

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

STATUS REPORT FILED BY THE COMMITTEE CONSTITUTED IN
THE MATTER OF O.A NO.259/2017
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ORDER DATED 20.01.2021
OF HON'BLE NGT IN

Original Application No. 76 of 2017 (SZ)

Original Application No. 259 of 2017 (SZ) &
M.A.No.209 to 214 of 2017 (SZ)

With

Original Application No. 260 of 2017 (SZ) &

The committee constituted as per the order dated 06/01/2020 in the matter of O.A No. 259 of 2017, Lawyer's Environmental Awareness Forum (LEAF) Versus the State of Kerala & Others, hereby submit the following as per order dated 20.01.2021:

It is respectfully submitted that the committee had already conducted an air quality status study and submitted report of the eight cities mentioned in the application. As per the study report the air quality of all other areas except Vyttila in Ernakulam District were found to be within the permissible level. But that study was conducted soon after the Covid-19 pandemic induced lock down and based on the data available with the Kerala State Pollution Control Board from the existing manual ambient monitoring stations under National Air Monitoring Programme, State Air Monitoring Programme and Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations collected immediately before, after,

and during the lockdown. Hence Hon'ble NGT vide order dated 20.01.2021 in the aforementioned applications 259/2017 directed the committee to consider the observation made and conduct further Ambient Air Quality test when the activities in the State are in peak operation and then submit a further detailed report along with suggestions on remedial measures, if any.

Further, it was also directed that the independent departments who were directed to carry out certain recommendations to file their independent status report regarding the action plan with shorter timeline as to how they are going to implement the recommendations made by the committee to check the air pollution in the State of Kerala.

The action plan comprising of the short term and long term steps already prepared and submitted by the committee before the Honourable NGT is reproduced below:

Short term steps suggested for improving Air Quality		
SL. NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY
1	Launching extensive awareness drive against polluting vehicles	Motor Vehicle Department
2	Ensuring strict action against visibly polluting vehicles	Motor Vehicle Department
3	Steps to prevent parking of vehicles in non designated areas.	Motor Vehicle Department /State Police- Traffic
4	Introducing wet/Mechanized vacuum sweeping of roads.	Local Self-Government Department
5	Controlling dust pollution at construction sites by providing an appropriate covering system	Local Self-Government Department
6	Ensuring carriage of construction material in closed/covered vessels.	Police Department

Long term steps suggested for improving Air Quality		
SL. NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTING AGENCY
1	Retrofitting of diesel vehicles with particulate filters	Motor Vehicle Department
2	Installation of the vapour recovery system in fuelling stations	Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) /Pollution Control Board
3	Promoting battery operated vehicles	Motor Vehicle Department
4	Banning of old diesel vehicles in a phased manner	Motor Vehicle Department
5	Undertaking Greening of open areas	Local Self-Government Department/ Public Works Department
6	Creation of green buffers along the traffic corridors.	Local Self-Government Department/ Public Works Department
7	Development of a proper system for ensuring garbage/municipal solid waste/biomass/leaves connection and disposal and to avoid open burning.	Local Self-Government Department
8	Promoting the use of LPG only and to avoid the use of kerosene/firewood in restaurants/dhabas/roadside eateries.	Local Self-Government Department
9	Introduce water fountains at major traffic intersection, wherever feasible	State Highway Authority of Kerala (SHAK)/ National Highways Authority of India/PublicWorks Department (PWD)

10	Take steps for blacktopping/ pavement of road shoulders to avoid road dust	Public Works Department (PWD)
11	Prepare an action plan for public transport on CNG mode.	Motor Vehicle Department
12	Ensure the proper collection of solid waste (biomass)	Local Self-Government Department (LSGD)
13	Ensure strict enforcement of the ban on burning of agricultural waste and crop residues	Agriculture Department
14	Ensure strict action against industrial units not complying with standards.	Pollution Control Board
15	Ensure DG sets meeting the standards only be allowed to operate	Department of Electrical Inspectorate/Pollution Control Board (KSPCB)
16	Undertake road widening and improvement of infrastructure for decongestion of road	Public Works Department (PWD)

It is respectfully submitted that the Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala vide letter No. 46/EMCell/CSO/2021(1) dated 02/02/2021 directed all concerned departments mentioned in the action plan to submit their individual status report to Hon'ble NGT on or before 09.03.2021 mentioning how they are going to implement the recommendation in an effective manner. Copy of the letter is produced herewith and marked as Annexure R(2)A.

In the action plan already submitted by the committee the following are the steps to be taken by the Pollution Control Board

2	Installation of the vapour recovery system in fuelling stations	Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) /Pollution Control Board
14	Ensure strict action against industrial units not complying with standards.	Pollution Control Board
15	Ensure DG sets meeting the standards only be allowed to operate	Department of Electrical Inspectorate/Pollution Control Board (KSPCB)

Petrol refuelling stations are a major source of benzene emissions, volatile organic compounds and particulate matter 2.5 concentration. Therefore installation of vapour recovery system is an important step in improving air quality. This is to be implemented in coordination with Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) shortly.

Periodical inspections are being conducted by the Board in industries and the pollution control measures adopted by them are being verified. The Board ensures connectivity of the Online Continuous Emission Monitoring System (OCEMS) of industries with the Board's portal. Adequate actions are also being taken to rectify the same if any, Non-compliance is noticed by Board.

In connection with the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), with an intention to reduce the PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ concentration from DG sets, retro fitting of emission control devices of generators already in use was suggested or shift to gas

based DG sets. Circular regarding the above was already issued by Kerala State Pollution Control Board on 9-12-2020. Copy of the same is produced herewith and marked as Annexure.R(2) B

It is submitted that the objectives of the previous report, the air quality which was routinely monitored by the Kerala State Pollution Control Board as the part of the Ambient Air Quality Monitoring program was analyzed with reference to the COVID -19 pandemic induced lockdowns.

Vide the order dated 20.01.2021 in OA 259/2017, the Honourable NGT had directed the committee to conduct further Ambient Air Quality test when the activities in the State are in peak operation. It may kindly be noted that in the previous report the air quality status of eight districts with peak operation prior to Covid 19 was also incorporated in which all the parameters were within prescribed limit for all stations except Vyttila in Ernakulam District. As the Hon'ble NGT has directed to conduct study again with peak operation, it is brought to the kind attention that even though the restrictions of lockdown have been lifted, the educational institutions still remain closed except some higher degree level classes. Public conveyance services though started are yet to be fully functional. In the industrial sector, only large scale units have resumed full scale production, some are working only intermittently and some still remain closed. Activities related to construction sector are also to come up in full fledged functioning.

The entire activities of state are expected to be in peak operation by June 2021 when the educational institutions and public conveyance restart completely. Hence it is respectfully submitted that such ambient air quality study will be conducted thereafter. Hence, the Hon'ble NGT may be pleased to allow sufficient time to conduct air quality analysis after resuming the peak operational stage.

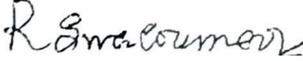


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