

Minutes of the 3rd Monitoring Committee meeting, constituted in connection with O.A. Nos. 395/2013, 396/2013 & 242/2016, convened by Additional Chief Secretary, Environment Department on 04.03.2023

Meeting commenced at 11:00 am with the Additional Chief Secretary, Environment Department in chair. Additional Chief Secretary, Local Self Government Department; Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department; Member Secretary of Kerala State Pollution Control Board; District Collectors of Idukki, Thrissur districts; Deputy Collector, Ernakulam; Director Urban Affairs; Director of Panchayats; Secretary, Kochi Municipal Corporation; Secretaries/representatives of all Municipalities and Panchayats coming under the purview of the subject and other officers concerned were present.

ACS, Environment Department commenced the meeting welcoming all. ACS briefed on the directions issued by the National Green Tribunal vide order dated 27.05.2022. The Monitoring Committee comprising of Secretaries of Local Self Government, Water Resources, Finance and Revenue Departments was constituted vide G.O dated 12/07/2022 and so far 2 meetings were taken by the said committee on 29.07.2022 and 26.10.2022. It was pointed out in the meeting that though the action plan consists of a large number of action points, many of those are the repetitions of the same action points which are to be implemented in different Municipalities/GPs/Corporations. Hence, the actual number of 100 point action plan can be condensed to 30 points in short term action plan and 8 in long term action plan respectively.

ACS, Environment Department expressed his severe disappointment in the way actions are being carried out by various implementing agencies without applying mind. There has been an utter failure in reporting the progress achieved, in a uniform and systematic way. Apart from considering these actions as part of compliance to the orders in Original Applications, it was directed in the meeting that the same has to be given high priority considering it as a public health emergency. It was also pointed out that many of the actions taken by various agencies like Suchitwa Mission were

not seen reflected in the Action Taken Report.

The piecemeal work done by various sectors have to be collated meticulously to present the actual quantum of work. ACS, LSG conveyed that both Director, Urban Affairs and Director of Panchayats shall take personal efforts in highlighting the efforts of LSG dept in this endeavour. The Head of departments have to take personal responsibility in monitoring the progress, and ensuring timely and accurate reporting of progress. The action taken by the individual Municipalities could not be spelt out clearly when details were sought for by ACS, Env't. This will not be helpful while collating details for submission of reports. There has to be uniformity in reporting which has to be looked into by LSGD.

Decisions taken after detailed discussions and deliberations:

1. the Director, Urban Affairs and Director of Panchayats shall prepare a proforma to collect data so as to clearly and precisely reflect the action taken at field level as instructed by ACS, Environment Department and ACS LSG department and share the same with all the LSGIs and other implementing agencies along the watershed area.

(Action: Director of Panchayats, DUA, LSGD)

2. All the LSGIs shall prepare reports detailing the progress made in accordance with the proforma to be shared by the Director of Panchayats and the Director, Urban Affairs and the same shall be send by LSGIs to their respective Directorates. The data sent by LSGIs shall be scrutinized at the Director level by DUA & DP and a qualitative & quantitative report depicting the statistical data on progress achieved shall be forwarded to the Environment Department.

(Action: DUA, Director of Panchayats, LSGIs concerned)

3. LSGI's may prioritize inspections on units in close proximity to water bodies shall be taken up on priority. The pollution from high rise apartment complexes buildings also need to be addressed on priority. The ATR shall quantify the work done, period over which the works were

carried out and the net outcome. The Secretaries of LSGIs shall taken steps to bring all sorts of violation to book and shall ensure the protection of water bodies. The statutory provisions to prevent pollution of air and water, and endangering human life shall be used against the polluters. If temporary measures are to be put in place, these may be done within a strict time frame and progress reported.

(Action: DUA, Director of Panchayats, LSGIs concerned, WRD, KWA Evt, KSPCB)

4. KWA & LSGIs and KSPCB may jointly work out provisions for utilizing the unutilized capacity of treatment plants.

(Action: LSGIs concerned, WRD, KWA, Evt, KSPCB)

5. The reports have the lacunae of not specifying the definite time line & cost estimates and funding sources for projects listed; which shall be immediately addressed.

(Action: DUA, Director of Panchayats, LSGIs concerned, WRD, KWA Evt, KSPCB)

6. It is decided to conduct a meeting (tentative date on 16.03.2023) to sort out the issues discussed herein and to come up with a comprehensive action plan and hence all the implementing agencies are to report their action taken to the environment Department (envtkerala@gmail.com), except LSGIs who are to report to DUA and Director of Panchayats. DUA & Director of Panchayats shall forward the report of LSGD through proper channel to Evt.

(Action: KSPCB, Director of Panchayats, DUA, KWA , LSGIs concerned)

Dr. V. Venu

