

**BEFORE THE HONORABLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
SOUTHERN BENCH CHENNAI**

**Original Application No 149 of 2025 (SZ)  
(Earlier O.A. No. 308/2025 (PB))**

**Jacob Thomas, Punnathaniyil, Kottayam,** : **Applicant**  
**Kerala**

**Versus**

**State of Kerala, through its Secretary,** : **Respondents**  
**Department of Environment and Climate**  
**Change, Thiruvananthapuram, and Others.**

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**BENGALURU  
25-11-2025**

  
(P. THIRUVANANTHAPURAM)

**Counsel for Respondent No. 4.**



  
25/11/2025

**DEPONENT**

**J. Chandra Babu**  
**REGIONAL DIRECTOR**  
**CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD**  
**REGIONAL DIRECTORATE - BENGALURU**  
**(MIN.OF ENV,FOREST & CC, GOVT OF INDIA)**  
**BENGALURU - 560 079. MOB: 9868278903**

**BEFORE THE HONORABLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
SOUTHERN BENCH CHENNAI**

**Original Application No 149 of 2025 (SZ)**  
(Earlier O.A. No. 308/2025 (PB))

*Jacob Thomas, Punnathaniyil, Kottayam,* : *Applicant*  
*Kerala*

*Versus*

*State of Kerala, through its Secretary,* : *Respondents*  
*Department of Environment and Climate*  
*Change, Thiruvananthapuram, and Others.*

**REPLY ON BEHALF OF RESPONDENT NO. 4, CENTRAL  
POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD (CPCB)**

1. The instant matter has been *Suo Motu* registered by the Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), New Delhi, as Original Application No. 308 of 2025 (PB), based on the letter petition received from one Mr. Jacob Thomas, Kottayam District, Kerala which has been transferred to The Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT) South Zone Bench Chennai and renumbered as Original Application No.149 of 2025 (SZ). Central Pollution Control Board (hereinafter referred to as CPCB) is the Respondent No. 4 in the matter.
2. This Honourable Tribunal had directed the respondents to file their respective replies/reports while hearing the matter on 01-09-2025. A copy of the order dated 01.09.2025 is placed as **Annexure-1**.



*J. Chandra Babu*  
22/9/2025

**J. Chandra Babu**  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
REGIONAL DIRECTORATE - BENGALURU  
(MIN.OF ENV,FOREST & CC, GOVT OF INDIA)  
BENGALURU- 560 070. MOB: 9862789002

**Preliminary submissions:**

3. That the Respondent No. 4, (CPCB), is constituted under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. It performs the functions under The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) in every State/ Union Territory respectively have been constituted under Section 4 of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and Section 5 of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, and are responsible for implementation of the provisions notified under the various acts/rules in the respective State/ Union Territory.
4. That, the averments made in the letter petition dated 20-03-2025 are mainly regarding the alleged illegal operations of a stone quarry in Moonnilavu Village, Meenachil Taluk, Kottayam District, Kerala. It is alleged that the quarry is operating illegally, violating the environmental laws, and the licences were obtained by suppressing material facts. The main matter raised in the petition is with respect to the Environmental Clearance (hereinafter referred to as EC) issued by the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority, Kerala (hereinafter referred to as SEIAA) and other licences obtained by the quarry owner, allegedly by concealing material facts.

**Para wise submissions:**

5. That Para A refers to matter of records and allegations regarding the illegal operation of the stone quarry and no comments required from this answering respondent.



  
 J. Chandra Babu  
 REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
 CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
 REGIONAL DIRECTORATE - BENGALURU  
 (MIN. OF ENV, FOREST & CC, GOVT OF INDIA)  
 BENGALURU - 560 079. MOB: 9868278903

