



Ganga Vriksharopan Abhiyan

National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has launched afforestation drive in five Ganga basin states – Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

- The campaign has been initiated as part of the Forest Interventions in Ganga (FIG) component of Namami Gange programme.
- State Forest Departments of these states have been made the nodal agencies for the smooth and effective execution of the campaign.
- In order to implement the afforestation project in a scientific manner, Forest Research Institute (FRI), Dehradun was assigned the project to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) on the basis of which the State Forest Departments would carry out their plantation activities.
- The FRI report provides a multi-disciplinary approach with potential plantation and treatment models. Considering the type of natural ecosystem, identification of native vegetation, soil conditions and agro-climatic zones, potential models of various types have been developed.
- Besides maintenance of the ecological and geological integrities, the implementation plan aims to contribute towards the Clean Ganga Mission, by improving the base flow and filtration of the ground water pollution.

Namami Gange Programme

- Namami Gange Programme is an Integrated Conservation Mission, approved as 'Flagship Programme' by the Union Government in June 2014 to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga.
- The program is being implemented by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), and its state counterpart organizations i.e., State Program Management Groups (SPMGs).

NOTE

National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)

- National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) is the implementation wing of National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA).
- It is a registered society, originally formed by Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) on 12th August 2011 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- But now both NGRBA and NMCG are allocated to the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (MoWR, RD & GR).
- Main pillars of the programme include sewerage treatment infrastructure, river-front development, river-surface cleaning, bio-diversity, afforestation, public awareness industrial effluent monitoring, and ganga gram.
- Its implementation has been divided into Entry-Level Activities (for immediate visible impact), Medium-Term Activities (to be implemented within 5 years of period) and Long-Term Activities (to be implemented within 10 years).

Significance of the programme

- It aims to bring greater awareness among people and other stakeholders regarding the importance of afforestation for the task of Ganga Rejuvenation.
- A number of schools, colleges and departments have been requested to “Adopt a Plant” for turning this campaign into a people’s movement.
- Plantation activities are being carried out with great enthusiasm all along the banks of the River Ganga with participation of local people.

Why is Afforestation in Ganga Basin important?

- Forests cause higher rainfall and raise water level in the rivers.
- Through their foliage, craggy bark and abundant leaf litter, trees and forests decrease the speed of water dispersion and favour slow but greater infiltration of rainwater to ensure smooth functioning of the hydrological cycle.
- The presence of healthy forest cover along the river provides self-cleaning ability to the river.
- Afforestation and augmentation of existing forest along the Ganga can strengthen the riparian ecosystem and contribute to the overarching cause of Ganga Rejuvenation.

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