

Relook at 'Namami Gange'

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated India's first multi-modal terminal on the Ganga river at Varanasi.

\n

- In this context, the government's approach in 'Namami Gange' (National Mission for Clean Ganga) raises serious environmental concerns.

\n

\n\n

What are the concerns?

\n\n

\n

- Lack of proper impact assessment due to development activities in the Ganga basin has resulted in deterioration of river Ganga.

\n

- Reports and statements from various official sources including the CAG and NGT suggest the deteriorating nature of Ganga river.

\n

- The government is, in fact, doing a lot that adversely affects the river.

\n

- These include the

\n

\n\n

\n

- i. continued onslaught of hydropower projects

\n

- ii. inter-linking of rivers, waterways, dredging, river front development

\n

- iii. [Char Dham Highway](#)

\n

- iv. even Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

\n

\n\n

\n

- Unsustainable sand mining, river encroachments and extraction of groundwater and other resources are continuing at increasing rates.

\n

\n\n

What should be done?

\n\n

\n

- Government has to come up with a credible road map, and set up pilots.
- It should ensure that existing sewage and industrial effluent treatment plants work as per design, and also set up decentralised STPs (sewage treatment plant).
- Eco-friendly treatment options should be opted.
- The government should also take steps to reduce sugarcane cultivation and promote water-saving and yield-enhancing cultivation methods.
- These efforts, if taken, could have helped improve the state of flow in the Ganga river.
- Above all, the government must make river governance democratic, with clearly defined norms of transparency, participation and accountability.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: BusinessLine

\n

