

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:7490  
ANSWERED ON:15.05.2000  
GANGA PURIFICATION PLAN  
JAI BHADRA SINGH

**Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether Ganga Action Plan launched in Varanasi has not brought any qualitative change;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the amount so far granted by the Government in this regard since its commencement annually;
- (d) whether the Government are considering to set up a Committee to review the working of Ganga Purification Programme; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

MINSITER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI)

(a) and (b) Phase I of the Ganga Action Plan launched in Varanasi in 1985 has brought about a qualitative change in the river water quality in terms of measured parameters such as summer average values of Biochemical Oxygen demand (BOD) and Dissolved Oxygen levels (DO). The increase in dissolved oxygen levels and reduction in biochemical oxygen demand levels are as follows:

(In Milligram/litre)                      1986    1999

Dissolved Oxygen	Varanasi Upstream	5.6	8.2
	Varanasi Downstream	5.9	8.4

Biochemical Oxygen Demand	Varanasi Upstream	10.1	2.2
	Varanasi Downstream	10.6	3.7

The technological design under Ganga Action Plan Phase - I provided only for an incidental reduction in the levels of microbial pollution.

(c) The details of the amounts granted annually by the Government for the creation and maintenance of assets under Ganga Action Plan in Varanasi are at Annexure-I. Out of the total sum of Rs.67.60 crores released so far, Rs.42.92 crores have been released by the Government of India and Rs.24.68 crores by the State Government of Uttar Pradesh.

(d)&(e) Ganga Action Plan and the National River Conservation Plan are reviewed regularly at various levels. There is a National River Conservation Authority under the Prime Minister which reviews the Programme. A Monitoring Committee under the Member, Planning Commission and a Steering Committee under Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forests review the Programme quarterly. In addition, a mid-term evaluation of the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I was undertaken jointly by the Aligarh Muslim University, Roorkee University, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta. The evaluation report has concluded that with the reduction of discharge of organic matter, a necessary first step in restoring the water quality has been achieved to a fair level under the Ganga Action Plan phase-I. It is also mentioned that the Ganga Action Plan phase-I as conceived and implemented is an appropriate programme for application to other river basins. Some shortcomings of the programme were also brought out in the evaluation report and have been taken note of for suitable modification in the subsequent river action plans. These include reduction of discharge of organic matter, local conditions to be given adequate consideration in the choice of sewage treatment technology, regular cleaning of sewage and interception structures constructed under the Ganga Action Plan phase-I, regular training for the staff posted at all levels, resource recovery options to be analysed etc.

A cost benefit analysis of the Ganga Action Plan phase-I was also undertaken by a reputed expert from Harvard Institute of International Development in collaboration with local Indian institutes viz. Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi, Indian Toxicology Research Centre, Lucknow and All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta. The study broadly concluded that in spite of its many shortcomings the Ganga Action Plan phase-I has delivered significant benefits to India. The polluted stretch of the river violating the bathing class standards would have been at least 740 kms. Between Kannauj and Varanasi as compared to 437 kms.

between the same towns with the Ganga Action Plan phase-I. In terms of both cost and time taken, the Ganga Action Plan phase-I compares favourably with those of the other major rivers of the world. The study has concluded that the internal rate of return of the Ganga Action Plan phase-I is well above 10% required of public sector projects.

There is no proposal, at present, under the consideration of the Government for constitution for a committee to review the working of the Ganga Purification Programme.

#### Annure-I

#### Details of Funds Released for Ganga Action Plan Works for Varanasi

Year Funds Released (In Rs. Lakhs)

1985-86	29.300
1986-87	291.000
1987-88	521.285
1988-89	490.360
1989-90	1104.140
1990-91	811.075
1991-92	444.200
1992-93	352.840
1993-94	561.000
1994-95	426.620
1995-96	371.210
1996-97	353.000
1997-98	329.500
1998-99	271.200
1999-2000	403.000

Total 6759.730

Out of the above, Rs.4291.840 lakhs have been released by Government of India and rest by State Government.