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JOINT INSPECTION REPORT IN THE MATTER ORIGINAL APPLICATION  
No.114 to 122 of 2020 (SOUTH ZONE) FILED BY PANTRANGAM  
RAMASUBBAIAH  
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I, Pantrangam Ramasubbaiah, Son of Venkatasubbaiah, residing at Vallipuram Mallam Village and Post, Chittamuru Mandal, SPSR Nellore, Andhra Pradesh - 524 003 have filed Original Application at Hon'ble NGT (SZ), against the respondents 6 to 66 for illegal unauthorised prawn cultivation in the agricultural lands without obtaining necessary permission or licence from the authority constituted under the Coastal Aqua Culture Authority Act near the agricultural lands.

The Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (South Zone), Chennai on its order dated 22.07.2020 has issued the following directions among other things inter alia as follows:

*"Considering the grievance in the matter and also the substantial question of environmental arises for consideration, and also in view of the dictum laid on the decision cited supra there is a possibility of damage is being caused on environment and also to soil affecting its fertility, in order to ascertain the impact of such activities and also assess the environmental damage to be realised from those persons and also to ascertain the action taken by the authorities, we feel it appropriate to appoint a joint committee comprising of 1) District Collector, Nellore District or a Senior Officer not below the rank of Assistant Collector or Sub-Division Magistrate to be deputed by him, 2) Joint Director of Fisheries Department, 3) Senior Officer from Andhra Pradesh State pollution Control Board to be designated by the Chairman, 4) Senior Officer from Coastal Aquaculture Authority and 5) a Professor from Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, Guntur to inspect the area in question and submit a factual as well as action taken report, if there is any violation found.*

*The committee is also directed to go into the question as to 8 whether any environmental damage has been caused on account of the unauthorised functioning of these shrimp/prawn cultivation in the agriculture land, whether any illegal discharge of untreated effluents*

*being done into the water bodies from these units and if so for the quality of the water is affected, whether there is any authorised extraction of ground water for this purpose without obtaining any necessary permission from the authorities, considering the nature of the area as to whether it is critically over exploited or semi critical area and assess the environmental compensation and the persons responsible for the same apart from assessing individual damage caused to the agriculturist who have come with the application before this Tribunal.”*

1) The sector of aqua plays an important role in economic development of the country by its potential in exports and nutrients addition to generation of employment. The District of SPSR Nellore District is also blessed with coastal area. The share of brackish shrimp of the district to the GVA reached peaks during 2017-2018. It accounted for 84.11 per cent. But the average share of the brackish shrimp is not less than 80 percent.

2) The shrimp culture attracts not only more profits but also many legal issues. Some of the adjacent former to the brackish shrimp ponds filed a petition in the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Chennai. The petitioners alleged some issues on the writ. They are

- a) Pulikaluva and Royyalakaluva which is feeder channel to the Mallam tank are being contaminated due to release of contaminated waste water into drain from shrimp ponds.
- b) With that effect of contaminated water, the agriculture fields of paddy crops are getting damaged and hence requested to take necessary steps on aqua cultivation.

3) In this connection, the adjacent farmers have raised said complaint in the Writ Petition before Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Chennai has directed the District Collector, SPSR Nellore appropriate to appoint a joint committee comprising of (1) District Collector, Nellore District or a Senior Officer not below the rank of Assistant Collector or Sub-Division Magistrate to be deputed by him, (2) Joint Director of Fisheries Department, (3) Senior Officer from Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board to be designated by the Chairman, (4) Senior Officer from

Coastal Aquaculture Authority and (5) a Professor from Acharya N.G. Ranga Agriculture University, Guntur to inspect, if there is any violation found.

Further, the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal has directed the committee to study the following things:

- a) The environmental damage has been caused on account of unauthorized function of shrimp culture.
- b) The illegal discharge of untreated effluents being done into water bodies from the units.
- c) If so, the quality of affected water.
- d) Unauthorized extraction of ground water for the purpose of shrimp cultivation.
- e) Area as to whether it is critically over exploited or semi critical area.
- f) Assess the environmental compensation and persons responsible for the damage.
- g) Consider the loss of income caused on account of the illegal activity.

In pursuance of the proceedings of the District Collector, SPSR Nellore the Sub Collector and Sub Divisional Magistrate, Gudur has appointed a committee under his supervision, comprising of Deputy Inspector of Surveyor, Executive Engineer (Irrigation), Executive Engineer (Electrical), Assistant Director (Agriculture) Executive Engineer (Pollution Control Board as members of the committee and Assistant Director of Fisheries as convenor of the committee.

