

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1854

ANSWERED ON:26.03.2012

PROTECTION OF GANGA RIVER

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the concerns expressed by various organizations/individuals/researchers regarding the existence of the holy Ganga river recently;
- (b) if so, the main points of concern expressed by them;
- (c) the details of the assistance provided by the World Bank to the Government for the purposes; and
- (d) the details of the steps taken by the Government to protect the Ganga river and the work executed, as-on-date?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) to (d) Ganga Action Plan (GAP) is being implemented since 1985 for undertaking pollution abatement activities in the identified polluted stretches of the river Ganga through implementation of works like interception and diversion of sewage, setting up of sewage treatment plants, low cost sanitation works, crematoria works etc. An expenditure of Rs. 1045 crore has been incurred towards implementation of various pollution abatement works in towns along river Ganga and sewage treatment capacity of 1091 million litres per day (mld) has been created.

In light of experience gained in implementation of the river action plans since 1985, the conservation strategy was reviewed by the Government. Accordingly, in February 2009, the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) has been constituted as an empowered, planning, financing, monitoring and coordinating authority with the objective to ensure effective abatement of pollution and conservation of the river Ganga by adopting a holistic river basin approach.

Representations/ suggestions are received from time to time from members of the public/ organisations pertaining to conservation of river Ganga. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the Government with a consortium of 7 Indian Institute of Technologies for preparation of a Ganga River Basin Management Plan. Feedback/inputs from experts/organisations for overall improvement of the ecological health of the river, augmentation of river flow, control of pollution etc., are taken into account in the preparation of the basin management plan.

The NGRBA in its first meeting has resolved that under Mission Clean Ganga it will be ensured that by 2020 no untreated municipal sewage and industrial effluents flow into Ganga and the investments required to create the necessary treatment and sewage infrastructure will be shared suitably between the Central and the State Governments. Projects amounting to Rs. 2598 crore have been sanctioned so far under the NGRBA programme.

A project under the NGRBA with World Bank assistance for abatement of pollution of river Ganga at an estimated cost of Rs. 7000 crore has been approved by the Central Government in April 2011. The World Bank will provide financial assistance of US \$ 1 billion. The principal objective of the project, to be implemented in 8 years, is to fund creation of pollution abatement infrastructure for sewage treatment, industrial pollution control, solid waste management and river front management for conservation and restoration of water quality of the river.