

# Effluent Treatment in Newsprint Manufacture An Example from Hindustan Newsprint Limited

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## SUMMARY

Pollution control measures adopted from the planning stage for the Newsprint Mill are illustrated. Effect of in-plant control measures and recycling of waste water on reduction of pollutional loads and consumption of fresh water are shown. Segregation of sewers in the mill has resulted in economical sizing of the treatment units. The efficiency of the effluent treatment units during the operation of the mill has been verified and reported in this paper. Colour removal by using the coagulating and flocculating agents in the primary clarifier has been found successful. BOD removal in the aerated lagoon-polishing lagoon system has been found very effective. Pattern of oxygen dispersion in the lagoon by mechanical aerators is under study. Overall efficiency of the effluent treatment plant for removal of BOD, Suspended Solids and colour has been found over 90%.

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## INTRODUCTION :

Hindustan Newsprint Limited, a subsidiary of Hindustan Paper Corporation Limited, with a capacity of 80,000 Tonnes of Newsprint per annum is located at Mevelloor, about 30 Kms. south of Ernakulam in the State of Kerala. The construction of the Mill Started in Jan. 1977 and went on stream in February 1982. Environmental Pollution Control Measures have been adopted for the Mill from its planning and design stage itself and forms an integral part of the Mill. A paper "EFFLUENT TREATMENT & DISPOSAL SYSTEM FOR THE KERALA NEWSPRINT PROJECT—A CHALLENGE TO PLANNING AND EXECUTION", giving details of proposed pollution control measure for the Newsprint Mill was presented in IPPTA annual Meeting & Seminar in 1979 at New Delhi. The present paper provides the details on functioning of the effluent treatment plant after the Mill was put in operation. It deals mainly with the efficiency of the different units of the treatment system including that of the colour removal which was added subsequently. The paper also elaborates the pulping process, internal control

measures and recycling of waste water adopted in the mill which have reduced the pollutional loadings and thus resulted in economical and efficient design of the effluent treatment plant.

## PULPING PROCESS :

The newsprint in Hindustan Newsprint Limited is made using 70% chemi-mechanical pulp produced from Eucalyptus wood and 30% chemical pulp produced from Reed and Bamboo. The eucalyptus wood is chipped, screened and the chips are washed. The washed chips are treated with steam and caustic soda solution. The impregnated chips are pressed to remove the spent liquor and then refined in two stages. A.D.K.P. press is provided in between these two refining stages to extract the liquor. The unbleached pulp so produced is washed on brown stock washer and bleached by two stage hypo-

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chlorite treatment. The bleached pulp is again refined in a third stage refiner, screened, centrifuged and dewatered on a thickener and stored in high density chest.

The chemical pulp is produced from reeds and bamboo by using the conventional kraft process. The chips are cooked in stationary digesters. The pulp is washed on brown stock washers by counter current washing. The washed pulp after screening is bleached by conventional CEH sequence. The bleached pulp is then stored in high density chest.

The spent liquor from both, the chemi-mechanical and chemical pulp mills is processed in the chemical recovery plant for the recovery of chemicals, which are reused in the process.

The pulp furnish consisting of about 70% bleached chemi mechanical pulp and 30% bleached chemical pulp is further processed in the stock preparation plant and finally the newsprint is produced over a twin wire paper machine—the duoformer.

The Mill has got a water treatment system, demineralisation plant for boiler feed water, power boilers and a captive generation unit of 15 MW capacity.

#### RECYCLING OF WASTE WATER :

The fresh water requirement of 35000M<sup>3</sup>/per day for production of 250 IPD at Hindustan Newsprint Limited is drawn from the river Muvattupuzha. Low water consumption of 140M<sup>3</sup>/per tonne of newsprint produced could be achieved mainly due to the recycling of the wastewater at the various stages, some of these are enumerated below :—

- i. The filtrate from the brown stock thickener in chemical pulp mill is used in the centrifugers for dilution.
- ii. The major portion of the filtrates from chlorination, alkali extraction and hypowashers in the bleach plant are recirculated in the respective stages for dilution.
- iii. Filtrate from unbleached washer of chemi-mechanical pulp is cooled and reused in raffiners for pulp dilution.

