

Disastrous Condition of the Sabarmati River - Release of report on joint investigations by Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti and Gujarat Pollution Control Board, of the pollution levels in the prime water source of Ahmedabad District.

The Sabarmati River in the Ahmedabad City stretch, before the Riverfront, is dry and within the Riverfront Project stretch, is Brimming with Stagnant Water. In the last 120 kilometres, before meeting the Arabian Sea, it dead comprises of just industrial effluent and sewage.

On 12 March 2019, the Regional Officers Mr Tushar Shah and Ms Nehalben Ajmera of Gujarat Pollution Control Board, Rohit Prajapati and Krishnakant of Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti, Social Activist Mudita Vidrohi of Ahmedabad, Subodh Parmar, Lawyer of Gujarat High Court, conducted a joint investigation. This was conducted in the context of implementation of the Order, dated 22.02.2017, of the Supreme Court in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 375 of 2012 (Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti & Anr V/s Union of India & Ors) about the status of industrial effluent and sewerage discharge into the Sabarmati River stretch of Ahmedabad District. The investigation reports are shocking and reveal the disastrous condition of Sabarmati River in and around Ahmedabad District and about 120 kilometres downstream.

Sabarmati River no longer has any fresh water when it enters the city of Ahmedabad. The Sabarmati Riverfront has merely become a pool of polluted stagnant water while the river, downstream of the riverfront, has been reduced to a channel carrying effluents from industries from Naroda, Odhav Vatva, Narol and sewerage from Ahmedabad city. The drought like condition of the Sabarmati River intensified by the Riverfront Development has resulted in poor groundwater recharge and increased dependency on the already ailing Narmada River. The following investigation report speaks for itself. The investigation raises fundamental questions against both, the polluting industries that discharge their untreated effluents into the Sabarmati River, and the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation that discharges their poorly treated, untreated sewerage into the Sabarmati River. The Gujarat Pollution Control Board's top cadre officials have failed in their duties and responsibilities to protect the Sabarmati River's water quality, inspite of the Supreme Court Order dated 22.02.2017, directing strict compliance of effluent treatment standards, continuous monitoring and closure of defaulting industries and Orders dated 03.08.2018 and 19.02.2019 of the National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, Delhi, in Original Application No. 593 of 2017, (Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti & Anr V/s Union of India & Ors) for implementation of the Supreme Court order.

The alarmingly critical and dangerous levels of pollution, far exceeding permissible levels, as recorded in the investigation report, are summarised below:

- The Water in Sabarmati Riverfront has 4.66 mg/l DO, 98 mg/l COD, 28 mg/l BOD, 96 mg/l Sulphate, 153 mg/l Chloride, and 668 mg/l TDS.
- The First Outfall of STP of Ahmedabad after Vasna Barrage (After Sabarmati Riverfront) 160 MLD has 337 mg/l COD, 139 mg/l BOD, 108 mg/l Sulphate, 186 mg/l Chloride, and 732 mg/l TDS.
- The Second Outfall industrial effluent of Ahmedabad after Vasna Barrage – Storm Water Drain from DaniLimda (After Sabarmati Riverfront) has 1301 mg/l COD, 536 mg/l BOD, 462 mg/l Sulphate, 933 mg/l, Chloride, and 3135 mg/l TDS.
- The Third Outfall of STP of Ahmedabad after Vasna Barrage (After Sabarmati Riverfront) 800 MLD has 587 mg/l COD, and 218 mg/l BOD.
- The Fourth Outfall of Industrial Effluent from Naroda, Odhav and Vatva industrial Estates (Mega Pipeline) after Vasna Barrage (After Sabarmati Riverfront) 40 MLD has 1052 mg/l COD, 210 mg/l BOD, 863 mg/l Sulphate, 4025 mg/l Chloride, and mg/l 9813 TDS.
- The Fifth Outfall of Industrial Effluent of Narol after Vasna Barrage (After Sabarmati Riverfront) 100 MLD has 1126 mg/l COD, 427 mg/l BOD, 743 mg/l Sulphate, 1600 mg/l Chloride, and 5290 mg/l TDS.
- The Sabarmati River 100 mtrs. after STPs and Industrial Effluent Outfall has BDL (Beyond Detection Limit) DO, 1009 mg/l COD, 447 mg/l BOD, 612 mg/l Sulphate, 1665 mg/l Chloride, and 4368 mg/l TDS.
- Mirolu Village pumping station 21 Kms. downstream of Vasna Barrage BDL (Beyond Detection Limit) DO, 151 mg/l COD, 33 mg/l BOD, 188 mg/l Sulphate, 491 mg/l, Chloride, and 1466 mg/l TDS.

