

31 brick kilns closed in Tripura

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AGARTALA: Following directions of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), the Tripura State Pollution Control Board (TSPCB) recently issued closure notices to 31 brick kilns in the state for non-compliance with environmental norms.

MK Das, scientist at the TSPCB, said the kilns had been operating without valid clearances from the board. In the inspection, it was discovered that they were flouting environmental mandates. District magistrates have been asked to ensure their closure.

After a complaint was lodged against brick kilns in the state for violating environmental norms and causing pollution, NGT had issued notices to

348 brick kilns. NGT also instructed the board to file an inspection report.

Inspection revealed that five kilns had been running without the board's consent and 126 had taken consent for operations long ago but had not renewed these.

"Some brick kilns operate very close to human habitation, not following the statutory environmental mandates," Das said.

Two months ago, NGT had slapped fines of Rs 1 lakh against each of the 126 non-compliant kilns. For those which are operating without any permission whatsoever, a fine of Rs 1.5 lakh was levied. However, 31 kilns did not deposit the fine within the stipulated period.

"We had issued at least four reminders. The last date was October 16. Finally, we had to close the non-compliant 31 brick kilns," Das said.

NGT is scheduled to issue the final decision against the illegal brick kilns on Wednesday.