

**Union Government and State Government would work together to save the identity of Ganga, symbol of the most ancient culture : Chief Minister**

**Ganga not only a medium of development of Indian culture and civilization but also witness to it : Chief Minister**

**A public awareness effort will be made in 25 districts through Homeguard Swayam Sewaks**

**Efforts are being made to complete pending STP's and propose new STP's as per need**

**Chief Minister flags off the 'Namami Gange Jagriti Yatra'**

*Lucknow: 09 August, 2017*

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath ji has said that the union and state governments will work in tandem to save the identity of Ganga, symbol of the most ancient culture

He further added that Ganga was not only a medium of Indian civilization and culture's development but also a witness to it and pointed out that to maintain its cleanliness and flow, is the responsibility of every citizen.

Expressing his gratitude towards Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi ji for creating a separate ministry for Ganga rejuvenation, first by anyone after independence, the Chief Minister said the present government will work towards the cleanliness and proper flow of the Ganga, as best as it can.

The Chief Minister said so today at his official residence after flagging off the 'Namami Gange Jagriti Yatra' organized by the Homeguards. Praising this Yatra which will begin from Bijnore and conclude at Ballia, the Chief Minister said that this Yatra will successfully involve people from all walks of life like the common man, social groups, youth, farmers, students and traders in the 'Namami Gange' project.

It may be pointed here that during the Yatra, more than one lakh homeguards will cover 25 districts on the Ganga banks and create public awareness about the need to protect and conserve the holy river Ganga. This Yatra will conclude on September 06, 2017.

The Chief Minister said that the Namami Gange project was started by Prime Minister in July 2014 wherein Rs 20,000 crore had been earmarked to keep Ganga clean and flowing from Gangotri to Ganga Sagar and it was to fast tracks this process initiated by the Prime Minister that through a major drive from July 05, 2017, more than 1.30 crore trees have been planted.

Of these majority of plants are pakar, mango, banyan, neem, peepal, Ashok and other traditional and medicinal plants, he informed while adding that 1,627 village panchayats, in 25 districts on the banks of the river Ganga have been made open defecation free (ODF). With this, various tanneries, dirty drains and sewers flowing into the Ganga are being tackled by the state government on a serious note.

The Chief Minister said that work on completing the under-construction STP's was underway and more STP's will be constructed as per need. Yogi ji also exhorted the common people not to throw filth in the Ganga and said that they should realize their responsibilities towards the present and future generations by keeping the rivers clean.

He praised the initiative of public awareness undertaken by the Homeguards and said that if the rivers like Yamuna and Ganga did not flow in Northern India, the region would have been turned into a desert. The Chief Minister also urged people to ensure that Ganga, Yamuna and the mystical Saraswati's meeting point at Sangam was clean before the Ardh Kumbh in 2019.

Later the Chief Minister flagged off the Namami Gange Jagriti Yatra. The vote of thanks was proposed by the Minister of State for Home Guards (Independent Charge) Mr Anil Rajbhar. Before this, Swami Chidanand Saraswati ji Maharaj of the Parmarth Niketan lauded the efforts initiated by Chief Minister for Ganga cleaning and expressed hope that by these, the mission launched by the Prime Minister will definitely succeed.

Also present on the occasion were Urban Development Minister Mr. Suresh Khanna, Technical Education Minister Mr. Ashutosh Tandon, Principal Secretary (Homeguards) Mr. Kumar Kamlesh and DG (Homeguards) Dr. Surya Kumar and a large number of officials and other dignitaries.

\*\*\*\*\*