

Clean Ganga mission: using new technologies

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Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi launched an Integrated Ganga Conservation Mission called "Namami Gange" last year. The mission approaches Ganga Rejuvenation by consolidating existing ongoing efforts and planning for a concrete action plan for the future.

A Consortium of seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) has prepared a Ganga River Basin: Environment Management Plan. Reports suggest that Industries directly or indirectly discharging their solid/liquid wastes into RĀ?mgangĀ?, Kali and Ganga must be directed to follow best available practices for managing solid/liquid wastes and attain complete recycling of water and proper disposal of solid wastes/sludge as per norms enforced by regulating agencies.

Also, IIT Kanpur has prepared a compendium to provide an overview of different technological options available for treatment of sewage and assessment of their performance. This compendium of sewage treatment technologies have been prepared based on primary and secondary data gathered from operations of sewage treatment plans in the country over the last two decades.

According to reports, Union Minister for Water Resources Ms Uma Bharati has said that expertise from premier IITs would be utilized for cleaning the river Ganga, which would be completed in the shortest period.

"We will be using various technologies for rejuvenation of river Ganga. We will be utilizing the services of IIT experts and explore all possible options," she said on the sidelines of Ganga Manthan.

The PM's pet project is also receiving support from foreign shores, the German Government has offered Rs 3 million euros for supporting Ganga Rejuvenation during the Indo-German Government Negotiations held in November 2014.

Many countries such as Germany, Australia, Canada, Singapore, and Netherlands have expressed interest in supporting Ganga Rejuvenation through knowledge/technology sharing and providing financial/technical assistance for cleaning up Ganga, capacity building, research and development, sharing of experiences, expertise, and best practices.

The National Mission for Cleaning Ganga is in continuous dialogue with relevant organizations of these countries to facilitate a fruitful involvement of foreign countries in Ganga Rejuvenation. Also, Israel has expressed interest in sharing its expertise on water purification and waste water treatment for cleaning the Ganga.

Government policy has given a boost for harvesting solar energy. The support to renewable sources, biogas or biofuel need sustained support for research as well as field level dissemination.

"Harvesting renewable sources (solar, biomass, biogas) and youth power will make our country a developed country. To realize this vision, there has to be a paradigm shift in energy planning with focus on renewable sources of energy," summed up Dr TV Ramachandra, professor, Coordinator of Energy and Wetlands Research Group (EWRG), Convener of Environmental Information System (ENVIS) at the Center for Ecological Sciences (CES), IISc.