

NGT directs CPCB to strengthen infrastructure of laboratories



New Delhi, Aug 26 (PTI) The National Green Tribunal Wednesday directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to take steps to strengthen the infrastructure of laboratories of state pollution control boards.

The green panel noted that 23 state pollution control boards have filed Action Taken Reports (ATRs) informing it about prescribed minimum inspection frequency for environmental surveillance of industries.

“In view of the above, the remaining 12 state pollution control boards may also file their action taken report with the CPCB within three months from today.

“The CPCB and state pollution control board may take further steps for strengthening of their monitoring and related infrastructure, including the infrastructure of laboratories,” a bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice A K Goel said.

It also directed the Haryana government to apprise it about status of fluoride contamination and availability of potable water to the affected inhabitants.

The tribunal directed state pollution control boards to submit further action report to the CPCB by December 31.

“The CPCB may collate the same and file a consolidated report before the next date by e-mail,” the bench said.

The CPCB told the tribunal that it had engaged Dr. C.S. Sharma, retired Scientist, for preparation of report for strengthening of Central laboratories and Regional Directorate laboratories at Bengaluru, Bhopal, Kolkata, Lucknow, Shillong and Vadodara.

Industrial development cannot be done on the graves of human beings and should not be at the cost of "air and water quality", the NGT had earlier said while directing the Haryana government to shorten the period of inspection of polluting factories.

The tribunal's direction came during the hearing of a plea filed by journalist Shailesh Singh seeking a direction to close industrial units running without the requisite statutory consent under Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

Alleging that these industries were causing water pollution, the plea has also sought a direction to restrain them from dumping untreated effluent in fields.

Citing a news article, it said groundwater in most of the areas in 11 districts of southern and western Haryana is unfit for consumption due to salinity of high concentration of nitrate or fluoride. PTI PKS RKS RKS

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