CHAPTER – V
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

Committee System as a mechanism that augments legislative efficiency involves different components, financial, investigative, scrutiny and advisory. Within the group of committees of an advisory nature comes the Committee on Environment, the Rules Committee, Committee on Papers Laid on the Table and the Committee on Private Member’s Bills.

Innovations in Science and Technology has changed human life as well as legislature’s role. Change, though for the best, has always left their negative impressions also. Perhaps the worst side of this innovative science and technology is pollution. To cope with this change, the role of the legislature has increased so much so that it is now called upon to discharge more responsibilities. Out of this is born the Committee on Environment of the Kerala Legislature. It is in this context that the investigator chose to concentrate on this Committee as a role model of advisory committees of the KLA.

The Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Kerala Legislative Assembly provide for a Committee on Environment. It shall consist of not more than nine members to be nominated by the speaker. However, a minister is disallowed to hold the position of a committee member. Similarly, a member on being appointed a minister ceases to be a member of the Committee.
The Committee on Environment formed in July 1992\textsuperscript{4} is the genuine contribution of the IX KLA. The Committee studies environmental problems within the state; examines the nature, degree and extent of environmental imbalances caused by different kinds of pollution and examines the working and activities of the Department/Board or the industrial establishments connected thereto. It also reviews the implementation of the plans and programmes of both centre and state relating to maintenance of environmental balance and examines the annual reports of the department/board concerned to ensure whether expenditure incurred was commensurate with the results achieved. Finally, it enjoys authority to report to the assembly on the action taken by the state government on different measures suggested by the Committee\textsuperscript{5}.

During the tenure of the X KLA, the Committee held 173 sittings, undertook 74 visits in the state and presented 18 reports (see Figure 5.1). Some of the major problems on which the Committee concentrated its attention were implementation of the Coastal Regulation Act, environmental problems due to plastic waste, waste disposal in corporations and municipalities, environmental problems due to sand mining in Kerala rivers etc.
Paradoxically, in the first two instances the Committee concentrated on pollution caused by institutions of health as of Calicut Medical College and hospitals attached thereto. The Committee understood that human waste was the major source of pollution in this context. To assess the gravity of the situation it held two sittings, one at Trivandrum on 19 September 1996 and the other at Calicut collectorate hall on 4 October 1996. After taking evidence from the public, representatives of voluntary organisations, officers of the health department, principal and Residential Medical Officer (R.M.O), Calicut Medical College, the Committee recommended installations of incinerators for disposing waste materials.
Trichur was also experiencing the same level of pollution. Trichur Medical College, hospitals attached to it and other private hospitals in the area were responsible for this large scale pollution. In the meeting convened on 3 January, 1997 the Committee collected evidence from various sources and made the following recommendations:

a. The ground where wastes are kept should be properly fenced; and

b. Installation of one or two incinerators for the disposal of wastes.

Perhaps, the greatest contribution of the Committee towards a social cause was its response to the Central Notification under section 3 (1) and section 3 (2)(v) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Rule 5(3)(d) of Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, of the Ministry of Environment and Forest dated 19 February 1991. This notification declared coastal stretches as Coastal Regulatory Zones and laid down conditions and regulations for controlling development activities in the Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZ).

Consequently, coastal stretches within 500 metres of High Tide Line (HTL) of the landward side in the case of seas, and 100 metres in the case of creeks, rivers and backwaters shall be considered as Regulation Zones. Certain prohibitions and controls were introduced in this Regulation Zones. To implement these prohibitions and controls, coastal stretches are divided into four sectors: CRZ-I, CRZ-II, CRZ-III and CRZ-IV on the basis of Coastal Area Classification And Development Regulations.
After eliciting states' opinion as well as seeing their opposition, the Central Government appointed a committee\(^{13}\) to study and incorporate necessary modifications. However, at the instance of the Indian Council for Enviro-legal Action, the Hon'ble Supreme Court intervened and decreed in favour of the 1991 Notification.

But, the state of Kerala in view of the special situation prevailing in the state such as high density of population, mode of living of the people and concentration of the whole development programme of the state within this prohibited area\(^{14}\), demanded relaxation in the 100 metres specification. But the Central Government was not favourable. Therefore, the Committee after eliciting public opinion and collecting evidence from various agencies and organisations recommended that a uniform law applicable to the whole of coastal belt is impractical. It should be implemented with necessary modifications to suit each case. Considering Kerala's special situation, the Committee recommended to include the state in CRZ – IV category.