Investigation by Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti and Gujarat Pollution Control Board on 12 March 2019

Sr. No	PARAMETER	Colour Pt. Co. Scale	TDS mg/l	NH3-N mg/l	Chloride mg/l	Sulphate mg/l	DO mg/l	COD mg/l	BOD mg/l
1	Railway Bridge	30	668	4.31	153	96	4.66	98	28
2	Danilimda-STP (60-106 MLD STP)	50	732		186	108		337	139
3	DaniLimda Storm Water Drain	150	3135	10.13	933	462		1301	536
4	New Pirana 182 MLD STP							587	218
5	MEGA	450	9813	30.18	4025	863		1052	210
6	Narol NTIEM	200	5290	79.91	1600	743		1126	427
7	Sabarmati	150	4368	68.04	1665	612	BDL	1009	447

	River Downstream								
8	Miroli Village		1466	31.97	491	188	BDL	151	33
	Effluent Discharge Norms	100	5000 mg/l	50 mg/l	600 mg/l	1000 mg/l		250 mg/l	30 mg/l
	River Norms	Nil	500 mg/l	Nil	Nil	Nil	> = 5 mg/l	Nil	< = 3 mg/l

The pathetic and dismal condition of the Sabarmati River is a cause of grave concern for the health of the people of the Ahmedabad city and the villages around Sabarmati River downstream of Riverfront who rely on the river water for their daily use and livelihood. Some of the major direct and indirect effects of the high levels of pollution on the people and environment includes contamination of ground water, food contamination, associated health hazards, loss of natural river habitat, depletion of ground water levels due to lack of water recharge, loss of flora and fauna, etc. Urgent action is necessitated in light of these findings to rejuvenate and restore the Sabarmati River and its water quality, which calls for the strict implementation of the Supreme Court Order by the concerned authorities.

We demand that:

1. GPCB immediately issue closure notices to all the defaulting industries located in Ahmedabad industrial clusters, in implementation of the Supreme Court Order dated 22.02.2017.
2. GPCB immediately issue closer notices to all the defaulting CETPs of the Ahmedabad industrial cluster, in implementation of the Supreme Court Order dated 22.02.2017.
3. GPCB immediately issue notices to the Municipal Commissioner of Ahmedabad to ensure compliance by all STPs in the area.
4. GPCB should file criminal cases against the all owners/directors of the defaulting polluting industries, the officers of the CETPs, and the Municipal Commissioner of Ahmedabad.
5. The GPCB investigate and prepare further detailed reports about the ground water contamination as well as contamination of the food grains, vegetables, and fodder.
6. Ensure Interim Exemplary Monetary Compensation along with medical services to the farmers and villagers who have suffered from the groundwater pollution.

7. Immediately pay Interim Compensation per season per acre to the farmers who are forced to use contaminated Sabarmati River water and groundwater for irrigation of agricultural land and hence are facing several severe problems.
8. Appoint a competent interdisciplinary committee, of officials and field experts, to assess the ongoing and past damages to quantify the real compensation payable to the farmers for the damage done.
9. Implement the Order, dated 22.02.2017, of the Supreme Court in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 375 of 2012 (Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti & Anr V/s Union of India & Ors) and National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, Delhi Order, dated 03.08.2018 and 19.02.2019, in Original Application No. 593 of 2017, (Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti & Anr V/s Union of India & Ors) in letter and spirit.

Rohit Prajapati (9408986452) Krishnakant (9426608075) Swati Desai

Rajni Dave Anand Mazgaonkar

Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti

Sagar Rabari - **Khedut Ekta Manch (Gujarat)**

Mahesh Pandya - **Paryavaran Mitra**

Nita Mahadev - **Gujarat Lok Samiti**

For response from the GPCB officials you can dial

Chairman, GPCB, Mr Rajiv Gupta © 9978406054

Member Secretary, GPCB, Mr K. C. Mistry © 9825469137

RO, GPCB, Ahmedabad, Mr Tushar Shah © 9824180382

RO, GPCB, Ahmedabad, Ms Nehalben Ajmera © 9898003096