

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING CONVENED BY ADDITIONAL
CHIEF SECRETARY(ENVIRONMENT) ON 25.02.2023 IN THE
MATTER OF OA 147/2022**

The meeting via video conference commenced at 11 am with Additional Chief Secretary (Environment) in the chair. The Chairman and the Member Secretary of Kerala State Pollution Control Board, Director, Environment and Climate change; Deputy Director, Urban Affairs; Under Secretary, Environmental Department, officials from Environmental Department, Panchayath Directorate, District Panchayath, Industries Directorate, Secretaries of concerned LSGDs, and Pollution Control Board attended the meeting.

Member Secretary, KSPCB informed that the Monitoring Committee members visited the adjoining areas of Vembanad lake in the districts of Alappuzha, Ernakulam and Kottayam on 23.02.2023. The current status of measures taken for controlling pollution by the stakeholders was presented.

After the presentation, Additional Chief Secretary asked remarks of Chairman, KSPCB and Director of Directorate of Environment and Climate Change (DoECC). The Chairman informed that the progress can be reported to Hon'ble NGT. The Director, DoECC informed that dredging action has to be resorted to at a later stage.

The Additional Chief Secretary wanted a detailed discussion on the order of the Hon'ble NGT dated 06.01.2023 and directed the Member Secretary to read out the operational part of the court order. The Hon. Tribunal had severely criticized the State for poor implementation of the relevant rules, and disregard of the directions of the NGT. ACS Env. noted that the local bodies are not taking adequate action to ensure proper management of liquid waste in their jurisdictions, and their inaction has led to the situation that the ACS Env't department has to appear personally before the tribunal and give explanation for the callous indifference of the local governments. This situation cannot be allowed to continue, and the authorities responsible for waste management will have to answer for their irresponsible attitude. As a case in point, the issue of waste management of apartment complexes, commercial establishments and houseboats was examined. It was seen from the inspection of the committee that most of the apartment complexes are not treating their liquid waste, which was flowing directly into water bodies and contaminating them, creating a catastrophic situation amounting to a public health emergency. Notice should be issued by the local bodies and the KSPCB to flats, commercial establishments, hotels, resorts and house boats which have not provided sewage treatment facilities to ensure that their liquid waste is treated according to prescribed standards.

A time period up to 30 days can be allowed within which measures should be taken, otherwise closure order should be given against the violators.

Additional Chief Secretary said that action shall be taken against officials who fail to implement the respective rules. A note shall be submitted by Member Secretary, KSPCB with the approval of Chairman within three days itself. Additional Chief Secretary also said that the details regarding the number of polluting sources namely flats, commercial establishments, house boats, hotels, and resorts, industrial units etc which are to be closed will be reported to Hon'ble NGT during the next posting of OA-147/2022 on 22/03/2023.

The meeting came to an end by 12.30 pm.