Next, the Committee concentrated on a universal environmental pollutant-plastic. Man is always guided by the desire to improve his standard of living. The invention of plastic is only one step in such direction. In India the manufacture of plastic on an industrial basis dates back to 1940's. Kerala stands first in the use of plastics in the world\(^ {15}\). As an instance the Committee pointed out that about 65 lakhs of families habitually took to plastic carry bags at the ratio of 3-20 bags per family\(^ {16}\). Thrown out plastic bags and other plastic items during journey come besides this. This is actually an off shoot of tourism, both domestic and
The Committee estimated the number of tourists at about 6 to 8 lakhs per year. If this is permitted unhindered, with in no time Kerala would be turned into a large heap of plastic. Therefore the Committee earnestly put forward certain specific recommendations:

i. Excessive use of plastics should be curbed legally;

ii. As a first step, a ban should be imposed both on the production and use of such items as plastic covers, packing materials, plastic tumblers, pet-bottles, covering materials etc.;

iii. To create an in-depth awareness in the minds of the public through the media as well as voluntary organisations in relation to this menace;

iv. To open environmental friendly societies in schools and colleges to form opinion against this menace;

v. To make penal the act of throwing plastic wastes in to seas, rivers and other water sources;

vi. Popularisation of bio-degradable materials;

vii. Total ban on the issue of new licence to any factory producing plastic;

viii. Prohibit plastic carry bags in tourist centres; and

ix. To stop the production of plastic stage by stage.

A Committee worth its name like this could not leave unanalysed the environmental problems in the Alappuzha–Kuttanadu areas. Alappuzha is the most thickly populated town in Kerala. So naturally, it is no surprise that the whole town is in the grip of pucca environmental pollution. The causes are many and varied.
Firstly, the Committee described Alappuzha town as a 'dubbing yard'. The main contributors to this dubbing yard were the slaughter Houses of the Alappuzha municipality, Medical College Hospital, the K.S.R.T.C canteen and a host of others.

The town of Alappuzha is surrounded by waters on all sides, many of which lack free flow. Added to this is the problem of weeds, polluting water sources and making water transport impossible. These Venetian backwaters offer an excellent breeding place for mosquitos. Moreover, the Committee found that there was neither proper drainage system nor any facility for processing waste.

The net result is rampant pollution. It is so high that the town itself has become the breeding place of infectious diseases. Japanese encephalitis, for the first time, appeared in Alappuzha in Kerala. Elephantiasis has almost become a social problem in the town. The presence of cauliform bacteria beyond the normal permissible level also poses a major health hazard.

After assessing the gravity of the situation the Committee made a number of recommendations. It found that the basic reason for the spread of such killer diseases as Japanese encephalitis, Dangi fever and rat fever is polluted water. A proper drinking water scheme was the remedy. By diverting water from Pamba and Achankovil rivers, this can be solved, the Committee stated. In the absence of proper drainage facilities, pollutants and filthy water are drained to the near by canals and lakes. Therefore the Committee recommended the setting up of scientifically designed drainage system.
The third reason was stated as the lack of proper processing units to process solid wastes from dwelling places, markets, hotels, hospitals, slaughter Houses etc. The Committee estimated its average disposal per day between 150 and 200 tonnes. Hence it laid down that modern techniques should be employed to meet the situation. The technique developed and employed by Excell Industries, Allappuzha was preferred by it. Besides, certain prohibitions were also prescribed by the Committee. Over and above all, the Committee stressed the need to create a general awareness in the minds of the public.

Nelliampathy, a well known tourist resort, green belt of the Parambikkulam Wild Life Sanctuary and the wind belt that maintains the ecological balance of Kerala was found by the Committee in a state of peril and destruction. So naturally, it formed the subject matter of study of the Committee in its seventh report. Nelliampathy, comprising the areas which were once under the British Malabar and Travancore-Cochin state, was declared a panchayath by the government as per Government Notification, G.O.O.M.S., 1981/61. As on the date of this report, there were two types of lands – those lands leased out by the government and private estates. There were such 14 private estates stretching in an area of 8500 acres. Government lands lent on lease constituted 9100 acres of land. Neither was there any substantial revenue for the government from these leases nor any material benefit.
The relation between leases and environment, according to the Committee, was found in the large scale unauthorised tree felling. The Committee estimated the daily transport of timber at 10 lorry loads on the basis of evidence. Therefore, the Committee placed the following recommendations before the House:

(i) To make an enactment enabling the government to recover all lease lands from private sector without paying any compensation;

(ii) The lease deeds and ‘pattas’ of all those lands which the former ruling families of Cochin, Travancore and Kollamkode had executed should be cancelled;

(iii) The Kerala Preservation of Trees Act should be amended so as to make mandatory government’s permission for cutting timber; and

(iv) Taking note of the irresponsible conduct of government pleaders, the Committee urged the government to retake all lost lands upon a Single Bench judgement of the Hon’ble High Court by filing appeals before the Division Bench and Full Bench of the High Court, and if necessary, before the Supreme Court.

