

Yamuna pollution level dips for first time this yr

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New Delhi: The Yamuna has shown signs of improvement for the first time this year. However, the faecal coliform level is still 160 times higher than the maximum permissible limit. The river water thus continues to be not suitable for drinking even after conventional treatment.

The Yamuna continues to be polluted throughout its 22 km stretch in Delhi. However, it is now in much better condition than in May 2022 when the river was twice more polluted.

According to data from Delhi Pollution Control Committee for May, while the faecal coliform level in the river at the entry point in the city before the Najafgarh drain converges on the river was 400 units, well within the maximum limit of 2,500 most probable number (MPN)/100ml and the desirable limit of 500 MPN/100ml, the same at the exit point was 4,00,000 units, which is 160 times the maximum limit and about 800 times the desirable limit.

According to the data, the water samples collected from the first two locations of the river in Delhi — Palla and Wazirabad — were within standard criteria related to fitness for bathing. However, by the time the river reaches ISBT bridge,

the pollution levels shoot up with the dissolved oxygen — a marker of presence of life in the river — going down but faecal coliform and biochemical oxygen demand levels increasing.

The data shows that at Asgarpur, the river's exit point in the city, the pollution was at its peak with the maximum faecal coliform level crossing 4,00,000 MPN/100ml. The maximum faecal coliform level at this location was 47,00,000 in April, 4,30,000 in March, 2,50,000 in February and 2,00,000 in January. In May 2022, the maximum level of faecal coliform was 8,10,000 units.

The water samples were collected on May 3 from eight points along the Yamuna — Palla, Wazirabad, ISBT bridge, ITO bridge, Nizamuddin bridge, Okhla barrage, Agra canal at Okhla barrage and Asgarpur, where the Shahdara and Tughlaqabad drains converge.