

# Standing Committee Report Summary

## Water Pollution in Delhi NCR

- The Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change (Chair: Mr Bhubaneswar Kalita) submitted its report on “Water Pollution in Delhi NCR and Steps Taken by Various Agencies for its Mitigation” on December 9, 2025. Key observations and recommendations of the Committee include:
  - **Monitoring of contaminants:** The Committee noted a severe degradation in water quality in the Yamuna River between Palla, Wazirabad, and Shahdara Drain locations. It recommended increasing the number and frequency of existing monitoring systems in these areas. The Committee also recommended expanding the contamination parameters to include Chemical Oxygen Demand (water quality measure indicating the total amount of oxygen needed to chemically oxidise all organic matter) to better distinguish between contaminants. It also recommended regular tracking of various impurities in the groundwater.
  - **Sewage management:** The Committee noted a lack of reliable data on waste water generation in the city and recommended real-time automated monitoring of the volume of pollutant loads at critical points in the city. It also observed a high distribution loss and recommended strengthening of the water supply network. The Committee further noted that a large portion of households in Delhi lack connection to underground sewerage network, leading to sewage dumping into open drains. It recommended formalisation of desludging tankers. The Committee also recommended mandating reuse of treated wastewater for discharge into the river, or for non-potable purposes such as irrigation and groundwater recharge. It further recommended a revision of quality standards for treated waste water to avoid removal of several nutrients.
  - **Industrial water pollution:** The Committee noted that the 13 Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) in Delhi operate at only 34% capacity. This indicates that a large volume of industrial wastewater is being diverted to the municipal sewer system or drains, bypassing treatment. It further noted 49 out of 189 Grossly Polluting Industries remain non-compliant with treatment standards as of 2024, and several industries have moved to unauthorised areas, possibly leading to undetected river pollution. It recommended Geographic Information System based mapping of all industries to track their location, and establishment of modular CETPs. It further noted that Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) is a more effective technology for wastewater treatment than CETPs, despite its higher cost. It recommended a dedicated loan with low or zero interest to be extended to those industrial units that are unable to afford the ZLDs.
- **Environmental flow of Yamuna:** Environmental flow refers to the quantity, timing, duration, frequency, and quality of water flows in rivers. The Committee recommended reconvening the Yamuna River Basin Board decide on the scientifically recommended environmental flow for the lean season. It suggested introducing a levy on water-intensive industries discharging into the river which could be utilised to finance modernisation of irrigation canals and implement advanced sewage treatment technologies. This would improve the quality and quantity of water, ultimately improving environmental flow. The Committee also recommended revising the timelines for future water sharing agreements between states on the Yamuna riverbank from 30 years to 10 years.
- **Rejuvenation of floodplains:** The Committee recommended measures to be taken to combat encroachment, sand mining, and illegal dumping, ensuring strict penalties for the same. It also recommended a complete ban on groundwater extraction within the Yamuna floodplain to address excessive extraction. It suggested a targeted sludge removal plan, along with afforestation and ecological revival of native trees and grasses.
- **Public health:** The Committee recommended creating a public dashboard to track water quality and disease incidence data. It recommended dedicated healthcare units for diarrhoea treatment and public health campaigns, particularly in low-income and high-risk areas. It also recommended the abolishing or lowering of GST on water purifiers and their components.

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