

## **Press Brief for media**

The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on 'Waste Management in Urban Local Bodies', Government of Kerala, Report No. 9 of 2022 has been laid on the table of Kerala Legislative Assembly on 14 September 2023. Audit Reports, upon their presentation to the Legislature are public documents.

The summary of the most important points highlighted in the Report is given below:

- No scientific study has so far been conducted to assess the quantity, composition and physical and chemical characteristics of the waste generated in the State. The 22 test-checked Urban Local Bodies adopted per capita estimates of waste generation without conducting any survey during the audit period 2016-2021.

*(Paragraph 2.1.1)*

- Expenditure on purchase and distribution of bio-composter bins turned infructuous due to non-utilisation by beneficiaries, which resulted in unfruitful expenditure of ₹3.35 crore by Thiruvananthapuram Corporation.

*(Paragraph 4.1.1.1)*

- Though bio-medical waste is to be treated and disposed within 48 hours, there was a huge backlog at the IMAGE facility at Palakkad due to insufficient disposal capacity. On the other hand, KEIL facility at Ambalamedu, Kochi, despite possessing capacity to handle 16 tonnes per day, handled only 6.2 tonnes.

*(Paragraphs 5.2.3.1 and 5.2.3.2)*

- Leachate treatment plants were not installed and made functional at the processing facilities in Brahmapuram and Njaliyanparamba. As a result leachate oozed underground from the waste heaped in plant premises, polluting nearby water bodies, farmlands and wells.

*(Paragraphs 4.1.2.1 and 4.1.2.2)*

- Huge accumulation of unprocessed waste amounting to 2.85 lakh tonnes was noticed during the period 2016-2021 in the Centralised processing plant of Kochi Corporation at Brahmapuram, which has been functioning without the authorisation of Kerala State Pollution Control Board for several years.

***(Paragraph 4.1.2.1)***

- An unjustifiable clause in the agreement between the local body and contractor, linking payment of tipping fee to the total quantum of waste brought into the treatment plant resulted in excess payment of ₹11.72 crore to the contractor by Kochi Corporation.

***(Paragraph 4.1.2.1)***

- Due to non-preparation/delay in preparation of DPRs by eleven ULBs in the State, ULBs lost Central assistance to the tune of ₹ 45.82 crore.

***(Paragraph 2.1.2.2)***

- Informal waste collectors/waste pickers were not seen integrated into the formal waste management system and there was no system in place to monitor the quantity and type of waste handled by scrap dealers or to ensure the proper storage and disposal of such wastes.

***(Paragraph 2.1.4)***

- Thirteen out of 22 test-checked ULBs did not conduct Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities on importance of source level segregation and source level processing of biodegradable waste. Seventeen ULBs did not create awareness on provisions regarding levy of penalty for littering and dumping of waste in public places and water bodies.

***(Paragraph 2.1.5)***

- Test-checked ULBs utilised only 0.48 to 1.66 *per cent* of Development fund for waste management during 2016-2021, which was much lower than the prescribed 10-15 *per cent*.

***(Paragraph 2.2.3.1)***

- The test-checked ULBs did not have a system in place for segregation and collection of domestic hazardous waste, sanitary waste and horticulture waste.

***(Paragraph 3.2)***

- Out of the 14 dumpsites in test-checked ULBs, remediation works had not commenced in any of the Municipalities.

***(Paragraph 4.2.1)***

- The efforts of the State to purchase land to set up landfill facility have not succeeded yet, due to which mixed waste was being disposed of at Kerala Enviro-Infrastructure Limited (KEIL), the only landfill facility for hazardous waste in the State. Four ULBs disposed 1313.21 tonnes of mixed waste as rejects during 2020-21 through Clean Kerala Company Ltd., to KEIL for land filling.

***(Paragraph 3.1.5)***

- Test-checked ULBs did not collect or channelise e-waste to authorised dismantlers/recyclers and e-waste was found mixed with municipal solid waste. Instances of accumulation of e-waste in open space as well as unauthorised dismantling of Television sets by scrap dealers in six test-checked ULBs in violation of guidelines of Central Pollution Control Board were noticed.

***(Paragraphs 5.3.2)***

- None of the test-checked ULBs had a system in place for accounting, collecting and disposing Construction and Demolition waste.

***(Paragraph 5.4)***