

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

Original Application No. 186 of 2020 (SZ)

Tribunal on its own motion-SUO MOTU
Based on the News item in The New
Sunday Express Newspaper Dated:
20.07.2020, "Ranipet Residents health
at risk due to Pollution; Chromium waste
killing agriculture in Ranipet Poses long-term
health risks."

...Applicant

Vs

Union of India,
Rep. by its Secretary,
Ministry of Environment and
Forests and Climate Change
Indira Paravaran Bhawan,
Jorbagh Road, New Delhi- 110 003
And Others

...Respondents

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Filed by
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STATUS REPORT FILED ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
TAMILNADU POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

I, G. Goplakrishnan, Son of V. Gandhi, Hindu, aged about 58
years, having office at No.76, Mount Road, Guindy, Chennai-600 032,
do hereby solemnly affirm and sincerely state as follows:-

1. I am the Joint Chief Environmental Engineer, Tamil Nadu
Pollution Control Board, Chennai - 600 032 and I am filing this Report
on behalf of the Respondents TNPC Board and as such I am well
acquainted with the facts of the case from the records.

2. It is submitted that the Hon'ble NGT has passed an order
dated 03.02.2021 and directed inter alia as follows:

"In the mean time, the respective State Government
Departments are also directed to file their independent written
response to the allegations made and the steps taken from their side


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for the purpose of mitigating the issue especially in view of the directions given by Hon'ble Apex Court in Vellore Citizens' case (Welfare Forum Vs Union of India and others (1996) 5 SCC 647) as mentioned above.

3. It is respectfully submitted that, the Ranipet District (formerly Vellore Dist.), Ranipet Town is located at 12 56° Northern latitude and 79.20° eastern longitude and is 93 KM west of Chennai. It is geographically 25 Km away in the North East of Vellore, the District Headquarters of Vellore District. Ranipet has been selected by the SIDCO & SIPCOT to establish the estates/complexes, since it is situated at a distance of 3.5 Km from River Palar and adjoining Chennai - Chittoor Bangalore Road (NH-4). Palar river is one of the major water sources running West to East located at downstream of the Industrial complex and other water bodies namely Puliyankannu and Karai Eri located in the downstream of the site.

4. It is respectfully submitted that the SIPCOT Industrial complex, Ranipet was established during the year 1973. The industrial complex has Phase-I, Phase-II and Phase III where the Petro - chemical, Bulk drugs & Pharmaceuticals, Heavy Engineering, Foundry, Chemicals, Tanneries wet and Dry processes and miscellaneous industries are located including the defunct site of M/s Tamilndu Chromates and Chemicals Ltd., (TCCL). The Ranipet SIPCOT Industrial Complex lies in the North-West of Ranipet town and the area of SIPCOT Industrial Complex comprising of Phase I & II is 862.91 Acres. Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board has identified the industries

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Finished Leather Effluent Treatment Company Limited, SIDCO Industrial Estate, Karai Village, Ranipet, Walajapet Taluk, Ranipet District and M/s. SIPCOT & SIDCO PHASE II Entrepreneur Finished Leather Effluent Treatment Company (P)Ltd., Plot No 105, SIPCOT Industrial Estate, Phase II, Puliyanthangal, SIPCOT, Ranipet with the member tannery units of 99 Nos. of the above CETPs , 1 No. of Individual Effluent Treatment Plant (IETP) are Located in the SIPCOT – SIDCO Ranipet area. The other 6 IETPs are located outside of SIPCOT area. All the member tannery units are connected with CETPs where the pretreated trade effluent from the member tannery is discharged through CETP conveyance main pipe line for further treatment so as to achieve the Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) system so as to comply the directions issued by Hon'ble Apex Court with respect to the case of Vellore Citizens case Welfare Forum Vs Union of India and others (1996) 5 SCC 647) forum from time to time. The pre-treated trade effluent generated member tannery units is discharged through CETP conveyance pipeline after the pre-treatment system and further the partially treated trade effluent is treated with Effluent treatment plant (ETP) consisting of primary and secondary (biological treatment) and tertiary treatment system so as to reduce the pollution load for the subsequent further treatment followed by Reverse Osmosis and Reject Management System. In the R.O system, the R.O permeate water is being reused and recycled by the member tannery units , Reject is evaporated through Multiple Effect Evaporator (MEE) and recovered salt from the MEE system is being bagged and stored

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within the closed shed for further scientific disposal. Similarly the other kind units are also having similar system of treatments so as to achieve Zero Liquid Discharge system at all times.

6. It is respectfully submitted that the TNPCB has initiated the serious action on the violating industries which are located in the Critically Polluted Area (CEPI Area), SIPCOT, Ranipet and imposed an Environmental Compensation (EC) of Rs. 666.38 lakhs so as to comply Hon'ble NGT Case (SZ) of 1038/2018 Dt. 14.11.2019 vide Board's Lr.T4/TNPCB/F.2643/CEPI/EC/VLR-26/2020 Dt.28.01.2020 and further small industry associations have obtained the stay on the impugned orders dt.10.08.2019 and 14.11.2019 passed by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Principle Bench, New Delhi from the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. Further an Environmental Compensation of Rs. 18.6 Lakhs and Rs. 17.40 Lakhs was also imposed for repeated violation & non compliance of consent order conditions to the 17 category industry of Ms Thirumalai Chemicals Ltd., SIPCOT, Ranipet vide Board's Proceeding No.T5/TNPCB/F.0892/VLR/RL/W/2019 Dated: 13.11.2019 and Board Letter Dt. 08.01.2021 respectively. The unit has also remitted the above Environmental Compensation. Similarly another 17 category unit in the same location of Ranipet SIPCOT. The unit of M/s. Malladi Drugs & Pharmaceuticals unit-III, SIPCOT, Ranipet an Environmental Compensation of Rs.47.10 Lakhs was imposed vide Board's letter Dt. 08.01.2021 for non compliance of the consent order conditions and violation caused by the unit. The unit has also remitted the same. In view of the above it is respectfully


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submitted to the Hon'ble NGT(SZ) that the TNPCB is continuously monitoring the industries located in the SIPCOT-SIDCO Ranipet area and taking the action on the industries so as to comply with various directions issued by the Hon'ble NGT orders.

