

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO. *162

ANSWERED ON 14.12.2023

CLEANING OF MINOR RIVERS

†*162 SHRI MALOOK NAGAR

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the steps being taken by the Government to maintain the cleanliness of the minor rivers passing through the district headquarters, cities and industrial areas;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to introduce new provisions for the said purpose; and
- (c) if so, the details of the policy being formulated in this regard?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) to (c) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. *162 TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.12.2023 IN LOK SABHA REGARDING “CLEANING OF MINOR RIVERS”

Rivers and other water bodies in the country are polluted mainly due to discharge of untreated or partially treated sewage from cities/towns/local bodies and industrial effluents in their respective catchments, poor operation and maintenance of sewage/effluent treatment plants, lack of dilution, dumping of solid waste on their banks and other non-point sources of pollution. Rapid urbanization and industrialization have also compounded the problem.

Government of India has been taking many steps for pollution abatement in rivers all over the country, though it is the responsibility of States/Union Territories (UTs) and local bodies to ensure required treatment of sewage and industrial effluent, before discharging into recipient water bodies, land or coastal waters for prevention and control of pollution therein.

Namami Gange Programme (NGP) implemented by National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) was launched by Government of India in 2014 as a focused program to clean and rejuvenate River Ganga and its tributaries. To stop untreated sewage and industrial effluents reaching the rivers, interventions like interception and diversion of drains carrying dirty water and construction of Sewerage Treatment Plants (STPs) and Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) were taken up under it. 195 sewerage infrastructure projects have been sanctioned at a cost of Rs 31,344.13 crore for creation & rehabilitation of 6,173.12 Million Liters per Day (MLD) of Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) capacity along with laying of 5,253.64 km of sewerage network in River Ganga and its tributaries. Out of these, 109 sewerage projects have already been completed resulting in creation & rehabilitation of 2,664.05 MLD of STP capacity along with laying of 4,465.54 km of sewerage network.

NMCG has taken special steps to keep clean minor rivers which form the tributaries of River Ganga, by taking up pollution abatement works in them. Special projects have been sanctioned to clean up the tributaries like Yamuna, Hindon, Kali, Kosi, Gomti etc which are very polluted. 67 projects with a sanctioned cost Rs.12479.90 crore to create 3 678.4 MLD sewerage treatment capacity to tackle pollution in these tributaries. River Basin Management Plans (RMPs) have been prepared for the Ramganga River basin, with the involvement of stakeholders. CETPs and STPs have been built on Pandu river in Kanpur to prevent the flow of effluents from the tanneries and untreated sewage which were polluting it and River Ganga in Kanpur, one of the main pollution hot spots in the River Ganga.

Taking up of these projects under Namami Gange have resulted in improved water quality in Ganga and its tributaries, which is seen in the increased biodiversity and reduced pollution stretches. Namami-Gange was recognized as one of the top ten World Restoration Flagships by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Conference of Parties (CoP 15) at Montreal in 2022.

National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) was launched to tackle pollution in other rivers.

NRCP has so far covered polluted stretches of 38 rivers in 82 towns spread over 16 States at a total sanctioned cost of Rs. 8241.32 crore. These include rivers like Rani Chu in Sikkim, Nambul in Imphal,

Manipur; Devika and Tawi in Udhampur, Jammu; Dhiphu and Dhansiri, Nagaland; Pamba in Kerala etc. Pollution abatement works have been taken up, at a cost of Rs 990.26 Crores in Mula Mutha river which flows by Pune and is a tributary of Bheema river. Pollution abatement works have been taken up, at a cost of Rs 1926.99 Crores in Nag River which flows by Nagpur and is a tributary of Kanhan river.

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. Further, priority for effective rejuvenation of small rivers has been accorded under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

Cleaning of river is a continuous process. Innovative approaches are tried to ensure sustainability by involving people and evolving new business models like HAM and One City One Operator etc. NMCG "River Cities Alliance" (RCA) started with 30 river cities on the banks of river Ganga in 2021 as a dedicated platform for river cities in India to ideate, discuss, and exchange information for the sustainable management of urban rivers under the Urban River Management Plan (URMP), now has 142 cities on the banks of many Indian rivers and Aarhus city of Denmark as members. On 6 December 2023, at Conference of Parties (CoP28), RCA signed a Memorandum of Common Purposes (MoCP) with the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI), representing 124 cities/towns situated along the banks of the Mississippi River, United States of America to promote knowledge sharing and capacity building between RCA and MRCTI. Expanding the RCA, on 10 December, 2023, "Global River Cities Alliance" (GRCA), led by NMCG was launched at the CoP28 with 9 countries and 2 international cities; 3 international funding agencies- World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) entering into a partnership to provide a unique platform for global river cities to ideate, network, support and co-learn to foster river centric development.

Central Pollution Control Board, State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees regularly monitor industries with respect to effluent discharge standards and take action for non-compliance under provisions of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. To improve the monitoring of compliance, directions have been issued by CPCB to specific industries to install online 24x7 effluent monitoring systems. Steps have also been taken by CPCB to promote low waste concept in grossly water polluting industries and maintain zero liquid discharge wherever possible.

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 and published in their report of 2018, within the stipulated timelines. As per the orders of NGT, regular review on implementation of action plans to mitigate river pollution and other surface water is undertaken in the States/UTs and also at Central level.