It is a paradox that Kerallites are far ahead in personal cleanliness, but lag behind in social cleanliness. Social health depends upon social cleanliness. But, over population, high density of population, public ignorance especially of those slum dwellers, official neglect and lack of future oriented sewage and drainage systems altogether present a gloomy picture of our corporations and municipalities. Waste disposal centres
turned out to be waste collecting centres. Rivers are polluted by human secretion. Even the so called eradicated diseases are making their new peep. It is against this background that the Committee took up a study of the waste disposal schemes in our municipalities and corporations. The study was very exhaustive and covered 3 corporations and 54 municipalities.

After the study and assessment of the situation, the Committee concentrated on:

a. The setting up of sewerage and sewage processing centres. Where they partially exist, as in Trivandrum and Cochin, steps should be taken to repair them;

b. Making compulsory septic tanks in those places where there are no sewage systems; removing septage in tanker lorries under the guidance of Kerala Water Authority (KWA) or the local body concerned;

c. Imposing ban on the flow of filthy water from septic tanks and drainage pipes direct in to canals and rivers;

d. Making available necessary funds to local bodies in the budget itself under a new head of account for undertaking sewage processing programmes;

e. Co-ordination in the activities of various departments such as the local bodies, Irrigation Department, KWA, Pollution Control Board and Health and Family Welfare Department to achieve this programme; and
Finally, to monitor this programme the Committee recommended the constitution of a body at the district level. It should consist of Members of the Legislative Assembly, District Collector, Members of Pollution Board, representatives of voluntary organisation and members of different departments in the district. The local MLA of the concerned district head quarters should be its chairman. It should meet at least once in a month and assess the progress of the work.

Progress is desirable but it should not be at the cost of human life. At par with this spirit the Committee on Environment concentrated on M/s Grasim, Mavoor in its tenth report. The starting remark in the report itself is catchy. The Committee characterised it ‘as an instance of an industrial unit hunting the lives of the local people for profit’. M/s Grasim, Mavoor, Kerala has kept up its record in polluting air and water in the locality. Loss to human life and untold sufferings to the survivors were the outcome. The zigzagging Chaliyar lost her beauty forever, but she had enough poison to give to the people nearby. It found that the only perception of the management was profit and the health of the people in and around the factory was of little concern.

Air pollution by the factory was caused by the emission of hydrogen sulphide. To its astonishment, the Committee found three instances of such death of labourers by inhaling hydrogen sulphide. Nothing was there to monitor the level of hydrogen sulphide in the air. On examination by the Inspector of Factories and Boilers on 25 June, 1995, emission of hydrogen sulphide was found to be 111 PPM in the Mavoor region whereas the permissible limit was only 60 micrograms.
To assess the extent of water pollution, the Committee sought the assistance of the Pollution Control Board Project Co-ordinator. While deposing before the Committee, he categorically made it clear that the water flown to Chaliyar was full of health hazardous chemicals. This noxious substance, on contact with air, absorbs oxygen, thus causing asphyxia to the people. It also affects underwater resources. The worst side is that it even caused pollution to the nearby wells. Taking a bath in the Chaliyar river is dangerous, reminded a Pollution Control Board officer. Those who did so suffered from skin irritation and headache, said another witness who happened to be an environmental engineer.

The gravity of the situation is writ large on the face of death toll itself. Within a period of four years from 1990–94, there were 258 cancer deaths in the various nearby regions. The Committee found that on many occasions the factory flouted the terms and conditions of the Report of the Pollution Control Board. According to the Committee the same attitude of the company even after the deadline fixed by the government, without inviting any sanction was, a bid to help the management to violate the norms. On consideration of multifarious factors, the Committee arrived at the following recommendations:

1. The final report of the expert committee headed by Mr. Sen Gupta should be implemented within a year;

2. 25 percent of the yearly profit of the company should be set apart to promote health measures of the nearby people;
3. To reserve 10 percent vacancies in the company to those affected by the company’s irresponsible conduct;

4. Air pollution should be properly monitored and equipments to that effect may be obtained at the earliest;

5. To establish a site office of the Pollution Control Board at Mavoor; and

6. To provide drinking water schemes and health care measures to the people of the nearby panchayaths at company’s own expense.

