

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 740

ANSWERED ON 21.07.2022

POLLUTION IN BHARATHAPUZHA RIVER

740 SHRI V.K.SREEKANDAN

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the condition of river Bharathapuzha in the State of Kerala is very pathetic as it is highly polluted and needs restoration and rejuvenation and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is a policy of the Government to set up independent statutory authorities for the rejuvenation and restoration of large rivers in the country;
- (c) if so, whether the Government proposes to set up a Bharathapuzha Management Authority, since it is an inter-state river;
- (d) whether the Government has received any representation in this regard; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government thereon?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) As per the last report published by CPCB in September 2018, 351 polluted stretches have been identified on 323 rivers based on monitoring results of 521 rivers in the country in terms of Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), an indicator of organic pollution. Based on BOD value, CPCB has categorized polluted stretches as Priority-I (>30 mg/l), Priority-II (20-30 mg/l), Priority-III (10-20 mg/l), Priority-IV (6-10 mg/l) and Priority-V (3-6 mg/l). As per this report, the stretch along Patambi town situated on Bharathapuzha River in Kerala has been categorized as Priority-IV with a BOD value of 6.6 mg/l.

(b) & (c) For conservation and rejuvenation of rivers, this Ministry has been supplementing efforts of the States/Union Territories (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 Ganga and its tributaries, and the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) for other rivers. Sewerage infrastructure, setting up of sewage treatment plants (STPs), interception & diversion, river front development, low cost sanitation, afforestation, etc in polluting towns/cities along the rivers are important components of these programs.

As per the information provided by Kerala Pollution Control Board (KPCB), the State Government, in accordance with NGT O.A. No.673/2018, the pollution loads were ascertained and it has been observed that pollution is mainly due to domestic effluents through storm water drains. Action plan was prepared by various State Government departments for rejuvenating the River Bharathapuzha, the same was approved by CPCB and implemented. The action plan comprises of activities such as establishment and modernization of municipal solid waste (MSW) treatment plant, material collection facility, resource recovery facility, door to door collection and transportation of MSW, management of municipal plastics, hazardous, biomedical and electronic waste, awareness programme for sections of public, monitoring of river quality by sampling, Green protocol implementation in all offices institution and public function are fast progressing. Installing household and community level solid waste management units, primary sewage treatment plant and septage treatment plant, installation of modern slaughter house and rendering plant, construction of sanitary plants in public place are also progressing. The progress on the implementation of action plan is being monitored and as per the analysis reports, Bharathapuzha is constantly achieving bathing quality standards (BOD<3 mg/l, FC<500 mg/l).

(d) & (e) In February, 2021, a request for setting up of Bharathapuzha Management Authority was received from the Friends of Bharathapuzha (FoB), a Society for Restoration of River Nila. The same was referred for necessary action by this Ministry to Government of Kerala in March, 2021. In addition, a similar request was recently received from Shri V. K. Sreekandan, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Kerala in July, 2022.
