

OVERVIEW

The water of Yamuna continues to be relentlessly polluted by the domestic and industrial sewage generated in the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

While the water quality of the river at the point of its entry into Delhi at Palla is adequate to sustain aquatic life and conforms to water quality of “bathing” standards in terms of Dissolved Oxygen (DO) and Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), the water quality is rendered unfit for any purpose by the time it exits Delhi at Okhla, with a drastic decline in the parameters of both DO and BOD as well as in total coli form count.

Performance audit of the sewage treatment programme undertaken by the Delhi Government through its implementing agencies viz. the Delhi Jal Board and the Delhi State Industrial Development Corporation disclosed glaring mismatch between the sewage generated and the treatment capacity created, as also between the treatment capacity created and the conveyance systems, resulting in discharge of untreated sewage into the river.

Thus, very little value for Rs. 872 crore spent on treatment of domestic sewage over the last decade has been realized in terms of impact on preventing the pollution of Yamuna by the sewage generated in Delhi.

Out of the estimated 719 MGD of domestic sewage generated in the National Capital Territory, 384 MGD was being discharged untreated into the river. Besides, even the treated effluent from seven treatment plants did not meet the pollution control standards, while harmful gases were being discharged into the atmosphere due to non-functional sludge digesters and gasholders at five treatment plants.

Most of the industrial sewage of 42 MGD continued to be discharged untreated into the river despite an expenditure of Rs. 123 crore on the construction of 10 Common Effluent Treatment Plants. Most of them were either non-functional or were operating at sub-optimal levels.