

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

NEW CASE

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 IMPROPER AND UNSCIENTIFIC WAY OF WASTE
MANAGEMENT IN GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE,
KALAMASSERY, ERNAKULAM DISTRICT**

PRESENTED ON : 08.01.2021

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REPORT

This report relates to the improper and unscientific way of disposal of bio-medical waste and other types of waste within the premises of Government Medical College, Kalamassery, Ernakulam.

On 31st December, 2020 I received a Whats App message from the staff reporter of Malayala Manorama daily, pointing out that bio-medical waste including PPE kits were being burnt in the premises of Government Medical College, Kalamassery. The message contained a live video of the burning process. **Annexure-X1** is a screen shot of the same. **Annexure-X2** is another image received. It shows a pit containing baggages of medical waste intended to be burned.

The matter was telephonically informed to the Chairman, KSPCB who in turn directed to the Chief Environmental Engineer, Regional Office, KSPCB, Ernakulam to enquire and report.

On 3.1.2021, I along with the Chief Environmental Engineer made a local inspection of the site. The facts revealed during the inspection was shocking. There is a small structure in the premises intended for the storage of medical waste for onwards transmission to IMAGE, Palakkad maintained by IMA. The storage shed is only for name sake and in fact baggages containing the bio-medical waste are stored in the open space without any roof coverage. **Annexure-X3(a) and X3(b)** are the photographs of the storing area.

Few yards away from the storage space earthen pits filled with different types of waste materials were seen ready to be burned. These pits were attracting different types of birds and domestic animals. **Annexure-X4(a) and X4(b)** are the photographs of the same.

The condition of the sewage treatment plant of the hospital was also enquired into. The Chief Environmental Engineer informed that, the STP was not functioning. It was also reported that the responsible officials informed that the

huge quantity of effluent generated due to the enormous number of Covid patients was the main reason for the failure of the STP. It was also informed that the renovation of the plant is on the way, and untreated as well partly treated effluent was being discharged into different earthen pits at the rear side of the hospital. I did not dare to go near the pits on account of its present condition.

On 6.1.2021, the Chief Environmental Engineer gave a report wherein it is stated as under:

“As directed by your good self, directions were given to District Office-1 of the Board and the consolidated report submitted by them is enclosed as Appendix-1. In the report it may be noted that the STP is of 500 KLD capacity and specific directions were already issued to the hospital authorities to revamp the same which was unattended by them till date. It is mentioned in the report that complaints were there from nearby residents against the pollution caused due to mismanagement of pollution control facilities. However, the District Office was given strict directions to initiate legal actions against them including levying of environmental compensation for the committed offences in complying with relevant provisions of different environmental rules and operating the hospital without a valid consent/authorisation of the Board.”

The report referred to as Appendix-1 in the report of the Chief Environmental Engineer is appended as Annexure-X5 series.

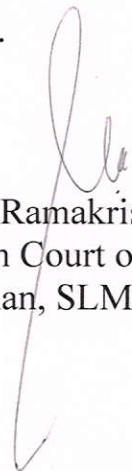
At present, there is acute shortage of common biomedical treatments facility in the State and the IMAGE unit at Palakkad maintained by IMA is one and only facility. It is overloaded also. I am given to understand that KEIL unit at Ambalamugal is expected to commissioned soon and it may solve the problem to a large extent. However, that is not a valid reason for burning biomedical waste in open space in a thickly populated area. Therefore;

- a) The authorities of the Government Medical College, Kalamasseery may be directed to resort to scientific methods for the disposal of biomedical waste and other types of waste in the hospital. They may also be directed to keep the bio-medical waste awaiting transportation to treatment units under

roofed structures. Directions may also be given for expediting the process of renovation of STP.

- b) The State Government may be directed to expedite the commission of KEIL unit at Ambalamugal, so that the present problem faced in bi-medical waste management in the State can be solved to a great extent.

Dated this the 8th day of January, 2021.