- iv. Filtrate from bleached washer of chemi-mechanical pulp is reused for pulp dilution in bleach towers.
- v. Filtrate from bleached thickener and the reject filter is used for the dilution of the pulp at raffinator, pressure screen and centrifugers.
- vi. Clear filtrate from paper machine disc saveall is used in CMP bleach washers, knock off showers of disc saveall, duoformer LP Showers, tertiary reject tank dilution, broke chest dilution etc.
- vii. Cloudy filtrate from the paper machine disc saveall is recycled in the disc saveall, consistency controllers and white water silo.
- viii. Cooling water from surface condenser in black liquor evaporation plant is used in digester house, chemi-mechanical pulping plant and paper machine chemical additive preparation section.
- ix. Foul condensate from black liquor evaporation plant is used in causticizer plant and ash handling section of power house.
- x. Vacuum pump seal water in paper machine is reused again after cooling through cooling towers.
- xi. Pressure screens are used in screening plant to reduce the losses of water and fibres to the effluent drains. It also minimises the foaming.

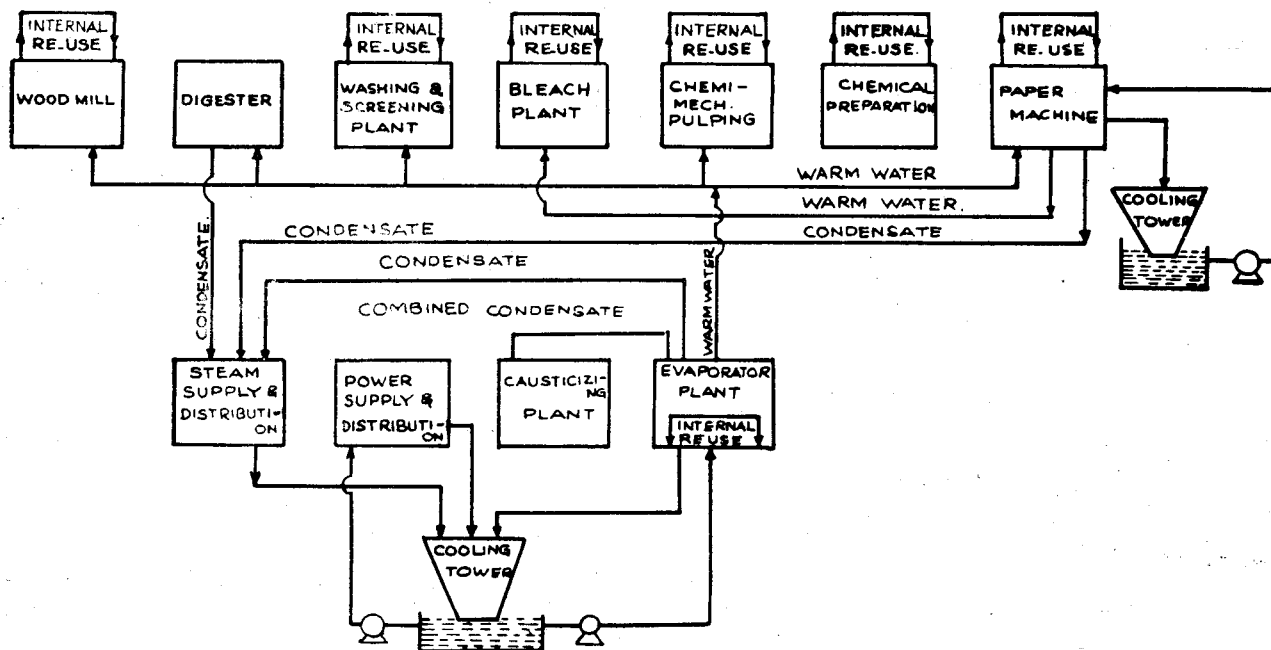
These inplant control measures are illustrated in Fig. 1.

