

**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL,
SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI**

O.A. No. 237 OF 2017 (SZ)

REPORT

**PRESENTED BY JUSTICE A.V.RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI
(FORMER JUDGE, HIGH COURT OF KERALA)
CHAIRMAN, STATE LEVEL MONITORING COMMITTEE, KERALA
(FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE AFORESAID COMMITTEE)
REGARDING THE POLLUTION CAUSED TO RIVER
KONOTHUPUZZHA IN ERNAKULAM DISTRICT**

PRESENTED ON : 05.08.2020

COMPLIANCE: ORDER DATED 26.05.2020

DATE OF POSTING: 10.08.2020

INDEX

		Pages
Report	:	01 - 05
<u>Annexures</u>		
A1	:	06
A2	:	07
A3	:	08

====***====

REPORT

The river Konothupuzha starts from Champakkara Canal at Thrippunithura. It passes through the local limits of the Thrippunithura Municipality as well as Chottanikkara, Udayamperoor, Mulamthuruthy and Amballoor Grama Panchayaths covering a distance of about 17 Kilometers and ultimately joins the Vembanad Lake at Poothotta region within the limits of Amballoor Grama Panchayath. The main stream joining the river within the limits of the Thrippunithura Municipality is Andharakarathodu.

This Hon'ble tribunal on 24.1.2020 had directed to take immediate steps to prevent the aforesaid river from being polluted with solid waste as well as septage waste through unauthorised outlets. There was a further direction to prepare an action plan for the aforesaid purpose with the involvement of the different government departments concerned and the local bodies through the limits of which the river flows.

The government as per G.O.(Rt)No.817/2020/LSGD dated 3.5.2020, constituted a committee with the District Collector as the Chairman and the District Level Officers of the key department as well as the local bodies concerned for preparation of the action plan and for its implementation.

An inspection was caused to be conducted by the District Office, Ernakulam of KSPCB, on 25.6.2020 along with the official of the Thrippunithura Municipality. It is informed that the banks of the river as well as the stream joining the same were inspected. Reportedly, inspections were conducted in the major establishment on the banks of the river on 30.06.2020, 2.7.2020 and 3.7.2020 and water samples were collected for analysis. The analysis reports are yet to be received.

Reportedly, the following were noted during the inspection.

- a. **Near Nadakkavu-Mulanthuruthy bridge:** solid/sweage wastes were seen dumped on either side of the road.
- b. **Kaniyavalli Bridge:** Nets were seen installed on either side of the bridge to prevent throwing of waste into the river.
- c. **Puthiyakavu-Kureekad bridge:** Nets were installed on either side of the bridge. However solid wastes were seen dumped at that point.


- 1 -

- d. **Skyline Ranch Villas:** It is at this point Andharakathodu joins Konothupuzha river. Inspection revealed that each villa is provided with individual septic tank and soak pit systems.
- e. **Anthakarathodu Bridge:** At the time of the inspection, cleaning of the Anthakarathodu by the Irrigation Department was going on. Solid wastes were seen dumped on the banks of the Anthakarathodu. No net was seen installed on the sides of the bridge. It is reported that the officials of the Thrippunithura Municipality informed that they would install the nets after the cleaning operations are over.
- f. **Karingachira Bridge:** Nets were seen installed either side of the bridge.
- g. **Star Homes and Annex Apartment:** This is an apartment complex with several towers. No sewage treatment plant was seen installed. Reportedly, septic tanks of some of the towers are close to the river side.
- h. **Aliyar Bridge:** Reportedly, the water near this area was found to be polluted and black coloured. Here sewage contamination is suspected.

The status of clearing work of Konothupuzha, arranged by Irrigation Department near Aliyar Bridge and Star Homes, Thrippunithura, can be seen from **Annexures-A1 and A2**, respectively.

It was also reported that the STPs of some of the flats on the banks of Konothupuzha and the drains joining river were not functioning.

The KSPCB reports that letters have been issued to the local bodies concerned for identifying and blocking all the unauthorised sewage outlets leading to the river and show cause notices were served on the following apartment complexes and establishments on the banks of the river, where the STPs are not properly functioning.

1. Choice Paradise Apartments, Thrissur.
2. SFS Kingdom Apartments, Thrissur.
3. Star Homes and Annex Apartments, Thrissur.
4. Heera Life Style Apartments, Thrissur.
5. Vally Heights Apartments, Thrissur.
6. Service Station at Thrissur owned by Karthikeyan M N.

CONCLUSION

The pollution of river Konothupzha cannot be considered as an isolated issue. It is closely and intrinsically connected with the Waste Management Systems in the local bodies involved.

As per the directions of the National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi in O.A.606/2018, instructions have been issued by the State Level Monitoring Committee, to all the local bodies in the State to be fully compliant in waste management within one year from April, 2019. With a view to make the process effective, District Level Monitoring Committees were formed all districts in the State, with the District Collector as the Chairman. General, as well as special directions pertaining to each District were given in the first meetings of these committees chaired by the Chairman of the State Level Monitoring Committee. However, all those directions went into deaf ears. Unless, there is proper co-ordination between the District Administration, different Government Departments, Local Bodies as the well as the Kerala State Pollution Control Board, nothing can be achieved.