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

ANNEXURE - XI





ANNEXURE

X3 (a)



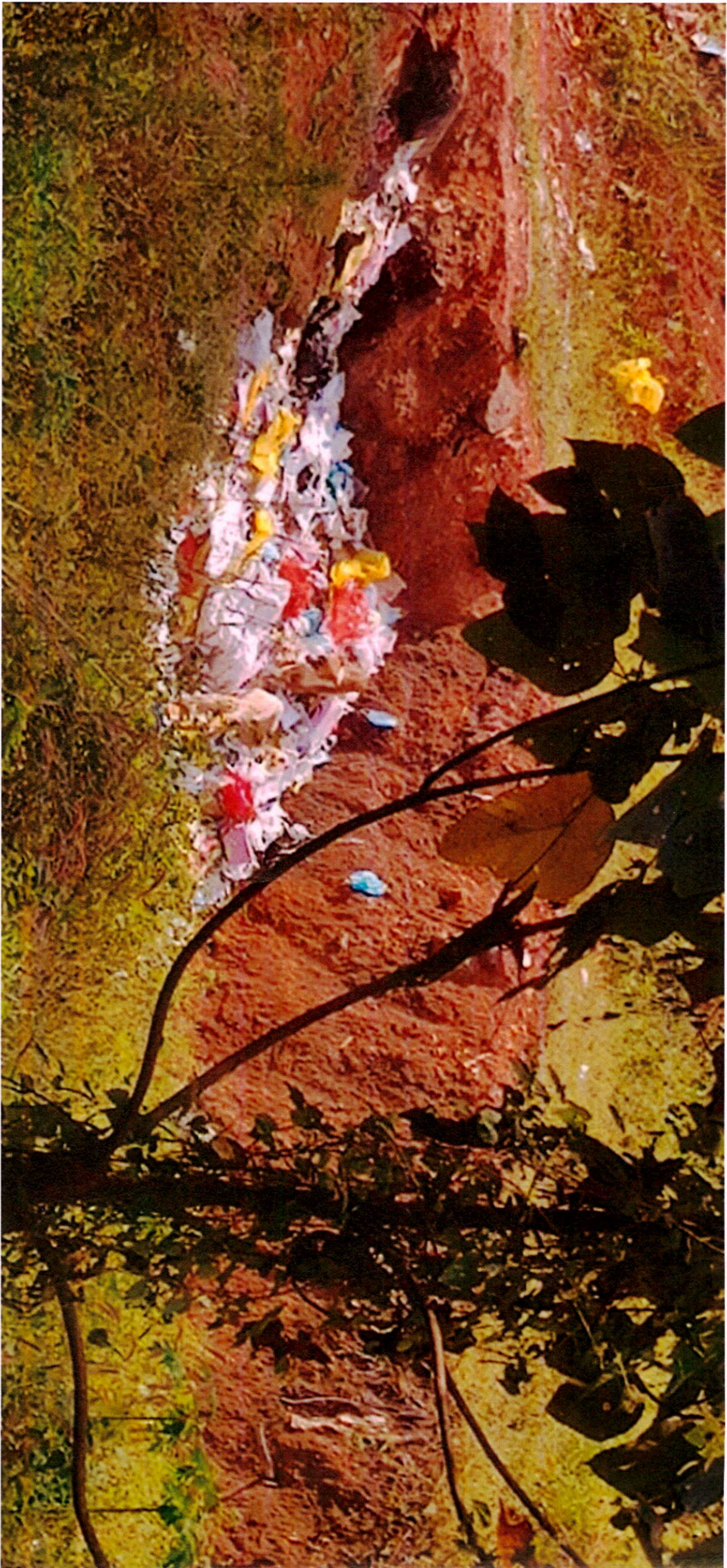
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ANNEXURE
A3(6)



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ANNEXURE
XIV (a)



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ANNEXURE 5. SERIES



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KERALA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