It has been reported that consumption of fresh water by most of the Swedish Paper Mills is at about 70M<sup>3</sup>/T whereas one Mill in Canada has achieved complete recycling of wastewater. Recycling of wastepaper is, however normally adopted to the extent it provides overall economy in the treatment of the effluent.

#### IN—PLANT CONTROL MEASURES :

The pollutional loadings on the effluent stream has been kept minimum by adopting a number of inplant control measures. In Paper Industry, pulp mills are the main source of pollution. The contamination of effluents with ligneous spent liquor has been completely avoided by adopting the following control measures :—

WATER RE-USE DIAGRAM (FIG. 1)



- i. Spent liquor from chemical pulp mill is processed in Soda Recovery plant for the Recovery of chemicals and at the same time making use of the heat value of the dissolved organic matter present in it for steam production.
- ii. The alkali extraction stage in pulp bleaching contributes to around 95% colour and BOD from any pulp mill. This has been almost completely eliminated by following sequential addition of calcium hypochlorite in the extraction stage. The colour of the effluent from this alkali extraction stage is within 100 Pt—Co units against 5000 Pt—Co units in other paper mills.
- iii. The total load both of BOD and colour on the effluents from the bleaching section is also low as the brightness of the bleached pulp is kept only 65% Elrepho. against 75—80% in other paper mills.
- iv. The spent liquor from the chemi-mechanical pulping process is completely pressed out from the chips and pulp and is again recycled in the process. The spent liquor initially pressed out from the chips after the impregnation is utilised for the dilution of the caustic lye to prepare the impregnation liquor.
- v. In spite of all care taken to avoid the contamination of effluents with the black liquor, in a continuous process, the contamination by spillages can not be ruled out. The black liquor from the pulp mill and soda recovery, if by and means finds its way into the effluents, can upset the whole effluents system and all efforts to minimise the pollution load on effluents will be defeated. In order to combat such situations, spillage tanks or sumps are provided in the chemical pulp mill and black liquor evaporation plant. The spillages occurring in these sections are diverted into these sumps, fitted with conductivity meters and pneumatically operated slide gates operating on conductivity sensing. The coloured effluents, so collected in these

sumps are then taken into the black liquor system.

## EFFLUENT TREATMENT & SEWERAGE SYSTEM :

### Pollutants :

The major polluting parameters in the paper/newsprint industry are BOD and suspended solids. Though the colour is not a pollutant but an aesthetic point of view it may need treatment. As practiced in the paper industry to provide treatment only for removal of BOD and suspended solids, HNL also initially planned and designed the elaborate system for effluent treatment only for removal of BOD and suspended solids. Soon after commissioning of the mill, the agitation by the people living on the downstream of Muvattupuzha River posed a serious problem and as a social obligation, HNL added in the existing effluent treatment system, colour removal system based on indigenous technology.

The colour to the effluents from a newsprint mill is mainly from the mechanical pulp mill. This is more so, if the process used is chemi-mechanical where colouring tannins and lignous compounds will be leached out from the wood during the chemical impregnation stage. It may not be economical to process this spent liquor in the chemical recovery plant to recover the chemicals because of the very low solids content in it. Even though some arrangement is made to recirculate and reuse the spent liquor coming out at the first instance, it is almost impossible to reuse the brown stock washings (i.e. the unbleached filtrate from a chemi-mechanical pulp mill) This results in the discharge of these washings in the effluent system which give very high colour to the effluents.

### Mill's Sewer System :

The Kerala State Pollution Control Board has stipulated limits of 100 mg/l suspended solids, 100 Pt—Co units colour and 30mg/l BOD for the effluents discharged into the river. Based on these specifications the entire effluents from each section of the mill are segregated into three sewers as follows :

#### I. High Solids—High Colour Sewer :

This sewer consists of all the effluents from each section having suspended solids more than 100 mg/l and colour more than 100

Pt—Co units. These effluents having high suspended solids and high colour, require retreatment for suspended solid removal, and thereafter BOD removal.

