

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:84  
ANSWERED ON:03.03.2010  
QUALITY OF GANGA WATER  
Bhagat Shri Sudarshan;Singh Shri Radha Mohan

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

- (a) whether the Planning Commission has published any study report on the quality of Ganga water during 2008-09;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Ministry thereto;
- (c) whether the water of river Ganga specially at Haridwar is not fit for drinking and bathing; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to clean the water of the river Ganga?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

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

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (d) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No.84 to be answered on Wednesday the 3rd March 2010 on Quality of Ganga Water raised by Shri Radha Mohan Singh and Shri Sudharshan Bhagat.

(a) to (c) Planning Commission prepared a report in May 2009 on utilisation of funds and assets created through Ganga Action Plan (GAP) in States. According to the report, the water quality of the river indicates some improvement over the pre-GAP period as per the water quality monitoring done by the reputed independent institutions. The analysis of water quality at 16 monitoring stations on the river during 1986 – 2008, showed reduction in Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) in all the stations, except two, indicating improvement in water quality. However, at 7 of these 16 locations, BOD levels do not meet the standards for bathing water. Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels have shown improvement at 4 locations. In terms of total coliform count (bacterial indicator for health concerns), the permissible limits for bathing water were exceeded at a number of monitoring stations.

As per water quality measured at Haridwar during summer (i.e. March to June) in 2009, the average value of BOD is 1.3 milligram per liter (mg/l) and Dissolved Oxygen (DO) is 7.8 mg/l, well within the permissible limits of water quality standards for bathing under GAP, i.e. maximum BOD of 3.0 mg/l and minimum desired DO value of 5.0 mg/l.

The levels of fecal coliforms are exceeding the maximum permissible limits of 2500 MPN (Most Probable Number) per 100 milliliter at monitoring locations along the river Ganga except in its upper reaches of Haridwar. The coliform count has increased particularly at pilgrimage places due to mass bathing by pilgrims. The situation would have been worse without the sewage treatment infrastructure created under GAP.

(d) The Ministry, since 1985, has been implementing the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) for pollution abatement activities in the identified polluted stretches of the river Ganga. Under the Ganga Action Plan, Phase-I &II, an expenditure of Rs.837 crore has been incurred so far. The schemes taken up include interception and diversion of sewage for treatment in sewage treatment plants; low cost sanitation works; electric and /or improved wood crematoria; river front development works etc. Sewage treatment capacity of 1025 million litres per day has been created under both the phases.

The Central Government has set up the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) on 20.02.2009 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, as an empowered planning, financial, monitoring and coordinating authority to ensure effective abatement of pollution and conservation of the river Ganga by adopting a holistic approach with the river basin as the unit of planning. The first meeting of the NGRBA held on 5.10.2009 resolved that by the year 2020, it will be ensured that no untreated municipal sewage or industrial effluent flows into Ganga.

Conservation of rivers is an ongoing and collective effort of the Central and State Governments. River conservation activities such as creation of civic infrastructure for sewage management and disposal are also being implemented under other central schemes, such as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns, as well as under State schemes.