

File No TE-16015/16/2020-O/o AD(RD Tech) NMCG
Government of India
National Mission for Clean Ganga
Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga
Rejuvenation
Ministry of Jal Shakti

1st Floor, Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium,
India Gate, New Delhi-110 001
Dated 1st April 2020

To,
The Secretary,
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh Road,
New Delhi-110 003.

Subject: Issue of sand mining in Uttarakhand and in particular the stretch on Ganga river from Raiwala to Bhogpur.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to NMCG letter of even no dated 2nd September 2020 vide which it has been requested that four ECs dated 23rd March 2020, 8th April, 2020 & 10th April 2020 issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for sand mining in this stretch needs to be reviewed and EC issued for above stretch be revoked till a detailed assessment and review is taken up.

2. As you are aware that the issue of sand mining in Uttarakhand and in particular the stretch on Ganga river from Raiwala to Bhogpur has been a cause of concern with several reports being received periodically of illegal mining harming the morphology and hydrology of the river Ganga. Accordingly, an Expert Committee was constituted by NMCG vide OM dated 14.01.2020 to provide scientific view on matters pertaining to illegal sand mining in Ganga river in Haridwar, Uttarakhand and suggest guidelines for sustainable sand mining. The Committee has since submitted its final report which has been forwarded vide our earlier letter along with salient recommendations contained in the report of the Committee. These recommendations inter-alia include identified reaches which are not suitable for mining as well as those where only strategic mining be undertaken after carefully ensuring that rate of extraction matches replenishment. The report further recommends avoiding ecological hotspots along the river for mining activities.

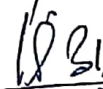
3. The entire issue was further deliberated in a special meeting of non-coal mining Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of MOEF&CC held on October 28, 2020 under Chairmanship of Dr. S.R. Wate and attended by 13 members from EAC as well as representatives from NMCG and Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation (UKFDC).

4. River Ganga (Rejuvenation, Protection and Management) Authorities Order, 2016 provides that specific threats to the River Ganga in areas in each village and town of such specified District abutting River Ganga and its tributaries, including sewerage and

industrial waste, cremation and burial of corpses and disposal of animal carcasses, and threats from *commercial*, recreational and religious activities needs to be identified or cause to be identified. Accordingly, National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has communicated its views about sand mining as an activity to be regulated in this stretch of River Ganga based on finding of the aforesaid scientific study carried out by IIT Kanpur. In addition, NMCG also recommends that there is urgent need to take holistic stock of status of mining in the entire State and assess its impact on river morphology and ecology to evolve a long-term strategy as large number of smaller tributaries flows into river Ganga in State of Uttarakhand.

Accordingly, and in the overall context of above, it may be appreciated that the stretch of National river Ganga in Kumbh zone being highly sensitive from spiritual, ecological and historical point of view, any decision on mining in this stretch needs to be reviewed after taking into consideration the scientific study and holistic approach in best interest of preserving ecology and integrity of river Ganga. Pending such a review, it is strongly recommended that ECs granted for mining in this sensitive stretch of River Ganga may be revoked. Confirmation to this effect may please be communicated.

Yours faithfully,



01.6.21
(D.P.Mathuria)

Executive Director(Tech)

Copy to Chief Secretary, Govt of Uttarakhand with a request that sand mining activity being reportedly carried out in this stretch (Raiwala to Bhogpur) on River Ganga may be stopped giving due consideration to NMCG's views pending scientific review of entire gamut of mining activities in the best interest of National River Ganga.

Copy for kind information to

1. PS to Hon'ble Minister for Jal Shakti, Govt of India.
2. PPS to Secretary, DoWR, RD&GR, New Delhi
3. Director General, National Mission for Clean Ganga, New Delhi.