

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1050

ANSWERED ON:12.08.2013

POLLUTION IN GANGOTRI YAMUNOTRI AND BADRINATH DHAM

Mahajan Smt. Sumitra

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

(a) Whether the environmental changes and pollution have caused ecological degradation to the famous Gangotri, Yamunotri and Badrinath Dhams;

(b) If so, the details thereof ; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to save the ecology of the region?

Answer

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

(a) and (b) : Ministry of Environment and Forests is not aware of any scientific report relating to ecological degradation in the famous Gangotri, Yamunotri and Badrinath dhams due to environmental change and pollution. However, a pilot study conducted on impact of hydropower in Bhagirathi Valley by G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development has indicated that the water quality parameters of the river are within the permissible limit. Further, survey of water quality of Yamuna and Bhagirathi River at Yamunotri and Gangotri undertaken by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in the Year 2009 to 2011 reveals that the water quality at both the studied locations are meeting the required criteria of Class 'B' i.e. water fit for organized outdoor bathing except in the year 2009 when total Coliforms violates prescribed limit. This violation of Total Coliforms may be due to rains leading to surface runoff or due to high number of pilgrims at the studied locations. .

(c) : Considering the ecological sensitivity of the region, several steps have been initiated by the Govt. of India to protect the ecology of Indian Himalayan Region including the Mission on Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem under National Action Plan on Climate Change. The Ministry of Environment and Forests, GOI, (MoEF) and G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED) have jointly prepared the document "Governance for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem- Guidelines and Best practices (G-SHE)". The document contains background information about the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR), guidelines and best practices covering a wide variety of issues, namely, Sustainable urbanization, regulated tourism, water scarcity, environmental awareness, energy options conservation area and forests zone management, monitoring networks and infrastructure development, etc. Specific guidelines for regulating tourists and pilgrimage is suggested for Himalayan region.