

Millennium post- 15-January-2021

DISCHARGE OF SEWAGE IN RIVERS JOINING GANGA

Stop 'crime of pollution', NGT tells UP government

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The National Green Tribunal has come down heavily on the Uttar Pradesh government over discharge of untreated sewage in rivers joining the Ganga and said there was no indication how "crime of pollution" is to be prevented by the State.

Terming the situation extremely "unsatisfactory", a bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said remedial action needs to be taken for contamination of Ramgarh lake as also the Ami, Rapti and Rohani rivers in and around Gorakhpur.

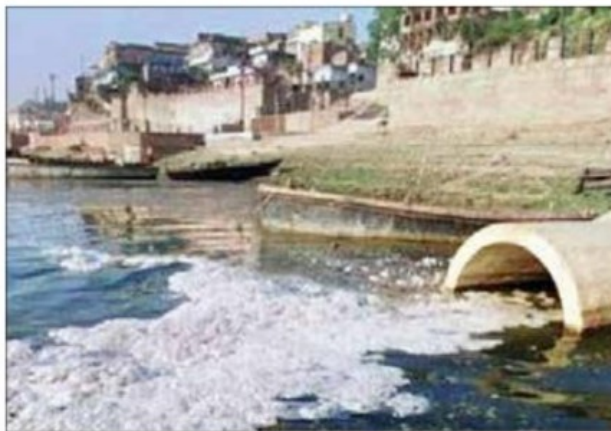
Perusing a report filed by a committee, the green panel said there is large scale non-compliance by the authorities concerned in discharge of their public duties.

"It is high time that periodically the Chief Secretary

personally reviews the matter to ensure compliance of directions of the Supreme Court requiring preventing discharge of untreated sewage and trade effluents, solid waste management and rejuvenation of Ganga," the tribunal said.

The NGT directed the UP Chief Secretary to oversee the execution of river rejuvenation plans for Ami, Rapti, Rohani, Saryu and Ghagra and fix the timelines for rejuvenation of different components with necessary budgetary support and designating the authorities/ officers responsible for it.

"Such projects cannot be delayed on the pretext of funding by the National Mission for Clean Ganga in view of the fact that preventing discharge of pollutants in Ganga or other water bodies a criminal offence under the Water Act and even



authorities are liable to be prosecuted for such offences in the light of the judgement of the Supreme Court.

"Compliance of the said judgement is not dependent on funding by the NMCG," the bench said.

The tribunal noted that an action plan has already been prepared for remediation of Ami and other rivers

in 2019 which is available on the website of the state pollution control board and it same has been duly approved by the River Rejuvenation Committee of UP.

"If it is so, the action needs to be taken promptly in accordance with the said plan.

The execution of plan may

be time-bound and supported by the necessary budget. Persons accountable may be specified," the bench said.

The NGT also noted that six out of 24 drains carrying untreated effluent to the Tapti river which meets river Ghagra which in turns goes to Ganga have been tapped and the remaining 18 drains continue to discharge untreated sewage/effluent in river Rapti.

"This situation is extremely unsatisfactory. Only steps mentioned are that CETP is under construction with a timeline and there is a proposal to set up STP again without any timeline and with no indication as to how continuing crime of pollution affecting the environment and the public health is to be prevented if the State is committed to the rule of law and protection of health of its citizens," it said.

Indian Express- 15-January-2021

'IMPLEMENTATION WILL CAUSE ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER FOR STATE'

Haryana rejects draft report that sought more water for Yamuna revival

SHIVAMPATEL

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 14

THE HARYANA government has rejected a draft report by the National Institute of Hydrology (NIH) that recommended the state to release more water into the Yamuna to help its revival.

A draft report by the institute had stated that the river stretch between Haryana's Hathnikund barrage and Delhi's Okhla needs

more water for maintaining its environmental flow (e-flow).

Haryana's additional chief secretary of the environment and climate change department, in a response filed before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on January 6, said the state was releasing 10 cubic metre per second (cumec) of water for maintaining e-flow from the Hathnikund barrage.

"The recommendation of NIH is nearly 300% of the existing e-flow of 10 cumecs and the state is

completely in disagreement with the recommendations... as the implementation of the above proposal shall cause environmental disaster in Haryana... It is further informed that the matter has already been taken up by the state with the Ministry of Jal Shakti... to not to accept the report of NIH in this regard," the response stated.

