

## Policy of Zero Discharge into Our River Mothers 25 June 2020

### Point No. 2

Treatment of sewage through 'Pond System and Plant Based Management of Sewage and Waste Treatment' and using the nutrient rich treated waste water for organic farming, which is the cheapest & durable and needs least management & electricity, must be preferred wherever possible.

A massive time-bound fruit/ medicinal plant/ tree plantation program on the banks of mother Ganga from Gangotri to Gangasagar, ensuring substantial profit to the farmers, alongwith development of constructed wetlands for sewage treatment in major cities on the banks of mother Ganga wherever possible should be undertaken.

Very powerful vested interests don't want such very valuable, very cheap, durable & easily manageable projects. For this reason the NGRBA approved Pilot Project of NBRI, Lucknow at Haridwar, 'Plant Based Management of Ganga Water Pollution: Plantation Along the Banks and Development of Constructed Wetlands for Sewage & Waste Treatment' was not allowed to be completed, although it was almost completed. The project was a joint venture of Save Ganga Movement and NBRI under the chairmanship of the eminent botanist Dr P Pushpangdan for plantation and development of constructed wetlands for sewage treatment in major cities on the banks of mother Ganga from Gangotri to Gangasagar, for which I struggled for about five years for getting approval and finally got approved by the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. Dr UN Rai was the project coordinator.

The same was the fate of the NGRBA approved Pond System Pilot Project at Varanasi of Dr Virbhadra Mishra, an eminent highly respected noble person and member of NGRBA. The project of NEERI, Nagpur entitled, 'Engineered Natural Systems for the Treatment of Domestic Sewage to Prevent River Ganga in Kanpur & Varanasi in UP and Navadeep in West Bengal', met also the same fact.

The NBRI Project is profoundly Rural-friendly, it hardly requires electricity, its maintenance doesn't require sophisticated experts, and its expenditure for treatment of 3 mld is rupees 50 lakhs for decades; whereas the expenditure for 3 mld by the STP of Rs 8 crores at Rishikesh is Rs 20 thousands per month and the old STP has to be replaced by a new one every 5 years, thus ensuring substantial benefits to the manufacturer of the machines and the corrupted bureaucrats.

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