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Government of India**

Shri Amit Shah chairs the Flag-in Ceremony of Ganga Aamantran Abhiyan

Ganga is the symbol of Indian Civilization, an inalienable part of India's spiritual, cultural and economic history: Shri Amit Shah

Modi Government following a focused approach to revive and rejuvenate Ganga; PM Modi has made Namami Gange a peoples' movement: Home Minister

Behavioural change required in people, especially children, to ensure the success of the Namami Gange project: Shri Amit Shah

New Delhi, March 13, 2020

Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Amit Shah presided over the Flag-in ceremony of the Ganga Aamantran Abhiyan, organized under the National Mission for Clean Ganga, in New Delhi today.



"We must not look at Ganga as only a river. It is the pivot of a thousand year old civilization, which is one of the oldest in the world. Indian civilization has contributed the most to humanity, whether it is science and technology, culture and language or religious research and spirituality. Ganga is the symbol of Indian Civilization and is revered in each household of the country", said Shri Shah in his address, while calling Ganga as Jeevan Daayini (Fountainhead of Life) for people settled along its banks. The river has been an inalienable part of India's spiritual, cultural and economic history, he added.

The Home Minister expressed pain when he said that though we treat Ganga as our mother, yet in the past, India did not care for its mother as it should have. He cited the increasing pressure of human settlements and industrial establishments on its banks over the years and the resultant pollution of the river water in various forms. This has led to a situation where the water of the river is so polluted that people think twice before taking a dip in it, in spite of the river being worshipped in our culture. "Ganga lost its 'Nirmal, Aviral' (clean and uninterrupted) flow due to excessive water use and pollution. It was only after Shri Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister, that a government in independent India thought about following a focused approach and acting decisively in the direction to revive and rejuvenate Ganga. PM Modi has made Namami Gange a peoples' movement", Shri Shah said.

Shri Shah said that the Namami Gange project is not limited only to activities like building infrastructure, preventing water pollution, efficient water management for providing clean water supply to people or use the river as a navigable waterway. These activities, he said, would happen anyhow, but the main focus of Namami Gange project is to create a culture of preserving the river in its 'Nirmal and Aviral' form for the future generations and that no one pollutes it again. This is the vision of PM Modi and only he has the ability to take such bold decisions and implement the vision on the ground. Shri Shah said that while only about Rs. 4000 crore were allotted for cleaning of Ganga from 1985 to 2014, over Rs. 20,000 crores has been allocated after 2014. Government of India, along with respective State governments, is implementing over 300 projects in Ganga basin under Namami Gange for Ganga rejuvenation and Swachhata Abhiyan, of which 116 projects have been completed. Further, Rs. 30,700 crores have been allocated for Jal Shakti Ministry in General Budget 2020-21., the Home Minister added.



Shri Shah lauded the efforts of the Jal Shakti Ministry in taking PM's vision forward and doing a commendable job in rejuvenating Ganga to a great extent, in a short period of 5 years. He compared these efforts with those from around the world and said that such a big feat has been achieved in a fraction of time. The Home Minister noted the efficient planning by the Ministry for water management and maintaining the level of water flow in the river. A well laid out sewer network is being constructed in 97 towns and over 4400 villages along the banks of Ganga and bathing ghats are being renovated, among other steps. In the near future, similar projects would be implemented on the major tributaries of the river. He also congratulated the team of Ganga Aamantran Abhiyan for conducting a month-long research expedition and awareness campaign on the river, which would play a big role in rejuvenating it. Shri Shah laid stress on bringing a behavioural change in the people, especially children, living along the banks of the river to ensure the success of the Namami Gange project.

Addressing on the occasion, Jal Shakti Minister, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat informed the gathering about the incessant efforts undertaken by Government of India for rejuvenating Ganga under the Mission Namami Gange in record time of last 5 years. Citing visible improvement in Ganga water, he said that today Ganga stands in the top 10 clean rivers in the world, and the level of oxygen and the dolphin population has steadily increased in the river.

MoS Jal Shakti, Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Rattan Lal Kataria was also present on the occasion, along with other senior officers of the Government of India.

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