



Ghaggar Water

Why in News?

A joint committee constituted by the [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) found that [Ghaggar river](#) water remains unsuitable for bathing. The committee detected [biochemical oxygen demand \(BOD\)](#) levels in the river exceeding the prescribed limit.

Key Points

- **Survey and Sample Collection:**
 - Committee members and department representatives conducted a survey in December 2023, to identify pollution sources in Sukhna Choe.
 - The survey revealed that slums near Mansa Devi Complex, Rajiv Colony, and Indira Colony in Haryana, as well as near Sohi Banquet Hall, were directly discharging solid and liquid waste into the choe.
 - The committee took samples from the Panchkula drain at the Vikas Nagar Bridge, which showed that **BOD (Biochemical Oxygen Demand)** and [TSS \(Total Suspended Solids\)](#) levels exceeded environmental standards for inland surface water discharge.
- **Pollution Levels in Ghaggar River:**
 - The committee collected water samples from upstream and downstream of Ghaggar River, near the Ambala-Chandigarh Highway Bridge in Zirakpur, where Sukhna Choe merges with it.
 - **Findings:**
 - [pH values](#) were within the acceptable range for outdoor bathing.
 - BOD levels failed to meet the primary water quality criteria for outdoor bathing at both locations.
 - **Recommendations:**
 - Municipal Corporation of Chandigarh should:
 - Ensure regular cleaning of drains.
 - Instalment of **iron nets at culvert points** where roads cross the drain to prevent solid waste dumping.
 - **Pollution Control Board should:**
 - Ensure proper **operation and maintenance of [Sewage Treatment Plants \(STPs\)](#)**.
 - **Prevent the disposal of untreated effluent** into the Ghaggar River.
 - **Panchkula Municipal Corporation should:**
 - Ensure STPs operate efficiently, preventing untreated effluent from entering Sukhna Choe through drains.

Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)

- BOD is the **amount of dissolved oxygen used by microorganisms** in the biological process of metabolizing organic matter in water.
- The **more organic matter** there is (e.g., in sewage and polluted bodies of water), the **greater the BOD**; and the greater the BOD, the **lower the amount of dissolved oxygen** available for higher animals such as fishes.
- The BOD is therefore a **reliable gauge of the organic pollution of a body of water**.

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
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- ⌚ 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



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