BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL, PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI

Original Application No. 01 of 2018 (M.A. No. 75/2018, M.A. No. 115/2018, M.A. No. 118/2018, M.A. No. 138/2018, M.A. No. 215/2018, M.A. No. 220/2018, M.A. No. 222/2018 & M.A. No. 451/2018)

(Earlier M.A. No. 1538/2017 in O.A. No. 222/2014)

IN THE MATTER OF:-

Sri K. S. Ravi Vs. State of Karnataka & Ors.

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ADARSH KUMAR GOEL, CHAIRPERSON

HON'BLE DR. JUSTICE JAWAD RAHIM, JUDICIAL MEMBER HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE S.P. WANGDI, JUDICIAL MEMBER

HON'BLE DR. NAGIN NANDA, EXPERT MEMBER

Applicant: Ms. Kanika Agnihotri and Mr. Ram Prasad, **Present:**

Advs.

Respondents Mr. Attin Shankar Rastogi, Adv. for Ministry of

Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Respondent Nos. 1,3,4,5,7-10: Mr. Devraj Ashok, Adv. for BBMP and State

of Karnataka

Respondent no. 11

Mr. Venkat Ramni, Sr. Adv., Mr. Nishanth Patil, Ms. Sneha R. Iyer, Mr. Rohit Prasad and Mr. K.

Megha, Advs.

Respondent No. 12: Mr. Ajith Bhasme and Mr. Naman Jhabakh,

Advs.

Mr. Saransh Jain, Adv.

Mr. Shubham Kulshrestha, Adv.

Mr. Devraj Ashok, Adv.

Da <mark>te</mark> and Remarks	Orders of the Tribunal
It <mark>em No.</mark> 05	1. This application (originally filed as a Miscellaneous
September 04, 2018	Application No. 1538/2017 and later converted to Original Application No. 01/2018 vide order dated 15.12.2017) seeks following reliefs:
	"(I) Restrain all the construction activities in violation of the buffer zones stipulations specified by this Hon'ble Tribunal in the above case in its Judgment dated 04.05.2016 including the ongoing constructions at Khata Number 1997/45/2, Sy. No. 41/2, Kaikondrahalli Vilalge, BBMP Ward No. 150 (Bellandur Ward), Mahadevpura Zone, Bengaluru; (II) Direct the BBMP and Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (for short KSPCB) to forthwith seal the aforesaid premises and not to allow anybody to occupy the premises and to submit compliance report thereof; (III) Direct the State Authorities to file a status report regarding the compliance of the directions issued by this Hon'ble Tribunal; (IV) Direct the State Authorities to demolish the offending constructions and restore the lands

September 04, 2018

R

including the rajakaluves, streams/nallas to its original condition and to submit compliance report before this Hon'ble Tribunal;

(V) Direct the State Authorities to cancel or revoke all the permissions or sanctions or licenses or consents, granted by them in violation of the buffer zones specified in the Judgment dated 04.05.2016, including the Occupancy Certificate dated 26.11.2016 issued by the BBMP to SJR Watermark Project - Residential apartments at property no. 3806, Sy. No. 68, Kasavanahalli, BBMP Ward No. 150 (Bellandur Ward) Mahadevapura Zone, Bengaluru;

Direct the State Authorities to forthwith seal the offending portions of the premises in question under Occupancy Certificate dated 26.11.2016 in SJR Watermark abutting the Kaikondarhalli Lake and to further demolish the offending constrictions and to submit compliance report in the above case;

(VII) Direct the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) and Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) to forthwith disconnect the electricity and water connections, No objections Certificates (NOC) of all the projects, buildings, on-going constructions, which fall in the buffer zones specified by this Hon'ble Tribunal and which have been granted permissions, approval, licenses and No objections Certificates (NOC) after the date of the judgment i.e. 04.05.2016;

(VIII) Restrain BBMP, KSPCB, BDA, BWSSB, BESCOM, KLCDA and other departments of the State of Karnataka from granting any further permissions, sanctions, consent, approvals and No objections Certificates in violation of the judgment dated 04.05.2016;

(IX) Direct an enquiry and prosecution against the concerned officials in the State Authorities who are responsible for grant of permissions, licenses or consents in violation of the Judgment dated 04.05.2016;