The study by NIH was commissioned in 2018 by the Central water ministry's National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG). The



Yamuna receives a large volume of domestic sewage. Archive

draft final report was discussed in June 2020 in a meeting chaired by central water minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.

At present, a minimum of 10 cumec of water is released into the river from Hathnikund barrage — except in monsoon months between June and October when it is increased up to 298 cumec. The NIH study recommended that minimum flow of water be increased, from 23 cumec to 34 cumec during lean or non-mon-

soon months. Between June and October, the flow should be 44 cumec to 220 cumec. The recommendation is aimed at helping the river achieve its ecological functions, such as recharging ground water, supporting biodiversity and aquatic life, and providing for the needs of the population.

The Yamuna receives a large volume of domestic sewage and industrial waste, and almost all freshwater present in it is diverted for various consumptive

purposes at the Hathnikund barrage, as per a report submitted by the Yamuna Monitoring Committee to the NGT in June.

Opposition to the NIH e-flow study was also made during a meeting last May by Haryana's additional chief secretary of the irrigation department. He said there was an acute drinking water shortage in the state, and groundwater levels have gone very deep at 78 'over exploited' blocks out of a total 121.

The Statesman- 15-January-2021

Dal Lake freezes after 30 years as mercury dips minus 8.4° Celsius

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 14 JANUARY

Kashmir's famous Dal Lake was found frozen on Thursday morning as the Valley recorded the coldest night after a gap of 30 years.

Men of the State Disaster Relief Force (SDRF) were deployed to break the thick sheet of ice that had got formed on the lake due to extreme cold. Some people were seen standing on the frozen patches of the lake.

Srinagar recorded minus 8.4 degrees Celsius that was the coldest since 1991 when the mercury had plunged to minus 11.8 degrees Celsius, said the MET officials. The city recorded minus 11.3 degrees Celsius in 1995.

The lowest minus 14.4 degrees Celsius was recorded in 1893. Parts of Delhi reeled under a "severe" cold wave and witnessed "dense" fog on Thursday as the minimum temperature dropped to 2 degrees Celsius, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Cong asks admin to evacuate stranded passengers: Congress on Thursday expressed concern over the emerging sit-



uation due to continuous closure of the Jammu-Srinagar national highway and urged the administration to take emergency steps in this regard.

In a statement, president J&K Pradesh Congress Committee GA Mir said that the people in Kashmir Valley were already facing hardships due to recent heavy snowfall and a "lethargic" administration and now the closure of Highway has multiplied their woes

manifold. He said that according to information, it can take more than one week to restore the Highway at Ramban. What situation will emerge in coming days, is any body's guess.

He said that there is shortage of essential commodities and prices are skyrocketing while thousands of people are stranded on Highway at different places. He said that in the past, the elected governments used to stock rations

and other essentials in Kashmir Valley, Ladakh and snow bound areas in Jammu region before the onset of winter but now all such practices have become things of past.

Parts of Delhi reeled under a "severe" cold wave and witnessed "dense" fog on Thursday as the minimum temperature dropped to 2 degrees Celsius, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. Visibility levels dropped to 100 metres at Palam and

201 metres at Safdarjung due to "dense" to "moderate" fog in the morning, an IMD official said. According to the IMD, "very dense" fog is when visibility is between 0 and 50 metres. In case of "dense" fog, visibility is between 51 and 200 metres, "moderate" 201 and 500 metres, and "shallow" 501 and 1,000 metres.

The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data for the city, recorded a minimum of 2 degrees Celsius, five notches below normal, as against 3.2 degrees Celsius on Wednesday. The weather stations at Lodhi Road and Ridge recorded a minimum of 2.4 and 3.6 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Cold wave sweeps Punjab, Haryana: Punjab and Haryana continued to reel under severe cold wave conditions on Thursday with Narnaul being the coldest place.

Narnaul in Haryana shivered at 1.8 degrees Celsius, three degrees below normal, an official of the India Meteorological Department said. A thick blanket of fog enveloped many places in Punjab and Haryana in the morning.

