

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1162
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.07.2025

Wildlife Deaths and Water Pollution in Solapur

1162. MS. PRANITI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE

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

- (a) whether any direction has been issued to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) to complete a forensic investigation, publish the cause of death for the 55 protected turtles, and judicially penalize any authorities or polluters found responsible for the said incident and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to mandate an immediate ecological audit and rehabilitation programme—including sewage diversion, dredging and riparian buffer restoration—under the Water Act and Wildlife Protection Act considering the lake has a history of fish kills and recurring contamination and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the details of the plans proposed by the Government to install continuous water quality monitoring systems in protected wildlife habitats like Siddheshwar Lake, enforce real-time pollution alerts and ensure monthly public reporting to prevent future ecological tragedies?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (b)

The protection and management of wildlife and its habitat is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government and Union Territory Administration. The Chief Wild Life Wardens of the States/Union Territories are empowered to take necessary action under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 for violation of provisions of the Act.

As per the information received from Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), the death incident of turtles and fishes was reported at Shri Siddheshwar Temple Lake in the month of April-May 2025. Shri Siddheshwar lake is sole property of Shri Siddheshwar Temple committee and maintenance of the said lake solely lies with the temple committee. The inspection of Shri Siddheshwar Temple Lake and surrounding was conducted by MPCB, other concerned authorities including Solapur Municipal Corporation, and Forest Department, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry Department of the Government of Maharashtra.

The MPCB issued direction on 13/06/2025 under section 33 A of Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 to Shri Siddheshwar Devasthan and Solapur Municipal Corporation directing them to take appropriate measures for water quality improvement of

lake. As per the postmortem of dead turtles conducted by District Veterinary Polyclinic Officers along with Veterinary Officers of Solapur Municipal Corporation (SMC) on 9th May 2025, the cause of death of turtles could not be ascertained. As per the inspection of MPCB and the water quality analysis report of lake, the amount of dissolved oxygen was found to be very low, the BOD / COD (biological / chemical oxygen demand) parameters were found at higher side. SMC has started aeration fountain system on immediate basis. Further, a meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Collector, Solapur and directions were given to PWD to install additional aeration system.

(c) The steps taken by the government for conservation of lakes and prevention & control of water pollution are given below:

- Government of India enacted The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and various provisions under The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for protection of water bodies and the Central & State Pollution Control Boards are implementing the provisions of both The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to prevent and control pollution of aquatic resources.
- Government of India stipulated General environmental standards under Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986 with an aim to prevent pollution in the water bodies.
- SPCBs/PCCs have been directed under Section 18(1) (b) of The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 vide letter dated 21.04.2015 to direct concerned agencies in the State/UT to develop infrastructure for sewage treatment.
- CPCB vide letter dated 17.02.2023 requested all the SPCBs/PCCs to ensure necessary action to prevent, control/abate pollution of stagnant water bodies in respective States/UTs as per provisions of Section 17.1.(a) of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.
- The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) monitors water quality of aquatic resources in the country at 4,736 locations which includes 558 on Lakes under the National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP).
- MoEF&CC is implementing a centrally sponsored scheme namely, National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems (NPCA)/2024 for conservation and management of wetlands in the country, on cost sharing basis between Central Government and respective State Governments. The scheme covers various activities such as interception, treatment of wastewater, shoreline protection, in-situ cleaning i.e., desilting and dewatering, storm water management, bioremediation, catchment area treatment including tree plantation in catchment area, survey and demarcation, bio-fencing, fisheries development, weed control, biodiversity conservation, education and awareness creation, community participation, etc.
- Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has notified the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 as regulatory framework for conservation and management of wetlands across the country to conserve, manage and maintain the ecological character of the wetlands. The said Rules inter-alia restrict the activities, like solid waste dumping, discharge of untreated wastes and effluents from industries, cities, towns, villages etc. In accordance with the provisions of the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017, the primary responsibility for the conservation and management of wetlands lies with the respective State Wetland Authorities.