- (X) Pass any other order(s) that this Hon'ble Tribunal may deem fit in the interest of environment, justice and equity."
- 2. According to the applicant, he is concerned about depleting water bodies in the city of Bangalore. This Tribunal vide the judgment dated 04.05.2016 in *Original Application No. 222/2014* titled as "Forward Foundation & Ors. Vs. State of Karnataka & Ors." dealt with the issue of implementation of earlier judgment dated 07.05.2015. The said earlier judgment was on the issue of

September 04, 2018

R

encroachment on wetlands and Rajakaluves and adverse impact on Bellandur Lake, Agara Lake and Rajakaluves. To consider these issues, a Committee was constituted. The Committee was to submit a Report to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and to the Tribunal. Civil Appeal Nos. 4829/2014 and 4832/2015 were preferred before the Hon'ble Supreme Court and were disposed of on 20.05.2015 giving liberty to move this Tribunal for recall of the order. The said applications were disposed of on 06.04.2016. Thereafter, the issues of validity of the projects in question were examined and the finally disposed of with matter was the following directions:

"63. On the facts and in the light of the materials on record we find that it is absolutely necessary to issue the following general and specific directions.

"General Conditions or directions:

- In view of our discussion in the main Judgment, we are of the considered view that the fixation of distance from water bodies (lakes and Raj<mark>ka</mark>lewas) suffers from the inbuilt contradiction, legal infirmity and is without any scientific justification. The RMP – 2015 provides 50m from middle of the Rajkalewas as buffer zone in the case of primary Rajkalewas, 25m in the case of secondary Rajkulewas and 15m in the tertiary Rajkulewas in contradiction to the 30m in the case of lake which is certainly much bigger water body and its utility as a water body/ wetland is well known certainly part of wet land. Thus, we direct that thedistance in the case 9 and Respondents Nos. 10 from Rajkulewas, Waterbodies and wetlands shall be maintained as below:-
 - (i) In the case of Lakes, 75m from the periphery of water body to be maintained as green belt and buffer zone for all the existing water bodies i.e. lakes/wetlands.
 - (ii) 50m from the edge of the primary Rajkulewas.

September 04, 2018

R

(iii) 35m from the edges in the case of secondary Rajkulewas (iv) 25m from the edges in the case of tertiary Rajkulewas

This buffer/green zone would be treated as no construction zone for all intent and purposes. This is absolutely essential for the purposes of sustainable development particularly keeping in mind the ecology and environment of the areas in question.

All the offending constructions raised by Respondents Nos. 9 and 10 of any kind including boundary wall shall be demolished which falls within such areas. Wherever necessary dredging operations are required, the same should be carried out to restore the original capacity of the water spread area and/or wetlands. Not only the existing construction would be removed but also none of these Respondents - Project Proponent would be permitted to raise any construction in this zone.

All authorities particularly Lake development Authority shall carry out this operation in respect of all the water bodies/lakes of Banglore.

- 2. The capacity of the existing STPs to treat sewage is 729 MLD, whereas another 500 MLD sewage is proposed to be treated in 10 upcoming STPs. In this context, all the STPs operating in the area whether Government or privately owned, should meet the revised standards notified by CPCB / MoEF.
- 3. Bangalore city receives treated potable water of 1360 MLD from river Cauvery whereas the requirement is for another 750 MLD and the entire area falls in critical zone in terms of ground water exploitation. Information reveals that only one million litre per month of STP treated water is used by builders for construction purposes. For this reason, the BWSSB issues partial NOC to various residential and commercial projects in respect of supply of potable water. In this context, following directions need to be issued:
 - i. At the time of grant of EC, the water requirement for the construction phase and operation phase should be considered separately. Due consideration should also be given for identification of source of supply of water and this should be a pre-requisite for grant of EC.
 - ii. All the project proponents should

September 04, 2018

R

necessarily use only treated sewage water for construction purpose and this should be reflected in EC as a condition for construction phase.

iii. Wherever the quality of treated sewage water does not conform to the quality needed for construction, necessary upgradation in STP should be undertaken immediately.