The Tribune- 15-January-2021

Pong wetland fit for fishing: Officials

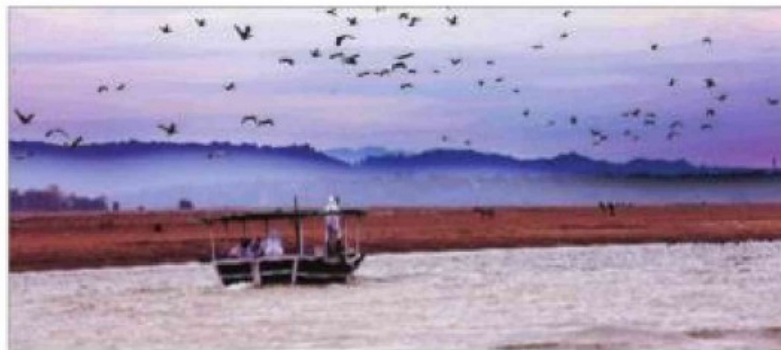
Water samples free of contamination | Avian flu outbreak on decline

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NURPUR, JANUARY 14

The water samples of the Pong wetland have been found free of contamination and is fit for fishing. The testing conducted by the Jal Shakti Department factored in 16 parameters in the wake of the avian flu outbreak in the wetland.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Raul M Rahane said the testing was conducted to rule out contamination in the wetland. "The wetland is free



Wildlife officials search for dead birds at Pong Dam. TRIBUNE PHOTO

DELHI MARKET OPENS AS SAMPLES TEST -VE

of water-borne contamination and pollution," he asserted. The report brings respite to the over 2,800 fish-

ermen who eke a living by fishing in the wetland. On January 3, the district administration had suspend-

ed fishing in the wetland after the outbreak of avian flu. Kangra DC Rakesh Prajapati said the decision to resume fishing in the wetland would be reviewed soon.

The avian influenza outbreak in Pong Dam sanctuary has been on the decline for the past two days, Archana Sharma, Chief Wildlife Warden, said. As many as 94 birds were found dead today, taking the toll to 4,836. On January 12, the mortality count was 280 and the next day it had dipped to 105.

The Tribune- 15-January-2021

Cleaning the Yamuna

SC intervention underscores urgency

TAKING up cudgels on behalf of the citizens and upholding their right to getting the supply of uncontaminated water, the Supreme Court has begun with ensuring a clean-up of the Yamuna. Taking suo motu notice of the sorry state of affairs, the SC has made all states through which the Yamuna passes and the agencies responsible for its clear flow answerable for the discharge of untreated effluents into the river. Rightly so. For, dirty water gushing from the taps in so many homes and establishments along the river's embankments can be traced to not one cause but to the cumulative neglect and oversight by all concerned. That the health and even life of both humans and aquatic species is compromised resultantly makes the lapses criminal.

The rap by the apex court should goad them all to get their act together: Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh as also the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, and the Central Pollution Control Board. While responding to the SC notices, each would do well to accept its share of the responsibility in the matter and proceed to fulfil it, rather than indulge in the usual blame game. A slip by any stakeholder can undo the good work of maintaining cleanliness by the others. A glaring example is the recurring glitches found in Haryana's sewage treatment plants that partly lead to the cancerous concoction in the Yamuna waters flowing into Delhi.

Indeed, the price to be paid in terms of ill-health and treatment for diseases and the economic cost of a degraded environment, flora and fauna far outweighs the cost incurred in curbing river pollution. The authorities must diligently set things right at the municipal level in order to nip the irritants in the way of proper industrial and human waste management in the bud. Swift penal action against the offenders is needed before things spin out of control. Respect for the natural lifelines holds the key for the sustenance of life and livelihoods.

The Tribune- 15-January-2021

Imposed ₹300 crore penalty for polluting Yamuna: State to NGT

BHARTESH SINGH THAKUR
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, JANUARY 14

Haryana has claimed before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) that it has been imposing environmental compensation (EC) on all violating units for polluting the Yamuna and penalty of Rs 300 crore has been imposed till November last, though only Rs 4.67 crore has been collected.

In its reply dated January 6 on findings of the Yamuna Monitoring Committee (YMC), the state submitted that the Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) "is in the process of imposing environmental compensation for untreated effluents in drains and sewage treatment plants (STPs) and the Chief Secretary has taken up the matter with individual administrative secretaries for taking action against erring officers".

