

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †3426
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.12.2024

DISPOSING OF REMAINS OF PUJA MATERIALS

†3426 SHRI UTKARSH VERMA MADHUR:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether people throw the remains or wastes of puja materials in the garbage after puja ceremony and also dump them into the nearby water bodies;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has any plan for disposing of puja materials, remains and ashes so that the religious sentiments of the people are not hurt; and
- (c) whether there is any plan to construct a separate ghat at the bank of rivers and water bodies to immerse idols, as to prevent contamination of water bodies/rivers and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

- (a) to (c): Yes. However, National Mission for Clean Ganga issued directions, from time to time, to the State Govts./authorities in Ganga basin States and all other states, *inter-alia* prohibiting immersion of such idols, puja material and other items of religious offering in water bodies like river, lakes, ponds, wells etc. during festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi, Durga Puja, Deepawali (Lakshmi Puja/ Kali Puja), Chhath Puja (Surya Sasthi), Viswakarma Puja, etc. Many Ghats have been constructed under Namami Gange Programme. However, no separate Ghat has been constructed to immerse idols. Regular public awareness programs have been organized through a volunteer cadre of Ganga Parhari, Ganga Doot, and Ganga Mitra to encourage behavioral changes in the public regarding the disposal of waste materials, including puja offerings and idol immersion, along the River Ganga and its tributaries. Behavioral change initiatives are also emphasized through the Ganga Task Force (GTF) in Uttar Pradesh, which undertakes activities such as public awareness programs, patrolling of sensitive river areas and to monitor Ghats to address polluting practices and promote sustainable behaviour.
