

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †2765
ANSWERED ON 05.08.2021

INCREASING POLLUTION IN RIVERS

†2765 SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Pollution Control Research Institute has conducted or proposes to conduct in depth study for increasing pollution of major rivers in the country;
- (b) if so, the outcome and recommendations made therein;
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (d) the steps being taken by the Government to curb increasing pollution of the holy rivers?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI & FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES

(SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL)

(a) to (d) The Pollution Control Research Institute in Hardwar (Uttarakhand) has informed that they have not carried out any comprehensive study on increasing pollution in major rivers of the country.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with Pollution Control Boards/Committees in different States/Union Territories (UTs), have been monitoring the water quality of rivers and other water bodies across 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. As per the last report published by CPCB in September 2018, 351 polluted stretches were identified on 323 rivers based on monitoring results in terms of Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), an indicator of organic pollution.

Cleaning/rejuvenation of rivers is an ongoing activity. 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 river and other 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 the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) for other rivers.

Proposals for pollution abatement works in the towns along polluted river stretches are received from the States/UTs from time to time for consideration under NRCP and sanctioned based on their prioritization, conformity with NRCP guidelines, availability of plan funds, etc. NRCP has so far covered polluted stretches on 34 rivers in 77 towns spread over 16 States in the country with the project sanctioned cost of Rs.5965.90 crore, and inter-alia, a sewage treatment capacity of 2522.03 MLD has been created. Under the 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, State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) and Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) monitor industries with respect to effluent discharge standards and take action for non-compliance under provisions of these Acts.

Besides, in compliance of the orders of Hon'ble 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 and published in their report of 2018, within the stipulated timelines. As per the orders of NGT, regular review on implementation of action plans is undertaken in the States/UTs and also at Central level.