#### II. Low Solids—Low Colour Sewer :

The effluents from each section having suspended solids lower than 100 mg/l and colour less than 100 Pt—Co units and which have high BOD due to the organic matter present in them are diverted into low solids low colour sewer. Since, the suspended solids and colour of these effluents are within the specified limits by the Pollution Board, it does not require any treatment for the removal of these pollutants. But as the BOD of these effluents is high it requires treatment for BOD removal.

#### III. Clear water sewer :

Pump glands and bearing cooling water from the different sections of the mill are collected separately in the clear water sewer. The water in this sewer is uncontaminated in the sense it is having no load with respect to suspended solids, colour and BOD. So these do not require any treatment at all and can directly be discharged into the river. The characteristics of the effluents ensuing from different sections of the mill are tabulated in Table I.

## PRIMARY TREATMENT :

The combined high solid—high colour effluents which contain 500—700 mg/l suspended solids, 3000—3500 Pt—Co units colour and 300—4000 mg/l BOD are first passed through a bar screen to remove the big particles like coal pieces, chips and other foreign materials and is then taken to 30 meter die clarifier. The colour removing chemicals, a mixture of alum, rare earths chloride and polyelectrolyte is added into this stream just before the bar screen where it is thoroughly mixed with the help of an agitator. The process adopted for colour is very sensitive to pH and the system works well at pH around 7.5—8.5. In normal conditions no pH correction is required but sometimes when the pH in the high colour effluent is on the higher side, it is adjusted to around 7.5—8.5 by addition of hydrochloric acid before the addition of the colour removing chemicals. The suspended solids along with the sludge produced due to precipitation of

TABLE—I  
CHARACTERISTICS FO THE EFFLUENTS ENSUING FROM DIFFERENT  
SECTION OF THE MILL

Section	Sewer	Flow lit/min.	P or pH	Suspended solids mg/lit	Colour Pt-Co Units	Dissolved oxygen mg/lit	COD mg/lit	BOD 5 at 20°C mg/lit
Paper Machine	High Solids	4500--5000	6.5--7.5	500--800	50--60	2--3	800--1000	200--300
	Low Solids	2500--3000	6.5--7.5	80--100	50--60	2--3	800--1000	200--300
Chemi- mechanical Pulp Mill	High Solids	1000--1500	8--9	800--1000	15000--20000	Nil	4000--5000	1000--1500
	Low Solids	5300--5800	8--9	60--80	60--80	3--4	500--800	200--300
Chemical Pulp Mill	High Solids	1000--1500	8--9	300--500	200--400	2--3	500--800	150--250
	Low Solids	2500--3000	6--7	60--80	80--100	2--3	500--800	150--250
Soda Recovery	High Solids	400--500	8--9	500--800	60--80	4--5	200--300	50--100
	Low Solids	400--500	8--9	50--60	80--100	2--3	200--300	50--100
Power House	High Solids	400--500	8--9	100--150	50--60	4--5	100--150	40--80
	Low Solids	400--500	6--7	60--80	40--60	4--5	80--100	30--50

colouring matter settled in the clarifier is taken continuously into a sump pit in the effluent filter house where the lime sludge from the calcium hypochlorite preparation plant is also pumped. Both these are filtered together over a vacuum belt filter. The sludge from the filter is taken out and disposed as a solid waste.

It has been noticed that the fibrous suspended solid present in the high solids effluents facilitate the coagulation and flocculation of the colour and helps in its proper settling in the clarifier. Also, due to the presence of suspended solid, the sliminess of the coagulated material is reduced by which the difficulty anticipated in filtration of the coagulated materials at the vacuum filter is overcome.

The overflow of the clarifier contains 60--80 mg/l suspended solids and 70--90 Pt-Co units colour. Thus the colour removing efficiency in the clarifier is over 95% and the suspended solids removal is around 90%. This combined treatment for the removal of the colour and suspended solids also helps in the reduction of BOD and COD. 30--35% reduction in the BOD has been observed in the clarifier.