7. It is respectfully submitted that the M/s Tamil Nadu Chromates and Chemicals Ltd (TCCL), a defunct unit located at Ranipet was operated as joint venture with TIDCO between the years 1975 to 1988 and as a private limited company thereafter the unit manufactured sodium bichromate, basic chromium sulphate and sodium sulphate using chromate ore.

8. It is respectfully submitted that the unit stopped its operation from the year 1995. About 2.2 Lakh Tonnes of chromium bearing hazardous waste generated during process activity was dumped at the backyard of the premises on open land over an extent of 2 hectares to a height of 3 to 5 meters. The leachate generation from the chromium bearing hazardous waste of stockpile is causing chrome contamination of land, ground water in that area.

9. It is respectfully submitted that the TNPCB has initiated a series of legal actions which includes the issue of closure, directions under Sec. 5 of EPA, 1986, filling of cases in the Hon'ble High Court of Judicature at Madras. However, no progress on remediation could be achieved as there was change in the company management and difficulties being encountered in tracing & recovery of funds for implementation.


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10. It is respectfully submitted that the MOEF & CC, GOI, New Delhi has initiated the project on remediation of hazardous waste contaminated areas in the country (8 sites) with CPCB, Delhi as an executing agency under the National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF) during 2011 which includes chromium contaminated area at TCCL, Ranipet. Accordingly M/s ERM India Pvt. Ltd has conducted detailed study at contaminated site and submitted DPR and also furnished additional information based on issues raised during the meeting held on 14.10.2019 under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Govt. of Tamil Nadu. Total estimated costs for remediation work at M/s TCCL is worked out as Rs.556 Crores. Meantime , Additional Chief secretary to Government (ACS), Environment and Forest department and the Chairman, TNPCB inspected the dump site on 20.08.2020 and subsequently addressed to the Chairman vide D.O Letter Dt. 25.08.2020 and mentioned that the leachate generation from the chromium bearing hazardous waste stockpile which is kept in open and there is possibility of further environmental degradation and it was stated that the implementation of the remediation proposal given by the ERM by mobilizing funding will take longer time, instructed to follow certain temporary measures as below,

Cover the entire dump area with HDPE sheet so as to influence both the erosive agent (water) and the medium being eroded (chromium).


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Providing garland all around the site so as to divert the rain water runoff from the site.

11. In view of the above the JCEE (M)/TNPCB Vellore has submitted the letter to Member Secretary, TNPCB vide his letter No. JCEE/TNPCB/TCC/compl/2020/Dated 09.09.2020. The Member secretary/TNPCB vide memo NO.T4/TMPCB/F.005718/TCCL/VLR/2020 dated 29.9.2020 has called the detailed report on remediation of contaminated site with time bound action Plan & Budgetary estimate based on the inspection of the TCCL site by Additional Chief secretary to Government, Environment and Forest department and the Chairman, TNPCB with the following:

Cover the entire dump area with HDPE sheet so as to influence both the erosive agent (water) and the medium being eroded (chromium).

Providing garland drain all-round the site so as to divert the rain water runoff from the site.

Budget estimate for the above may be prepared and got approved in the board. The funding may be met from the environmental compensation fund available with the board.

Further as per the ACS instruction, it shall also followed up with the CPCB so as to take-up the site remediation as per the DPR given by the ERM consultant with source for funding.

Further letter Dt. 5.10.2020 was addressed to the Board from JCEE(M), Vellore to call for the budgetary estimate from the reputed


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agency such as ERM/PWD /Tamilnadu Waste Management Limited , Gummudipoobdi etc., towards temporary remediation of the above contaminated site of TCCL.

12. It is respectfully submitted that the Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board has taken series of continuous remedial action to protect the ground water quality and taken action against the erring industries in and around the Ranipet area and complying the orders passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in SLP filed by Vellore Citizens case Welfare Forum Vs Union of India and others (1996) 5 SCC 647.

Under the above circumstances, it is humbly prayed that this Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (Southern Zone) may be pleased to pass such further or other orders as this Hon'ble Tribunal may deem fit and proper in the facts and circumstances of this case and thus render justice.

G. Gopalakrishnan
 JOINT CHIEF ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
 TAMIL NADU POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
 No.76, MOUNT SALAI, GUINDY,
 CHENNAI-600 032.
BEFORE ME

VERIFICATION

I, G. Gopalakrishnan, Son of V. Gandhi, working as Joint Chief Environmental Engineer, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Chennai-600 032 do hereby submit that the contents of above report are true to the best of my knowledge through records.

Verified at Chennai on this 18th day of March, 2021.

G. Gopalakrishnan
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POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD.**

**Advocate for Respondents:TNPCB
Thiru.C. Kasirajan,
Advocate, Chennai.**

Dated:23.03.2021.

Date of hearing on 19.04.2021.