6. That, Para B, 1 to 9 sections and Para C of the letter petition is related to the alleged discrepancies with respect to the grant of EC by the SEIAA of Kerala, allegedly overlooking the fact that the project area is functioning in an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and the presence of nearby River Streams, Water tanks, etc. It is also alleged that the operation of quarry is being undertaken by violating many of the specific conditions prescribed in the EC and that a previous representation made to SEIAA by the complainant has been over looked. In this regard, it is humbly submitted that the submission of SEIAA of Kerala (not a Respondent in the instant matter) and Department of Environment and Climate Change, Govt. of Kerala (Respondent No. 1) may kindly be considered. However, it is humbly submitted that as per the directions in another ongoing litigation before the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, Delhi in Original Application No. 304/ 2019, a seven-member Joint Committee comprising CPCB, Indian Institute of Mines/ NT , Dhanbad, CSIR - Central Institute of Mining & Fuel Research (CIMFR), Dhanbad, CSIR - Central Building Research Institute(CBRI), Roorkee, NT Roorkee, Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology , Dehradun and Directorate General of Mines Safety , GoI had submitted a study report, including the recommendations on the minimum buffer distance to be considered and other precautionary measures to be followed with respect to stone quarry operations. The report is under the consideration of the Hon'ble Principal Bench and further directions are awaited.
7. That, Para D and E (mistakenly mentioned as 'D') of the letter petition is related to the alleged non-compliance to the mining plan conditions with respect to the over extraction rubbles and ordinary earth from the site. In this regard it is humbly submitted that the submission of The Department



*[Handwritten Signature]*  
 25/11/2025  
 Chandra Babu  
 REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
 CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
 REGIONAL DIRECTORATE - BENGALURU  
 (MIN. OF ENV, FOREST & CC, GOVT OF INDIA)  
 BENGALURU - 560 079. MOB: 9868278903

of Mining and Geology, Kerala (Respondent No.2) may kindly be considered.

**Prayers:**

8. It is humbly submitted that, the operations of stone quarries are regulated by the statutory licenses including EC issued by SEIAA, Consent to Operate (CTO) by Kerala State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB), Mining Lease from DM&G (Department of Mining and Geology, Kerala), Explosives License/ NOC from PESO (Petroleum & Explosives Safety Organization) and NOC from concerned Grama Panchayat, etc. and the concerns/apprehensions raised by petitioner is also related to and may have been considered by these authorities before issuing of the clearances/licenses. Accordingly, the responses/replies made by the relevant concerned authorities in this regard may kindly be considered with respect to the specific allegations made in the petition.
9. It is also submitted that, as already detailed in para 6, a study report covering the minimum buffer distance to be considered and other precautionary measures to be followed with respect to stone quarry operations, prepared by the Joint Committee comprising of CPCB and other technical institutes is under the consideration in Original Application No. 304/2019, presently pending before Hon'ble NGT Principal Bench and further directions are awaited.
10. It is also submitted, that the Respondent No. 4 is also a member of the Joint Committee constituted by the Hon'ble NGT Principle Bench, previously in the matter before transferring the same to this Hon'ble South Zone Bench and necessary actions shall be initiated by the Joint Committee, according to further directions of this Hon'ble Tribunal.



*J. Chandra Babu*  
29/11/2015  
J. Chandra Babu  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
REGIONAL DIRECTORATE - BENGALURU  
(MIN. OF ENV, FOREST & CC, GOVT OF INDIA)  
BENGALURU - 560 079. MOB: 9868278903

11. It is humbly prayed that this reply by this Respondent No. 4, CPCB may kindly be taken on record. It is further submitted that CPCB shall abide by any order or directions passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal.

Dated at Bengaluru on this, the 25<sup>th</sup> Day of November, 2025.

*S. Prithwanthadas*  
(R. THIRUNAVUKARASU)

**Counsel for Respondent No. 4.**



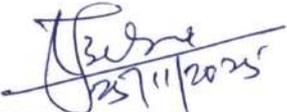
*J. Chandra Babu*  
25/11/2025

**DEPONENT**

**J. Chandra Babu**  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
REGIONAL DIRECTORATE - BENGALURU  
(MIN. OF ENV, FOREST & CC, GOVT OF INDIA)  
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basis of the record maintained during ordinary course of business of CPCB and available records and documents and the contents of the same are read over and explained to me and are not repeated herein for the sake of brevity.

