

No.A-32011/2/2009-NRCD-I
 Government of India
 Ministry of Environment & Forests
 National River Conservation Directorate

Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex,
 Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110 003.

Dated : the 30th November, 2010

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Sub: Minutes of the second meeting of National Ganga River Basin Authority held on 1st November, 2010.

The minutes of the second meeting of National Ganga River Basin Authority held on 1st November, 2010 are enclosed for information.



(Rajiv Gauba)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India

Encl: As above

To

1. Principal Secretary to Prime Minister, South Block, New Delhi.
2. JS to PM (Shri Shatrughna Singh), South Block, New Delhi.
3. PS to Finance Minister, North Block, New Delhi.
4. PS to Minister of Urban Development, Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi.
5. Ps to Minister of Power, Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi.
6. PS to Minister of Water Resources, Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi.
7. PS to Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Yojana Bhawan, New Delhi.
8. PS to Minister of State(I/C), Environment & Forests, Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi.
9. PS to Minister of Science & Technology, Anusandhan Bhawan, New Delhi.
10. Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh, Bapu Bhawan, Lucknow.
11. Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Uttarakhand, Sachivalaya, Dehradun.
12. Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Bihar, Sachivalaya, Patna.
13. Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Jharkhand, Ranchi.
14. Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, West Bengal, Writers Building, Kolkata.
15. Chief Secretary, Uttar Pradesh, Shastri Bhawan, Lucknow.

Contd.....P/2...

16. Chief Secretary, Uttarakhand, Sachivalaya, Dehradun.
17. Chief Secretary, Bihar, Sachivalaya, Patna.
18. Chief Secretary, Jharkhand, Project Bhawan, Ranchi.
19. Chief Secretary, West Bengal, Writers Building, Kolkata.
20. Addl. Secretary(MM), Ministry of Environment & Forests, New Delhi.
21. Chairman, Central Pollution Control Board, Parivesh Bhawan, New Delhi.
22. Prof. K.J. Nath, former Director, All India Institute of Public Health & Hygiene, Kolkata.
23. Dr. R.K. Sinha, Department of Zoology, Patna University, Patna.
24. Prof. B.D. Tripathi, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.
25. Dr. Veer Bhadra Mishra, President, Sankat Mochan Foundation, Varanasi.
26. Shri Rajendra Singh, Chairman, Tarun Bharat Sangh, Jaipur.
27. Smt. Rama Rauta, Convener, Save Ganga Movement, Pune.
28. Ms. Sunita Narain, Director, Centre for Science & Environment, New Delhi.
29. Dr. Ravi Chopra, Director, Peoples' Science Institute, Dehradun.
30. Prof. R.H. Siddiqi, former Professor, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

Minutes of the second meeting of the National Ganga River Basin Authority, held on 1st November 2010

1. The second meeting of the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) was held on 1st November 2010, under the chairpersonship of the Prime Minister. The list of participants is annexed.
2. While making his opening remarks, the Prime Minister noted the actions initiated after the National Ganga River Basin Authority was set up. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has signed a memorandum of understanding with a consortium of seven IITs for the preparation of a Ganga River Basin Management Plan. This will provide a roadmap for implementation of measures for conservation of the river Ganga. "Mission Clean Ganga" has been launched with the objective of ensuring that by 2020 no untreated municipal or industrial effluents are discharged into the river. The first phase of projects, worth ₹ 1,450 crore, has been approved. These projects are currently under implementation by States.
3. Emphasizing that NGRBA is a joint initiative of the Centre and States to rejuvenate the efforts for cleaning the river Ganga, the Prime Minister said that States should earmark adequate resources for river conservation efforts and give priority to capacity building of urban local bodies. State Governments and State Pollution Control Boards will also have to take stronger measures for effectively tackling discharge of industrial effluents, a major cause for pollution of the river Ganga. The Prime Minister said that it is important to draw appropriate lessons from the shortcomings of the previous Ganga Action Plans. In this regard, NGRBA has taken several measures for improving implementation. These include independent appraisal of projects, third-party inspections and tripartite memoranda of agreement among the Centre, States and urban local bodies. A Research Advisory Committee has been set up to promote innovative approaches and cost-effective technologies. Empowered State River Conservation Authorities have been set up in all five Ganga States for monitoring implementation.
4. The Prime Minister observed that maintaining environmental flows is an important new dimension of NGRBA's work. The river must not only be clean (*nirmal dhara*) but it must also continuously flow (*aviral dhara*). State Governments should introduce measures to optimize use of water. In this

regard, he said that it is important to have a relook at the issue of hydro-electric projects in the upper reaches of the Bhagirathi.

