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2 Ghaggar stretches in Punjab, Haryana among most polluted in India

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CHANDIGARH: With the state governments failing to take corrective measures, nearly 53% of polluted stretches of different rivers in the region fall in the category of Priority I class -- most polluted – requiring most urgent remediation. What is more worrying is that the two stretches of the Ghaggar river passing through Punjab and Haryana are, respectively, the sixth and seventh most polluted stretches in the country.

Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are grappling with the problem of contamination of river water, caused by the dumping of untreated industrial waste, untreated sewage and solid waste.

The issue has been taken up time and again, especially about the Ghaggar river, in the respective state assemblies, but nothing concrete has been done so far to address the problem that can have long-lasting consequences.

The ministry of jal shakti, in response to a question by Abdul Khaleque, Congress member of Parliament from Assam, shared data on pollution of water bodies, according to which there are 311 polluted river stretches with categories between Priority I to V in the country, of which 17 such stretches are in the region -- 9 in Himachal, 5 in Punjab and 3 in Haryana – and the level of pollutants in nine stretches of different rivers has been recorded manifold higher than the permissible limits.

Any location of a river or a water body having biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) more than 3 milligrams per litre (mg/l) is identified as a polluted location.