India’s dying rivers seek a coordinated response

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A river in the lifetime of a child. A river flows unerringly, its course unbroken by the vagaries of war and peace. The Ganges, the grandest river in India, has been a source of sustenance and joy to millions of Indians. But in recent times, its condition has been anything but rosy.

Over the past few decades, the Ganges has been increasingly polluted, with industrial effluents, domestic waste, and agricultural runoff pouring into its waters. This has led to a decline in the river’s water quality, affecting the health of humans and aquatic life. The river is also facing the threat of sedimentation, which reduces its flow and makes it more prone to flooding.

The Ganges, along with its tributaries, is a critical part of India’s water resources. It supports millions of people, who rely on it for drinking water, irrigation, and transportation. Moreover, the Ganges is also a source of spiritual and cultural significance, with the river being a part of many religious ceremonies and festivals.

The Indian government has taken several steps to address the pollution of the Ganges, including the implementation of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and the Ganga Saryu River Basins (Regulation and Management) Act, 2018. However, these efforts have not been sufficient to curb the pollution of the river.

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness among the public about the importance of protecting the Ganges. Many environmental organizations have been working towards cleaning the river, and there have been several initiatives launched by the government and international bodies to make the river clean.

However, a coordinated and comprehensive approach is needed to address the pollution of the Ganges. This will require a multi-stakeholder approach, involving the government, civil society, and the general public. It will also require a strong legal framework and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that the polluters are held accountable for their actions.

The government should also consider the creation of a task force to coordinate the efforts of various agencies working on the river’s pollution. This task force should be empowered to take decisive actions, including the imposition of penalties and the closure of polluting industries.

In conclusion, the Ganges is a precious resource that needs to be protected and preserved. The government, along with the help of civil society and the public, must work together to ensure the survival of this iconic river.