

Two-thirds of sewage in urban areas flow into rivers untreated: Panel

Says Cleaning Could Cost ₹1.8 Lakh Cr

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New Delhi: The government is focusing on managing sewage in towns/cities on the banks of the Ganga, but it could be facing an even bigger difficulty.

A parliamentary panel has expressed its concern at the massive problem of discharge of 'untreated' filth into rivers which requires a huge amount of money (Rs 1,10,000 crore to 1,80,000 crore) for setting up additional sewage treatment plants (STPs) to save these critical water bodies across the country.

The panel, which submitted its report to the Parliament during the budget session, has also noted that nearly two-thirds of the sewage generat-

COST TO TREAT THE WASTE

Countrywide status of sewage in urban areas



ed in urban areas across the country goes into rivers untreated, leaving the water bodies severely polluted.

Incidentally, more than two-third of the sewage gener-

ated in 118 towns, located in the Ganga river basin, also gets discharged into the river untreated. A recent government report has noted that these towns collectively gener-

ate over 3,636 million litres per day (MLD) of sewage as against the treatment capacity of approximately 1,027 MLD of the existing 55 STPs in these towns spread over five states.

The government has already approved Rs 20,000 crore for Ganga cleaning as part of its overall rejuvenation plan. But, the fate of other rivers is yet to be decided by the Centre with matching financial support.

Questioning the Centre for not adequately funding its plan to conserve rest of the rivers in the country under the National River Conservation Plan, the panel—department-related parliamentary standing committee on science & technology and environment & forests—noted that the government had merely made a provision of Rs 40 crore for the financial year 2015-16 which is not sufficient even for the ongoing sanctioned works under the National River Conservation Plan.

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