The committee physically inspected the area in question. During its inspection the Committee has observed certain things. They are

**4) Unauthorized cultivation:**

- a) Agricultural fields have been converted into shrimp culture. This is illegal.
- b) In Chittamur Mandal, 83.77% unauthorized shrimp cultivation is going on.
- c) In Vakadu Mandal, 75.77% the unauthorized shrimp cultures occupied.
- d) In Kota it is 94.09%
- e) Overall unauthorized cultivation is 86.43%.

### 5. Government land encroachment:

Encroachment of Government land is a common phenomenon in all villages in question as detailed below:

Sl.No.	Name of the Mandal	Name of the Village	Area under encroachment in Hectors
1	Chittamur	Pittuvanipalli	33.70
2		Padarthavanikandriga	2.04
3		Rananathapuram	20.40
		<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>56.14</b>
4	Kota	Karlapudi	9.48
		<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>9.48</b>
5	Vakadu	Muttambaka	7.58
6		Trimur	15.93
		<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>23.51</b>
		<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>89.13</b>

### 6) Quality of water:

The quality of water depends mainly on PH value of the water. The value in sample varies.

a) PH ranges from 10000 - 16000.

Ec has positive correlation with TDS and negative with crop productivity. The permissible level of Ec is 750-2000 us/cm.

b) Ec ranges 110-5466

c) TDS ranges 550-2800

### 7) Pollution:

The Royalkaluva is a tributary to Swarnamukhi River. Pulikaluva is a sub channel to Royyalakaluva. The Pulikaluva is designed to carry a discharge of 150 cusecs of water and irrigated 3238 acres of land. They are main supply channels of Mallam Tank. Yetigtukaluva takes off at right of Pulikaluva, direct feeder channel to agricultural fields of Pittivanipalli, Padarthaverikandriga and

Ranganathpuram in Chittimur Mandal. Palamaduguvagu is an inundation channel which carries flood water during monsoon periods.

Royylakaluva and Pulikaluva are being polluted due to release of brackish waste water from shrimp ponds. Hence, the Mallam Tank is also contaminated water of Royyalakaluva, Pulikaluva which are feers of the tank.

The Chief Scientist and head of saline water scheme, AIRP opined out of 40 samples 52.5 percent samples are non-saline. 5% strongly saline and 5% very saline.

The committee has found the following points during its physical inspection in the aforesaid villages such as

1. Some of the farmers have converted their agricultural lands into aqua culture.
2. Some extent of assigned land was converted for aqua cultivation.
3. The brackish ground water is being used for farming of shrimp culture in all villages of three Mandals in the range of 10000 - 16000 lph.
4. There is 83.77% of unauthorized shrimp culture is found in Chittumur Mandal, it is 94.09 in Vakadu Mandal and it occupies 75.7% in Kota Mandal. In aggregate it is 86.43%.
5. Absence of effluent treatment system facility to treat waste water in the shrimp farms.
6. Release of untreated brackish waste water into Pulikaluva and Royyalakaluva caused for water pollution in Mallam Tank which is designed to carry 150 cusecs and irrigate to 3738 acres.
7. Owing to water pollution TDS ranges 550-2400 PPM and EC ranges 1100 - 5466 us/cm.
8. Increasing salinity and electricity conductivity due to increasing TDS diminishes agriculture productivity. The average productivity is about 25 quintals per hector. The quality of the product is average.
9. It is found that 56.2 hectors of Government land is encroached and farming brackish water shrimp culture in Chittamur Manda, it is 9.48 Ha. In Kota and 23.51 in Vakadu Mandal. In aggregate it is 89.19 Ha.

10. Lack of inspection by authorities concerned during the period of shrimp culture.
11. Absence of co-ordination among the departments concerned.
12. Most of the shrimp culture is doing on lease basis.
13. Unmatched electrical connections and unavailable electrical connections are found more in number.

**8) Actions taken report:**

On the representation which had been submitted in Spandana programmes in Chittamur Mandal. The Tahsildar, Chittamur inspected and submitted a report to the Sub Collector, Gudur. On the request of ryots of Mallam, the Sub Collector, Gudur, inspected on 07.02.2020 and instructed to remove ponds in assigned lands. On the instructions of the sub-Collector, the Tahsildar of Chittamur Mandal and his staff removed the illegal ponds in the assigned land. The Tahsildar and his staff removed the sluices which throw the waste water into Royyalakaluva and Pulikaluva. The Electrical Department removed unauthorized connections.

