

Form panel to study impact of Ulhas river's untreated waste on environment, says NGT

Badri Chatterjee

badri.chatterjee@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered the formation of a committee of experts to study the impact of untreated industrial waste from Ulhas river on the environment in terms of contaminating soil, water and air. The panel will be headed by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the nodal agency will be Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), the NGT said.

"The committee shall jointly

inspect Dombivli better environment society association; Dombivli common effluent treatment plant (CETP); and Ambarnath Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) CEPT and submit a status report on the functional efficiency of CETPs and status of the recipient environment in terms of soil, water and air," read the NGT order, passed on August 8 and published on its website on Wednesday.

NGT gave the direction while hearing an application filed by environment group Vanashakti.

The group sought implementation of an earlier NGT judgment from 2015, which directed industrial associations of Dombivli and Ambarnath CETPs to pay penalty of ₹45 crore for improper effluent treatment.

The NGT bench of justice SP Wangdi, justice K Ramakrishnan and expert member Dr Nagin Nanda said the panel should comprise a senior representative of CPCB, a senior scientist from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (chemical engineering division) and a senior scientist or

engineer from MPCB. The committee will assess the impact of industrial effluents released into the river from the Dombivli and Ambarnath MIDC area and submit an inspection report by October 31.

"Incidents of coloured water, toxic fumes or unbearable stench are not addressed by local authorities," said Stalin D, director, Vanashakti. CETP officials refused to comment as the matter is sub judice, while MPCB said they needed to see the order but it will be complied with.