DISTRICT OFFICE -1, ERNAKULAM

GANDHINAGAR, KOCHI - 682 020

കേരള സംസ്ഥാന മലിനീകരണ നിയന്ത്രണ ബോർഡ്

ജില്ലാ ഓഫീസ്-1, എറണാകുളം

ഗാന്ധിനഗർ, കൊച്ചി - 682 020

PCB/EKM/DO-1/OA-1115/15

06.01.2021

From,

The Environmental Engineer

To,

The Chief Environmental Engineer
Regional office, Ernakulam

Sub: STP operation Kalamassery Municipality-Reg

Sir,

The Medical College Hospital is operating with 500 beds. The consent of the hospital was expired on 30.06.2018 and not holding a valid consent of the Board. The hospital had submitted the application for renewal but, the application was rejected due to non compliance of the conditions. The STP of the hospital is non-functional which is violation of Section 24 of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Rules, 1976. The raw effluent is stored inside the storage tanks without any treatment. It is suspected that the effluents are being discharged unauthorizedly without any treatment. The treatment unit IS OF 500 KLD capacity consisting of collection tank, equalization, aeration, secondary clarifier, chemoxidation tank and treated water tank. The treated water is being collected in a pond. Kindly note that Board had also received various complaints from nearby residents on the discharge of untreated waste water from the hospital. Based on the complaint, Board had issued directions to the Principal, Medical College on 22.04.2020 to operate the STP and also to revamp the existing STP. The copies of direction issued are enclosed herewith.

The Board had inspected the hospital on 31/12/2020 based on a complaint on improper management of bio medical wastes. At the time of enquiry, the STP was not operational. The sewage is seen collected in the storage tanks and not operating the STP. The waste water is seen just collected in the treatment units and it is suspected to be discharged outside without any treatment. Based on the above violations, Board had issued show cause notice to the hospital on 04.01.2021

Yours faithfully

P B

SREELAKSHMY

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SREELAKSHMY
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ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER

- 10 -

ANNEXURE X-S SERIES



KERALA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
DISTRICT OFFICE 1, GANDHI NAGAR, ERNAKULAM - 682 020

www.keralapcb.org

PCB/EKM/DO-1/OA-1115/15

Date: 22.04.20

From
Environmental Engineer

To
The Principal
Government Medical College,
H.M.T Colony P.O., Kalamasery,
Ernakulam

Sub:- Operation of Sewage Treatment Plant of Government Medical College, Ernakulam-reg

Ref:- Telephonic conversation with Project Engineer, Government Medical College, Ernakulam
22.04.2020

Sir

It is understood that the Sewage Treatment Plant of Government Medical College, Ernakulam is not functioning at present and the effluent generated is discharged without treatment. Discharging the whole effluent from COVID-19 Isolation ward, laboratory causes hazardous effects on the Environment and people living around this area. Complaints are existing against untreated effluent reaching the nearby residents from the Hospital compound. Kindly take necessary action to revamp the STP and start its function immediately. The action taken in this regard may be intimated to this office with the tentative date of completion.

For and on behalf of the
KERALA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

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MINI MARY SAM
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ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER

-11- *[Signature]*



KERALA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
DISTRICT OFFICE 1, GANDHI NAGAR, ERNAKULAM – 682 020

www.keralapcb.org

PCB/EKM/DO-1/OA-1115/15

Date:27.04.20

From
Environmental Engineer

To
The Principal
Government Medical College,
H.M.T Colony P.O., Kalamasery,
Ernakulam

Sub:- Proper disposal of sewage generated at Government Medical College, Ernakulam

Ref:- Your Letter No.GMC/PE/17.Vol.VII/2020 dated 23.04.2020

Sir/Madam,

From your letter 23.04.2020, it is understood that the Sewage Treatment Plant at Government Medical College, Ernakulam is not working now and the effluent generated is pumped to a check dam in the Medical College compound without any treatment. Since the revamping works of STP was stopped, alternative facility should be arranged to dispose sewage properly. The sewage from all toilets should be disposed through Septic Tank-System and waste water generated from bathrooms and other washing areas should be discharged through a soak pit after proper disinfection process. Pumping of sewage to the check dam is strictly prohibited. It is highly necessary to disinfect the check dam area and its surroundings regularly due to COVID-19 situation. In no case, the effluent from the hospital premises shall reach the near by houses.

Hence you are hereby directed to take immediate action in this regard and report the same to this office within 5 days.

For and on behalf of the
KERALA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

MINI MARY

SAM

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER

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MARY SAM
Date: 2020.04.29
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