Specific Conditions/Directions for Respondent 9;

In addition to the above directions which should be equally part of EC condition in respect of respondents nos. 9 & 10, following specific conditions shall apply to respondent no. 9:

- i. Reclaimed area of the lake to the extent of 3 acres 10 guntas in survey no. 43 should be restored to its original condition at the cost of project proponent. The possession of this area should be restored by Respondent No. 9 to the concerned Authorities immediately. In addition, a buffer zone of 75 m should be provided between the lake and the project area and this should be maintained as green area.
- ii. In the remaining area, where primary Rajkalewa is abutting the project area, 50 m buffer zone on the side of the project area from the edge of the rajkalewa should be maintained as green belt.
- iii. Several irrigation canals or tertiary rajkalewas taking off from the Agara tank were passing through the area of respondent no. 9, and serve the dual purpose of irrigating paddy fields and disposal of surface run off (storm water drains) during rainy season. However on account of the activities of the project, these drains have been totally obliterated. For the purpose of proper disposal of storm runoff from the entire area falling between the Agaralake and the Belandur Lake, respondent no. 9 must provide required number of storm water drains based on proper hydrological study. These storm drains should have a buffer zone of 15 m on either bank maintained as green belt.
- iv. The cumulative quantity of earth excavated for the construction of project is around 4 lakhs cubic meters in the depth range of 0 to 9 meters. This has created huge hillock like structure obstructing the natural flow pattern of surface runoff from AgaraLake side to

September 04, 2018

R

Balendur Lake side or primary For this purpose, during Rajkalewas. garland construction phase drain should be constructed around existing dumping site for safe disposal of runoff to the Rajkalewas. For the disposal of excavated material, a proper muck disposal plan duly approved by SIEAA shall be prepared. In any case the plan should ensure that no muck/sediment flows into Rajkalewas and/or Belandurlake.

- v. The Kharab land identified by Revenue Dept. admeasuring 1 acre 2 guntas should be demarcated and maintained separately as green belt.
- vi. The entire green belt created under the directions of this Tribunal should not to be considered as part of green belt of the project as part of EC condition and will be over and above the green belt as indicated in the EC.
- vii. In view of the heavy traffic load in the adjoining Sarjapur road, a proper study on the basis of traffic density, foot falls expected, etc., a proper plan needs to be prepared and the concept of service road exclusively for the project needs to be worked out and additional parking space created within the project area and incorporated as a part of the overall project layout, within a period of 3 months.

Though, at the time of hearing prior to passing the Judgment, we had heard the parties on all aspects but still we have provided rehearing to the parties on all issues with emphasis on imposition of environmental compensation including the quantum. Upon hearing, we are of the considered view that environmental compensation imposed upon Respondent No. 9 calls for no variation and the Respondent No. 9 should be called upon to pay the said amount of Rs. 117.35 Crores determined under the Judgment prior commencement of any project activity at the site. Respondent No. 10 has not commenced any actual construction activity but has carried out various preparatory steps including excavation and deposition of huge earth by creating a hillock at the premises in question and a site office.

Thus, considering cumulative effect on environment and ecology due to various breaches in that behalf by Respondent No. 10 and the fact that the remedial measures can more effectively be taken by the Respondent No. 10, we reduce environmental compensation

payable by Respondent No. 10 to Rs. 13.5 crores (3% of the stated project cost instead of 5% as imposed in the original judgment).

Item No. 05

September 04, 2018

R

General Directions:

- 1. We direct SEIAA, Karnataka to issue amended order granting Environmental Clearance within four weeks from today incorporating all the conditions stated in this judgement and such other conditions as it may deem appropriate in light of this judgment and Inspection Note of the Expert Members. The Project Proponents would be permitted to commence activity only after issuance of amended Environmental Clearance order.
- 2. SEIAA Karnataka and MoEF shall ensure regular supervision and monitoring of the project and during the construction and even upon completion to ensure that activity is carried out strictly in accordance with the conditions of the order granting Environmental Clearance, this Judgment, Notification of 2006 and other laws in force.
- 3. The distances in respect of buffer zone specified in this judgment shall be made applicable to all the projects and all the Authorities concerned are directed to incorporate such conditions in the projects to whom Environmental Clearance and other permissions are now granted not only around Belandur Lake, Rajkulewas, Agara Lake, but also all other Lakes/wetlands in the city of Bengluru.
- We hereby direct the State of Karnataka to submit a proposal to the MoEF for demarcating wetlands in terms of Wetland Rules 2010 as revised from time to time. Such proposal shall be submitted by the State within four weeks from today and the MoEF shall consider the same in accordance with law and grant its approval or otherwise within four weeks thereafter. After such approval is granted by MoEF, the State would issue notification notifying such immediately thereafter in accordance with Rules and law.
- 5. Both the Respondents Nos. 9 and 10 shall ensure that debris or any construction material that has been dumped into the Rajkulewas, or on their Banks and on the buffer zone of wetlands should be removed within four weeks from

