Illegal Construction along Ganga River Banks

In the matter, O.A. No. 200/2014 – M.C. Mehta V/s Union of India & Others, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) is dealing with the case of pollution and rejuvenation of river Ganga. Vide its order dated December 10, 2015, the NGT has issued various directions relating to the segment of Gaumukh to Haridwar (Uttarakhand), inter-alia, relating to illegal constructions activities likely to affect river Ganga which also includes hotels/dharamshalas/ashrams, construction of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) for treatment of sewage or domestic affluent falling directly into the river Ganga and to stop its discharge. The NGT has also directed that at least 100m from middle of the river would be treated as 'Eco-sensitive and prohibited zone'. No activity whether permanent or temporary in nature will be permitted to be carried on in this zone. The NGT has further directed that the area beyond 100 meters and less than 300 meters would be treated as regulatory zone in the hilly terrain. The area upto 200 meters shall be the prohibited area in the plain terrain and more than 200 meters and less than 500 meters would be treated as regulatory zone.

Restrictions have been imposed on activity or construction in the regulated area where the gradient is beyond 350 meters to prevent ecological damage and land sliding in that area. Further for the river bed mining, it shall be carried on in a highly regulated manner and under strict supervision of the authorities concerned. Discharge of domestic waste directly into the Ganga river is being managed by a mix of interception & diversion projects, sewage network and sewage treatment plant projects.

This information was given by Union Minister of State for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Shri Vijay Goel in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

Samir/jk

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