

## Yamuna in focus

**Issue Date:**

2008-11-30

*Court ordered a review of threat to it* the Delhi High Court refused to stay constructions on the Yamuna floodplains and riverbed on November 3 and ordered setting up an expert committee to evaluate the current and planned constructions for any adverse effects on the river and its ecology.

The judgement came in a public interest litigation initiated by Rajendra Singh of ngo Tarun Bharat Sangh in October last year for stopping the construction of the Commonwealth Games village and a depot of the Delhi Metro.

The court said the committee headed by teri director R K Pachauri should submit its findings in three months and that any construction during this period would be at the risk of the developer. The committee will have five members, and the petitioner and the respondents, including the Delhi government, will nominate two members each.

Singh welcomed the verdict but questioned the need for the committee. "The committee might undermine the judgment," he said. Manoj Misra, the convenor of the Yamuna Jiye Abhiyaan that has been campaigning against constructions on floodplains for over 250 days, agreed, "The court shouldn't wait for the committee."

The judges differed on staying construction. Justice A K Sikri wondered if there was enough time left to stop them, while Justice Rekha Sharma said the river was more important than events.

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