

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

Original Application No. 129/2024

News Item titled "**Forest land five times Delhi's geographical area Under encroachment govt. data shows**" appearing in Deccan Herald dated 05.01.2024

Date of hearing: 09.02.2024

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUDHIR AGARWAL, JUDICIAL MEMBER
HON'BLE DR. A. SENTHIL VEL, EXPERT MEMBER**

Respondent: Mr. Ravinder Kr. Gupta & Mr. Varun Gupta, Advs. for MoEF & CC
(Through VC)

ORDER

1. This original application under section 14 and 15 of National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 (hereinafter referred to as '**NGT Act, 2010**') has been registered exercising *suo-moto* jurisdiction in view of a newspaper report published in daily newspaper "Deccan Herald" dated 05.01.2024 under the title "**Forest land five times Delhi's geographical area Under encroachment govt. data shows**".

2. It is said that across the country there is large encroachment on forest land and broadly more than 7500 square kilometres of the recorded forest area of a total 7,75,288 square kilometers across the country has been encroached upon but no action has been taken by the concerned authorities in this matter. 56 percent of the forest area under encroachment falls under states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Manipur.

3. The issue raised in the report is very serious and if the factum that no action has been taken by the authorities is correct that would make the matter more serious requiring immediate attention and action.

4. In our view, substantial question relating to environment has arisen.

5. Mr. Ravinder Kr. Gupta, learned counsel has put in appearance on behalf of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (hereinafter referred to as '**MoEF & CC**') and states that since the matter relates to various state governments, the ministry has asked the concerned governments to take appropriate action and he may be granted some time to file his response to place on record the action taken by the ministry.

6. We also find that since the issue involves all the States and Union Territories across the country, Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary of Environment & Forests of all the States and Union Territories be impleaded as respondents as under:-

- (1) Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jorbagh Road, New Delhi – 110 003
- (2) Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Environment and Forest, Room No. 102, Secretariat, Andaman & Nicobar administration, Port Blair
- (3) Spl. Chief Secretary, Environment, Forest, Science and Technology Department, 4th Block, Ground Floor, Room No. 268, A.P Secretariat Office, Velagapudi, Andhra Pradesh
- (4) Principal Secretary, Department of Environment & Forest, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Secretariat, Itanagar – 791 111
- (5) Additional Chief Secretary, Environment and Forest Department, A-Block, 4th Floor, Assam Secretariat, Dispur, Guwahati – 781 006
- (6) Principal Secretary, Environment and Forest Department, Sichai Bhawan, Post Office – Old Secretariat, Patna – 800 015

- (7) Secretary, Department of Environment and Forests, Room No. 411, 4th Floor, Delux Building, UT Secretariat, Sector – 9, Chandigarh – 160 009
- (8) Principal Secretary, Forest, Department of Forest, Government of Chhattisgarh, Secretariat, Raipur – 492 001
- (9) Secretary/Chief Conservator of Forests, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Department of Personnel & Administrative Reforms, Ground Floor, Secretariat, Fort Area, Moti Daman, Daman (U.T) – 396 220
- (10) Principal Secretary, Environment & Forest, Environment Department, 6th Level, C-Wing, IP Estate, Delhi Secretariat, Delhi – 110 002
- (11) Secretary, Environment, Government of Goa, 2nd Floor, IT Hub, Altinho, Panaji, Tiswadi, Goa – 403 001
- (12) Additional Chief Secretary, Forest and Environment Department, Government of Gujarat, 14th Block, 8th Floor, Sachivalaya, Gandhinagar
- (13) Additional Chief Secretary to Government of Haryana, Environment & Climate Change Department, R.No. 406, 4th Floor, 5th Floor, New Secretariat, Sector 17, Chandigarh – 160 017
- (14) Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Science & Technology, Government of Himachal Pradesh, Department of Personnel, H.P. Secretariat
- (15) Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Department of Forest, Government of Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar
- (16) Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Forest, Environment & Climate Change, Nepal House, Doranda Ranchi, Jharkhand – 834 002