  
25/11/2025  
**DEPONENT**

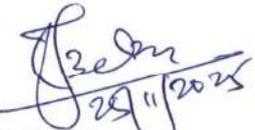
J. Chandra Babu  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
REGIONAL DIRECTORATE - BENGALURU  
(MIN. OF ENV, FOREST & CC, GOVT OF INDIA)  
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### VERIFICATION

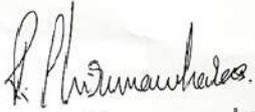
Verified at Bengaluru on this, the 25<sup>th</sup> Day of November, 2025, that the contents of the above reply are correct and true on the basis of the record of the cases as mentioned in the day-to-day affairs of the CPCB. Nothing has been concealed therefrom or mis- stated.



  
25/11/2025  
**DEPONENT**

J. Chandra Babu  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
REGIONAL DIRECTORATE - BENGALURU  
(MIN. OF ENV, FOREST & CC, GOVT OF INDIA)  
BENGALURU - 560 079. MOB: 9868278903

  
K. Prithvimaheesh.  
(R. THIRUVANANTHAPURAM)

**COUNSEL FOR RESPONDENT NO. 4.**

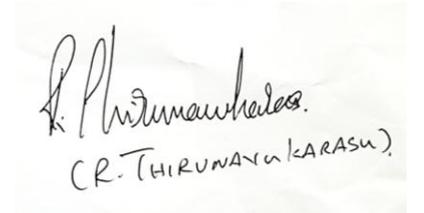
**BEFORE THE HONORABLE  
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**Original Application No 149 of 2025 (SZ)**  
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*Jacob Thomas, : Applicant  
Punnathaniyil, Kottayam,  
Kerala*

*Versus*

*State of Kerala, through : Respondents  
its Secretary, Department  
of Environment and  
Climate Change,  
Thiruvananthapuram, and  
Others.*

**REPLY ON BEHALF OF  
RESPONDENT NO. 4, CENTRAL  
POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
(CPCB)**



*R. Thirunavukarasu.  
(R. THIRUNAVUKARASU)*

M/s. R. Thirunavukarasu  
Counsel for the 4<sup>th</sup> Respondent-CPCB  
M-9444012986

**Item No.01:**

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

[Through Physical Hearing (Hybrid Option)]

**Original Application No.149 of 2025(SZ)**

[Earlier O.A. No.308 of 2025(PB)]

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

Jacob Thomas,  
Kerala.

...Applicant(s)

*Versus*

State of Kerala,  
Department of Environment and Climate Change,  
Thiruvananthapuram and ors.



...Respondent(s)

**Date of hearing: 01.09.2025.**

**CORAM:**

**HON'BLE Smt. JUSTICE PUSHPA SATHYANARAYANA, JUDICIAL MEMBER**

**HON'BLE DR. PRASHANT GARGAVA, EXPERT MEMBER**

For Applicant(s):           None.

For Respondent(s):       Mr. G. Vignesh represented  
  Mr. E.K. Kumaresan R1, R2 & R5.  
  Mrs. V.K. Rema Smrithi R3.

**ORDER**

1. The above case has been Suo Motu registered by the Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal, New Delhi as *Original Application No.308 of 2025 (PB)*, based on the letter petition received from one Jacob Thomas, Kottayam District, which has been transferred to this Bench and renumbered as *Original Application No.149 of 2025 (SZ)*.

2. Today, there is no representation for the applicant. Let notice be issued to the applicant as well as the respondents through the Tribunal.

3. The learned counsel Mr. G. Vignesh representing Mr. E.K. Kumaresan accepts notice on behalf of Respondents No.1, 2 & 5 and Mrs. V.K. Rema Smrithi accepts notice on behalf of Respondent No.3.

4. Post the matter on **26.11.2025**. In the meanwhile, the respondents are directed to file their respective replies/reports.

Sd/-

**Smt. Justice Pushpa Sathyanarayana, JM**

Sd/-

**Dr. Prashant Gargava, EM**

O.A. No.149/2025(SZ)  
01<sup>st</sup> September, 2025. AD.