

**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

Original Application No. 1094/2024

In the matter of:

News Item titled "All Indian salt Sugar brands contain microplastics reveals study"  
appearing in the Business Standard dated 13.08.2024.

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<b>1.</b>	<b>Reply</b> on behalf of Respondent No. 01 Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in Original Application No. 1094/2024, News Item titled “All Indian salt Sugar brands contain microplastics reveals study” appearing in the Business Standard dated 13.08.2024.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Annexure-1</b> A copy of Hon’ble NGT order dated 03.12.2024 and 23.08.2024.	

*Srinivas Vishven*

**Filed by: Adv. Srinivas Vishven**

**On behalf of Central Pollution Control Board**

**Place: Delhi**

**Date: 25.03.2025**

**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI  
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 1094 OF 2024**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**News Item titled "All Indian salt Sugar brands contain microplastics reveals study"  
appearing in the Business Standard dated 13.08.2024**

**REPLY ON BEHALF OF RESPONDENT NO. 01 CENTRAL POLLUTION  
CONTROL BOARD (CPCB)**

1. That, Hon'ble NGT vide order dated 23.08.2024 has sought the reply of respondents, including Central Pollution Control Board (hereinafter referred to as "CPCB") in the instant matter. Thereby, the reply is made in succeeding paragraphs.
2. That, CPCB is a Statutory Board constituted under Section 3 of The Water (Prevention and Control of pollution) Act, 1974 (hereinafter referred to as "Water Act, 1974"). It performs the functions under The Water Act, 1974, The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 (hereinafter referred to as "Air Act, 1981") and The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
3. That it is humbly submitted the news article communicates about the study conducted by Toxic Links, which revealed the presence of micro-plastics in all Indian salt and sugar brands, in various forms, including fiber, pellets, films, and fragments.
4. That Plastic Waste Management Rules , 2016 ( As amended) have been notified MoEFCC to give thrust on plastic waste minimization, source segregation,



recycling. The responsibility of implementation of these Rules has been entrusted with the Local bodies, producers, importers, brand owners, manufacturers as well as the plastic waste processors. Responsibility of enforcement of these Rules has been entrusted with CPCB and SPCB/PCC. Following provisions of Plastic Waste Management Rules may be noted:

i. **Registration of Brand Owners/Producers/Importer/Plastic Waste Processors:**

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Government of India, in the fourth Amendment to the Plastic Waste Management Rules, dated February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, notified 'Guidelines on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Plastic Packaging' in the Schedule II of the Rules. EPR means the responsibility of a producer for the environmentally sound management of the product until the end of its life. As per these guidelines, Producers, Importers & Brand-Owners (PIBOs) & Plastic Waste Processors (PWPs) shall have to register through the online centralized portal developed by the CPCB.

ii. **Promote alternative to Petro based plastic carry bags / films i.e. the compostable carry bags:** - As per Rules 4(h) & 4(h(a)) of the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 (as amended):

*“(h) the provision of thickness under clause (c) shall not apply to carry bags or commodities made from compostable plastic or biodegradable plastics. Carry bags and commodities made from compostable plastics shall conform to the Indian Standard: IS/ISO 17088:2021 titled as Specifications for Compostable Plastics.;*

*(h(a)) the manufacture of carry bags and commodities covered under sub rule (3) shall be permitted to be made from compostable plastics or biodegradable plastics*

*subject to mandatory marking and labelling laid down under these rules and the*



*regulations of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India for food contact applications. The manufacturers of compostable plastic or biodegradable plastic carry bags or commodities permitted under the rules, shall obtain a certificate from the Central Pollution Control Board before marketing or selling;*

- iii. It is is humbly submitted that matter related to Microplastics has been taken up in OA No. 251/2022 by Hon'ble NGT. MoEF&CC has developed an action plan outlining activities related to microplastics in compliance with the Hon'ble NGT's directions dated 01.03.2023 in OA No.251/2022, which is presently under implementation by the concerned organizations including CPCB.
- iv. The answering respondent No. 1 craves leave of this Hon'ble Tribunal for filing additional reply, if required, in future.
- v. That, in light of the above submission, it is respectfully submitted that this Answering respondent i.e. CPCB, shall abide by any order(s) or direction(s) passed by this Hon'ble tribunal in the instant OA and render justice.



*Divya*

**(Divya Sinha)**

Scientist 'F'

Central Pollution Control Board

**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI  
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 1094 OF 2024**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**News Item titled "All Indian salt Sugar brands contain microplastics reveals study"  
appearing in the Business Standard dated 13.08.2024**

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, Divya Sinha, working as Scientist 'F' in Central Pollution Control Board, Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi, the Respondent No. 1, in the above matter, do hereby solemnly affirm, declare on oath and state as under :-

1. That I, the deponent herein is the authorized representative to represent the Respondent CPCB in the present case, and as such, I am well conversant with the facts and circumstances of the present case on the basis of the information derived from the official records, and hence, I am competent to verify, sign and swear this affidavit on behalf of the Respondent CPCB.
2. That the accompanying reply may be read part and parcel of the present affidavit.
3. That the accompanying reply has been drafted and filed under my instructions and authority the contents thereof are true and correct on the basis of the records maintained during ordinary course of business of CPCB and available records and documents and the contents of the same are read over and explained to me and are not repeated herein for the sake of brevity.