The pH of the effluents at the clarifier overflow will be around 4.5 to 5.0 and that for the combined low solids effluents is around 7 to 8. When these two are mixed, the pH of the combined effluents is around 6.5 to 7.5 and needs no further pH correction. However, in case of abnormalities, the pH of the effluents after

mixing of low solids and clarifier overflow deviates from 6.5 to 7.5 range, this is again adjusted by the addition of acid or alkali, as required at the mixing point. On-line pH meters are provided at different stages for continuous monitoring of the pH of the effluents and then to take the corrective measures.

**THERMAL REDUCTION :**

The water consumption of the mill has been kept very low by effective recycling of the waste water wherever possible. Due to the large extent of this recirculation, the temperature of the combined effluents may go above 45–50°C. However, for the best biological activity, the most suitable temperature is around 35–40°C. Hence, to achieve this temperature two cooling ponds are provided in series. The combined effluents after the pH adjustment are taken into No. I cooling pond and then to No. II cooling pond. These cooling ponds are spread over an area of 6 hectares and the effluents are getting a retention time of 2 days and 2.5 days respectively in No. I and No. II cooling ponds.

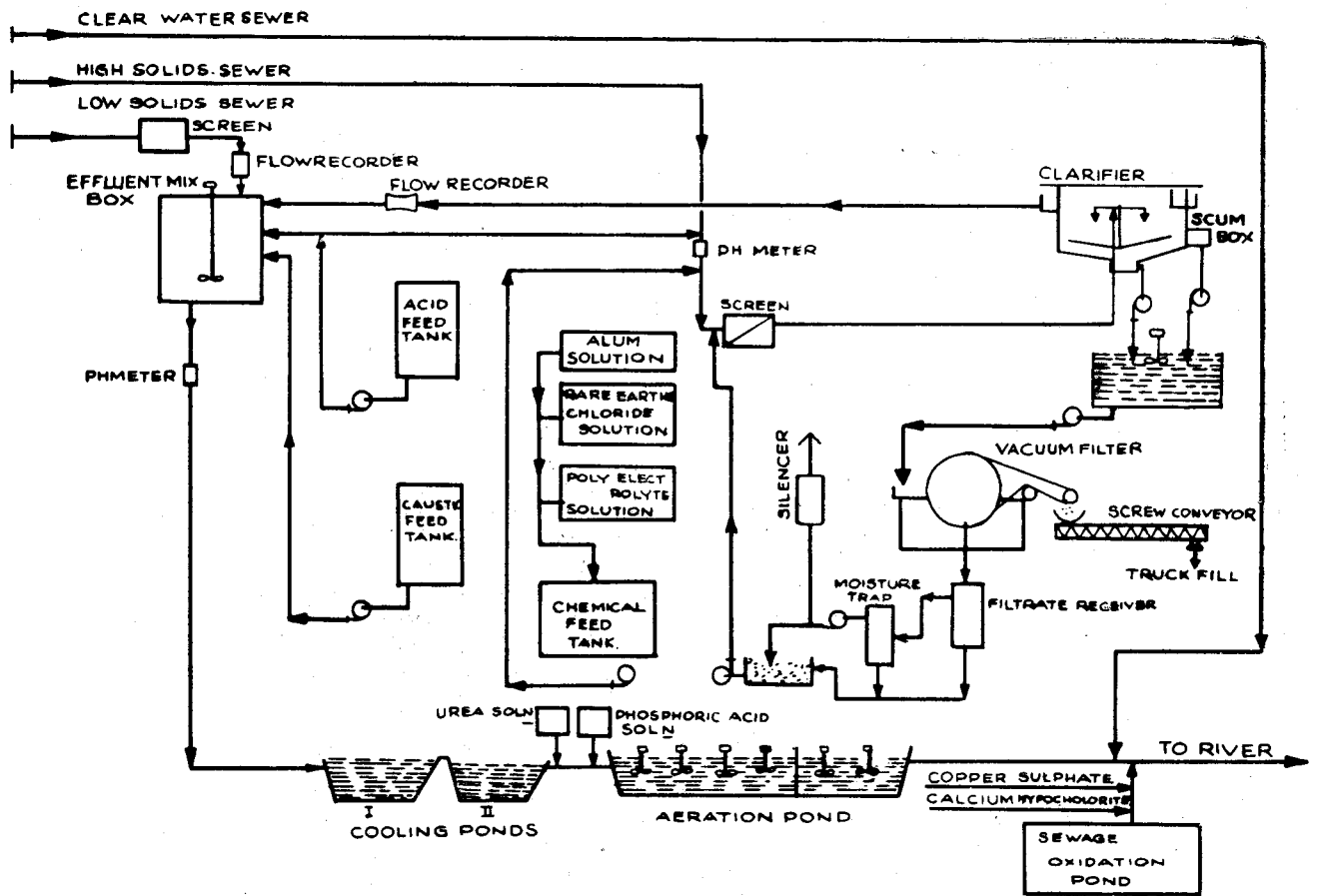
The cooling pond No. I also acts as settling tank for the suspended solids which find their way into the low solids sewer. Thus the suspended solids in the effluents at the outlet of cooling pond No. II is normally 50–60 mg/l. Provisions in the cooling ponds have been made such that either pond can be bypassed and dewatered for the removal of accumulated solids.

