

Corporates undertake Namami Gange Projects as part of their CSR activity

Shri Nitin Gadkari reviews corporate engagement, urges them to undertake projects like water temple and Ganga museum

Clean Ganga fund receives Rs 255.02 Crore contribution, projects worth Rs 205.14 Crore approved

The banks of River Ganga are set to get a major facelift as several corporates have undertaken CSR projects for *ghat* cleaning and development, afforestation, provision of amenities and similar work under Namami Gange programme. Companies like Shipping Corporation of India, Indorama Corporation, IndusInd Bank, Yes Bank, Hinduja Group, Arcelor Mittal, New Indian Express, Bajaj Electricals, Amer Maritime, HCL, Reliance Industries and a few others have shown interest and undertaken projects in this area.

Ganga rejuvenation projects are notified as CSR activity under Companies Act 2013. Corporates can give donations to the Clean Ganga Fund and also take up projects for rejuvenating the river. There is a dedicated webpage for participation under CSR activity which lists projects like *ghat*/crematoria construction and development, cleaning of ghats, cleaning of drains through bioremediation, river surface cleaning, solid waste disposal, afforestation activities, setting up of *Ganga Vatikas*, adoption of Ganga Grams and I.E.C. activities which corporates can take up.

In a meeting to review these projects in New Delhi yesterday, the Minister of Water Resource, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Road Transport & Highways and Shipping Shri Nitin Gadkari urged companies to undertake more and more projects for rejuvenation of Ganga as part of their CSR activity. He assured them that NMCG would hand hold them for ground clearances and local issues. He underscored the critical role that corporates can play in rejuvenating Ganga and said that they should try to come up with eco-friendly plans for development of the river bank. Shri Gadkari also instructed the NMCG officials to expedite procedures and approvals.

The significant projects that have been undertaken by the corporates include development of *ghats* at Gangotri and Badrinath at an estimated cost of Rs. 25.65 crore by Indorama Industries Ltd. DPRs for the project have been prepared by WAPCOS, approvals are at an advanced stage and work is expected to start by the end of this month.

IndusInd Bank is undertaking a project for treatment of 9 drains in Allahabad and Farrukhabad at the cost of Rs 9.5 Crore. The DPR for the project is ready. The Shipping Corporation of India proposes to develop Katwa Ghat in West Bengal at a cost of Rs 35 lakh.

Among other projects Yes Bank proposes to develop *ghats* in Rishikesh and undertake plantation activities in Uttarakhand. The New Indian Express is undertaking development of *Shankaracharya Samadhi* at Kedarnath in Uttarakhand, while the Hinduja Group is taking up *ghat* development work in Haridwar and Rishikesh. Bajaj electricals is undertaking plantations at Varanasi, Fatehpur, Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Pratapgarh, Ballia and Mau in Uttar Pradesh. Amer Maritime will take up *ghat* development in Kanpur, HCL has plans for holistic development of *ghats* in Varanasi, bio remediation, tree plantation community development and *Ganga Gram* development. Reliance Industries has plans for *ghat* development at Varanasi, Allahabad, Delhi, Haridwar, Kedarpuri and Rishikesh. These projects are at various procedural stages, and ArcelorMittal is contributing to the Clean Ganga Fund.

In course of the meeting Shri Gadkari also sought cooperation from the corporates for a project to develop 35 kilometer stretch along River Yamuna in the National Capital, and a Water Temple in a town along River Ganga. Some other projects being planned under CSR are development of Ganga Museum in Delhi/Haridwar/Allahabad/Varanasi, partnership with SBI, UBI, HDFC and Axis Bank for utilization of their ATM

networks for display of Clean Ganga message, and plantation of Rudraksha trees along River Ganga in Uttarakhand among others.

A review of the Clean Ganga Fund was also done during the meeting. Rs 255.02 Crore have been received as contribution to the Fund from PSUs, private corporates, individuals, NRIs/PIOs and India Development Foundation. Out of this, projects worth Rs. 205.14 crore have been approved by the Board of Trustees including annual plan for afforestation interventions in five main stem Ganga basin states through State Forest Departments worth Rs. 87.84 crore, treatment of five drains through in-situ bioremediation process worth Rs. 19 crore and redevelopment of ghats and crematoria and provision of amenities costing Rs. 98.3 crore.

Dr. Satya Pal Singh, Minister of State for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Mishra, Director General, National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and other senior officials were also present during the review.

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