



Ganga's Water Quality Deteriorating | Uttar Pradesh | 11 Nov 2024

Why in News?

Recently, The [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) has observed that the water quality in [the Ganga](#) in Uttar Pradesh is deteriorating because of the **discharge of sewage or sullage into the river.**

Key Points

▪ NGT's Concerns:

- The NGT reviewed the sewage treatment situation in Uttar Pradesh, finding a 128 million litres per day (MLD) gap in sewage treatment in Prayagraj district.
 - The [Central Pollution Control Board \(CPCB\)](#) report revealed that 25 untapped drains in Prayagraj discharge untreated sewage into the Ganga, while 15 others discharge into the [Yamuna](#).
 - Out of 326 drains in Uttar Pradesh, 247 are untapped and discharge wastewater into the Ganga and its tributaries.

▪ NGT's Directives:

- The NGT ordered the Uttar Pradesh chief secretary to submit an affidavit detailing each drain's sewage, connected **sewage treatment plants (STPs)**, and timelines for making STPs functional.
- The affidavit should also include **short-term measures to prevent untreated sewage discharge.**

▪ Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Issues:

- The CPCB report indicated that six out of 41 STPs in 16 Ganga-front towns are non-operational, and only one of the 35 functional plants complies with regulations.
- The water quality at 41 locations showed faecal coliform levels exceeding safe limits (500/100 ml), with 17 locations exceeding 2,500 MPN/100 ml, indicating severe pollution from untreated sewage.

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)

- It is a statutory organisation, was **constituted in 1974** under the [Water \(Prevention and Control of Pollution\) Act, 1974](#).
- CPCB was also entrusted with the powers and functions under the [Air \(Prevention and Control of Pollution\) Act, 1981](#).
- It serves as a field formation and also provides technical services to the Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate change of the provisions of the [Environment \(Protection\) Act, 1986](#).

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a specialised body for swift resolution of environmental and natural resource cases.

About

- Ⓢ **Establishment:** By National Green Tribunal Act 2010
- Ⓢ **Objective:** Quick resolution of environmental & natural resource cases
- Ⓢ **Case Resolution:** Within 6 months
- Ⓢ **Places of Sitting:** New Delhi (Principal), Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata, and Chennai

Structure

- Ⓢ **Composition:** Chairperson, Judicial Members, and Expert Members
- Ⓢ **Tenure:** Up to 5 years/until age 65 (no reappointment)
- Ⓢ **Appointments:** Chairperson - Central Government (with the CJI's consultation)
 - 📍 10-20 judicial members & 10-20 expert members - Selection Committee

India is the third country globally (after Australia and New Zealand) and the first developing nation to establish a specialised environmental tribunal like NGT.

Powers & Jurisdiction

- Ⓢ **Jurisdiction:** Civil cases on environmental issues and rights
- Ⓢ **Suo Motu Powers:** Granted since 2021
- Ⓢ **Roles:** Adjudicatory, preventative, and remedial
- Ⓢ **Procedures:** Follows Principles of natural justice
 - 📍 Not bound by the CPC, 1908 or Indian Evidence Act, 1872
- Ⓢ **Principles:** Sustainable Development; Precautionary; Polluter pays
- Ⓢ **Orders:** Executable as civil court decrees; offers relief and compensation (**decisions are binding**)
- Ⓢ **Appeals:** Tribunal can review its decisions.
 - 📍 If decision fails - Appeal to the SC to be filed within 90 days

NGT deals with Civil Cases under

- Ⓢ Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
- Ⓢ Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977
- Ⓢ Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
- Ⓢ Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981
- Ⓢ Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- Ⓢ Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991
- Ⓢ Biological Diversity Act, 2002



Drishti IAS