

BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL,
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 1063/2024

IN THE MATTER OF:

News item titled "Pollution control board reels in ghost nets" appearing in the Times of India dated 04.08.2024.

INDEX

S.NO.	PARTICULAR	PAGE NO.
1.	REPLY ON BEHALF OF RESPONDENT NO. 15 ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR DIRECTORATE OF FISHERIES	1-6

Respondent No. 15

Through

GIGI.C.GEORGE ADVOCATE
STANDING COUNSEL (UOI)

CH. No. 457, Lawyers Block-1,
Delhi High Court, New Delhi

Place:- Delhi

Email: gigicgeorge.adv42@yahoo.in

Dated:- 25.11.2024 M-9810625315



**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL, PRINCIPAL
BENCH, NEW DELHI**

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 1063/2024

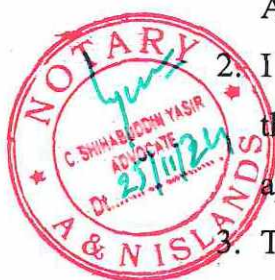
IN THE MATTER OF:

News item titled "Pollution control board reels in ghost nets" appearing in the Times of India dated 04.08.2024.

**REPLY BY WAY AFFIDAVIT ON BEHALF OF ANDAMAN AND
NICOBAR DIRECTORATE OF FISHERIES (R-15)**

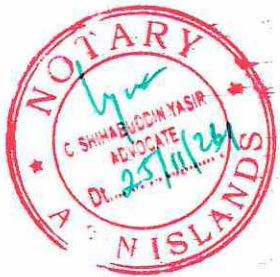
I Ms. Jagtap Kalyani Rajendra D/o. Shri. Rajendra Jagtap aged about 31 years working as the Director of Fisheries in the Directorate of Fisheries, under Andaman and Nicobar Administration do hereby solemnly state and affirm as under:-

1. I say that being the respondent No. 15 of the above Original Application, I am well conversant with the facts surrounding the present Original Application.
2. I say that this Original Application is registered *suo-motu* on the basis of the news item titled "Pollution control board reels in ghost nets" appearing in the Times of India dated 04.08.2024.
3. That the matter relates to the collection and recycling of fishnets which otherwise become "ghost nets". As per the article, these ghost nets are the torn and discarded fishnets that drift underwater, and strangle and kill fish, coral reefs, turtles and other organisms and then they become marine debris.
4. That the hon'ble Tribunal expresses his concern over violations of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, as well as the Coastal Regulation



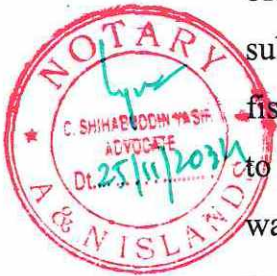
Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2019, specifically section 2.1.1 of CRZ 1A as the article explains that the HDPE (high-density polyethylene) or nylon fishnets wear out every six months to a year. If torn, the torn bit goes underwater, strangling fish such as anchovies and prawns. This affects fish reproduction and the business of fishermen. Furthermore, marine mammals such as turtles and whales that come up to breathe can get caught in ghost nets. These nets also lead to algal growth if they strangle coral reefs. It also alleges that the bundled-up, torn nets also cause sanitation and health issues, particularly during the monsoon.

5. That the matter taken up on 14.08.2024 by the Hon'ble Tribunal and impleaded the Answering Respondent as Respondent No. 15 and notice has been issued.
6. That it is submitted that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands currently have approximately 3,800 fishing vessels utilizing various types of nets for fishing activities. The primary Fish Landing Centre, which accommodates the majority of these fishing boats which is located at Junglighat. Consequently, this area is likely to have a significant accumulation of ghost nets.
7. I say and submit that Sri Vijaya Puram Municipal Council (SVPMC) is actively engaged in the collection of ghost nets from the Junglighat Fish Landing Centre. This initiative is crucial in mitigating the adverse effects that ghost nets pose to marine ecosystems and biodiversity.
8. I say that the collection efforts not only reduce the immediate risks associated with abandoned nets but also contribute to broader environmental protection goals.
9. That the Fishing activities often contribute to Waste Generation in marine areas and the Junglighat Fish Landing Centre is no exception. The fishing community plays a critical role as a key stakeholder. To address waste management , a baseline survey was conducted at the Fish Landing



Centre in Junglhat between the period 11.9.2023 - 5.10.2023 with the assistance of GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), Sri Vijaya Puram Municipal Council (SVPMC) and the Department of Fisheries, and C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre (CPREEC), using google forms to collect data from a random sample of 364 individuals involved in fishing activities.

