

X

BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
EASTERN ZONE BENCH, KOLKATA

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 202/2024/EZ

NEWS ITEM TITLED "MICROPLASTIC IN WEST
BENGAL'S DIGHA AND ODISHA'S PURI
SEAWATER AT ALARMING LEVELS" APPEARING
IN THE TIMES OF INDIA DATED 04.08.2024

AFFIDAVIT ON BEHALF OF RESPONDENT NO.2 i.e.
THE WEST BENGAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

INDEX

SL No	PARTICULARS	ANNEXURE	PAGE
1.	Affidavit		1-12
2.	Picture of beach cleaning activity.	"R"	13-20

Filed by

Sibojyoti Chakrabarti
SIBOJYOTI CHAKRABORTI
ADVOCATE
HIGH COURT AT CALCUTTA

SL. NO. 68 Dt.-28 APR 2025

BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
EASTERN ZONE BENCH, KOLKATA

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 202/2024/EZ

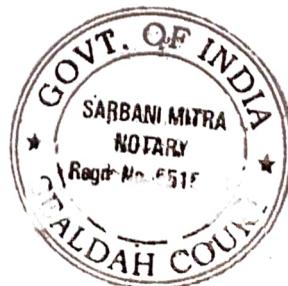
NEWS ITEM TITLED "MICROPLASTIC IN WEST
BENGAL'S DIGHA AND ODISHA'S PURI
SEAWATER AT ALARMING LEVELS" APPEARING
IN THE TIMES OF INDIA DATED 04.08.2024

AFFIDAVIT ON BEHALF OF RESPONDENT NO.2 i.e.
THE WEST BENGAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

Most Respectfully Sheweth

I, Sri Swarup Kumar Mandal, son of Shri Barendra Mandal,
aged about 56 years, by Religion - Hindu, by Occupation-Service,
working for gain at West Bengal Pollution Control Board, having
office at 10A, Block- I.A, Sector- III, Bidhannagar, Kolkata - 700
106, do hereby solemnly declare and say as follows:-

28 APR 2025



X

01. That, I am the Chief Engineer, West Bengal Pollution Control Board (hereinafter will be referred to as the 'State Board') and I am well acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the case. I have been duly authorized by the Respondent No. 2 to affirm this Affidavit on his behalf and as such, I am competent to do so.

02. That, this affidavit is being affirmed in pursuant to the orders passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal dated 10.12.2024 and 12.02.2025 wherein the State Board addresses the issues raised by the Applicant in the Times of India dated 04.08.2024 :

- (i) That, the State Board issued notices to all Producers(P), Importer(I), Brand Owners (BO), Plastic Waste Processors engaged in recycling, Co-Processing, Waste To Energy, Waste to Oil and Industrial Composting for necessary compliance of EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) guidelines notified by CPCB on 16th February 2022 vide Letter No. 5063 dated 04.04.2024.
- (ii) As per Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)'s mandate the State Board conducts regular monitoring of microplastic levels in seawater, sediments, and marine ecosystems. Data



28 APR 2025

X

collection under way to identify and quantify microplastics. collaborative studies with Calcutta University and CIPET, Haldia have been initiated to monitor marine microplastic pollution levels at Digha, West Bengal.

(iii) The CPCB issued notifications on banning single-use plastics (SUPs) and microbeads in personal care products, with phased reduction targets for sectors like packaging and FMCGs. Since July 2022, items such as plastic straws, cutlery, and packaging materials have been officially banned across State including Digha, wherein the District Administration has actively enforced the ban.

(iv) Following the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India Notification, the Department of Environment, Government of West Bengal issued Notification vide No. EN/1209/3C-22/2019 dated 27.06.2022 against Banned Plastic Carry Bags (thickness less than 120 microns w.e.f. 31.12.2022) and Single Use Plastic (SUP) items.

(v) A Public Notice was published by the State Board on 22.04.2022 prohibiting production, distribution, sale and use of SUP items within the entire State of West Bengal.

