Gange programme during last three years, including current year

(Rs. in crore)

State	Rivers	Funds Released			
		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 (30/06/2021)
Uttarakhand	Ganga, RisperanaBindal, Kosi	341.44	128.20	124.82	79.54
Uttar Pradesh	Ganga, Yamuna, Kali, Gomti, Saryu, Ramganga	823.77	821.09	472.46	37.58
Bihar	Ganga, Gandak, Kharkhari	673.03	1,185.17	194.43	5.68
Jharkhand	Ganga	74.23	30.50	28.03	1.73
West Bengal	Ganga, Damodar, Banka	227.62	70.60	105.06	0.94
Delhi	Yamuna	310.69	214.47	235.00	0
Haryana	Yamuna	----	----	----	0
Irrigation & Public Health Department, Himachal Pradesh		----	----	1.25	0
NMCG's Expenditure including other Basin wide interventions		175.76	223.06	178.92	21.98
Total		2,626.54	2,673.09	1,339.97	147.45
