

Fifth meeting of National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) was held on 26th March, 2015

5th Meeting of NGRBA was held on 26th March, 2015 at 7, Race Course Road under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. Following key decisions were taken during the meeting:

1. River cleaning machines may be installed in local boats and services of local boatmen may be utilized.
2. States were advised to set aside a fraction of the outlay in various ongoing developmental schemes for utilization in projects that would contribute to the rejuvenation of the river, setting in motion a Ganga centric approach in all developmental initiatives and help rationalize the financial requirement of the river restoration efforts.
3. People's participation in the river rejuvenation efforts to be ramped through initiatives such as involving NCC cadets in the river cleaning activities and organizing educational tours for students with "Ganga-Shram".
4. Ex-servicemen living on the banks of the river also needed to be involved.
5. A comprehensive database with technology options for pollution abatement available globally (covering a wide spectrum from nuclear science applications to algae based solutions) to be created and factored in implementation process as much as possible.
6. Identify plant species which enhance water availability for the river for plantation in forests in the upper reaches of the river.
7. Studies may also be undertaken to increase different indigenous species of aquatic and land based fauna that were contributing to pollution abatement through natural ecological processes.
8. States may prepare a list of all departments involved directly or indirectly in pollution abatement of Ganga. The chief Secretary of respective States may coordinate so that these departments do not work at cross-purposes and that they harmoniously work towards achieving the common objective with the desired outcomes.
9. Need for an effective law is identified.
10. Options are extending financial incentive by developing and involving interest subvention and facilitating industries to procure bank loans for effluent treatment equipment, so as to expedite pollution abatement efforts to industrial areas on a war footing should be explored.
11. Contribution made to the clean Ganga Fund could be utilized to meet the burden of interest subvention.
12. More financial support to states may be considered to reduce state burden in sharing project costs.
13. Studies may be conducted on Farrakka Barrage so that any adverse effects on the river and the ecological system may be addressed.

14. The pollution abatement efforts and other initiatives on Ganga and its tributaries should be well documented for replication in other rivers in the country. Appropriate knowledge sharing mechanisms should be evolved to share the best practices globally.
15. The Socio-Economic benefits of various initiatives under the river rejuvenation efforts should be appropriately evaluated. The economics of the entire mission for pollution abatement should be clearly analyzed by economists for focused and prioritized interventions.
16. Efforts should be made to sensitize all important institutions including the judiciary so that the key issues are clearly understood. Concerns of NGOs and other key stakeholders should be adequately addressed to develop a sustainable implementation mechanism.