28 APR 2025



X

- (vi) Department of Environment, Govt of West Bengal has imposed a total ban on use of plastic carry bags in all ecologically sensitive areas, major tourist places, hill areas & at Sundarbans.
- (vii) The Digha Shankarpur Development Authority (DSDA) along with representative of local Panchayat conducts visits to the marketplace, stockists of the plastic materials. Surprise checks at Market areas and near the Sea Beach areas are being conducted to minimise use of banned SUPs. Self Help Groups (SHGs) have been engaged for collection of plastic waste at Sea Beach area. The solid waste generated from the beach area is being collected and send to Material recovery Facility (MRF) located at Haldia.



Beach and Coastal Clean Drives

- CPCB guidelines encourage State Boards and local authorities to organize community-based beach cleanup drives. Monitoring microplastics reduction in cleanup zones as part of the impact assessment. Initiatives such as "Swachh Sagar Surakshit Sagar" involving public participation in

28 APR 2025

X

coastal waste removal under CPCB guidance has been taken up on 21.10,2024.

- Clean up activities initiative and the International Coastal Clean up Day (ICCD) clean-up programs are taken up.
- DSDA has been regularly conducting Coastal Clean up in month of September every year at Digha in association with District Administration and volunteers from School, Colleges and NGOs in relation to ICCD.



Photograph of the beach cleaning activities is annexed herewith and marked with letter "R".

Major activities at Digha:

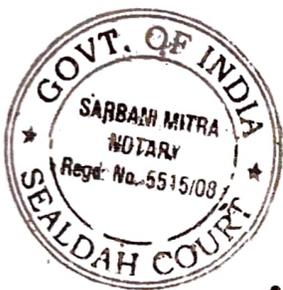
- Beach cleaning initiative that involves volunteers, students, officials are conducted.
- The initiative aims to make the beach clean, plastic-free, and environmentally friendly.
- The initiative is supported by the Forest and Environment Department, Tourism Department, and other organizations.
- Participation of Plastic Waste Processors in the said activity.

Major activities at Gangasagar Sea Beach:

28 APR 2025

X

- Complete ban of plastic below 120 micron has been imposed throughout Sagar Block.
- Enforcement teams with the help of Police and Gangasagar Bakkhali Authority has been formed and it has started working in all sensitive pockets.
- A bye-law for imposition of fine by the defaulting public has been passed by Sagar Panchayat Samity as a punitive measure to ensure the effectiveness of the plastic ban initiative.
- The suppliers of plastics, stockists and whole sell shopkeepers of plastic have been taken into confidence and they have stopped all sorts of inflow of plastic at Sagar island. Instead they are ensuring the eco-friendly and biodegradable bags as a substitute of plastic carry bags at Sagar island
- Special task force has been formed to keep a watch on the pilgrims, tourists or the local shopkeepers at Gangasagar which is the major site of generation of plastic waste.
- Plastic waste management unit has been made operational at



28 APR 2025

X

Rudranagar near the SWM unit.

- There has been continuous watch with the help of local police and Civil Defense Volunteers (CDVs) at the jetty Ghats where the transportation of people and things of daily use takes place to stop the inflow of plastic at the Sagar Island.
- Steps have been taken to make people aware at the Lot 8 and Namkhana portion from where the movement of people takes place towards Sagar.
- The display of IEC regarding ban of plastic at Sagar Island in Bengali, English and Hindi language has been done to warn the public beforehand.
- Awareness activity with the fishermen associations and their representatives have been held to avoid the plastic products.
- Alternative to the plastic products made of eco-friendly materials has been arranged locally in adequate quantity with the help of Self Help Groups (SHGs) so that no shopkeeper or common people use plastic in their compulsion.
- An extensive initiative of awareness activity were being taken in Sagar Block including Gangasagar sea beach and all jetty



28 APR 2025

X

ghats. The awareness activities comprised the mobilization of Bajar Committees/ Byabasayee Samitee, schools, SHGs, ration dealers, local vendor associations, representatives of vehicles plying on the Sagar island, Vector Control Teams (VCTs), ICDS workers and helpers, Mid-day meal workers, all GP/PS and ZP members, all political parties at Block level and many other stakeholders followed by an extensive miking at all villages.



