

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL SOUTHERN ZONE,
CHENNAI Original Application No. 55 of 2020 (SZ)**

IN THE MATTER OF

Tribunal on its own motion *suomotu*

Based on the News Item in

Chennai Express Newspaper

dated 03 03 2020, Chennai Supplementary

"Sewage is pumped into

Putheri Lake in Pallavaram",

Applicants

With

The Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu,

Public Works Department, Chennai

and others

... Respondent(s)

**REPORT FILED BY THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, WRD, LOWER PALAR BASIN
DIVISION, KANCHEEPURAM**

1. **R.Ramesh** son of R.Ramamoorthy aged about 55 years officiating as Executive Engineer, Water Resources Department (WRD) of the Public Works Department having my office at the Collectrate Campus, Kancheepuram District, Kancheepuram -1 submit my report as follows:
2. I submit that the above case has been *suomotu* registered by this Tribunal on the basis of the paper report published in Chennai Express Newspaper Chennai Supplementary, dated 03.03.2020 under the caption "*Back to the brink*" on the allegations that though huge amount has been spent by the Government for rejuvenating the Putheri Lake in Pallavaram, but now due to the negligence and lapses on the part of the local bodies, there is no maintenance for the lakes, leading to large growth of water of hyacinth have been grown affecting the flow of the water and also reducing the oxygen level in the water; indiscriminate discharge of sewage is being done in that area and the municipal authorities are pumping sewage water into the lake thereby affecting the quality of the water causing pollution and that there arises a substantial question of environment for interference of the Hon'ble Tribunal for giving necessary direction to solve the problem

3. The Hon'ble Tribunal has, therefore, appointed a Joint Committee comprising of the District Collector, Chengalpattu, District, The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Engineer-in Chief, Water Resources Organisation (WRO) and Public Works Department (PWD), the Commissioner, Pallavaram Municipality, Senior Officer from Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board to go in to the allegations in the report and to submit a factual and action taken report to the Hon' ble Tribunal.

4. The Hon'ble Tribunal further directed that if there is any discharge of untreated sewage, then the committee is directed to identify the persons responsible for the same and initiate action against the people in accordance with law, as discharging untreated sewage into the water body is an offence under the Water Prevention (control of Pollution) Act, 1974. If there is any pollution caused and the water quality has deteriorated then they are also directed to submit the action plan for remediating the same with shorter and longer time lines. If they are able to trace out persons responsible for the contamination, then action to be taken against such person including launching of prosecution and imposing environmental compensation and take steps to recover the amount from such person(s).

(i) The Hon'ble Tribunal designated the Water Resources Organisation (WRO) and Public Works Department will act as nodal agency for co-ordination and for providing all necessary logistics for this purpose.

(ii) The Chief Engineer, Public Works Department (PWD) and Water Resources Organisation (WRO), Chennai were *suomotu* impleaded as additional 9th respondent.

(iii) The committee was further directed to submit the report to this Tribunal within a period of two months.

5. REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:

The Putheri tank is not maintained by the PWD and is under the maintenance control of Pallavaram Municipality. The main allegation is that though huge amount has been spent by the Government for rejuvenating the Putheri Lake in Pallavaram, but now due to the negligence and lapses on the part of the local bodies, there is no maintenance for the lakes, leading to large growth of water of hyacinth have been grown affecting the flow of the water and also reducing the oxygen level in the water; indiscriminate

discharge of sewage is being done in that area and the municipal authorities are pumping sewage water into the lake thereby affecting the quality of the water causing pollution. Hence, PWD has no specific remarks to offer in respect of Putheri en

- (i) The Joint Inspection was held on 20.09.2020 with the members of the Committee appointed by the Hon'ble Tribunal and the report is under preparation and would be filed before the Hon'ble Tribunal immediately after the preparation of the report.

6 ANY SCHEME LAUNCHED BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION TO RESTORE THE WATER BODY AND IF SO ITS PRESENT STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION

There are plans for rehabilitation and restoration of all tanks including Putheri tank in the overall Kovalam basin (comes under Chengalpattu and Chennai District) under Comprehensive Flood Mitigation Project with an amount of Rs 2000 crore which also involves creating biodiversity parks/ tree-planting around the banks of the water body protecting the lake against the future encroachment. Detailed Project Report has been sent to Government and after approval from the World Bank, the said project scheme will be executed and the repairs/renewal of shutters and all other component works to rehabilitate the Putheri en either by the PWD or by the local body concerned.

It is, therefore, prayed that this Hon'ble Court may be pleased to take on record the submissions made in paragraphs 1 to 6 above and pass appropriate further orders as deemed fit and necessary in the circumstances of the case and thus render justice.


EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, W.R.O. (P.W.D.),
LOWER PALAR BASIN DIVISION,
KANCHEEPURAM-631 501.