

SC seeks status report on river water quality

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The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought a status report from the National Green Tribunal-appointed River Yamuna Monitoring Committee led by former Delhi Chief Secretary Shailaja Chandra about its recommendations to improve the quality of water and the extent to which States have implemented their suggestions.

A Bench led by Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde accepted the submission by senior advocate and amicus curiae Meenakshi Arora that the Committee, which also comprises former NGT expert member B.S. Sajwan, should be roped in for the benefit of its experience and work on the river.

"The committee is overseeing the programme on the Yamuna. It will help us know about the status of sewage treatment plants etc. A detailed status report should be sought from it on its recommendations and their implementation till date," Ms. Arora submitted.

The Supreme Court had, on January 13, taken suo motu cognisance of the contamination of rivers by sewage effluents through lapses committed by municipalities, saying "open surface water resources including rivers are the lifeline of human civilisation".

"Deterioration of quality of fresh water has a direct co-relation with the quality of public health... The right to clean environment, and further, pollution-free water, has been protected under the broad rubric of the right to life," a three-judge Bench led by the Chief Justice had said. On Tuesday, it included Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan as parties.