5. The Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment & Forests (MEF) made a presentation outlining the actions taken after the first meeting of NGRBA on 5th October 2009 and the initiatives related to the Ganga River Basin Management Plan. He also briefed NGRBA about the status of World Bank assistance for NGRBA. He referred to the Standing Committee that has been set up under the chairpersonship of the Finance Minister, and mentioned that the issues related to Bhaironghati, Pala Maneri and Loharinag Pala hydro-electric projects on river Bhagirathi have been extensively deliberated upon in meetings held under the chairpersonship of the Finance Minister.

6. MEF said that the working group set up under the chairpersonship of Dr. R. K. Sinha, expert-member NGRBA, has submitted an action plan for conservation of dolphins. Action will now be initiated to implement the recommendations of the plan. Steps are also being taken to promote public awareness, especially among youth and school-children, about the importance of dolphin conservation. Referring to the emphasis being given to promoting innovative projects for the cleaning of river Ganga, he mentioned that a proposal by Sankat Mochan Foundation to set up a 37 mld sewage treatment plant using AIWPS technology, has been processed for approval by the Research Advisory Committee, and its implementation will commence soon. It is also proposed to initiate bio-remediation based projects on several major drains discharging into the Ganga. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has been assigned the task of preparing detailed project reports for this purpose.

7. MEF informed NGRBA that in order to effectively tackle the problem of industrial pollution, CPCB has been asked to set up a dedicated cell for inspection and monitoring of industrial units discharging effluents into the river Ganga. In the first instance, the cell is focussing its efforts on the critical stretch of about 500 km from Kannauj to Varanasi. CPCB has started initiating direct action, *i.e.*, issuing orders for closure, under section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, against defaulting units.

8. MEF mentioned that projects worth ₹ 1,450 crore have been sanctioned in the first phase, to achieve the objective of Mission Clean Ganga, *i.e.*, no untreated municipal or industrial wastewater should be allowed to be discharged into river Ganga. He referred to measures that have been put in place for improving the implementation of projects. New projects are being sanctioned, based on a comprehensive approach, including conveyance networks, and pollution load based on the population for the year 2025 is being taken into consideration for designing these projects. The projects are being appraised by reputed independent institutions and a system of third-party inspection has been introduced. Further, in order to ensure proper operation and maintenance (O&M) of assets, these projects will be implemented on Design-Build-Operate model, with 15 years of O&M being part of the project.

9. MEF stated that the Planning Commission has agreed to the proposal that the O&M costs of the assets created under NGRBA will be shared by the Central and State Governments on 70:30 basis for three years. He suggested that this should be extended to a period of five years, so that States can, during this time, build the technical and financial capacity of urban local bodies to ensure O&M on a sustained basis.

10. Referring to the main sources of pollution in river Ganga, MEF pointed out that while Mission Clean Ganga will focus on tackling the point sources of pollution, *i.e.*, treatment of municipal and industrial wastewater, States will need to give priority and attention to tackling the non-point source of pollution, *i.e.*, agricultural run-off containing fertilizers and pesticides residues, disposal of dead bodies and animal carcasses, defecation and littering on river banks, and run-off from municipal and bio-medical wastes.

11. MEF emphasised that it is essential that States set up dedicated implementation entities for improving project preparation and implementation and to effectively discharge the responsibilities related to the objectives and mandate of NGRBA.

12. The Chief Minister of Uttarakhand observed that while ensuring cleanliness of river Ganga and ensuring adequate flows, developmental imperatives should also be given due importance. He said that it is important to ensure that the needs of the people living on the banks of the Ganga in the higher reaches are given adequate consideration while deciding about the

continuance of developmental projects. He pointed out in this regard that stoppage of work on the Loharinag Pala project has resulted in loss of employment for a large number of people, which is a matter of serious concern for the State. The Central Government should, therefore, provide suitable alternatives. He said that the consortium of IITs should take into consideration the requirements of the people and hold adequate consultations with State Governments while preparing the Basin Management Plan. He requested that Uttarakhand should be given a special status, given its location, its dependence on forest resources, and the limitations imposed by the need to conserve these resources. He requested that NGRBA's projects in Uttarakhand should cover all tributaries of river Ganga and be funded on 90:10 cost sharing basis between the Central and State Governments. Uttarakhand has the potential to generate 40,000 MW of hydro-electric power. However, only a small fraction of this has been tapped so far. He suggested that excess water in the river, except during the lean season, can be used for generating hydro-electric power, without adversely impacting the desired environmental flows. He requested that 2,000 MW of hydro-electric power may be provided to the State as compensation for closure of the three hydro-electric projects. He said that the proposal to declare the 135-km stretch of river Ganga from Gaumukh to Uttarkashi as an eco-sensitive zone would adversely impact the legitimate developmental needs of the people of this region. Chief Minister, Uttarakhand also requested that a Ganga Knowledge Centre or Research Centre under NGRBA may be set up in Uttarakhand, preferably in Uttarkashi.