- (17) Principal Secretary, Forest, Environment & Ecology Department, Karnataka Government Secretariat, Room No. 709, 7th Floor, 4th Gate, M.S. Building, Bangalore – 56000
- (18) Additional Secretary, Directorate of Environment & Climate Change (DoECC) 4th Floor, K.S.R.T.C Bus Terminal, Thampanoor, Thiruvananthapuram – 695 001, Kerala
- (19) Secretary, Department of Environment & Forest, Animal Husbandry, and Labour Employment & Training, 1st Floor, Paryavaran Bhavan, U.T. of Lakshadweep, Kavaratti
- (20) Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Forest, planning, Economics and Statistics, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Mantralaya, Bhopal
- (21) Principal Secretary, Revenue & Forest Department, Government of Maharashtra, 4th Floor, Mantralaya, Mumbai – 400 032
- (22) Additional Chief Secretary, Forest and Environment Department, Government of Manipur, Secretariat, Imphal – 705 001
- (23) Principal Secretary (Forest), Forest and Environment Department, Government of Meghalaya, Room No. 315, Additional Secretariat, Shillong – 793 001
- (24) PCCF and Principal Secretary (Forest), Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Mizoram, Secretariat, Aizawl – 796 001
- (25) Principal Secretary, Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, New Secretariat, Kohima, Nagaland
- (26) Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Forest & Wildlife, Government of Odisha, Kharbel Bhawan, Secretariat, Bhubaneswar – 751 001
- (27) Secretary, Science, Technology & Environment, IIIrd Floor, PHB Building, Anna Nagar, Puducherry

- (28) Secretary, Science, Technology & Environment, Government of Punjab, Academic Block, Mahatama Gandhi State Institute of Public Administration/Adjacent Sacred Heart, School, Sector - 26, Chandigarh
- (29) Principal Secretary (Forest and Environment), Government of Rajasthan, Vaniki Path, Near Secretariat, Jaipur – 302 005
- (30) PCCF cum Additional Chief Secretary, Forest and Environment Department, Government of Sikkim, Forest Secretariat, Deorali – 737 102 Gangtok, East Sikkim
- (31) Additional Chief Secretary, Environment and Forest Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, Namakkal Kavignar Maaligai, Fort St. George, Chennai 600 009
- (32) Spl. Chief Secretary, Environment, Science & Technology, Tankbund, Basheer Bagh Near NTR Gardens, Opposite Lumbini Park, Telangana – 500 022
- (33) Principal Secretary, Department of Science, Technology & Environment, Vigyan Prajukti O Paribesh Bhawan, P.N. Complex, Gorkhabasti, Agartala, West Tripura – 799 006
- (34) Principal Secretary, Forest Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Room No. 601, Bapu Bhawan, Secretariat, Vidhan Sabha Marg, Lucknow – 226 001
- (35) Principal Secretary, Department of Forest and Environment, Government of Uttarakhand, Subhash Road, Dehradun – 248 006
- (36) Principal Secretary, Department of Environment, 5th Floor, Pranisampad Bhawan, Block LB-II, Salt Lake, Sector III, Bidhannagar, Kolkata – 700 106
- (37) Commissioner/Secretary, Health & Medical Education/Forest, Ecology & Environment, Civil Secretariat, Leh, Ladakh – 194 101

(38) Director General, Forest Survey of India, Ministry of Environment,
Forest and Climate Change, Kaulagarh Road, P.O. IPE Dehradun –
248 195, Uttarakhand

7. Let notices be issued to all the respondents except MoEF & CC
which is already represented. Respondents may file their response within
two months by e-mail at judicial-ngt@gov.in preferably in the form of
searchable PDF/OCR Support PDF and not in the form of Image PDF.

8. List on 19.04.2024.

Sudhir Agarwal, JM

Dr. A. Senthil Vel, EM

February 09, 2024
Original Application No. 129/2024
AS.