

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI**

Original Application No.152 of 2024 (SZ)

[Earlier O.A. No.254 of 2024 (PB)]

IN THE MATTER OF:

Suo Motu based on the news item appearing in 'The Indian Express' dated 12.02.2024 titled, "**Andhra Pradesh: Rise in footfall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife**".

With

Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board
Through its Member Secretary,
Vijayawada and Others.

...Respondent(s)

REPORT FILED BY
ANDHRA PRADESH POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
(RESPONDENT NO.1)

Date: 29.01.2026

CLEAN COPY



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DATE: 29.01.2026



K.RAVINDRANATH
STANDING COUSNEL FOR GOVERNMENT OF A.P.
ANDHRA PRADESH POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

Report submitted to the Hon'ble NGT, New Delhi by Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB) in the matter of O.A. No 152 of 2024 (earlier O.A.No.254 of 2024) as suo-motu on the basis of the news item titled "Andhra Pradesh: Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wild life" appeared in the "New Indian Express" dt.12.02.2024.

The Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (PB), New Delhi, has taken up a Suo motu case based on a news article titled "*Andhra Pradesh: Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife*" published in the New Indian Express dated 12.02.2024. The news article raises an issue relating to the risk imposed on biodiversity and the native wildlife of the eco-sensitive areas of Andhra Pradesh due to increased human footprint, evident in the form of litter and waste.

By an order dated 21st March 2024, the Hon'ble NGT (PB) Delhi directed that "*Considering the issue raised in the matter, we also deem it proper to form a Joint Committee comprising of the Regional Officer, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF& CC), Chennai and the representative of Member Secretary, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), who will ascertain the current state of affairs in view of the facts reflected in the news item and submit the report before the Southern Zonal Bench of the Tribunal at least one week before the next date of hearing.*"

In compliance to the Hon'ble NGT (PB) Delhi order dated 21st March 2024, a Joint Committee was constituted by the Joint Director, Scientist D, MoEF&CC, AP, with the following Members after the receipt of nominations from concerned departments/ agencies:

S. No.	Name of the Official	Department/Agency
1	Smt. H. D. Varalaxmi, Regional Director	Regional Directorate, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Chennai
*2	Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Scientist 'D'	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub-Office, Vijayawada.
3	Shri Balaji Kari, IFS, Assistant Inspector General of Forests	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada
*4	Dr. Murali Krishna Chimata Scientist-E	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada
5	Smt. Saritha Environmental Engineer	Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), RO, Vizianagaram

6	Smt. Budigi Reddy Soni Scientist-B	Regional Directorate, Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Chennai
*Note: Pursuant to transfer and posting of Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Dr. Murali Krishna Chimata was made a Member of Joint Committee.		

On May 3rd and 4th 2024, the Joint Committee met Shri Narentheran GG, IFS, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Rampachodavaram Division, Alluri Sitarama Raju District and Shri Suraj Ganore, IAS, Project Officer of the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) in Rampachodavaram. Further, the Joint Committee accompanied by officials from Forest Department and Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) conducted field visit to Gudisa grassland. Gudisa grassland is situated in the Pullangi Protected Forest (PF) of Aku Mamidi Kota Beat within the Pullangi section of Rampachodavaram forest division.

On September 25th, 2024, the Joint Committee met Shri. Vinod Kumar, IFS, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Paderu Division, Alluri Sitarama Raju district. Further, the Joint Committee conducted field visit to Vanjangi hills, which is a part of reserved forest area and falls under the jurisdiction of Vanjangi VSS (Vana Samrakshana Samithi). The copy of the Joint Committee report is attached as Annexure –I

Based on the discussions with various stakeholders and observations made during the field visits to Gudisa and Paderu, the Joint committee suggested the following recommendations:

- A local Committee with representatives of State Forest Department / ITDA and Local Villagers may be constituted in these two places and the responsibility for management (entry, maintenance of the area) etc. be given to this Committee and reasonable entry fee may be charged through establishment of checkpoints and gate and the fee so collected can be used for paying salaries to local youth engagement for security and maintenance of this area and the surplus fund if any available can be used for other developmental works without destructing the pristine environment.
- Checkpoints may be established and operated at Paderu, similar to Gudisa to regulate the plastic pollution. At the checkpoint, entry tickets may be collected for all the vehicles; a refundable deposit may be collected on all the disposable items.

- Unregulated tourism practices such as camp fires, open defecation, etc., may be prohibited and Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) may be encouraged.
- Shifting Cultivation practiced by local communities also causes forest fire. These locals may be provided with alternate livelihood opportunities to reduce dependency on shifting cultivation. Additionally, incentives may be provided to local people for collecting the plastic waste.
- Natural ignition of dried grass litter takes place during the summer months which causes forest fires. As a precautionary measure, tourism may be discouraged during summer months.
- At Gudisa, many educational boards were observed at regular intervals, showing Do's and Don'ts for tourists. Similar boards may be established at Paderu also for educating the tourists.

A detailed report was submitted to the Collector & District Magistrate, Alluri seetharamaraju district. The copy of the letter dated 18.12.2025 is attached as Annexure –II

As per the Hon'ble NGT Orders, the APPCB, Vizianagaram has addressed a rejoinder to the District Information and Public Relations Officer, Alluri Seetharamararaju district. The copy of the letter dated 17.01.2026 is attached as Annexure –III

This report is submitted to the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal in due compliance of the directions issued by Hon'ble Tribunal. APPCB will abide by all such directions, as the Hon'ble Tribunal may deem fit and appropriate

Date : 29.01.2026
Place : Vizianagaram


Environmental Engineer
APPCB, Regional Office,
Vizianagaram
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
A.P.POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
REGIONAL OFFICE
VIZIANAGARAM

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE IN COMPLIANCE TO THE HON'BLE
NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL (PB), DELHI ORDER DATED 21.03.2024 IN
O.A. NO. 254 OF 2024 (NEW OA No. 152 OF 2024 IN NGT, SZ)**

1.0 BACKGROUND:

The Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (PB), New Delhi, has taken up a Suo motu case based on a news article titled "Andhra Pradesh: Rise in footfall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife" published in the New Indian Express dated 12.02.2024. The news article raises an issue relating to the risk imposed on biodiversity and the native wildlife of the eco-sensitive areas of Andhra Pradesh due to increased human footprint, evident in the form of litter and waste.

By an order dated 21st March 2024, the Hon'ble NGT (PB) Delhi directed that "Considering the issue raised in the matter, we also deem it proper to form a Joint Committee comprising of the Regional Officer, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF & CC), Chennai and the representative of Member Secretary, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), who will ascertain the current state of affairs in view of the facts reflected in the news item and submit the report before the Southern Zonal Bench of the Tribunal at least one week before the next date of hearing." (A copy of NGT order dated 21.03.2024 is attached as Annexure 1)

2.0 CONSTITUTION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE:

In compliance to the Hon'ble NGT (PB) Delhi order dated 21st March 2024, a Joint Committee was constituted with the following Members after the receipt of nominations from concerned departments/ agencies:

S. No.	Name of the Official	Department/Agency
1	Smt. H. D. Varalaxmi, Regional Director	Regional Directorate, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Chennai
*2	Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Scientist 'D'	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub-Office, Vijayawada.
3	Shri Balaji Kari, IFS, Assistant Inspector General of Forests	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada
*4	Dr. Murali Krishna Chimata Scientist-E	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada

5	Smt. Saritha Environmental Engineer	Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), RO, Vizianagaram
6	Smt. Budigi Reddy Soni Scientist-B	Regional Directorate, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Chennai
*Note: Pursuant to transfer and posting of Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Dr. Murali Krishna Chimata was made a Member of Joint Committee.		

3.0 FIELD VISITS BY COMMITTEE:

On May 3rd and 4th 2024, the Joint Committee met Shri Narentheran GG, IFS, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Rampachodavaram Division, Alluri Sitarama Raju District and Shri Suraj Ganore, IAS, Project Officer of the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) in Rampachodavaram. Further, the Joint Committee accompanied by officials from Forest Department and Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) conducted field visit to Gudisa grassland. Gudisa grassland is situated in the Pullangi Protected Forest (PF) of Aku Mamidi Kota Beat within the Pullangi section of Rampachodavaram forest division. The detailed observations of the Joint Committee during the field visit to Gudisa are given in **Annexure 2**.

On September 25th, 2024, the Joint Committee met Shri. Vinod Kumar, IFS, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Paderu Division, Alluri Sitarama Raju district. Further, the Joint Committee conducted field visit to Vanjangi hills, which is a part of reserved forest area and falls under the jurisdiction of Vanjangi VSS (Vana Samrakshana Samithi). The detailed observations of Joint Committee during the field visit to Paderu are given in **Annexure 3**.

4.0 FIELD OBSERVATIONS OF COMMITTEE W.R.T ISSUES RAISED IN THE HON'BLE NGT DATED 21.03.2024:

Issues highlighted in Hon'ble NGT Order	Field observations of committee
<i>The news item mentions that several hill stations, such as Paderu, Gudisa and segments of the Nallamalla forest region in Andhra Pradesh, have been compelled to shut their doors temporarily to address the mounting debris issue.</i>	Based on discussions held with several Departments, local people and as gathered during the inspection, it is to state that the News Article published is true and during the past 2 years there has been severe crowd gathering and tourists inflow to Gudisa Grasslands as well as Vanjangi Hills in Paderu District. It was informed by the officials that due to severe inflow of tourists there has been drastic change and enormous amount of waste and garbage was thrown all over and

	<p>for cleaning the pristine environment and region, the State Forest Department / ITDA had to impose restrictions on entry of tourists also on few occasions. And further, it was also noted that this inflow of tourists is more especially during the winter seasons especially from the Months of November to February.</p>
<p><i>The news item also contains advice to the local authorities to enforce a ban on plastic within the protected area and stresses the importance of collective responsibility in maintaining cleanliness and minimizing garbage in these environments.</i></p>	<p>The Joint Committee noted that currently there is no ban imposed on plastic at present on both the hills. According to the information provided by DFOs of Rampachodavaram and Paderu, approval for the establishing Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) has been granted for both Gudisa and Paderu. However, due to lack of coordination among officials of the Forest Department, ITDA and local Panchayats, the CBET activities are getting delayed and not yet implemented. Therefore, a collective effort is essential for regulating tourism, maintaining cleanliness and minimizing garbage in these areas.</p> <p>Further, the Joint Committee during its visit to Paderu, noted that the then District Collector arbitrarily handed over the Reserve Forest land to ITDA for promotion of tourism without obtaining the concurrence from the Forest Department and pursuant to handing over of the Forest Land to ITDA, huge destruction of forest land without diversion or approval is being undertaken especially for laying of roads and infrastructure development, which is a big reason of concern and the Joint Committee opines that both the Departments instead of a coordinated effort in addressing challenges engaged in conflict management and accordingly, no agency is taking the ownership for addressing the pollution related issue.</p>

	<p>Accordingly, the Joint Committee opines that the Forest Area concerned may be restored back to Forest Department and the responsibility for managing the pristine environment, pollution under control etc. be vested to the same agency so that pollution may be kept under control. Copies of communication exchanged between Revenue and Forest Department is enclosed as Annexure—4.</p>
<p><i>It also suggests the proposal to establish the checkpoints to monitor the transportation of plastic in the hilly and reserved areas.</i></p>	<p>The Joint Committee during the visit to Gudisa, it is observed that at Aku Mamidi Kota, approximately 15km from Gudisa, a checkpoint was established in November 2022 and is being managed by the Forest Department. At the checkpoint, all disposable items of tourists are affixed with stickers, and a deposit of Rs.10 per item is being collected. Upon presentation of the item at the checkpoint during departure, the deposit is refunded to tourists. However, during the visit to Paderu, no such checkpoints observed and this issue is pending due to lack of coordinated efforts between Forest Department and ITDA.</p>
<p><i>It also raises the issue of forest fire.</i></p>	<p>The Joint Committee noted that the flow of tourists to these places was maximum in the months of winter especially during November to February and in that season due to extreme cold weather there is a possibility of fire due to camp fires by tourists. However, based on discussions with forest department officials, it was noted that the primary causes of forest fires was due to the shifting cultivation methodology being practiced by local communities and fires initiated by locals in pursuit of a beetle insect believed to be a rich source of protein, and natural ignition of dried grass litter particularly prevalent during the summer months. From the</p>

Gudisa hilltop, patches of land burnt due to shifting cultivation were noted

5.0 CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS:

Based on the discussions with various stakeholders and observations made during the field visits to Gudisa and Paderu, the Joint committee suggests the following recommendations:

- A local Committee with representatives of State Forest Department / ITDA and Local Villagers may be constituted in these two places and the responsibility for management (entry, maintenance of the area) etc. be given to this Committee and reasonable entry fee may be charged through establishment of checkpoints and gate and the fee so collected can be used for paying salaries to local youth engagement for security and maintenance of this area and the surplus fund if any available can be used for other developmental works without destructing the pristine environment.
- Checkpoints may be established and operated at Paderu, similar to Gudisa to regulate the plastic pollution. At the checkpoint, entry tickets may be collected for all the vehicles; a refundable deposit may be collected on all the disposable items.
- Unregulated tourism practices such as camp fires, open defecation, etc., may be prohibited and Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) may be encouraged.
- Shifting Cultivation practiced by local communities also causes forest fire. These locals may be provided with alternate livelihood opportunities to reduce dependency on shifting cultivation. Additionally, incentives may be provided to local people for collecting the plastic waste.
- Natural ignition of dried grass litter takes place during the summer months which causes forest fires. As a precautionary measure, tourism may be discouraged during summer months.
- At Gudisa, many educational boards were observed at regular intervals, showing Do's and Don'ts for tourists. Similar boards may be established at Paderu also for educating the tourists.



Shri. Balaji K

AIG, MoEF&CC

Sub-Office, Vijayawada



Dr. Murali Krishna

Scientist E, MoEF&CC

Sub-Office, Vijayawada



Smt. Varalakshmi

Regional Director,

Regional Directorate,

CPCB-Chennai



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Smt. Saritha

Environmental Engineer

APPCB, Vizianagaram

ANNEXURE - II



A.P. POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
 REGIONAL OFFICE; D.No-8-30-19, Sai Nagar,
 Thotapalem, Vizianagaram



Lr. No. PCB/ROVZ/Tech/2025-

Date: 18-12-2025

To
 The Collector & District Magistrate,
 Alluri Seetharamaraju District.

Respected Sir,

Sub: APPCB-RO-Vizianagaram – O.A. No 152 of 2024 (earlier O.A.No.254 of 2024)
 News item titled “Andhra Pradesh : Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wild life” appeared in the New Indian Express dt.12.02.2024 – Constitution of Joint Committee - Site inspection of Joint Committee – Report – Submitted – Reg.

Ref: 1) O.A. No 254/2024 News item titled “Andhra Pradesh : Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wild life” appearing in the New Indian Express dt.12.02.2024.
 2) MoEF&CC File No. SO/VIJ/EPA/NGT/106-55/2024 Date: 30.04.2024
 3) Hon’ble NGT Order dt.07.08.2024
 4) Hon’ble NGT O.A. No.152/2024(SZ) dt.17.09.2024.
 5) Field visit of the Joint Committee on 03.05.2024, 04.05.2024 & 25.09.2024.
 6) Hon’ble NGT Order dt.31.01.2025 & dt.13.11.2025

* * * * *

It is to submit that the Hon’ble NGT, New Delhi has registered O.A. No 152 of 2024 (earlier O.A.No.254 of 2024) as suo-motu on the basis of the news item titled “Andhra Pradesh: Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wild life” appeared in the “New Indian Express” dt.12.02.2024. The news article raises an issue relating to the risk imposed on biodiversity and the native wildlife of the eco-sensitive areas of Andhra Pradesh due to increased human footprint, evident in the form of litter and waste.

The Hon'ble NGT had constituted a Joint Committee comprising of Regional officer, MoEF&CC & Representative of Member Secretary, CPCB, vide order dated 21.01.2024 to submit a factual report in the instant case. Further, the Hon’ble NGT implead the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), through its Member Secretary and Ministry of

Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Regional Office (SEZ), Chennai as respondents in the matter.

In this regard, the Joint Director, Scientist D, MoEF&CC, AP, vide reference 2nd cited, based on the nominations received, constituted the following Joint Committee:

1. Shri Balaji Kari, IFS, Asst. Inspector General of Forests, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada.
2. Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Scientist 'D', Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada.
3. Smt. H. D. Varalaxmi, Regional Director, RD-Chennai, Central Pollution Control Board, Chennai.
4. Representative of Andhra Pradesh State Forest Department.

In addition to the above, as the subject matter concerned about solid waste management, the following members were also invited for site inspection:

1. Representative from Regional Office, Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB).
2. Representative from Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Alluri Sitharama Raju District

The Joint Committee has inspected the Gudisa area (ASR District) on dt.03.05.2024 and Vanjangi hills in Paderu area (ASR District) on dt.25.09.2024. The Detailed Joint Committee report is herewith enclosed.

Observations of the Joint Committee during the visit:

Based on discussions held with several Departments, local people and as gathered during the inspection, it is to state that the News Article published is true and during the past 2 years there has been severe crowd gathering and tourists inflow to Gudisa Grasslands as well as Vanjangi Hills in Paderu District. It was informed by the officials that due to severe inflow of tourists there have been drastic change and enormous amount of waste and garbage was thrown all over and for cleaning the pristine environment and region, the State Forest Department / ITDA had to impose restrictions on entry of tourists also on few occasions. And further, it was also noted that this inflow of tourists is more especially during the winter seasons especially from the Months of November to February.