It may be noted that suitable temperature and pH are essential prerequisite for successful working of biological treatment system and HNL takes all care to control them.

**SECONDARY TREATMENT :**

The secondary treatment for the removal of BOD is accomplished in aeration ponds. The aeration ponds have been found to be the simplest and most effective method for secondary treatment of the effluents. This could be achieved due to the vast land available in the form of a natural nalla in between two hillocks.

To the cooled primary treated effluents are added the nutrients-nitrogen and phosphorous



**EFFLUENT TRBATMENT SYSTEM (FIG. 2)**

in the form of urea and phosphoric acid. The solution of urea and phosphoric acid at the required concentration are added separately to the effluents at the cooling pond No. II outlet,

The aeration pond has been divided into two cells—the primary cell and the polishing cell. These aeration ponds are spread over in an area of 14.6 hectares of land. Sixteen floating aerators of 55 KW rating each, are provided in the aeration lagoon, 12 in primary cell and 4 in the polishing cell. The positioning and operation of these aerators is done in such a manner that there is no channelling of the effluents through the lagoon and the entire effluents are invariably subjected to thorough aeration. The retention time for the effluents in the lagoon is 9 days in the primary cell and 16 days in the polishing cell. Theoretically, the retention time required in the lagoon is less but due to various other reasons the higher sizing of lagoon was done at the initial stage itself to take care of effluent for expended capacity of the mill. Due to this large retention time for the present capacity, the requirement of nutrients is found to be very much lower than the standard figures. Normally, the feeding of the nutrients is not required. Occasionally, the nutrients are added in the ratio of 100 : 1.4 : 0.4 for BOD : N : P. The BOD reduction efficiency in the aeration lagoon

is nearly 90%. All the characteristics of the effluents at the outlet of the aeration pond are well below the specified limits. Complete effluent treatment plant is shown in Fig. 2.

#### SEWAGE TREATMENT :

Hindustan Newsprint Limited has put up a colony consisting of around 1000 quarters wherein nearly 5000 people live. The effluents in the sewage from this colony and also from the mill is around 1000 lit/min. Septic tanks are provided for the sewage and the overflow from these septic tanks are taken into an oxidation pond. Chlorination is done in the overflow of oxidation pond using calcium hypochlorite for reduction of coliform bacteria and also copper sulphate in controlled dose is added to these effluents to control the algae growth. The effluents from the sewage oxidation pond after treatment joins the effluent from the aeration pond before the discharge point.

