

Shocking Video Shows Covid Patient's Body Being Thrown In River In India

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On camera, two men - one of them in a PPE suit - are seen lifting a body on the bridge over river Rapti.

The incident was shot by a couple of people who were driving by the spot in Balrampur district on May 28.

Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh (India): A shocking video of a body of Covid patient being thrown in a river has surfaced from Uttar Pradesh, where thousands of bodies buried in shallow graves by the Ganga and some dumped in the river made headlines around the world a couple of weeks ago. The Centre has ordered several northern states to ensure that dead bodies are not disposed of in rivers. In a letter, the Centre had also asked states to increase patrol along riverbanks to stop the practice, which appears to be proliferating due to poverty and lack of awareness.

The incident was shot by a couple of people who were driving by the spot in Balrampur district on May 28.

On camera, two men, one of them in a PPE suit, are seen lifting a body on the bridge over river Rapti. The man in the PPE suit can be seen tinkering with the body -- probably trying to get it out of the body bag.

The Chief Medical Officer of Balrampur later confirmed that the body was indeed of a Covid patient, and the relatives were trying to dump it in the river.

A case has been filed against the relatives the body has been handed back to them.

"Preliminary investigations have revealed that the patient was admitted to hospital on May 25, and he died three days later on May 28. As per Covid protocol, the body was handed over to his relatives. Preliminary investigations reveal that the relatives threw the body into the river. We have filed a case and strict action will be taken," said Balrampur Chief Medical Officer VB Singh.

Earlier this month, hundreds of bodies had washed up on the banks of river Ganga in parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In Buxar district, 71 bodies were retrieved from the riverbank.

Thousands of other bodies have been found buried in the sandbanks of Ganga, which local authorities said, could have floated up during the high tide.

Cellphone videos were also circulated on social media that showed bodies being thrown into the river from ambulances stopping at a bridge near Bihar border in Saran district. Locals said the ambulances belonged to both states.

The matter became a flashpoint between the two states with Bihar alleging that the practice of dumping bodies in river belonged to Uttar Pradesh.

Union minister Gajendra Shekhawat, who controls the Central Jal Shakti ministry, had tweeted, "We have taken serious note of the issue of dumping dead bodies in River Ganga and instituted measures for the prohibition of the same. The Centre through the NMCG and district authorities will ensure all unidentified bodies are disposed as per the protocol".

In an order he tweeted accompanying the post, the Centre had asked Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, to keep vigilance "along the length of the river" to check such incidences. The states have also been asked to dispose of the bodies according to Covid-19 protocol and send a compliance report within 14 days.

- NDTV