DS

**दिव्या सिन्हा / Divya Sinha**  
**DEPONENT**  
 वैज्ञानिक 'एफ' / Scientist 'F'  
 केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड  
 Central Pollution Control Board  
 (पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)  
 Mo Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India  
 परिवेश भवन, पूर्वी अर्जुन नगर, दिल्ली-110032  
 Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi-110032

## VERIFICATION

25 MAR 2025

Verified at Delhi on this day of 25 MAR 2025 2025 that the contents of the above reply are correct and true on the basis of the record of the cases as mentioned in the day to day affairs of the CPCB. Nothing has been concealed therefrom or mis-stated.



Divya Sinha / Divya Sinha  
 वैज्ञानिक 'एफ' डिप्लोमा  
 केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड  
 Central Pollution Control Board  
 (पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)  
 (Mo Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India)  
 परिसर भवन, पृथ्वी अर्जुन नगर, दिल्ली-110032  
 South Block, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi-110032

ATTESTED

*[Signature]*  
 NOTARY PUBLIC  
 GOVT. OF INDIA

25 MAR 2025

25 MAR 2025

Item No.15

Court No. 3

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

Original Application No. 1094/2024

News Item titled "All Indian salt Sugar brands contain microplastics reveals study" appearing in the Business Standard dated 13.08.2024

Date of hearing: 03.12.2024

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ARUN KUMAR TYAGI, JUDICIAL MEMBER  
HON'BLE DR. A. SENTHIL VEL, EXPERT MEMBER**

Respondent: Mr. Srinivas Vishven, Adv. for CPCB.

**ORDER**

1. As per office report, all the respondents have been duly served.
2. None has appeared for respondents no.2, 3 and 4.
3. In view of the nature of the environmental questions involved, we consider presence of duly authorized officers of respondents no. 2, 3 and 4 to be essential for assisting this Tribunal in just and proper adjudication thereof.
4. Accordingly, notices be issued to respondents no. 2, 3 and 4 again by speed-post requiring them to ensure filing of appropriate response by way of affidavit at least one week before the date of hearing fixed and also presence of duly authorized officers before this Tribunal on the date of hearing fixed.
5. Sh. Srinivas Vishyen, Advocate has appeared for respondent no.1-CPCB and he seeks time to file its response.
6. Response on behalf of respondent no. 1-CPCB be also filed at least one week before the next date of hearing fixed.

7. List on 26.03.2025 for further hearing.

Arun Kumar Tyagi, JM

Dr. A. Senthil Vel, EM

December 03, 2024  
Original Application No. 1094/2024  
JG.

Item No.07

Court No. 1

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

Original Application No.1094/2024

News Item titled "All Indian salt Sugar brands contain microplastics reveals study" appearing in the Business Standard dated 13.08.2024

Date of hearing: 23.08.2024

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PRAKASH SHRIVASTAVA, CHAIRPERSON  
HON'BLE DR. A. SENTHIL VEL, EXPERT MEMBER**

Applicant: None appeared

**ORDER**

1. This original application is registered *suo motu* on the basis of the news item titled "All Indian salt Sugar brands contain microplastics reveals study" appearing in the Business Standard dated 13.08.2024.

2. The news item relates to a study titled "Microplastics in Salt and Sugar" that revealed the presence of microplastics in all Indian salt and sugar brands, in various forms, including fiber, pellets, films and fragments. As per the article, the study tested 10 types of salt, including table salt, rock salt, sea salt and local raw salt and five types of sugar purchased from both online and local markets.

3. The news item highlights that the size of these microplastics ranged from 0.1 mm to 5 mm. The highest levels of microplastics were found in iodised salt, in the form of multi-coloured thin fibre and films. The concentration of microplastics in the salt samples ranged from 6.71 to 89.15 pieces per kilogramme of dry weight. Iodised salt had the highest concentration of microplastics (89.15 pieces per kilogramme) while organic rock salt had the lowest (6.70 pieces per kilogramme). In sugar samples, the concentration of microplastics ranged from 11.85 to 68.25

pieces per kilogramme, with the highest concentration found in non-organic sugar.

4. The news item also highlights that the presence of microplastics can have adverse and long-term health impacts on human health. Microplastic can harm both health and the environment. These tiny plastic particles can enter the human body through food, water and air. Recent research has found microplastics in human organs such as the lungs, heart, and even in breast milk and unborn babies. The article asserts that the average Indian consumes 10.98 grams of salt and around 10 spoons of sugar every day, much higher than the World Health Organization's recommended limits.

5. The news item raises substantial issue relating to compliance of the environmental norms.

6. Power of the Tribunal to take up the matter *suo-motu* has been recognized by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of "*Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai vs. Ankita Sinha & Ors.*" reported in 2021 SCC Online SC 897.

7. Hence, we implead the following as respondents in the matter:

- (1). Central Pollution Control Board, through its Member Secretary, Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi-110032
- (2). Indian Institute of Toxicology Research, through its Secretary, Vishvigyan Bhawan, 31, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, Lucknow-226001
- (3). Indian Council of Medical Research, through its Secretary, V ramalingaswami Bhawan, PO Box No. 4911, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi-110029, India

(4). Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, through its  
CEO, 03rd & 04th Floor, FDA Bhawan, Kotla Road, Near Bal  
Bhawan New Delhi - 110002 India.

8. Issue notice to the above respondents for filing their response/reply  
by way of affidavit before the Tribunal at least one week before the next  
date of hearing. If any of the respondents directly files the reply without  
routing it through his advocate then the said respondent will remain  
virtually present to assist the Tribunal.

9. List on 03.12.2024.

Prakash Shrivastava, CP

Dr. A. Senthil Vel, EM

August 23, 2024  
Original Application No.1094/2024  
SN