

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

**ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 198 OF 2024 (SZ)**

Suo Moto matter in respect of news item appearing in 'The New Indian Express' dated 08.04.2024 titled "**Garbage pile-up on Fort Kochi beach hampers tourism prospects**".

Versus

Kochi Municipal Corporation,  
Through its Secretary, Ernakulam, and ors.

...Respondent(s)

**REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE DISTRICT COLLECTOR, ERNAKULAM/**

**4<sup>TH</sup> RESPONDENT**

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Dated at Chennai on this the 21<sup>st</sup> of July, 2025

  
**M/s. E.K.KUMARESAN**

Standing Counsel for State Government of Kerala - NGT(SZ) Chennai Bench

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Action Taken Report on Fort Kochi Beach Clean-up and Waste Management

Ref: Letter No. KSPCB/HO/EE3/OA-198/2024, dated 22.01.2025 of the Member  
Secretary, KSPCB

Pursuant to the directions issued by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in Case No. 198/2024 and as part of the Waste-Free Nava Kerala Campaign, a detailed action plan was formulated and implemented for the sustainable management of waste at Fort Kochi Beach. A meeting was convened on February 20, 2025, under the chairmanship of the District Collector, Ernakulam, to discuss and execute measures to transform Fort Kochi Beach into a Green Tourist Destination. This report outlines the specific actions taken under different categories, the stakeholders involved, and the outcomes of the initiatives implemented so far.

The meeting held on February 20, 2025, by the Ernakulam District Collector to discuss making Fort Kochi Beach a "green tourist destination." aimed to address waste management and cleanliness in the popular tourist area. The Collector emphasized the importance of maintaining the site's appeal to both domestic and international tourists.

The Heritage Society President, Bony Thomas, highlighted the significance of considering the area's history and heritage while transforming Fort Kochi into a green tourist destination. He emphasized the need for proper waste management, clean public spaces, and adequate toilet facilities. He also mentioned that the Heritage Society was willing to take responsibility for the initiative if financial assistance for waste management was provided.

Following this, the DTPC Secretary addressed the primary challenges faced at the Fort Kochi tourism center and proposed potential solutions.

**Decisions Taken**

**Bio-Organic and Inorganic Waste Treatment**

It was noted that the area lacked facilities for treating bio-waste at the source, with hotels, home stays, and restaurants relying on authorized agencies for waste disposal. The Corporation Secretary stated that the corporation currently collected waste from public areas, but dealing with sea waste remained a significant challenge. Bony Thomas mentioned that Plan@Earth was working on a technology to produce bricks from sea waste, which, if successful, could help address the issue. He further noted that, due to the accumulation of large amounts of waste daily, burying it on the beach using JCBs was currently the most viable option, though a



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permanent solution and a decision on cost management were required.

Regarding inorganic waste, it was stated that while the corporation collected waste from street vendors, there was no accurate data on which shops cooperated with the collection process, leading to frequent dumping and burning of waste in various locations.

To address this, it was decided that the Haritha Karma Sena would collect inorganic waste from all roadside shops in exchange for a user fee. The District Collector instructed that all shops be included in the program and be provided with accurate receipts when charged. It was also decided to strengthen enforcement activities at both the district and corporation levels.

The key issues identified in waste management included the lack of facilities for treating bio-waste at the source, forcing hotels, home stays, and restaurants to depend on external agencies for waste disposal. This led to the accumulation of sea waste without a sustainable disposal mechanism. Additionally, inorganic waste, particularly plastic, was being dumped and burned in unauthorized locations, further aggravating environmental concerns.

To address the waste management challenges, the Corporation has implemented several measures. Waste collection and processing have been streamlined through Haritha Karma Sena, ensuring systematic collection of both bio-organic and inorganic waste from roadside vendors and commercial establishments. A user fee system has been introduced, mandating shops and vendors to pay for waste collection services, with receipts provided to maintain transparency and accountability. Additionally, efforts are underway in collaboration with Plan @Earth to develop technology for converting sea waste into eco-friendly bricks, promoting sustainable waste disposal. Strict enforcement measures have also been adopted by the District Enforcement Squads and the Local Self Government Department (LSGD) to monitor and penalize illegal dumping practices, ensuring effective waste management in the region.

The responsible authorities for Bio-Organic and Inorganic Waste Management are the Joint Director, LSGD, the District Enforcement Squad, and the Secretary, Kochi Corporation.

#### Public Waste Disposal

Concerns were raised regarding the widespread garbage dumping in public areas and the burning of various types of waste.

