

RESPONSE OF THE COMMISSIONER (I/C), COONNOOR MUNICIPALITY ON THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE PAPER REPORT AND THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SEWAGE IS TREATED IN THE CONONNOOR MUNICIPALITY AS ORDERED BY THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL ON 25.09.2020 IN O.A. No:108 OF 2020(SZ)

Introduction:

The Honourable National Green Tribunal (SZ) during its hearing on 25.09.2020 took the Interim Report filed by the Joint Committee into record, and directed to file further report and also to file responses of the individual respondents on the allegations in the Paper Report and on the further action on improving the system.

In compliance, the responses of the Coonoor Municipality on the allegations contained in the Paper Report and the manner in which the sewage is treated by the Municipality, further action for improving the system is submitted as follows:-

Response on the allegations contained in the e-paper Report

- (i) ***The elephants are not drinking the river water, come to the railway station to drink good water, even though there is good flow in the river.***

The report attempts to create an impression that the elephants are not at all drinking water in the River down-stream of Rannimedu Railway Station, where they usually drink water and came to Rannimedu Railway Station in search of good quality water. Elephants came to Rannimedu Railway Station and drank water there was isolated incidents. Further, elephants drank water only in Coonoor River adjoining the Railway Station.

- (ii) ***Coonoor River is used as a Dumping Yard for Garbage, makes the River a Waste Drain :***

Though garbage has been thrown in the river previously, Coonoor Municipality has been taking steps to control dumping of garbage after SWM Rules 2016 came in to being and the bylaws notified in 2017.

Coonoor Municipality removed most of the garbage in Krishnapuram stretch (1km) of the Coonoor River in June 2019 with the support from a NGO and a chain link facility for a length of 414 mtrs has been established and since then dumping of garbage has been prevented.

In Coonoor Municipality, there is adequate system for the collection, processing, treatment and disposal of Solid Waste is maintained to prevent throwing garbage into the river violations are penalized. The quality of the water in the river is found to be satisfactory. It is also noticed from the results

found to be satisfactory.

- (iii) ***There is no septic tank in many houses. The Public Toilets are also directly connected to the River:***

It is estimated in 50% of area of the Town, there is no Septic Tanks, at house-hold level. Out of thirty community toilets and four public toilets, septic tank is not available only in one public toilet in the Bus Stand as the same was constructed very long back. The public toilet connected to the Sewage treatment Plant , that is proposed under '**Nadanthai Vaazhi Cauvery**' project.

- (iv) ***Meat waste is dumped in the River. The River becomes a source of spreading diseases to animals and Human:***

Coonoor Municipality has provided Box Type composting equipment, at an estimated cost of Rs. 5 lakhs, for composting the meat, fish and chicken stall wastes, at Vasampallam. The same is functioning satisfactorily. The dumping of such wastes is not happening. The allegation that the River has become a source of spreading disease is baseless.

Response on the manner in which sewage is treated in the Municipality and further action for improving the system

- (i) ***Present status of Treatment of Sewage in Coonoor Municipality:***

It is estimated that the present generation of sewage in Coonoor Municipality is around 2.0 MLD, of which 25% (0.5 MLD) of sewage is handled at household level where adequate land is available. 25% (0.5 MLD) is catered through 30 community toilets and 4 public Toilets, of which barring one Public Toilet in the Bust Stand, others are having septic tank arrangements. The rest is either having septic tank and the treated sewage from the septic tank is let into the river directly or let in to drains, from where it joins with the river. The sewage generated from the following areas of the Municipality viz. 1. Krishnapuram 2. Mission Hill 3. Vannarper 4. Parasuram Street 5. V.P. Street 6. Model House 7. Rajaji Nagar 8. Old Hospital line 9. Ambedhkar nagar and 10.Chandra Colony, are reaching the River.

- (ii) ***Action for improving Sewage Management:***

A proposal at an estimated cost of Rs. 500.00 Lakhs for collecting the sewage generated from 2088 households of Krishnapuram Area through Pipelines and providing a Sewage Treatment Plant is approved by the Government on 26.02.2020. Subsequently this proposal is included under '**Nadanthai Vaazhi**

Cauvery project through Public Works Department, aimed to conserve, rejuvenate and augment the water resources in Cauvery basin and to effectively curb sewage discharged. This work is expected to be commenced shortly. On completion, the sewage generated from areas like Krishnapuram, Mission Hill, Parasuram Street, Alai Sait Compound, Fairy Bank Street, VP Street, MGR Nagar areas, entering in to the river would be curtailed, and thus 60% of sewage presently entering in to the River without treatment would be prevented.

(iii) Action proposed by Coonoor Municipality:

1. Proposed to undertake a survey of commercial establishments discharging sewage directly in to water bodies, which shall be completed before 31.12.2020.
2. Proposed to undertake a survey of households discharging sewage directly in to water bodies, which shall be completed before 31.01.2021.
3. Proposed to ensure that all commercial establishments shall be prohibited from discharging sewage in to water bodies directly, before 31.01.2021.
4. It is proposed that the households not having septic tank shall be made to provide septic tank and soak pit arrangements, wherever space is available, before 31.03.2021.
5. Detailed study of households not having adequate area to provide septic tanks shall be carried out and the possibilities of providing alternate solution shall be explored engaging experts in this field.

Prayer:

Considering the much undulated and unfavourable terrain, which is a challenge to Coonoor Municipality in the collection and conveyance of the sewage generated, and the low temperature the area is experiencing in most of the year, which is also a challenge in maintaining the biological treatment systems, and on the question of providing few Decentralized Sewage Treatment Plants, it is prayed that that the Honourable Green Tribunal may institute an expert technical team to study and suggest means for the collection and conveyance of sewage, selection of treatment technology, etc, with a view to ensure that untreated sewage is not let in to the water courses.

It is further requested that this Honourable National Green Tribunal (SZ) to accept the Response and to pass appropriate orders the Honourable National Green Tribunal (SZ), considers deem and fit on the facts and circumstances of the issue.


18.11.2020
Commissioner(I/C),
Coonoor Municipality