The YMC had, in its fifth report last month, pointed out that Haryana did not comply with directions of the NGT dated September 11, 2019, regarding compen-

Only ₹4.67 crore collected so far



Toxic foam floats on the surface of the Yamuna. FILE PHOTO

sation for not being able to fix deficiencies in STPs, delay in construction of new STPs and not starting work with regard to sewerage and its connectivity. "It will be open to Haryana to recover the said amount from erring officers and contractors," the NGT had said.

The YMC had, in its report, indicated that 16 of the 24 STPs inspected in the Yamuna catchment towns were found to be having operational deficiencies and were not complying with standards. It was concluded that the status given by line depart-

ments were incorrect and officers of the HSPCB had not performed their duties. Haryana had now told the NGT that 10 STPs had improved position and six were still not complying.

Regarding the observation that none of four common effluent treatment plants (CETPs) and three STPs in Sonapat, it admitted that the trunk sewer line had settled down, due to which the entire sewage was not reaching the two STPs and thus, were not functional to capacity. It was stated that work of replacement of trunk sewer

line would be completed by June 30 and the HSIIDC is in the process of upgrading the four CETPs.

On discharge at Sonapat, which was affecting the drinking water treatment plant at Wazirpur in Delhi due to higher higher BOD and ammonical nitrogen concentration, Haryana pointed to floating tenders for conduit to carry effluents separately. On the non-functional STP in Faridabad, it submitted that it was under construction.

The YMC had pointed out that construction of seven new CETPs had not started in Faridabad, Gurugram and Yamunanagar, which would discharge 131.25 MLD of industrial effluents in the Yamuna. Haryana replied that three CETPs in Faridabad would be constructed by 2023 and two CETPs were being commissioned in Gurugram. Regarding industrial effluents from Yamunanagar and Jagadhri, Haryana said it was considering shifting industrial units.

Punjab Kesari- 15-January-2021

नदियों में अपशिष्ट जल छोड़ने पर फटकार

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): राष्ट्रीय हरित अधिकरण ने गंगा नदी में मिलने वाली अन्य नदियों में अपशिष्ट जल छोड़ने को लेकर उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार को फटकार लगायी और कहा कि इसके कोई संकेत नहीं मिल रहे हैं कि राज्य 'प्रदूषण के अपराध' को कैसे रोकना चाहता है। हालात को 'असंतोषजनक' करार देते हुए अधिकरण के प्रमुख आदर्श कुमार गोयल की अध्यक्षता वाली पीठ ने कहा कि रामगढ़ झील और गोरखपुर और उसके आसपास आमी, राप्ती और रोहिणी नदियों के प्रदूषण को रोकने के लिए उपचारात्मक कार्रवाई करने की आवश्यकता है। समिति द्वारा दी गई रिपोर्ट के आधार पर

● अब समय आ गया है कि मुख्य सचिव स्वयं निगरानी करें और गंगा संरक्षण पर उच्चतम न्यायालय के निर्देशों का पालन सुनिश्चित करें: एनजीटी

हरित अधिकरण ने कहा कि बड़े पैमाने पर संबंधित अधिकारी अपने कर्तव्य पूरा करने से पीछे हट रहे हैं। अधिकरण ने कहा, "अब समय आ गया है कि मुख्य सचिव स्वयं समय-

समय पर इसकी निगरानी करें और अपशिष्ट जल और औद्योगिक कचरे के नदी में मिलने, ठोस कचरा प्रबंधन और गंगा संरक्षण पर उच्चतम न्यायालय के निर्देशों का पालन सुनिश्चित करें।" अधिकरण ने उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्य सचिव को निर्देश दिया कि वह आमी, राप्ती, रोहिणी, सरयू और घाघरा नदियों की संरक्षण योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन पर ध्यान दें। उसने निर्देश दिया कि वह संरक्षण के लिए बजट और समय सीमा तय करे और संबंधित अधिकारियों और संस्थाओं को जिम्मेदार ठहराए। पीठ ने कहा, 'इन परियोजनाओं में राष्ट्रीय स्वच्छ गंगा मिशन से धन प्राप्ति के नाम पर देरी नहीं की जा सकती है।'