

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3791

ANSWERED ON:22.12.2015

Conservation of Rivers

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

- (a) whether the Government has any plan for the conservation and rejuvenation of rivers and its tributaries in the country and if so, the details thereof, including endangered rivers;
- (b) the details of ongoing projects in this regard and the details of rejuvenated rivers so far, river and State-wise;
- (c) the details of funds allocated/released and utilized so far during each of the last three years and the current year, river and State-wise; and
- (d) whether the Government has any proposal to enact a legislation to check illegal construction on river banks, indiscriminate exploitation of groundwater and for conservation of water/rivers and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (c) Discharge of untreated and partially treated sewage from cities/towns and industrial effluents constitute a major source of pollution in rivers. It is the responsibility of the State Governments/ concerned local bodies to set up proper facilities for collection, transportation and treatment of sewage being generated and ensure that untreated sewage does not fall into the rivers thereby polluting them. This Ministry has been supplementing the efforts of the State Governments in abatement of pollution in identified stretches of various rivers under National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) and NGRBA (National Ganga River Basin Authority) programmes, on cost sharing basis between the Central and State Governments. Various pollution abatement schemes taken-up under these programmes, inter-alia include interception & diversion of raw sewage, construction of sewerage systems, setting up of sewage treatment plants, low cost sanitation facilities, electric/improved wood crematoria and river front development. The NGRBA programme along with work of Ganga & its tributaries is with Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation from 01/08/2014 onwards. The programmes of NRCP & NGRBA (till 01/08/2014) have covered polluted stretches of 42 rivers in 199 towns spread over 21 States at a sanctioned cost of ` 11212.33 crore so far, as per details at Annexure-I. Sewage treatment capacity of 5084 million litres per day (mld) has been created so far under these two programmes.

The details of funds released to various State Governments for implementation of sanctioned works under NRCP/NGRBA programmes during the last three years and current year, State-wise are at Annexure-II.

The Government has in 2014 also initiated an Integrated Ganga Conservation Mission - 'Namami Gange' under the NGRBA programme for consolidating the ongoing efforts & planning for an integrated and comprehensive action plan for rejuvenation of Ganga and its tributaries. The State Governments, apart from their own budgetary allocation, are also accessing financial assistance for creation of sewerage infrastructure, including sewage treatment plants, in various cities/towns under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) programme of Ministry of Urban Development, and Swatch Bharat Abhiyan (Gramin) programme of Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has issued directions under Section 18 1(b) of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 in April, 2015 to all State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees regarding treatment and utilization of sewage generated in their respective States. CPCB has also issued directions to 178 towns under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for proper treatment and disposal of sewage.

To control discharge of industrial effluents, CPCB and respective State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees monitor industries with respect to effluents discharge standards and take action for non-compliance under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. To improve the monitoring of compliance, directions have been issued to specific industries to install online 24x7 effluent and emission monitoring devices. Steps have also been taken by CPCB to promote low waste and no waste concept leading to Zero Liquid Discharge by grossly water polluting industries, particularly those located on the river banks.

(d) Water being a State subject, it is the primary responsibility of the State Governments to regulate construction along the river banks and indiscriminate exploitation of ground water. However, building and construction projects involving built up area of more than 20,000 square meters require prior environmental clearance of the concerned State Level Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) under the provisions of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 of this Ministry, as amended from time to time. Construction of various other projects, including river valley projects, listed in the schedule to the EIA Notification also require prior

environmental clearance from this Ministry or the SEIAA concerned, depending upon the category of the project. In addition, this Ministry vide its Notification of December, 2012 has declared the entire watershed of about 100 kilometers stretch of river Bhagirathi from Gomukh to Uttarkashi covering an area of 4,179.59 square kilometres as an Eco-sensitive Zone, inter alia prohibiting and regulating certain activities within the zone.

Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation has also circulated a Model Bill to regulate and control development of ground water to all States/Union Territories (UTs) to make suitable legislation to regulate utilisation of ground water. So far, 15 States/UTs have enacted the legislation based on this Model Bill.
