

Maintenance of water bodies

2074. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that incorporating maintenance of water bodies as an integral part of town planning is essential to ensure their upkeep and prevent incidents of urban flooding;

(b) whether encroachment of natural drainage channels is one of the main reasons for flooding in urban areas; and

(c) if so, the details of steps taken by Government to incorporate the maintenance of water bodies in urban areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN):

(a) Water conservation and maintenance of water bodies is a subject matter of States and a function of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). However, it is essential that water bodies be included as integral part of town planning process for minimising the incidents of urban flooding.

(b) and (c) Generally encroachment of natural drainage channel, inadequate maintenance of water bodies, etc. are some of the reasons for flooding.

In this regard, Ministry of Urban Development has issued an advisory on 'Conservation and Restoration of Water Bodies in Urban Areas (2013)' in which various steps are suggested for water body conservation and restoration. Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has also prepared 'Draft Guidelines for Conservation and Protection of Water Bodies'.

Further, to revive, restore and rehabilitate the traditional water bodies, a scheme for Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of water bodies in rural and urban areas is under implementation with multiple objectives like Comprehensive improvement and restoration of water bodies thereby increasing tank storage capacity, Ground Water Recharge, Increased availability of drinking water, Improvement in agriculture/horticulture productivity, etc.

In XII Plan, so far 1354 water bodies have been included under RRR of water bodies scheme and works in 464 water bodies have been completed.

Policy on silt management of river Ganga

2075. SHRI K.T.S. TULSI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made any policy on silt management in the backdrop of reduction of depth of Ganga river on account of siltation which added to the floods of 2016; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, by when will Government be able to frame such a policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has issued Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines 2016 which has been prepared with extensive consultations with states and other stakeholders. The guidelines amongst its other objectives are also aimed at:—

- (I) Ensuring conservation of the river equilibrium and its natural environment by protection and restoration of the ecological system,
- (II) Ensuring that the rivers are protected from bank and bed erosion beyond its stable profile,
- (III) Avoiding pollution of river water leading to water quality deterioration,
- (IV) Maintaining the river equilibrium with the application of sediment transport.

Further, Government has constituted a Committee for preparation of Guidelines for desiltation of river Ganga from Bhimgauda (Uttarakhand) to Farakka (West Bengal) under the Chairmanship of Shri Madhav Chitale (former Expert Member, National Ganga River Basin Authority and Ex Secretary to the Government of India), with Secretary (Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation) and Secretary (Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) as other members. The report of the committee has been submitted.