To mitigate this issue, it was decided that separate bins for bio-organic and

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inorganic waste collection would be installed. Additionally, boards educating the public on proper waste disposal practices would be placed in the area. The Secretary informed that steps had already been taken to install 30 new bins and bottle booths in addition to the existing ones. The District Collector directed that cooperation from DTPC be obtained for this initiative.

The major issues identified were unregulated garbage dumping and open waste burning in public areas, resulting in environmental pollution. Additionally, the absence of waste bins in key locations contributed to indiscriminate littering, further aggravating the waste management problem.

To address these issues, the Corporation has implemented several measures. Thirty additional segregated waste bins for bio-organic and inorganic waste have been installed at strategic locations to promote proper waste disposal. Public awareness initiatives have been introduced through signage and boards, educating both tourists and locals on responsible waste management practices. Additionally, a dedicated team has been deployed to monitor public areas and take strict action against those involved in illegal dumping, ensuring better cleanliness and waste management.

The responsible authorities for Public Waste Disposal & Infrastructure Development are the Secretary of Kochi Corporation and the Secretary of DTPC.

#### Management of Sea Waste

The corporation further stated that it faced financial constraints in continuing large-scale waste disposal operations for sea waste, which fell under the category of reject waste. The tourism department, DTPC, and the Heritage Society were urged to take action on this matter.

The District Collector clarified that, since the waste was generated in a public space within the corporation's jurisdiction, it was the corporation's responsibility to manage its disposal. He added that DTPC, the tourism department, and the Heritage Society had resource limitations in this regard.

It was decided that a Container MCF should be set up to collect and separate bio-organic and inorganic waste from the sea, and steps should be taken to identify a suitable location for it. Additionally, immediate measures were to be implemented to remove garbage dumps and beautify the area.

The collection and disposal of sea waste posed significant financial and logistical challenges, making it difficult for the Kochi Corporation to manage the process independently. The high cost of waste management further strained the Corporation's

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resources, limiting effective disposal solutions.

To address the challenges of sea waste disposal, the District Collector clarified that the responsibility for waste management at Fort Kochi Beach lies with the Kochi Corporation. As a long-term solution, steps are being taken to identify a suitable location for establishing a Material Collection Facility (MCF) to facilitate the segregation and processing of sea waste. Additionally, an immediate clean-up drive was conducted to remove waste dumps and restore the beach's aesthetic appeal, ensuring a cleaner and more attractive environment.

The responsible authorities for Management of Sea Waste are The Mayor and District Collector decided to hold a special meeting on this issue, Secretary, Kochi Corporation, Secretary DTPC, District Coordinator, Sanitation Mission, Heritage Society, and District Coordinator, Haritha Kerala Mission

#### Establishment of Bathrooms

The meeting acknowledged that Fort Kochi had four public toilet facilities, with only two near the tourist boat jetty and the parade ground—being in good condition. The toilet maintained by the Kochi Corporation was reported to be in poor condition and required renovation. The Secretary stated that the Kochi Corporation had decided to renovate the toilet as part of its annual plan.

It was also noted that the toilet complex in Nehru Park, though renovated in conjunction with the carnival, was not operational, and additional efforts were needed to ensure its proper maintenance. The district administration had allocated 10 cents of land for the construction of new toilets. The Regional Director of the Tourism Department informed that funds had already been allocated for the construction but that work had been delayed. He assured that steps would be taken to initiate the work as soon as a new agency was identified.

The District Collector directed that these activities be expedited and that the feasibility of constructing additional toilet complexes be explored. He also instructed that the maintenance of the toilet under the Kochi Corporation be entrusted to Kudumbashree.

The key issues identified were the limited availability of public toilet facilities at Fort Kochi and the poor maintenance of the existing toilets, causing inconvenience to tourists and visitors.

To address the sanitation challenges, the Kochi Corporation has initiated the renovation of dilapidated toilet complexes to improve existing facilities. Additionally,

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10 cents of land have been allocated for the construction of new public toilet complexes to accommodate the growing number of visitors. To ensure proper upkeep, the maintenance responsibility has been handed over to Kudumbashree, enhancing cleanliness and accessibility of public toilet facilities.

The responsible authorities for Establishment of Bathrooms are Secretary, Kochi Corporation, Regional Joint Director, and Department of Tourism

#### **Prohibition of Single-Use Plastic Items**

The meeting emphasized the need to eliminate single-use plastic items as a crucial step in making the beach area a green tourism center. It was noted that inefficiencies in the collection and disposal of such materials had resulted in significant issues.