On another occasion, the investigative machinery of the Committee was set in motion upon receipt of many complaints from the people of Karthikappally. On 2 December, 1997 the Committee visited the place and collected evidence from the public, departmental heads, and representatives of voluntary organisations. The complaint that the people preferred was that they mainly used to depend upon, for their drinking water, underwater sources which were found to be contaminated by the presence of excessive fluoride. As per the findings of the Pollution Control Board, this water is not suitable for human consumption.

Upon perusal, the Committee found excessive fluoride content in water. Septic tanks were rare and people often used to defecate in open spaces. During rainy season, absorption of human wastes by underwater sources also found to contaminate water. In the wake of coir industry, open water outlets such as canals and rivers were found polluted.
Sand mining along the coastal belt of Karthikappally was another major concern for the Committee. The coastal belt of Karthikappally taluk extends to a distance of 21 kilometres. Since a major portion of the taluk is situated between the Kayamkulam Lake and the Arabian Sea, sea erosion often causes major havoc with the lives and property of the people.

In the light of the study and findings, the Committee recommended that water from Pamba and Achankovil rivers should be made available to the people for drinking. To meet the same exigency, the second option suggested by the Committee was purification of seawater for which financial assistance was rendered by Australian Government. Construction of septic tanks should be made compulsory and financial assistance to that effect may be provided to the poor people by the panchayath. Imposing stringent prohibition upon sand mining and construction of a sea wall stretching the 21 kilometres of the coastal belt of this taluk were the other major recommendations.

The Committee couldn't leave any matter concerning the destruction and encroachment of forestland unnoticed since such instances, by their very nature, form part of environmental destruction. It was in this background that the petitions by Sarvashree M. Dasan and Sathyan Mokeri, members of the Hon'ble Assembly, were examined and scrutinised by the Committee. The Members, in their petitions vividly explained about the large scale unauthorised tree felling taking place at Maruthomkara and Kavalumpara.
The Committee on 2 May, 1998 visited the location and assessed the gravity of the situation. It found that about 400 trees having an age between 400 and 500 years were cut down. The management's contention was that it was their private property and therefore they resorted to this practice, that too, after obtaining passes.

After weighing the pros and cons, the Committee finally recommended in favour of a total prohibition on tree felling. To achieve this the Kerala Forest Act should be amended in such a way as to plug all loopholes. An interesting as well as perplexing factor exposed by the Committee was the role of certain revenue officers and forest officers in these encroachments.

In view of the alarming extent of pollution caused by vehicles and the impact that it leaves on human life, the Committee undertook a study. It estimated the probable increase in vehicles by 2010 AD as 50 lakhs. Emission from vehicles contains spurious substances like carbon monoxide, hydrocarbon, nitrogen oxides, lead, sulphur oxides and benzyynes. Besides, sounds of different engines and divergent horns also cause pollution. The net result of pollution is a handful of diseases to which men are forcibly succumbed. The Committee found that it is not the dearth of rules and regulations, but the laxity on the part of officers to enforce it that made the matter the worst. Therefore, it recommended that pollution control laws should be strictly enforced.
Among the specific recommendations\textsuperscript{40}, mention may be made of (i) the use of lead free petrol, (ii) increasing recourse to four stroke engines, (iii) installation of anti-pollution devices in the stage of manufacturing, (iv) recourse to compressed natural gas, (v) prohibition upon unusually old vehicles, and (vi) pooling\textsuperscript{41}.

Social orientation of the Committee compelled it to concentrate on a matter which might have been otherwise left unnoticed. Thus, it chose to study the spread of typhoid in Mattancherry\textsuperscript{42}. The Committee found that water pollution, laxity on the part of health authorities, and mosquito menace were the major causes for the spread of epidemics in Mattancherry. Immediate steps to make available pure drinking water and cleaning all canals and drainage lines were the major recommendations. As a viable and preliminary step, it also stressed on the need to generate public awareness.

The potentialities of tourism as an industry is well understood. But it seems that the state of Kerala is either unaware of this potential or deliberately ignores this sector. Keeping this in view the Committee studied the environmental problems and the ways to improve the status of Kovalam as a potential tourist centre\textsuperscript{43}.