It is crucial to note that Thripunithura Municipality through which river Konothupuzha passes, is lagging behind in achieving the target fixed by the Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal, in Solid Waste Management.

The details of segregation and collection of solid waste in Thripunithura Municipality as in March, 2020 is as follows. The data was prepared on the basis information supplied by the Municipality to the State Level Monitoring Committee through KSPCB.

Number of Wards		49
Number of Household units		29495
Number of Establishments		3400
Number of Houses having segregation at source	- Dry	25690
-Do-	- Wet	26730
Number of establishments having segregation at source	- Dry	2920
-Do-	- Wet	2860

Ag 3.

Number of households under door to door collection	- Dry	25690
-Do-	- Wet	26730
Percentage of households under door to door collection	- Dry	87.1
-Do-	- Wet	90.7
Number of establishments under door to door collection	- Dry	2920
-Do-	- Wet	2860
Percentage of establishments under door to door collection	-Dry	85.9
-Do-	-Wet	84.2
Number of collectors		64
Number of vehicles used		2

The data regarding segregation and door to door collection of solid waste in the Thripunithura Municipality appears to slightly inflated. Had it been fully correct, most of the road sides and river sides in the Municipality would have been waste free. Even if, 1% of the solid waste generated in the households and other establishment is unattended by the local body, it would be sufficient to pollute the river and road stretches in it's locality.

The details of door to door collection as in March, 2020, in the panchayaths through which the river Konothupuzha passes are given in **Annexure-3**.

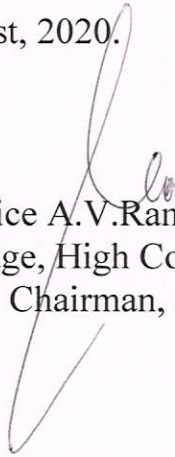
To overcome the present situation, the following suggestions are made.

1. All the local bodies above mentioned should achieve 100% compliance in door to door collection of segregated wastes and should ensure its safe and proper disposal. Source level treatment of wet solid waste, under the supervision of Suchitwa Mission, Haritha Kerala Mission and Pollution Control Board can be promoted as far as practicable. Major commercial establishments, if possible, can establish its own plastic shredding units so that littering of plastics on the roads and in the river can be controlled.
2. The local bodies above may be advised to install surveillance camera units on major points of waste disposal. They may also be directed install nets on either side of the bridges over the river Konothupuzha wherever necessary. These local bodies should also undertake the responsibility of conducting awareness programmes to the public regarding proper waste management.

This can be done with the help of Suchitwa Mission, Haritha Kerala Mission and State Pollution Control Board. Awareness programmes can be conducted in educational institutions also with the assistance of District Legal Services Authority.

3. The KSPCB shall be burdened with the responsibility of, proceeding against individuals, establishments and local bodies violating environmental laws and recovering compensation for environmental degradation.
4. The State Irrigation Department shall be directed to clean the river Konothupuzha and the streams connecting the same periodically to ensure free flow of water. It is learnt that the Irrigation Department constructs temporary mud bunds at Champakkara Canal side (it is hear the river starts) and at Poothotta (it is hear the river ends) to prevent the entry of salt water during summer season. Strict instruction should be given to the irrigation department to remove these bunds before the onset of monsoon every year, so that clogging at that points can be avoided.

Dated this the 5th day of August, 2020.


Justice A.V. Ramakrishna Pillai
(Former Judge, High Court of Kerala)
Chairman, SLMC, Kerala.

Status of clearing work of Konothupuzha arranged by Irrigation department



KONOTHUPUZZHA NEAR ALIYAR BRIDGE TRIPPUNITHURA- STATUS BEFORE WORK



STATUS NEAR ALIYAR BRIDGE- AFTER CLEARING

So



Latitude: 9.954518
Longitude: 76.355811
Elevation: -0.63m
Accuracy: 6.1m
Time: 06-25-2020 15:39
Note: Konothupuzha

DURING EXECUTION NEAR STAR HOMES, TRIPPUNITHURA



Latitude: 9.954652
Longitude: 76.355784
Elevation: 10.37m
Accuracy: 6.1m
Time: 06-25-2020 15:42
Note: Konothupuzha

REACH NEAR STAR HOMES AFTER CLEARING

h

Sl. No.	Name of Panchayath	Population (2011)	No. of wards	No. of Households	No. of Establishments	Door to door Collection Households				Door to door Collection Establishments				No. of collectors	No. of vehicles used
						Number		Percentage		Number		Percentage			
						Dry	Wet	Dry	Wet	Dry	Wet	Dry	Wet		
1	Amballur	25628	16	8454	1690	1600	0	18.92	0	210	0	12.42	0	18	1
2	Chottanikkara	22656	14	9097	480	9000	0	98.93	0	420	0	87.5	0	28	1
3	Mulamthuruthi	25852	16	7728	11	0	Not received	0	Not received	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Udayamperoor	39538	20	10022	1586	600	4000	5.98	39.91	One/month	One/month	One/month	One/month	14	0