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Periyar is full of pesticides: National Institute of Interdisciplinary Science and Technology

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K OCHI: Abysmal levels of chemical pollution in Periyar surfaced on Wednesday with the National Institute of Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST) confirming dangerous percentage of endosulfan, benzene hexachloride (BHC) and DDT in more than 60 samples collected from the river.

Scientific analysis of 64 spot samples of water collected from the neighbourhood of Eloor industrial area has confirmed the contamination, said an NIIST report filed before the high court on Wednesday.

NIIST did the analysis following an HC directive to study the samples. The directive was part of an interim order issued while considering a petition filed by advocate AX Varghese for Green Action Force.

NIIST report stated that all the 64 water samples showed presence of pesticides except in three places - upstream of Pathalam bund near Edayar industrial site, upstream of Pathalam bund at the backside of Southern Minerals and Chemicals, and sample collected from treated effluent discharge from Sud-Chemie.

The report, filed through central government counsel T Sanjay, said that water from Periyar is not suitable for use without treatment given the presence of pesticides. Samples were collected by Kerala State Pollution Control Board in the presence of court-appointed advocate commissioner PA Jacob. The exercise took more than two months to complete with the team collecting samples from the vicinity of more than 15 industrial units in the area.

Additionally, samples were taken from places including Kuzhikandam Thodu, Panachi Thodu, Unthithodu, Pollipuram, Chakkalakkal Thodu, Pallipuram Chal, Poothavalathodu, Vettukadavu, FACT, Eloor Ferry. Edamula, Vertukadam, Muttar and Kadamakudy Jetty.

Green Action Force had alleged that industrial units in the Eloor industrial area are heavily polluting water of Periyar river. Endosulfan and DDT are known as endocrine disruptors and have been banned in many countries, with most developed nations imposing a total ban.