



## EDITORIAL: INDIAN EXPRESS

**GENERAL STUDIES 3: ENVIRONMENT**

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**TOPIC: POLLUTION**

### KEY ISSUES CONCERNING THE YAMUNA IN DELHI

#### 1. Drinking Water Crisis and Dependency on Haryana

- Delhi relies heavily on Haryana for its drinking water supply, regulated through the Hathni Kund Barrage.
- Raw water reaches Delhi at the Wazirabad Barrage, where it is treated for public use.
- Lean seasons cause water levels to drop, increasing ammonia contamination, leading to plant shutdowns and shortages.
- Water crises result in public panic, forcing residents to depend on tankers.
- A proposed solution includes joint inspection by Delhi and Haryana with an independent monitoring mechanism.
- Political disputes and legal battles have hindered transparent water-sharing agreements.

#### 2. Pollution: Industrial Waste, Sewage, and Regulatory Failures

- The Yamuna suffers from untreated sewage, industrial effluents, and solid waste dumping.
- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) formed the Yamuna Monitoring Committee (YMC) in 2018 to oversee pollution control.
- Major stakeholders include Delhi Jal Board, DDA, and governments of Haryana and UP, but many commitments remain unfulfilled.
- Key polluting drains include Najafgarh, Supplementary, and Shahdara, releasing untreated sewage and industrial waste.
- Haryana contributes to pollution with 80 million liters of untreated sewage from Gurugram entering the river daily.
- Delhi's interceptor project aimed to capture sewage before it reached the river, but incomplete sewer networks and ineffective treatment plants have hampered success.

#### 3. Environmental Flow and the Need for Policy Reform

- The environmental flow of the Yamuna is crucial for maintaining its ecological balance.



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- The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) tasked the National Institute of Hydrology (NIH) with assessing flow requirements.
- Upstream water withdrawals significantly reduce the Yamuna's flow through Delhi, worsening pollution and harming aquatic life.
- The YMC recommended revisiting the 1994 water-sharing agreement among Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh for a fairer distribution.
- Political and bureaucratic hurdles have stalled implementation, requiring central or judicial intervention.

## Conclusion

- Political conflicts and administrative inefficiencies have delayed effective solutions for the Yamuna crisis.
- The river's deterioration affects public health, environmental sustainability, and governance.
- With elections shaping the debate, the focus should shift from political rhetoric to actionable solutions.
- Citizens must demand accountability and pressure authorities to implement tangible reforms.

## About the Yamuna River System

- The Yamuna is a vital tributary of the Ganga, forming part of the larger Ganga Drainage System.
- It flows through the northern Indian subcontinent, supporting diverse ecosystems.
- Stretching over 1,300 km, it plays a crucial role in India's hydrology and economy.

**Source:** <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/for-the-yamuna-to-flow-consensus-is-needed-not-political-slugfests-9808640/>

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