In an effort to study the problem, the Committee held three sittings and had discussions with all the officers related to this field. On examination of petitions and memoranda received from various corners, it understood the major problems facing Kovalam as:
1. Unauthorised structural constructions and beach encroachments detrimental to environment;

2. Environmental pollution caused by unscientific waste disposal;

3. Lack of enough and proper health facilities;

4. Scarcity of drinking water and health problems arising from it;

5. Shortfalls in electricity transmission and distribution;

6. Bad conditions of roads;

7. Encroachment of way side vendors;

8. Lack of enough force to maintain law and order;

9. Cattle and dog menace; and

10. Disturbances caused by anti-social elements.

What the committee found to its astonishment at this stage is the fact that the Tourism Department had not been given any power in relation to Kovalam by the government.

After detailed study and investigation the Committee arrived at the following recommendations:

1. Demolition of unauthorised constructions often constituting beach encroachments;
2. Preparation of a master plan with due regard to environmental balance under the auspices of the Trivandrum Development Authority (TDA) and Tourism Promotion Council (TPC) and entrusting responsibilities therein to the Department of Tourism;

3. Kovalam beach area should be maintained as a protected area;

4. Adoption of scientific methods for processing wastes;

5. Co-ordination among various departments like the department of Local Self Government, Tourism and other departments to achieve the desired objectives;

6. Draining filthy water through underground pipes from hotels and allied institutions;

7. Curbing dog menace and cattle menace by the local body;

8. Close all massage parlours operating in and around Kovalam beach without the permission of Vizhinjam Panchayath and

9. In view of the importance of Kovalam as an international tourist centre, it should be freed from power cuts during tourist season.

Rivers and lakes are natural life sources. But modernisation has made them emission centres of spurious substances. Besides, the indiscriminate and uncontrolled removal of sand from the beds of rivers also jeopardised their very existence. It tends to cause an upset of both ecology and environment.
Total prohibition on sand mining is neither possible nor desirable. Sand is an essential part of construction work. So far, there is no alternative to this. But unscientific sand mining may prove fatal both to their existence and the environment. Therefore, what is required is a scientific approach. It is against the background that the Committee concentrated on the environmental problems associated with sand mining.46

The Committee in its study brought out the ill effects of unscientific sand mining. Firstly, it noticed that unscientific sand mining may badly affect the ‘alluvial cons’ or ‘alluvial fans’ beneath the waters in the river bed. Again, sand mining from either side of the rivers may cause land stretches to fall in waters. Excessive sand mining increases the depth of the rivers causing soil erosion during rainy season. Increase in the depth of rivers in turn causes the water level in adjacent wells to come down, thus causing water shortage during hot seasons. It may also affect the strength of bridges and dams. After due analysis the Committee recommended that:

1. Circular no: 66221/P1/97/Rev. dated 5 January, 199847 should be implemented strictly;

2. Sand mining from those rivers the control of which is vested with the grama panchayath should be regulated by pass. To check this local vigilance committees should be constituted;
3. Form checkposts in all sand mining centres and appoint watchmen;

4. To make the rivers free from all sorts of environmental pollution, the Committee suggested absolute prohibition on encroachments and waste deposits in rivers;

5. River Management Fund, as in the case of the major rivers under the Revenue Department should be instituted in the case of all rivers; and

6. A protection scheme encompassing all rivers in the state should be instituted under the Irrigation Department.

Though a late entry in our committee constellation, the work of the Committee on Environment was commendable during the period under study. It had proved its worth on many occasions by responding to social needs of the Kerala State. Its contribution to the cause of environment is visible from the herculean task it had undertaken. To rise up to the expectations of democratic society, it conducted 173 sittings and undertook 74 visits in the state during the term of the X KLA. There was an increase in reports from 11 during the tenure of the IX KLA to 18 at the time of X KLA. In its search for exploration it had left no field untouched which in one way or other created a problem to the state. A perusal of the major problems on which the Committee concentrated clearly bears evidence to this (see Table 5.1). The problems dealt with by the Committee can be classified under two heads—general and specific.
Table 5.1
Major Areas Focussed by the Committee on Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Coastal Regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Fourth Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Environmental Problems in Alappuzha, Kuttanadu, Karthikappally etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Sixth Report and Eleventh Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Environmental Problems in Municipalities and Corporations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Eighth Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Forest Land Encroachment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Seventh Report and Twelveth Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Sand Mining</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Interim Report (26 December, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Industrial Pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Tenth Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic Pollution</td>
<td>Fifth Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vehicle Pollution</td>
<td>Fourteenth Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
<td>Health Institutions</td>
<td>First and Second Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
<td>Epidemics</td>
<td>Fifteenth Report</td>
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</table>

