

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2258

ANSWERED ON:29.08.2007

CONTAMINATED WATER

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

- (a) whether besides arsenic there are other harmful chemicals also in the basin of Ganga and other rivers in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the State-wise details of the schemes being run by the Government at present to check the pollution in rivers;
- (d) whether these schemes are achieving the targets; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT OF FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) to (b) As reported by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), out of 206 rivers being monitored for water quality by CPCB with State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees, toxic metals are measured in 120 rivers. It is also reported that 104 rivers are containing toxic metals namely, Arsenic, Cadmium, Copper, Lead, Chromium, Nickel, Zinc and Mercury. However, as per Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS 10500), the concentration of most of these metals is found within the prescribed drinking water limits except for chromium.

(c) The State-wise details of different Pollution Abatement Schemes being implemented under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) are enclosed herewith at Annexure.

(d) to (e) Most of the Sewage Treatment Plants (one of the main core schemes of NRCP) are reported to be complying with the prescribed standards. The main reasons for non-compliance of some of the STPs are the poor operation & maintenance of these plants, frequent power failure etc.

As a consequence of completion of works under the Ganga Action Plan (GAP), the Ganga River water quality has shown improvement over the pre-GAP period water quality due to the schemes completed under the Plan. The water quality of rivers has been under stress due to phenomenal increase in population, large scale extraction of water from the rivers for irrigation, drinking etc.