To tackle this, it was decided that the use of single-use plastics would be completely banned and that traders would be provided with alternative products. Additionally, enforcement activities would be strengthened to ensure compliance with green regulations, with enforcement efforts coordinated under the leadership of the Fort Kochi Sub-Collector.

The major issues identified were the ineffective collection and disposal of plastic waste, along with the widespread use of single-use plastic items at Fort Kochi Beach, contributing to environmental pollution.

To tackle plastic waste pollution, a complete ban on single-use plastic items has been enforced, directing all vendors to switch to eco-friendly alternatives. Additionally, the Green Protocol is being strictly implemented, with fines imposed on businesses that fail to comply, ensuring a significant reduction in plastic waste generation at Fort Kochi Beach.

The responsible authorities for Prohibition of Single-Use Plastic Items are Sub-Collector, Fort Kochi, Secretary Kochi Corporation, Secretary DTPC, District Coordinator Sanitation Mission, and District Coordinator Haritha Kerala Mission

#### **Beautification of Public Spaces and Public Awareness**

The meeting recognized that Fort Kochi received between 10,000 to 15,000 visitors daily and up to 30,000 on holidays. To raise awareness, it was decided that IEC boards would be installed to inform visitors that the area was designated as a green tourist center. Additional signboards providing information about waste management and toilet facilities would also be set up.

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Furthermore, a permanent enforcement squad would be established in the area to identify and take action against individuals responsible for littering, dumping, and burning waste in public spaces.

Dr. Akhil, a representative of GCM, suggested that an IEC plan be formulated with the involvement of traders, business associations, resident associations, homestays, hotel and restaurant associations, and other relevant organizations before officially designating the area as a green tourist destination. GCM was assigned the responsibility of preparing this plan. It was also decided that the implementation of the IEC plan would be led by the tourism department, DTPC, Kochi Corporation, and the Heritage Society.

A major issue identified was the lack of awareness among tourists and local stakeholders regarding proper waste management practices and environmental conservation, contributing to unregulated waste disposal and littering.

To address the lack of awareness, informational boards (IEC) have been installed, promoting Fort Kochi Beach as a Green Tourism Center and encouraging responsible waste disposal. Additionally, a permanent enforcement squad has been deployed to monitor and penalize offenders violating waste management norms. To foster community involvement, the Green Kochi Mission has been entrusted with developing an awareness plan in collaboration with traders, businesses, and resident associations, ensuring collective participation in maintaining a clean and sustainable environment.

The responsible authorities for the Beautification of Public Spaces and Public Awareness are Green Kochi Mission and DTPC, Kochi Corporation, Heritage Society.

Decision to implement source segregation of waste and establish proper collection systems for bio-degradable and non-biodegradable waste. The Haritha Karma Sena will collect inorganic waste from all roadside vendors, with user fees being implemented. Installation of additional bins and bottle booths in public areas. 30 new bins will be installed. Arrangements for the collection and segregation of waste from the sea, with the provision of container MCGs. Discussions regarding the management of seaweeds, including exploring the feasibility of brick production by Plan @Earth and interim measures for disposal by burying the seaweed on the beach using JCBs.

Sanitation Facilities: Plans for the renovation of existing public toilets, including the toilet complex taken over by the Kochi Corporation and the closed toilet complex in Nehru Park. Construction of new toilet complexes on 10 cents of land

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allocated by the District Administration, with the Tourism Department expediting the process. Exploration of handing over the maintenance of public toilets to Kudumbashree units. Plastic Waste Reduction: Enforcement of a ban on single-use plastic items. Promotion of alternative products for traders.

Strengthening enforcement activities under the leadership of the Fort Kochi Sub-Collector.

Public Awareness and Beautification: Installation of IEC boards to educate the public about the green tourism initiative, waste management, and sanitation facilities. Formation of a permanent enforcement squad to monitor public spaces. Development of an IEC plan with the involvement of various stakeholders, coordinated by the Green Kochi Mission (GCM). Steps will be taken to remove waste piles and beautify the area.

The Kochi Corporation will be responsible for the disposal of waste in public areas. The maintenance of the toilet near the Kochi Corporation has been poor and will be renovated. New toilets planned have been delayed, but will be constructed soon.

The District Collector's office, in collaboration with various departments and stakeholders, has initiated several measures to address the waste management and cleanliness issues at Fort Kochi Beach. These actions align with the NGT's order and aim to transform the area into a sustainable and green tourism destination.

Yours Sincerely,



UMESH N S K IAS  
District Collector, Ernakulam

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