

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1976

ANSWERED ON:26.03.2012

POLLUTION IN RIVERS

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

- (a) whether the level of pollution has increased in various rivers in the country including Tungabhadra river;
- (b) if so, the details of these polluted rivers, State-wise and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the schemes launched earlier for clearing these rivers have not achieved the desired results;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the effective steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to make all rivers pollution free?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Pollution load on rivers has increased over the years due to rapid urbanization 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. The Central Pollution Control Board in association with State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees have established a network of 1085 Water Quality Monitoring Stations along various river stretches. Water quality data in respect of Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) has exceeded the desired water quality criteria (< 3 mg/per litre) in 150 river stretches covering 121 rivers including some stretches of the Tungabhadra river. Details of number of polluted stretches and rivers statewide are at Annexure.

(c) to (e) This Ministry is supplementing the efforts of the State Governments in pollution abatement in various rivers through the centrally sponsored National River Conservation Plan (NRCP), which presently covers 40 rivers in 190 towns spread over 20 states. As the major cause of rising organic pollution particularly BOD in these rivers is due to discharge of untreated and partially treated domestic effluents by various municipalities across the country, major pollution abatement schemes implemented under the Plan include interception, diversion and treatment of sewage. Sewage treatment capacity of 4574 million litres per day has been created so far under the Plan. The water quality, in terms of BOD values for major rivers is reported to have improved as compared to the water quality before taking up pollution abatement works under NRCP. However, the levels of bacterial contamination in terms of fecal coliform are reported to be exceeding the maximum permissible limit at a number of locations along various rivers.

Creation of sewerage infrastructure for its disposal is the responsibility of the State Governments/Urban Local Bodies. Assistance is also provided in this regard through other central schemes, such as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission and Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns.