

**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI**

**O.A.No.132 of 2020 (SZ)
(Through Video Conference)**

IN THE MATTER OF:

Agatti Island Kera Karshaka Sanghom,
Agatti Island, Lakshadweep – 682 553,
Rep. by its President Sri Koya.P.

.... Applicant

Vs.

1.Union of India, MoEF & CC,
Rep. by its Secretary, New Delhi and others

....Respondent(s)

STATUS NOTE FILED ON BEHALF OF MoEF & CC, RO, BENGALURU.

Me. Sarashwathy
02/11/2020

ME. Sarashwathy
Counsel for the Respondents 1&2

STATUS NOTE IN OA NO. 132 OF 2020 OF HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL (NGT), SOUTHERN ZONE (SZ)

1. Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT), Chennai vide its Order dated 07.09.2020 in OA No. 132 of 2020, Agatti Island Kera Karshaka Sanghom Vs Union of India and Others directed constitution of a Joint Committee and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Regional Office, Bangalore as the nodal agency for coordination and providing necessary logistic for this purpose and for submitting the report.
2. As per the Orders of the Hon'ble NGT (SZ), the Joint Committee consisted of following Members/ Representatives namely
 - A. Senior Officer from MoEF& CC, Regional Office, Bangalore
 - B. Senior Scientist of National Coastal Zone Management Authority
 - C. Senior Officer, Lakshadweep Coastal Zone Management Authority and
 - D. Senior Scientist from National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management, Chennai
3. MoEFCC Regional Office, Bangalore vide its letter dated 21.09.2020, sought nominations from the concerned agencies and the following officials have been nominated by the concerned agencies to serve as a Member of the Joint Committee:

S. No	Organization	Nominated Member Details
1	MoEFCC Regional Office, Bangalore	Dr. Murali Krishna, Scientist-D
2	National Coastal Zone Management Authority (NCZMA)	Dr. Harendra Kharkwal, Scientist-E
3	Lakshadweep Coastal Zone Management Authority (LCZMA)	Dr. Idrees Babu K K Scientist
4	National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM)	Dr. Robin, Scientist-C

4. Due to non-availability of flights for travelling to Agatti Islands and also considering the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the Joint Committee convened its first meeting through video conference on 16.10.2020 to understand the issues raised in the petition. After convening the first meeting, the Committee identified the major issues raised in the petition as follows:
 - i. As per Integrated Island Management Plan (IIMP) of Lakshadweep, 20 meters from the High Tide Line (HTL) is the No Development Zone (NDZ) and all developments must get the approval of the local elected Government.
 - ii. No activities which adversely affect the coastal ecology shall be undertaken in the Agatti Island

- iii. Union Territory of Lakshadweep Island and Public Works Department of Lakshadweep is laying beach roads in a massive scale on the southern side of the Agatti Island for promotion of Tourism.
 - iv. Lakshadweep Coastal Zone Management Authority has marked 978 coconut trees for uprooting standing on the proposed beach road area, which are controlling the erosion in the area. Of the earmarked 978 coconut trees, 102 trees have already been removed and has built a road leaving 20 meters from seaside, High Tide Line (HTL) and substantial portion of the land has been vanished in erosion.
 - v. The present road constructions are on the No Development Zone (NDZ) of the ICRZ as shown in the IIMP and no environment impact assessment study was conducted and no environmental clearance for this has been obtained.
 - vi. No sanction was obtained from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and National Coastal Zone Management Authority.
 - vii. The construction of the beach road is done to help some resort owners who depend on the Tourists and the fishers and agricultural workers who depend on the coastal ecology would be affected.
5. Pursuant to identification of major issues in the petition, the Joint Committee requested the representative of Lakshadweep Coastal Zone Management Authority (LCZMA) to obtain relevant supporting documents and information from various concerned agencies in the Lakshadweep Islands as the Committee could not physically verify the site due to non-availability of flights due to COVID-19 situation. Accordingly, the representative of LCZMA obtained possible relevant information from various departments and shared with the Joint Committee for its examination.
6. To discuss the issues in detail, the Joint Committee convened its second meeting through video conference on 02.11.2020 and noted that certain more information is required to arrive at a consensus decision and additional information needs to be sought from Union Territory of Lakshadweep Administration.
7. **Considering the Covid-19 situation prevailing all over the world and Lakshadweep Islands being the few islands that have not been severely affected by Corona Virus and also considering the fact that “No Flights are available for travel to Agatti Islands”, the Joint Committee suggested seeking additional time of another three months from Hon’ble NGT for examination all the issues in detail and to submit a factual report subject to resuming of flights to Agatti Islands for undertaking a site visit as per directions of Hon’ble NGT.**