#### EFFLUENT DISPOSAL :

The treated effluents from the aeration lagoon are mixed with the uncontaminated effluents from the clear water sewer and the treated effluents from the sewage oxidation pond. The characteristics of these effluents at the final discharge points are tabulated along with the specifications laid down

TABLE—II  
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMBINED EFFLUENTS

Effluent	Flow lit/min	pH	Suspended solids mg/lit	Colour Pt-Co Units	Dissolved oxygen mg/lit	COD mg/lit	BOD5 at 20°C mg/lit
Combined high solids sewer	7000—9000	7.5—8.5	500—700	3000—3500	0—1	1200—1400	300—400
Combined low Solids sewer	11000—13000	7—8	60—90	80—100	2—3	600—700	150—250
High solids sewer after primary treat- ment (clarifier over- flow)	7000—9000	4.5—5.0	60—80	70—90	1—2	800—1000	200—300
Combined low solids and primary treated high solids	19000—21000	6.5—7.5	60—90	80—100	1—2	600—800	150—250
Aeration lagoon outlet	19000—21000	6.5—7.5	60—90	80—100	5—6	120—150	15—20
Clear water sewer	1800—2500	6.5—7.5	40—60	30—50	4—5	20—30	4—5
Sewage oxidation pond over flow	800—1000	8.0—8.5	70—80	40—80	5—6	70—80	10—15
Final discharge at check point	22000—24000	7.0—7.8	70—80	80—100	5—6	120—150	15—20

by the Kerala State Pollution Control Board in Table III. These results can briefly be summarised as follows :

Parameter	Effluents discharged from HNL	Tolerance limits from Kerala State Pollution Control Board.	ISI Tolerance limits IS 2400-1974
Colour	Pt-Co Units 117	× + 100	Not Specified
Suspended solids	mg/lit 73	100	100
BOD <sub>5</sub>	mg/lit 17	30	30
COD	mg/lit 121	250	Not Specified.

TABLE III  
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EFFLUENTS AT FINAL DISCHARGE POINT

Parameter	Units	Results	Specifications laid down by Kerala State Pollution Control Board,
Quantity discharge	KL/Day	34380	33000
PH	—	7.6	5.5-9.0
Temperature	°C	31	Ambient
Suspended Solids	mg/lit	73	100
BOD <sub>5</sub> at 20°C	mg/lit	17	30
COD	mg/lit	121	250
Oil and grease	mg/lit	3.5	10
Sulphides as 'S'	mg/lit	0.34	2.0
Total residual chlorine	mg/lit	Nil	1.0
Hexavalent Chromium as 'Cr'	mg/lit	Nil	0.1
Colour	Pt-Co Units	97	× + 100*
Phenolic compounds	mg/lit	Nil	1.0
Mercury as Hg	mg/lit	0.001	0.01**

\*Where × is the river water colour which is normally 30 Pt-Co units.

\*\*Specification as per IS 2490 (Part-I) 1974.

These results indicate the effectiveness of the effluent treatment at HNL. These effluents are not at all harmful to the aquatic life and can safely be discharged into the inland surface water. These effluents are then taken through an underground RCC pipe, 1200 mm in diameter and are discharged below the surface of water in the Muvattupuzha River, about 5 Kms. down stream of water in take point. At the discharge point the river has a minimum flow of 12.75m<sup>3</sup>/sec. which provides about 30 times dilution to the treated effluents. The characteristics of the river water before and after the discharge point are tabulated in Table IV.

TABLE-IV  
RIVER WATER CHARACTERISTICS—  
UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM

Characteristics	Units	Upstream	Downstream
PH	—	7.3	7.5
Suspended solids	mg/lit	23	31
Colour	Pt-Co Units	30	40
Dissolved Oxygen	mg/lit	7.6	7.2
COD	mg/lit	8	16
BOD <sub>5</sub> at 20°C	mg/lit	1.0	1.5

Facility of gravity flow of the effluents through the entire treatment plant and disposal pipe line was available as the land has the sloping gradient from the mill towards the effluent discharge point of the river. A separate drainage has been provided in the mill site to take care of the storm water.

#### OTHER POLLUTIONAL ASPECTS :

A newsprint mill can be as polluting as any other paper mill if proper care is not taken for the effluents treatment. However, there is scope for modifying the process to bring down the load on the effluents. At Hindustan Newsprint Limited, the pollution load has been brought down by adopting various measures explained in the above section.

The pulping process is also modified in such a way that the pollution load on the effluents is



minimum. In case of chemical pulping process, the effluents from the bleaching section exhibit the least possible BOD and colour load due to the sequential addition of calcium hypochlorite in the alkali extraction stage and also due to low brightness level maintained for the bleached pulp. Similarly, the load on the effluents from chemi-mechanical pulping process is also kept low by keeping a very high pulp yield of 85% and above.

The BOD load from paper machine is low as no organic additives are used. The suspended solids load from paper machine could be brought down due to the high total retention of 75–80%

on paper machine and also due to the high efficiency of the disc saveall and because of the various recirculation measures.

The pollution load on the effluent stream and also at various stages of the effluent treatment process is indicated in table V. From these results it can be noticed that the BOD, colour and Suspended Solids from the various sections is low in comparison with that from any other proper mill of same capacity. However, the colour load from chemi-mechanical pulp mill is on the higher side. This necessitates the colour removing treatment in a newsprint mill.

TABLE—V  
POLLUTION LOAD FROM DIFFERENT SECTIONS

Section	Sewer	Flow M <sup>3</sup> /day	BOD <sub>5</sub> at 20°C Kg/ day	Suspended solids Kg/day	Colour Kg/day
Paper Machine	High Solids	6600	1650	4290	363
	Low Solids	4000	1000	360	220
Chemimechanical pulp mill	High Solids	1700	2125	1530	34000
	Low Solids	8000	2000	560	560
Chemical Pulp Mill	High Solids	1700	340	680	510
	Low Solids	4000	800	280	360
Soda Recovery	High Solids	720	54	468	50
	Low Solids	720	54	40	65
Power House	High Solids	720	43	90	40
	Low Solids	720	29	50	36
Combined High Solids	High Solids	11440	4212	7058	34960
Combined low solids	Low Solids	17440	3883	1290	1240
Primary Treated High Solids (clarifier overflow)		11440	2860	800	1830
Combined Low Solids and Primary Treated High Solids		28880	6743	2090	3070
Aeration Lagoon outlet		28880	5.7	2266	3070
Clear water sewer		4000	20	200	160
Sewage oxidation pond overflow		1500	18	112	68
Final Discharge at check point		34380	585	2578	3298

The total BOD load from a normal paper mill is around 40—60 Kg/T of paper<sup>6</sup>. However, due to the various recirculation carried out and also due to the basic process adopted, BOD load on the effluents stream from Hindustan Newsprint Limited is 30--32 Kg/T of newsprint produced. This low BOD load has made the effluent treatment easy and effective. Added to this the high capacity of the aerated lagoon at Hindustan Newsprint Limited has made the effluent treatment system fool proof.

The dissolved oxygen at the outlet of the aerated lagoon is normally 5.5 to 6.0 mg/l. The results given in Table III indicate that the effluents discharged from Hindustan Newsprint Limited are not at all harmful to the aquatic life. This is also supported by the fact that a large number of good quality fish are grown in the polishing lagoon. A look at Table IV shows that there is no major change in the quality of the river water after the discharge of the effluents.

#### **Study for D.O. pattern in lagoon**

HNL is carrying out a study to know the pattern of dissolved oxygen in the wastewater in the aeration pond to establish the following aspects :

- i. Power requirement for oxygen demand and BOD removal,
- ii. Placement of aerators in the lagoon,
- iii. optimum depth of lagoon for aerobic condition.

Some valuable information have already been collected but it needs further study to arrive at some definite parameters for economical and efficient design of aerobic lagoons.

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