Flood fury in Pune fuelled by encroachments on riverbeds: Site visit report

National Green Tribunal (NGT) during its earlier hearing took note of the rampant dumping of debris on the flood plains of the rivers flowing in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad.

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Nadeem Inamdar
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The site visit report was prepared by the water resources department, district collector and central pollution control board.(HT FILE)

Due to encroachments, discharge carrying capacity of rivers is decreasing day by day and causing flood-like situations, according to the site visit report prepared by the five-member committee constituted under the supervision of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB). The committee was formed under the direction of the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

On August 21, Saurabh Rao, commissioner, Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), RD Mohite, chief engineer water resources department visited the encroachment sites with the officials of district collectorate, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), Maharashtra Pollution Control Board and Central Pollution Control Board.
The site visit report was prepared by the water resources department, district collector and central pollution control board.

The report further states that the dumping of debris done by the Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Limited (Maha-Metro) at two locations in Sangamwadi and Sangam bridge on Mutha river bank is obstructing the river flow.

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) during its earlier hearing took note of the rampant dumping of debris on the flood plains of the rivers flowing in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad.
Pune-based civic and environment activist Sarang Yadwadkar had filed a petition in the NGT and mentioned the 12 dumping spots in PMC, PCMC and Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA). Along with Yadwadkar, activists Vivek Velenkar, Narendra Chugh and Dilip Mohite were part of the petition.

The NGT on July 23 took note of the rampant dumping of debris on the flood plains of the rivers flowing in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad and ordered the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) to form a five-member committee. The members of the five-member committee include: chief engineer, water resource department, Maharashtra, Pune district collector, member secretary, Maharashtra pollution control board, state environment impact assessment authority (SEIAA) Maharashtra and senior scientist from central pollution control board (CPCB).

Applicants Sarang Yadwadkar, Narendra Chugh, Vivek Velankar and Dilip Mohite in a joint statement issued, said, "In light of these observations, the root cause of the recent floods in Pune is as clear as daylight. It is now up to all of us to put pressure on PMC, PCMC, and PMRDA to see to it that all such encroachments from the river banks are removed without any delay and the residents of Pune live a peaceful life; safe from floods."

"As the issue is directly related to the safety of the residents, in the present circumstances; it is the need of the hour that all political parties make their stand clear regarding the encroachments, " the statement read.