

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

(By Video Conferencing)

Original Application No.777/2022  
(I.A No. 280/2022)

**In re: Ranthambhore Musical Festival, near the Forest/Sanctuary  
area**

Date of hearing: 07.11.2022

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ADARSH KUMAR GOEL, CHAIRPERSON  
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUDHIR AGARWAL, JUDICIAL MEMBER  
HON'BLE PROF. A. SENTHIL VEL, EXPERT MEMBER**

Applicant: Mr. Atmaram N.S. Nadkarni, Senior Advocate with Dr. Harsh Pathak &  
Mr. Mohit Choubey, Advocates for Applicant (Canvas Talent Private  
Limited) in I.A No. 280/2022

**ORDER**

1. Proceedings have been initiated in this matter *suo motu* to consider the impact of the proposed musical festival close to the Tiger reserve at Ranthambhore, Rajasthan, as publicly announced on the website.

2. Advance notice for today's hearing was issued to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest/Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajasthan, Principal Secretary, Tourism, Govt. of Rajasthan and District Collector/Magistrate, Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan. No response has been filed by the said Authorities. However, the Event Manager, Canvas Talent Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, (hereafter called the PP) has entered appearance and filed I.A No. 280/2022 seeking permission to assist the Tribunal.

3. Accordingly, we have heard Sh. A. S Nadkarni, learned Senior counsel for the PP and perused the application.

4. Averments in the application filed by the PP are that the event called “Ranthambhore Festival” is being organized since 2017 to promote art and culture of the area. The event is organized at Hotel Nahargarh. The brochure annexed to the application states that it is approximately 5 kms from the Ranthambhore National Park, (notified as such under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972). Audience size is 500-600. Event will be within the Hotel complex at amphitheatre. Only fabric banners and recycled material is used. There is DG stage but guests use wireless headphones. The hotel is a venue for weddings and other such events. Photographs of the festival in the previous years show use of musical instruments, lighting, drums and attendance by 3000 people. It is further stated that the festival includes wildlife safari during morning and evening hours, art and craft fair during the day, music from 4 pm to 6 pm and folk music from 6 pm to 9:30 pm, acoustic music performances in Amphitheater and Hathi Kund, 9:30 pm soundless event (using headphones, with no noise surroundings). The event has all permissions/approvals. The PP has made huge investments and efforts for organizing the event.

5. On due consideration, we find it difficult to accept that all approvals for the event have been taken. On being asked to produce approval, if any, from the Wildlife Department, no such approval has been shown. Thus, claim that all approvals have been taken remains a tall claim. Further stand that even in absence of any appraisal of impact of the event on the wildlife, there can be no objection to the event is also unacceptable.

6. It is well known that Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve is an eco-sensitive zone. Activities in its vicinity have to be regulated to ensure that there is no harm to the wildlife. It is difficult to accept that such events

have no relevance for protection of wildlife. No evaluation has been undertaken by any statutory regulator or even by the PP that the event will have no adverse impact on the wildlife.

7. Information available in public domain shows that Rajasthan Government submitted its proposal for declaration of area close to the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve as Eco sensitive zone vide letter dated 7.1.2011, in pursuance of order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 04.12.2006 in W.P No. 460/2004, *Goa Foundation v. Union of India*. By letter dated 31.3.2011, addressed to the Forest and Wildlife Departments, it was directed that till a notification is issued regarding Eco-sensitive zone by the MoEF, GoI, the guidelines for non-forest activities in wildlife habitats as prescribed by the MoEF, GoI letter No. 6-1.0/2011 dated 15.3.2011 be followed. The guidelines inter alia lay down requirement of approval of standing committee of National Board of Wildlife (NBWL) for activities within 10 kms. from boundaries of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. District Level Monitoring Committee has been constituted in the District subject to overall supervision and control of Central Government. The non-forestry activities in wildlife habitats are intended to maintain balance between development and conservation of wildlife and bio-diversity. Any activity having potential of damage to the wildlife has to be duly regulated in view of orders passed by Hon'ble Supreme Court in W.P Civil No. 337 of 1995 as mentioned in the Guidelines annexed to the above letter.

8. Learned senior counsel for the PP submitted that there is no legal restriction under the law for the event in the Hotel where such activities are routine as music is life and there be no harm to the wildlife, the hotel itself being far away from the Tiger reserve but he was willing to give undertaking that there will be no music and light in the proposed event

except by use of headphones and the activity will be shifted to indoors from amphitheater.

9. As already mentioned, it appears to be difficult to rule out the possibility of disturbing the wildlife and eco-system by such large event close to the Tiger reserve. Informed decision in such a matter by statutory regulator is necessary in absence of any express permission when the event is within 10 kms from the Tiger Reserve.

10. Accordingly, we direct that the event may be held only if so permitted and subject to such conditions as laid down by a joint Committee of National Wildlife Board, GoI and Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajasthan after due consideration of its impact on the wildlife and the eco-system. Decision may be taken expeditiously preferably within one week from the date of application by the PP. National Board for Wildlife in coordination with other concerned Authorities, the including the National Tiger Conservation Authority may issue appropriate guidelines with regard to such events in the vicinity of other National Parks in the country, preferably within one month. If any such guidelines have been issued, the same may be updated with further inputs, if any. Compliance may be ensured by the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, Sawai Madhopur.

The Application is disposed of.

A copy of this order be forwarded to the National Wildlife Board, GoI, National Tiger Conservation Authority, GoI, Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajasthan, District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, Sawai Madhopur by email for compliance.

Adarsh Kumar Goel, CP

Sudhir Agarwal, JM

Prof. A. Senthil Vel, EM

November 07, 2022  
Original Application No.777/2022  
(I.A No. 280/2022)  
AB