September 04, 2018

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today. In the event they fail to do so, the same shall be removed by the Lake Development Authority along with the State Administration and recover charges thereof from the said Respondents.

- There is a serious discrepancy even in regard to the measurement of land as far as Respondent no. 9 is concerned. Admittedly the Respondent has been allotted and is in possession of land admeasuring 63.94 acres, though Environmental Clearance has been granted for 2,92,636.03 Sq. Meters which is equivalent to 72.22 acres. For this reason alone, Environmental Clearance cannot be given effect to. While issuing the amended Environmental Clearance, *SEIAA* Karnataka shall take consideration all these aspects and, if <mark>necessary,</mark> would re<mark>quire</mark> Respondent no. 9 to submit a fresh layout plant and the project may be revised accordance with law.
- 7. Both the Respondents (Project Proponents) shall submit an appropriate plan in view of the conditions imposed in this judgment and the amended Environmental Clearance that would be issued.
- 8. The amount of environmental compensation will be deposited prior to issuance of amended Environmental Clearance."
- 3. In the present application, the grievance of the applicant is that the project called 'SJR Watermark Project' on the bank of Kaikondrahalli Lake in Bengaluru was within less than 10 meters from the edge of the lake as against the requirement of distance of 30 meters which is a buffer/no development/no construction Zone. Buffer zone specified by this Tribunal in Forward Foundation (Supra) is 75 meters. Thus, the project is in violation of Section 505 (ii) of the Karnataka Municipal Corporation Act, 1976. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike (BBMP) cannot grant any permission, approval or sanction

September 04, 2018

R

for such project. It is in violation of Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, 1961 and Zoning Regulations, RMP-2015. Occupancy Certificate granted by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike to SJR Prime Corporation Pvt. Ltd. is illegal.

4. We are informed that during pendency of this application, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike passed order dated 01.01.2018. The operative part of the said order is as follows:

"Therefore, for all the above reasons and facts and circumstances the buildingplan in LP No. Nayo/Mava/Committee/86/15-16 and the building license also dated: 21-07-2015 in nonest, nullity, invalid and inoperative and is hereby cancelled and/or revoked with immediate effect. (The order pronounced in the BBMP office, Bengaluru on this 1st Day of January, 2018)."

- 05. Against the above order, *Writ Petition Nos.* 1656/2018 and 975/2018 have been filed in the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka. The said Writ Petitions are still pending before the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka. The High Court granted interim orders against which *SLP* (Civil) No. 4811/2018 and 5937/2018 were filed. Therein, stay of order of Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka has been granted.
- 6. The fact remains that the very same issue is subject matter of consideration inter-parties in the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka and Hon'ble Supreme Court. Thus, it will not be appropriate for this Tribunal to continue parallel proceedings on the same issue. Proceedings with regard to validity or otherwise of the Building Plan and license for the *K.N. Mohan Building* will stand closed as far as this Tribunal is concerned, subject to any order that

	1	may be passed in the proceedings pending before the
	I	Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka and the Hon'ble
	n No.	Supreme Court in above matters. Other prayers are
	i	integrally linked to the issue of validity of the above
September 04, 2018	0010	project. The same cannot be gone into independently.
	R	The matters accordingly stand disposed of as above.
	<u> 1</u>	M.A. Nos. 220/2018 and 222/2018:
		These applications are dismissed as withdrawn.
		, CP (Adarsh Kumar Goel)
		, JM (Dr. Ja <mark>wad Rahim</mark>)
		JM (<mark>S.P.</mark> Wangdi)
V	NATIO	,EM (Dr. Nagin Nanda) 04.09.2018