

Business leaders commit support of nearly Rs 500 crores for Namami Gange Mission following appeal by Shri Nitin Gadkari



Captains of Indian trade and industry have committed a support of nearly Rs 500 crores for the development of amenities like ghats, river fronts, crematoria and parks at various places along River Ganga as part of the Namami Gange Mission. Shri Nitin Gadkari, Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Road Transport & Highways and Shipping interacted with business leaders in Mumbai, and appealed to them to participate in the mission to clean Ganga. The interaction was organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga.

Speaking on the occasion Shri Gadkari emphasised that cleaning the Ganga should become a peoples movement .He informed that a lot of private individuals from across the world have pledged support for cleaning Ganga and have donated generously. He also said that strict laws will be brought in to check pollution of the river.

The support from the business community in Mumbai follows closely after similar success in London last week where Indian corporates committed overwhelming support for Namami Gange Mission after an interaction with Shri Gadkari at a road show organized by NMCG.

Private funding is being sought for projects worth over Rs 2500 crore for development of ghats, crematoria, waterbodies, parks, sanitation facilities, public amenities and river front. An indicative list of these projects have been published as a booklet and are also available on the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) website as an e- booklet. The Government is appealing to the business community to participate in the Namami Gange Mission to clean the river by funding projects of their choice.

At the interaction with business leaders in Mumbai Shri Gadkari outlined the implementation of the 'Namami Gange' programme for rejuvenation of the river Ganga and its tributaries, which has been divided into three levels. The short term activities for immediate visible impact include river surface cleaning and modernization of ghats and crematoria. The medium term activities to be

implemented within five years include municipal sewage management, biodiversity conservation, afforestation, Ganga gram, industrial effluent management, water quality monitoring and rural sanitation. Long term activities to be implemented within ten years include adequate flow of water, improved efficiency of surface irrigation and increased water use efficiency.

Shri Satyapal Singh, Minister of State for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation said that for Indians Ganga is not just a river, it is a civilization in flow. For Indians river Ganga has always represented the most significant sacred river, with many religious centres having developed on its banks. Water as one of the tatvas is symbolically associated with creation, dissolution, fertility and cleansing and is inherent in the larger Indian cultural ethos.

Shri U.P Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources said that the vision of Ganga rejuvenation constitutes restoring the wholesomeness of the river in terms of ensuring continuous and unpolluted flow and geological and ecological integrity. He informed that 113 ghats and 52 crematoria are under various stages of progress at a cost of Rs 626.57 crores. 84 ghats in Varanasi will be cleaned up at a cost of Rs 5 crores per year. All villages near Ganga have been declared Open Defecation free. Trash skimmers have been deployed in 11 cities to collect all kinds of floating waste materials to clean the Ganga river surface.

The Government of India, through Namami Gange Programme announced in 2014, has given a much needed thrust to restoring the wholesomeness of the river by allocating resources of about Rs.20,000 crores and has adopted an integrated Ganga Rejuvenation approach addressing various aspects. The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has sanctioned projects worth about Rs.17,000 crore for Sewerage Management, Industrial Effluents Managements, Biodiversity Conservation, Solid Waste Management, Afforestation , Rural Sanitation, River Front Management, Capacity Building, Development/ Rehabilitation’ of Ghats& Crematoria etc. and above all a Communication & Public campaign to make ‘Ganga Rejuvenation’ a public movement.

However, the task of rejuvenating river Ganga, associated with 43% of the country’s population and its critical religious, spiritual, cultural and historical significance, assumes a gigantic proportion and cannot be achieved by governmental efforts alone. It requires wholehearted involvement and support from all Indians, cutting across society, for whom Ganga is important not only as an unending source of nourishment, but as part and parcel of a rich and timeless culture and tradition.
