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GSPCB confirms borewells in Cuncolim fish processing units

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Margao: The Goa State Pollution Control Board (GSPCB), during an environment audit conducted by it of several fish meal and fish processing units at the Cuncolim Industrial Estate, Cuncolim, indicated the presence of borewells within the premises of these units. The findings have given credence to complaints that the bore wells have been dug by these units to discharge untreated effluents.

On Friday, a team of GSPCB officials, during a physical verification, confirmed the detection of borewells at some of the units and collected samples of the water discharged into the them for analysis.

The GSPCB had on November 5 and 6 conducted a Ground Penetration Radar (GPR) survey of four fish meal and fish processing units located in the Cuncolim industrial estate – United Marine Products, Quality Foods, Sagar Feeds and Food Processing Industries and Indotech Ice and Cold Storage.

In a notice addressed to the four units, GSPCB said that during the GPR survey, chambers/pits/pipes were identified to be located underground within their premises.

For physical verification of the GPR reports, the GSPCB on Friday conducted an inspection and excavation of the identified locations of some of the units in the presence of the factory representatives.

The GSPCB records stated that at the Indotech Ice and Cold Storage six borewells were detected, while at Sagar Feeds and Food Processing Industries, three borewells were found dug. Water samples of each of these borewells have been collected for analysis.

At the United Marine Products, 10 suspected locations for borewells/chambers/pipes were located within the premises during the GPR survey. However, on Friday, the factory management prevented the GSPCB officials

from digging the locations within the premise by producing a stay order issued by the court. United Marine Products had earlier moved the court anticipating that the GSPCB would demolish certain structures of the unit.

The environmental audit was conducted by the GSPCB team led by member secretary Shamila Monteiro, along with professor R Jayashakila, Tamil Nadu Fisheries University, professor Manjare, BITS Goa, and consultants Hemant Rane and Sanjay Amonkar.