12.1 Responding to Uttarakhand Chief Minister's observations, MEF clarified that the notification pertaining to eco-sensitive zone would be issued only after due consultations with all stakeholders, including the State Government. He further clarified that this will not mean a total prohibition on all developmental activities. The activities to be prohibited and activities to be regulated will be duly identified and listed in the notification, which will issued after due consultations.

13. The Minister for Municipal Affairs and Urban Development, Government of West Bengal noted the successful implementation of GAP-I and GAP-II projects in West Bengal. He assured that all remaining projects under GAP-II will be completed expeditiously. While projects worth around ₹ 140 crore have been sanctioned in West Bengal under NGRBA, project proposals worth around ₹ 800 crore are being formulated by the State Government. He requested that the proposals submitted by the State

Government may be sanctioned expeditiously by NGRBA and that powers to sanction projects up to a certain limit may be delegated to the State Government. He mentioned about the attention given to river-front development and electric crematoria projects in West Bengal, which have been successful in addressing non-point sources of pollution. He stressed the importance of including projects related to municipal solid wastes under NGRBA. He also suggested that projects related to desiltation, lining of canals and embankment protection should be included, so as to comprehensively tackle the problem of river pollution. He suggested that the IITs should focus on developing cost-effective technologies. He welcomed the proposal to share O&M costs between the Central and the State Governments for a period of five years. He informed NGRBA that the State Government has taken a decision to set up a dedicated implementing agency for NGRBA projects and said that this entity will be constituted soon. He also said that an executing agency, based on public-private partnership (PPP) model, will also be set up to implement major infrastructure projects.

14. MEF observed, in response, that the Government of West Bengal should speedily formulate and implement projects pertaining to sewage treatment and sewerage networks, and take up river-front development projects in towns outside Kolkata Metropolitan area also. He appreciated the efforts of the State Government in checking littering on the banks of the river Ganga and addressing non-point pollution through implementation of river-front development projects.

15. Shri S. C. Mishra, MP, representing the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, informed NGRBA that the State Government has decided to set up a dedicated agency for NGRBA projects. He said that this agency will be constituted shortly and special purpose vehicle and PPP models will be adopted for project implementation. He stressed that decisions on continuance of developmental projects, such as hydro-electric projects in the upper reaches of the Bhagirathi, should be based on technical considerations alone. He endorsed the view of the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand regarding the utility of hydro-electric projects for improving power requirements, as well as for preventing floods and for meeting irrigation needs. He stated that annual outlay of NGRBA should be significantly increased, in order to ensure implementation of projects required for achieving the objective of Mission Clean Ganga. He added that given the large requirement of funds, the Central and State Governments should share the costs on 90:10 basis. He was of the view that given the capacity constraints of urban local bodies,

O&M costs should be shared between the Central and State Governments throughout the life-cycle of these projects. He also stressed on speedy clearance of project proposals under NGRBA. He suggested that for tackling industrial pollution, pollution abatement structures may be upgraded under NGRBA, besides taking action against defaulting industries.

16. The Deputy Chief Minister of Jharkhand stated that river Ganga flows through a small stretch in Jharkhand and only two towns, namely, Sahibganj and Rajmahal, are located on this stretch. Mining, cattle-wallowing, municipal sewage, dumping of municipal and bio-medical waste and cremation of dead bodies are significant sources of pollution of river Ganga. He said that appropriate projects to tackle these problems will be formulated and submitted to NGRBA shortly. He informed NGRBA that institutional set-up, in the form of the State River Conservation Authority, the State Executing Agency and an implementing agency, has already been set up and will soon become operational.

17. The following points were made by the Expert-Members:

1. Prof. Veer Bhadra Mishra

Synergy/coordination may be ensured between projects being implemented under different plans/programmes of Central and State Governments in the same city.

2. Smt. Rama Rauta

She suggested that comprehensive environmental impact assessment of hydro-electric projects on Alaknanda and Mandakini rivers should be undertaken. Concern was expressed over large-scale deforestation between Haridwar and Rishikesh for road projects.

The Chief Minister of Uttarakhand responded that no such deforestation has taken place.

