



Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB)

Why in News?

While the **fishing community continues to voice concerns** about the **contamination of water bodies** caused by heavy industrial **pollution**, **the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board** maintains in its report that pollution levels remain within the prescribed limits.

Key Points

- **Expert Opinion:**
 - The Water Pollution Expert noted drastic differences between MPCB and independent lab results.
 - It was pointed out that even 236 mg/l **Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)** (in MPCB report) is too high for a natural water body, indicating severe pollution.
 - The independent Lab findings also show extremely high COD, hinting at direct effluent discharge from industries.
- **Impact on Local Fishing Community:**
 - **Environmental degradation:**
 - The water turned black and lifeless, as it suggests a high concentration of organic matter requiring significant oxygen for decomposition, potentially leading to oxygen depletion and harm to **aquatic life**.
 - **Community response:**
 - **The Fish Workers Union** raised multiple complaints to various government departments (fisheries, environment, Konkan & Raigad administration) without resolution.
 - Diwale village once had more than 10,000 fishermen, now many have shifted to non-fishing jobs (security guards, domestic help) or sell purchased fish.
 - Fishing zones like **Kharghar, Mansarowar, Diwale creek**, historically rich, are now degraded.
 - Observes untreated effluents discharged directly into Diwale creek, with pipeline proposed to extend to Belapur.
 - This could **destroy Thane and Nhava Sheva creeks**, affecting the **Arabian Sea**.
- **Industrial Activity in the Region:**
 - Approximately 3,254 industrial units operate in the region which include chemicals, dyes, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, petrochemicals, textile processing, engineering units, etc.

The Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB)

- It is a state-level body **responsible for implementing environmental legislation** in Maharashtra, focusing on **preventing and controlling pollution**, particularly under **the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**, and **the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981**.