Matters that may emerge and affect Kerala’s Social and economic life in the wake of implementation of Coastal Regulation Rules, environmental problems in Alappuzha, Kuttanadu, Karthikappally and Kovalam, environmental problems in the various municipalities and corporations in Kerala, forest encroachments in Nelliyampathy and in the
suburbs of Kozhikodu and sand mining from Kerala rivers were the general problems that the Committee concentrated. Specific problems dealt with were pollution caused by plastic vehicles, and health institutions.

A perusal of all these reports clearly reveals that the Committee has gone to the depth of the problems. But, many of its recommendations lie on paper only. Despite its earnest recommendations the old environmental problems still persist in Alappuzha, Kuttanadu, Karthikappally and Kovalam. Environmental problems in municipalities and corporations are no exceptions. It would be better not to comment up on forest encroachments. Sand mining goes unhindered except certain checks and fines. A question as to the 'why' and 'what' of this invariably leads us to read the achievements the Committee in conjunction with the attitude of the executive.

Proper enforcement of committee recommendations rests with the executive. The Committee on Environment in one of its reports has stated that tree felling and encroachment on government lands took place at the connivance of forest officers and revenue officers. In the same instance, it recommended strong disciplinary action against Kuttiadi Forest Range Officer, Section Forester, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of the flying squad, Village Officer and Village Assistant. The picture is not different in the case of land encroachments and sand mining. In the seventh report, the Committee stated that even after the 1980 enactment of Kerala Land and Leases (Modification of Rights) Act, there was no
move from the part of the government to raise the rate of lease. This was done at the instance of estate owners. Even after the publication of this Act as an extraordinary gazette in 1990, the government did not do anything positively.

The situation was in no way different in the case of M/s. Grasim, Mavoor. Even when the company flouted the directions of the government in relation to anti-pollution measures, the government remained silent. Despite rules and regulations sand mining still goes on.

Anything positive that the Committee contributed at the operational level is limited and confined to pollution in Medical College Hospital, Calicut, plastic menace and vehicle pollution. In relation to the first issue cited, the government informed the Committee that steps were underway for the installation of an incinerator. The only thing that is adhered to in respect of vehicle pollution is the pollution under control certificate. Though plastic carry bags of the old generation were prohibited by law, it is still in circulation. To the extent to which the Committee was able to impose a ban legally, it was successful. On the whole, even in these three fields the Committee can claim only partial success.

All these are not due to the lack of machinery, but owing to the attitude of the executive. As earlier stated executive lapse drains out committee's efficiency. Shri. M.Vijayakumar, the former speaker in an
interview told that committees in Kerala including the Committee on Environment can claim only fifty percent success. The negative attitude the executive is the main reason for this. In the survey 83.33% of the sample responded that executive lapse was the main reason for the inefficiency of legislature committees in Kerala (see Table 2.1).

When queried about the activities of the Committee on Environment 76.67 percent answered that they were not at all satisfied. Only 23.33 percent were found satisfied with the activities of it. Thus, on the whole it is found that operationally the Committee on Environment in Kerala does not conform to standards of efficiency.

Many of the problems that the Committee undertook at the time of the X KLA were highly technical, complicated and involving skills of a higher degree. In the days to come problems may assume even larger dimensions and complex features. After all, the Committee is only a body of professional politicians. Therefore, it is high time to think in terms of structural changes for functional efficiency.
Notes and References

1. *Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Kerala Legislative Assembly*, (Secretariat of the Kerala Legislature, Trivandrum, 1994), Rule 261 C.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, Proviso.


13. See Ibid, p.4: B.B. Vora Committee. This committee recommended reduction in the coastal distance from 500 metres to 200 metres in the case of seas and from 100 metres to 50 metres in the case of creeks, rivers and backwaters. But, its recommendations were not accepted.
16. Ibid.
19. Ibid, Sixth Report, p.3.
27. The study was conducted during 1997.
33. Ibid, pp. 3-4.


37. Ibid, p.15.


42. Ibid, Fifteenth Report, pp 1-5.


44. Ibid, p.3., p.7.


47. Ibid, p.20 , Appendix - IV


49. Supracited Note 23, p.3.

50. See Supracited Note 29, p.7.

51. See Supracited Note 6.