Public Awareness and Capacity Building

- The State Board organizes campaigns to educate citizens and industries about the impacts of microplastics and importance of responsible plastic use. Training programs for local authorities on plastic waste management practices.
- The State Board has been conducting different awareness program with Local Authorities and other stakeholders regarding Microplastics in sea water and its consequences.

28 APR 2025

X

Enforcement of Penalties

- Joint inspections were conducted with District Administration and penalties were imposed.
- Measures have been now taken for implementation of CPCB notified guidelines for assessment of environment compensation (EC) to be levied for violation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

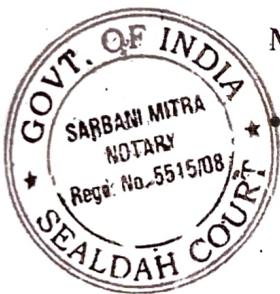
Marine and Coastal Complexity

• **Transboundary Pollution:** Microplastics originating from other regions or countries through ocean currents exacerbate the problem, making it difficult to address pollution at the local level alone.

- **Impact on Coastal Livelihoods:** Strict enforcement of bans and penalties without viable alternatives can negatively impact the livelihoods of coastal communities, especially small-scale fishermen and vendors.

03. That, the State Board recommends the following :

- Establishing real-time monitoring systems along the coastline with modern technologies for data accuracy.



8 APR 2025

X

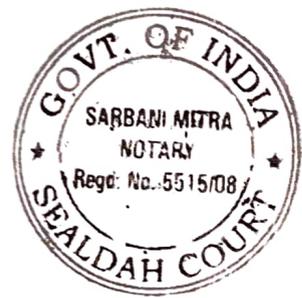
- Developing state-of-the-art waste processing units, including MBRs (Membrane Bioreactors) and debris traps.
- Conducting wide campaigns focusing on the hazards of microplastics and sustainable waste management practices.
- Mandate reverse logistics and recycling systems for all plastic manufacturers and ensure regular audits of compliance.
- Imposing stricter penalties for non-compliance with regulations and incentivize clean-up efforts through tax benefits for industries.
- The urban local bodies play a crucial role in monitoring, evaluating, enforcing and penalizing violations related to plastic waste, particularly microplastic pollution in beach and sea water.

It is therefore respectfully prayed that Hon'ble Tribunal may pass such order/orders as it deems fit and proper in the interest of justice.

*I identified by me
Sibajyoti Chelwastri
Advocate
for WBPCB 28.04.2025-*

Swarup Kumar Mandal
DEPONENT

28 APR 2025



X

VERIFICATION

I, Sri Swarup Kumar Mandal, son of Shri Barendra Mandal, aged about 56 years, by Religion - Hindu, by Occupation-Service, working for gain at West Bengal Pollution Control Board, having office at 10A, Block- LA, Sector- III, Bidhannagar, Kolkata - 700 106, do hereby solemnly declare and say as follows:-

1. That, I am the Chief Engineer, West Bengal Pollution Control Board and I am well acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the instant Original Application.
2. That, the statements made in paragraph 1 of this affidavit is true to my knowledge and belief.
3. That, the statements made in paragraphs 2 to 4 of this affidavit are my information derived from the records available in the office of the State Board which I verily believe to be true and the rest are my respectful submission before this Hon'ble Tribunal.



Swarup Kumar Mandal
DEPONENT

Sibajyoti Chakrabarti
Identified and corrected by me
Advocate
WBPCB
28.04.2025

Identified By Me

Advocate

Solemnly Affirmed &
Declared Before Me
On Identification By.....

SARBANI MITRA
NOTARY
Regd. No.-5515/08

28 APR 2025

















X

BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
EASTERN ZONE BENCH, KOLKATA

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 202/2024/EZ

NEWS ITEM TITLED "MICROPLASTIC IN WEST
BENGAL'S DIGHA AND ODISHA'S PURI
SEAWATER AT ALARMING LEVELS" APPEARING
IN THE TIMES OF INDIA DATED 04.08.2024

AFFIDAVIT ON BEHALF OF RESPONDENT NO.2 i.e.
THE WEST BENGAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

SIBOJYOTI CHAKRABORTI
ADVOCATE
HIGH COURT AT CALCUTTA