

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4297
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2011
POLLUTION IN RIVERS
Yadav Shri Ranjan Prasad

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

- (a) whether water of most of the major rivers has become black after getting polluted despite spending crores of rupees;
- (b) if so, whether all efforts to deal with the said problem have proved infructuous;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government is considering to formulate any National Policy to protect rivers from getting polluted;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the funds allocated to States for clearing major rivers during each of the last three years, State-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) to (f) Pollution load on rivers has increased over the years due to rapid urbanisation and industrialization. Abstraction of water for irrigation, drinking, industrial use, power etc. compounds the challenge. Discharge of untreated wastewater from towns along the rivers constitutes the major source of pollution load in rivers. According to a recent report of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), against an estimated sewage generation of about 38254 million litres per day (mld) from the Class I cities & Class II towns of the country, the available treatment capacity is for 11787 mld.

Interception and diversion of raw sewage and setting up of Sewage Treatment Plants, have been among the main components of pollution abatement works undertaken in the River Conservation Plan. The National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) presently covers 39 rivers in 185 towns in 20 states. An expenditure of Rs.4729 crore has been incurred and Sewage treatment capacity of 4417 million litres per day (mld) has been created so far under the Plan. Details of funds released under NRCP for cleaning major rivers during the last three years state-wise are given in the Annexure. With the pollution abatement works completed so far, despite significant increase in urbanization, industrialization and growth in population in cities along the banks of river, the water quality in terms of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) values for major rivers is reported to have improved as compared to the water quality before taking up pollution abatement works under NRCP, based on independent monitoring undertaken by reputed institutions.

The Central Government has constituted the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) in February, 2009 as an empowered authority for conservation of the river Ganga by adopting a holistic approach. The Authority has decided that under 'Mission Clean Ganga', it will be ensured that by year 2020, no untreated municipal sewage and industrial effluents flow into Ganga. A project with World Bank assistance for abatement of pollution of river Ganga at an estimated cost of Rs.7000 crore has been approved in April, 2011.

Conservation of rivers is a collective effort of Central and State Governments and the Central Government is supplementing the efforts of the State Governments in river conservation through the Central Plans. Creation of infrastructure for sewage management and disposal is also being undertaken through other Central schemes, such as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission and Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns, as well as under state schemes.