The committee has observed during the inspection that some electrical connections are not matched with sanctioned survey numbers:

**9) Recommendations:**

1. The lessors should take necessary measures to convert the lands which are not fit for agriculture into shrimp ponds.
2. Only lands which are not fit for agriculture which was certified by the Agriculture Department should be allowed to convert into brackish water shrimp culture and for Aqua cultivation.
3. The Government of India as well as the Government of Andhra Pradesh is spending huge amount of money in form of subsidies. But the benefits are not reaching to the gross root level. Hence, the Government may establish a fish market yard like agricultural market yard that should take up marine business.
4. The number of shrimp cultivation by owner is very small due to lack of investment. Hence, the benefits may be reached by credit linkage with fish market yard. The credit amount may be met from either its own funds which have been provided by the Government or banks on guaranty of fish market yard.
5. The mechanism may be established headed by not below the rank of Assistant Collector or Sub Collector and Sub Divisional Magistrate with

empowered to conduct surprise visits or inspection, levy huge penalties and demolition on illegal prawn ponds and demolition, if necessary and cancel the license of the illegal ponds.

6. The mechanism should consist of Senior Agricultural Scientist, Officers from the Board of Pollution and Control, Fisheries, Groundwater and Audit as members of the agency.
7. The lease amount may be fixed by the Government or the mechanism that should be not less than the loss of agricultural income due to the conversion of agricultural land into shrimp pond.
8. In order to avoid problems of ground water salinization, drawal of groundwater is strictly prohibited for shrimp aquaculture. It must be ensured that piezometers/groundwater monitoring bore wells preferably 4/ ha (along the periphery of the pond) are installed to monitor salinity ingress. In case of salinity ingress, the Coastal Aquaculture Authority should ensure immediate closure of the farms.
9. An underground pipe line may be constructed which may be convenient to drain the waste water freely. The drain should be connected to salt pond or Buckingham canal whichever is nearer to the ponds. The cost of constructing the drain will be collected from shrimp cultivators irrespective of owners of the land (OR)
10. A common drain system may be connected to a pond which the cost of construction has been shared between public and the owner of shrimp cultivators irrespective of ownership of the land in the ratio of 25:75.
11. It is better to handover the maintenance of the drain system to the fish market yard if the yard has been established. In case of absence of the yard, the maintenance may be handed over to Irrigation Department. It may be inspected by the mechanism.
12. Take necessary measures to all high saline groundwater for shrimp farming because the saline water with high PH value is unfit for agricultural and drinking purposes. But, as such farm shall have pollution free or eco-friendly drain system.
13. Category-wise land utilization with survey numbers may be tagged with GPS to prevent encroachments of Government lands.
14. Necessary measures should be taken to reclaim the agricultural lands and the cost of reclaiming will be collected from the responsible shrimp cultivators.
15. The departments concerned may take necessary steps to quick disposal of the legal issues in the Hon'ble Courts by timely responding according to the directions of the Hon'ble Courts.
16. To include the Groundwater Department, Irrigation Department and Forest Department as members into the District Level Committee (DLC) where the application for approval of Aqua ponds is being scrutinized and finalized.
17. To disconnect the electrical connections this has been got unauthorizedly.

18. To demolish the Aqua ponds which have no approvals by duly following the procedure laid down under CAA Rules.
19. Institutionalization of Aqua cultivation in the said Mandals.
20. Minimum of 50-100 mtrs. distance may be maintained between the Aqua ponds and Agricultural fields.
21. Minimum of 300 mtrs distance may be maintained from the habitation containing more than 500 members to the Aqua ponds.
22. A committee consisting of different departments like Agricultura, Revenue, Electricity and Forest while issuing electrical connections for Aquaculture may be constituted for issuing No Objection Certificate.

**10) Action to be taken immediately:**

1. Demolish the illegal shrimp ponds, if any, one of the ponds has been missed while the action that had been taken.
2. To remove all illegal electrical connections and electrical polls.
3. Encroachments should be removed immediately.
4. Immediate steps to be taken for cultivation of paddy crops in the affected area.

  
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Joint Director of Fisheries,  
SPSR Nellore District.

  
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M. Pramod Kumar Reddy  
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