3. Prof. B. D. Tripathi

A dedicated institution for Ganga-related R&D activities should be set up at Varanasi as part of NGRBA.

4. Prof. K. J. Nath

Sewerage and treatment infrastructure in different cities should be planned, based on the assimilative capacity of the river. In this regard, he emphasized that zero discharge was not a practicable concept. He suggested that projects being implemented should take into consideration the guidelines being evolved under the Basin Management Plan, which is under preparation. Capacity development of urban local bodies is important for the success of NGRBA's programme. Solid waste management should also be an integral part of the overall NGRBA programme.

5. Shri Rajendra Singh

- (i) STPs are not working satisfactorily at most locations.
- (ii) In order to ensure environmental flow, the other six States of the Ganga river basin may also be considered under the NGRBA programme.
- (iii) To ensure success of the programme, involvement of public is essential, such as through Ganga Maha Panachyat,

6. Ms. Sunita Narain

Attention should be given to improving project preparation and implementation. The guidelines being evolved under Basin Management Plan should be given due consideration in this regard.

18. MEF observed that while measures are being taken to improve project preparation and implementation, it is also important to make full use of budgetary allocations, in order to achieve the objective of Mission Clean Ganga. MEF submitted the suggestions provided by the expert-members of NGRBA to the Prime Minister. These suggestions were based on a meeting taken by MEF with the experts earlier in the day.

19. After discussions, the following decisions were taken:

- (i) Loharinag Pala, Pala Maneri and Bhaironghati hydro-electric power projects on Bhagirathi may be discontinued, as duly recommended.
- (ii) The stretch of river Bhagirathi from Gaumukh to Uttarkashi may be declared as an eco-sensitive zone, and the relevant notification may be issued after due consultations.
- (iii) O&M costs of assets created under NGRBA will be shared between the Centre and States for five years, with a review at the end of three years.
- (iv) States will set up dedicated agencies for implementation of NGRBA projects.

20. The Prime Minister concluded with the observation that the views expressed by State Governments and experts would be considered by the Standing Committee.

21. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the chair.

List of participants in the NGRBA meeting at 7, Race Course Road, New Delhi on 1st November 2010

1. Prime Minister - In the Chair
2. Union Minister of Finance
3. Union Minister of Urban Development
4. Union Minister of Power
5. Union Minister of Water Resources
6. Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission
7. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology
8. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Environment & Forests
9. Chief Minister, Uttarakhand
10. Shri Hemant Soren, Deputy Chief Minister, Jharkhand
11. Shri Asok Bhattacharya, Minister-in-Charge, Urban Development Department, West Bengal
12. Shri S. C. Mishra, MP, Uttar Pradesh
13. Prof. Sanjay G. Dhande, Director, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
14. Ms. Sunita Narain, Director, Centre for Science & Environment
15. Dr. Veer Bhadra Mishra, President, Sankat Mochan Foundation, Varanasi
16. Shri Rajendra Singh, Chairman, Tarun Bharat Sangh, Jaipur
17. Smt. Rama Rauta, Convenor, Save Ganga Movement, Pune
18. Prof B, D. Tripathi, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
19. Dr. Ravi Chopra, Director, Peoples' Science Institute, Dehradun
20. Dr. R. K. Sinha, Department of Zoology, Patna University, Patna
21. Prof. R H. Siddiqi, former Professor, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh
22. Prof. K. J. Nath, former Director, All India Institute of Public Health & Hygiene, Kolkata
23. Shri T. K. A. Nair, Principal Secretary to PM
24. Shri Atul Kumar Gupta, Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh
25. Ms. Mira Mehrishi, Addl. Secretary & Project Director, NRCD, MoEF
26. Shri Shatrughna Singh, Joint Secretary to PM
27. Shri Rajiv Gauba, Joint Secretary, NRCD, MoEF
28. Shri Alok Ranjan, Principal Secretary (Environment), Government of Uttar Pradesh
29. Shri Rajeev Gupta, Principal Secretary, Government of Uttarakhand
30. Shri Debashis Sen, Principal Secretary (Urban Development), Government of West Bengal
31. Shri P. K. Jajoria, Principal Secretary (Urban Development), Government of Jharkhand
32. Shri Alok Vardhan Chaturvedi, Resident Commissioner, Government of Bihar

33. Prof. S. P. Gautam, Chairman, CPCB
34. Dr. Vinod Tare, Professor, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
35. Shri Brijesh Sikka, Director, NRCD, MoEF
36. Shri Ajay Raghava, Deputy Director, NRCD, MoEF