

The matter is *sub judice* before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in view of IA no. 100 in Writ Petition (Civil) 337/1995.

***Coal mining in forest areas***

2024. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry had compromised many of its original position to accommodate the demand of other departments *viz.* Coal Ministry in forest area;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry has demanded to declare coal in dense forest areas as strategic energy reserve; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) After the enactment of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 with effect from 25.10.1980, prior approval of the Central Government is required for the use of forest land for non-forest purposes. The Act envisages optimization of use of forest land for non-forest purposes, including coal mining. To compensate the loss of forests and to minimize the adverse impact of such non-forest activities on flora and fauna of the area, suitable and site specific mitigation measures are taken. As such, no special dispensation has been proposed to accommodate the demand of other Departments including Coal Ministry.

- (c) No, Sir.
- (d) Does not arise.

***Sources of pollution in Ganga***

†2025. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:  
SHRI RAMCHANDRA PRASAD SINGH:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that pollution level is found to be increasing along the course of the river Ganga from its origin to its meeting with the sea;
- (b) if so, whether Government has identified the sources of the pollution;
- (c) if so, the types of these sources and the contribution of each source in increasing the pollution level in river Ganga;
- (d) whether Government has any plan to restrict these sources; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (e) The pollution load on rivers including Ganga has increased over the years due to rapid urbanization and industrialization. Abstraction of water for irrigation, drinking, industrial use, power etc. compounds the challenge. Disposal of untreated/partially treated sewage by the cities and towns is the major source of pollution in the river, constituting about 75-80% of the pollution loads by volume. As per Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), 2760 mld (million litres per day) of sewage is generated by the cities and towns along the river. Industrial effluents and other non-point sources of pollution like disposal of dead bodies and animal carcasses, open defecation, cattle wallowing, agricultural runoff etc., add to the pollution loads.

Conservation of rivers is an ongoing and collective effort of the Central and State Governments. The Central Government is implementing the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) for pollution abatement through implementation of works like interception and diversion of sewage, setting up of sewage treatment plants, sanitation facilities etc. Under this Plan, Rs. 887 crore has been spent so far and a sewage treatment capacity of 1064 mld has been created. Action is taken by the CPCB and the State Pollution Control Boards under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 against industries not complying with effluent discharge standards.

The Central Government has set up the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) in February, 2009 as an empowered authority for conservation of the river Ganga with a river basin approach. The Authority has decided that under Mission Clean Ganga it will be ensured that by 2020 no untreated municipal sewage and industrial effluents flow into Ganga. Pollution abatement schemes worth about Rs. 2476 crores have been sanctioned under NGRBA so far.

River conservation projects such as creation of civic infrastructure for sewage management and disposal are also being implemented under other central schemes, such as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns, as well as under State sector schemes.

#### ***Environmental clearance to POSCO***

†2026. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether proposed steel and iron factory of POSCO company in Orissa has been given environmental clearance;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.