The Joint Committee noted that currently there is no ban imposed on plastic at present on both the hills. According to the information provided by DFOs of Rampachodavaram and Paderu, approval for the establishing Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) has been granted for both Gudisa and Paderu. However, due to lack of coordination among officials of the Forest Department, ITDA and local Panchayats, the CBET activities are getting delayed and not yet implemented. Therefore, a collective effort is essential for regulating tourism, maintaining cleanliness and minimizing garbage in these areas.

Further, the Joint Committee during its visit to Paderu, noted that the District Collector arbitrarily handed over the Reserve Forest land to ITDA for promotion of tourism without obtaining the concurrence from the Forest Department and pursuant to handing over of the Forest Land to ITDA, huge destruction of forest land without diversion or approval is being undertaken especially for laying of roads and infrastructure development, which is a big reason of concern and the Joint Committee opines that both the Departments instead of a coordinated effort in addressing challenges engaged in conflict management and accordingly, no agency is taking the ownership for addressing the pollution related issue.

Accordingly, the Joint Committee opines that the Forest Area concerned may be restored back to Forest Department and the responsibility for managing the pristine environment, pollution under control etc. be vested to the same agency so that pollution may be kept under control.

The Joint Committee during the visit to Gudisa, it is observed that at Aku Mamidi Kota, approximately 15km from Gudisa, a checkpoint was established in November 2022 and is being managed by the Forest Department. At the checkpoint, all disposable items of tourists are affixed with stickers, and a deposit of Rs.10/- per item is being collected. Upon presentation of the item at the checkpoint during departure, the deposit is refunded to tourists. However, during the visit to Paderu, no such checkpoints observed and this issue is pending due to lack of coordinated efforts between Forest Department and ITDA.

The Joint Committee noted that the flow of tourists to these places was maximum in the months of winter especially during November to February and in that season due to extreme cold weather there is a possibility of fire due to camp fires by tourists. However, based on discussions with forest department officials, it was noted that the primary causes of forest fires was due to the shifting cultivation methodology being practiced by local communities and fires initiated by locals in pursuit of a beetle insect believed to be a rich source of protein, and natural ignition of dried grass litter particularly prevalent during the summer months. From the Gudisa hilltop, patches of land burnt due to shifting cultivation were noted.

Further, based on the discussions with various stakeholders and observations made during the field visits to Gudisa and Paderu, the Joint committee suggested the following recommendations:

- A local Committee with representatives of State Forest Department / ITDA and Local Villagers may be constituted in these two places and the responsibility for management (entry, maintenance of the area) etc. be given to this Committee and reasonable entry fee may be charged through establishment of checkpoints and gate and the fee so collected can be used for paying salaries to local youth engagement for security and maintenance of this area and the surplus fund if any available can be used for other developmental works without destructing the pristine environment.
- Checkpoints may be established and operated at Paderu, similar to Gudisa to regulate the plastic pollution. At the checkpoint, entry tickets may be collected for all the vehicles; a refundable deposit may be collected on all the disposable items.
- Unregulated tourism practices such as camp fires, open defecation, etc., may be prohibited and Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) may be encouraged.
- Shifting Cultivation practiced by local communities also causes forest fire. These locals may be provided with alternate livelihood opportunities to reduce dependency on shifting cultivation. Additionally, incentives may be provided to local people for collecting the plastic waste.
- Natural ignition of dried grass litter takes place during the summer months which causes forest fires. As a precautionary measure, tourism may be discouraged during summer months.

- At Gudisa, many educational boards were observed at regular intervals, showing Do's and Don'ts for tourists. Similar boards may be established at Paderu also for educating the tourists.

Submitted for favor of kind information.

Yours faithfully,

Encl: A/a.


ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
A.P.POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
REGIONAL OFFICE
VIZIANAGARAM

ANNEXURE - III



A.P. POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
 REGIONAL OFFICE; D.No-8-30-19, Sai Nagar,
 Thotapalem, Vizianagaram



Lr. No. PCB/ROVZ/Tech/2025-

Date: 17-01-2026

To
 The District Information and Public Relations Officer,
 Alluri Seetharamaraju District.

Sir,

Sub: APPCB-RO-Vizianagaram – O.A. No 152 of 2024 (earlier O.A.No.254 of 2024)
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Ref: 1. O.A. No 254/2024 News item titled “Andhra Pradesh: Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wild life” appearing in the New Indian Express dt.12.02.2024.
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 6. Hon’ble NGT Order dt.31.01.2025 & dt.13.11.2025
 7. APPCB, VZM Lr. No. PCB/ROVZ/Tech/2025 dt.18.12.2025

It is to submit that the Hon’ble NGT, New Delhi has registered O.A. No 152 of 2024 (earlier O.A.No.254 of 2024) as suo-motu on the basis of the news item titled “Andhra Pradesh: Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wild life” appeared in the “New Indian Express” dt.12.02.2024. The news article raises an issue relating to the risk imposed on biodiversity and the native wildlife of the eco-sensitive areas of Andhra Pradesh due to increased human footprint, evident in the form of litter and waste.

The Hon'ble NGT had constituted a Joint Committee comprising of Regional officer, MoEF&CC & Representative of Member Secretary, CPCB, vide order dated 21.01.2024 to submit a factual report in the instant case. Further, the Hon’ble NGT implead the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), through its Member Secretary and Ministry of

Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Regional Office (SEZ), Chennai as respondents in the matter.

In this regard, the Joint Director, Scientist D, MoEF&CC, AP, vide reference 2nd cited, based on the nominations received, constituted the following Joint Committee:

1. Shri Balaji Kari, IFS, Asst. Inspector General of Forests, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada.
2. Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Scientist 'D', Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada.
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4. Representative of Andhra Pradesh State Forest Department.

In addition to the above, as the subject matter concerned about solid waste management, the following members were also invited for site inspection:

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Based on the discussions with various stakeholders and observations made during the field visits to Gudisa and Paderu, the Joint committee suggested the following recommendations:

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- Checkpoints may be established and operated at Paderu, similar to Gudisa to regulate the plastic pollution. At the checkpoint, entry tickets may be collected for all the vehicles; a refundable deposit may be collected on all the disposable items.
- Unregulated tourism practices such as camp fires, open defecation, etc., may be prohibited and Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) may be encouraged.
- Shifting Cultivation practiced by local communities also causes forest fire. These locals may be provided with alternate livelihood opportunities to reduce dependency on shifting cultivation. Additionally, incentives may be provided to local people for collecting the plastic waste.
- Natural ignition of dried grass litter takes place during the summer months which causes forest fires. As a precautionary measure, tourism may be discouraged during summer months.
- At Gudisa, many educational boards were observed at regular intervals, showing Do's and Don'ts for tourists. Similar boards may be established at Paderu also for educating the tourists.

In this regard, a detailed report was submitted to the Collector & District Magistrate, Alluri seetharamaraju district.

Submitted for favor of kind information.

Yours faithfully,

Encl: A/a.


ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
A.P.POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
REGIONAL OFFICE
VIZIANAGARAM

Item No.15:**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI**

[Through Physical Hearing (Hybrid Option)]

Original Application No.152 of 2024(SZ)

[Earlier O.A. No.254 of 2024 (PB)]

IN THE MATTER OF:

Suo Motu based on the news item appearing in 'The Indian Express' dated 12.02.2024 titled, "**Andhra Pradesh : Rise in footfall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife**".

Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board
Through its Member Secretary,
Vijayawada and Ors.



...Respondent(s)

Date of hearing: 13.11.2025.

CORAM:

HON'BLE Smt. JUSTICE PUSHPA SATHYANARAYANA, JUDICIAL MEMBER

HON'BLE Dr. PRASHANT GARGAVA, EXPERT MEMBER

For Applicant(s): Suo Motu.

For Respondent(s): Mr. K. Ravindranath for R1 & R3.
M/s. Y. Kavitha for R2.

ORDER

1. On the earlier occasion i.e. on 31.01.2025, this Tribunal noted that though the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests had filed their respective reports, they intended to file a rejoinder to the report of the Joint Committee. Despite sufficient time having been granted, the same has not been filed till date.

2. Accordingly, the said authorities are directed to file their rejoinder, if any, before the next date of hearing, without further delay.

3. Post the matter on **30.01.2026**.



Sd/-

Smt. Justice Pushpa Sathyanarayana, JM

Sd/-

Dr. Prashant Gargava, EM

**O.A. No.152/2024 (SZ)
13th November, 2025. Mn.**