10. That the survey revealed a diverse range of educational backgrounds among the fishermen 33.2%(121) illiterate, 12.9%(47) were literate, 33.2%(121) had completed matriculation, 14.8%(54) had finished senior secondary education, 5.2%(19) were undergraduates and 0.5%(2) had postgraduate degrees. It is submitted that the analysis highlighted that 38.7% of fishermen carried water bottles and packed food items or wrappers during their trips. Of these 28% disposed of their waste in bins upon returning to shore, while 44.5% discarded waste directly into sea, often unaware of the environmental impact on marine life. It is further submitted that the survey also found that 74.7% of the respondents were fishermen with the remaining being wholesalers and retailers connected to fishing activities. The baseline survey identified common types of waste found at the FLC, including discarded tea cups, grocery item wrappers(e.g.masala, salt, biscuits) fish packaging materials, cool drink bottles, lids, used ropes, fragmented thermocol, and abandoned fishing nets.



11. That it is submitted that subsequent to the survey, several interventions were implemented to raise awareness and promote waste disposal practices. This initiative was organized by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit(GIZ) GmbH India on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Sri Vijaya Puram Municipal Council and the Department of Fisheries, with C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre (CPREEC) (Centre of Excellence for Environmental

Education Centre jointly established by C. P. Ramaswamy Ayar foundation and M.O.E.F.C&C, Govt. of India) serving as the implementing agency for information, communication and education. Meeting with fishermen were held along with an awareness rally and one on one discussions. Wall paintings, stickers on fishing boats and posters were used to visually educate the community. In collaboration with Sri Vijaya Puram Municipal Council Ghost Net Collection Centre was established, dustbin were distributed to fishermen for use on their boats and additional garbage bins were placed at strategic locations within the FLC.

12. That it submitted that Fishermen were encouraged to bring back any waste they generated at sea and dispose it on in the provided bins. This initiative was particularly focused on the Fish Landing Centre in Ward No.14 where efforts were made to foster responsible waste management practices. The fishermen were educated about the environmental impacts of marine litter and the importance of maintaining clean oceans. By carrying designated containers for waste and ensuring that all wrappers and other debris were brought back to shore, the fishermen actively contributed to reducing marine pollution. It is further submitted that dustbins placed at prominent points within the Fish Landing Centre facilitated proper disposal of waste which primarily consisted of fish packaging wrappers, salt packet wrappers, small ropes and paper tea cups. The sanitary section of Ward No.14 meticulously quantified the collected waste, maintaining data to monitor the volume and types of waste generated. This data provided valuable insights into waste generation patterns and helped in planning future waste management strategies.

13. That it is submitted that below given table provides a detailed account of the waste collected between the period November, 2023 - June/July, 2024 through various interventions over specified periods within the



130

community. It categorizes the waste based on its source and type along with corresponding quantities collected. Across all these initiatives a total 4006 kilograms of waste was collected reflecting the community's commitment to reducing waste and promoting environmental sustainability. The data illustrates the effectiveness of these initiatives/interventions in addressing different types of waste and their impact on the local environment.

SL. NO.	WASTE COLLECTED FROM	PERIOD	QUANTITY (KGS)
1.	Fishermen returned grocery wrappers and others	16.11.23 – 30.06.24	482.00
2.	Waste collected from garbage bins(Fish packaging waste, tea cups, salt packets etc)	16.02.24 – 18.07.24	716.00
3.	Waste collected from the barrier installed on the drain FLC	05.01.24 – 18.07.24	983.00
4.	Discarded fishing net deposited at Ghost net collection centre at FLC	12.10.23 – 30.06.24	1825.00
	Total waste collected		4006.00



From the above data it is clear that the initiative taken by Administration has significantly improved the cleanliness of the Fish Landing Centre and fostered a sense of responsibility among the fishermen, encouraging sustainable practices within the community.

14. That the answering respondent (R-15) being coastal union territory is taking all the steps for reducing and minimizing the environmental pollution of the sea.
15. That the answering respondent will abide by the directions issued by this Hon'ble Tribunal in its true spirit. The answering respondent will file additional affidavit/reply if required.

Noted & Registered
at Serial No. 26863
Dated 25/11/2024


DEPONENT

मत्स्य निदेशक
Director of Fisheries
अण्डमान तथा निकोबार द्वीपसमूह
Andaman & Nicobar Islands
पोर्ट ब्लेयर-७४४१०१
Port Blair-744101

Verification

Verified at Port Blair on 25/11/24 that the contents of above affidavit are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and nothing material has been therefrom.




DEPONENT

मत्स्य निदेशक
Director of Fisheries
अण्डमान तथा निकोबार द्वीपसमूह
Andaman & Nicobar Islands
पोर्ट ब्लेयर-७४४१०१
Port Blair-744101

Executant has admitted the execution of contents of this document and the contents were read over and explained in Hindi / English / language. Accordingly I authenticate the document and affix the seal in my office on this 25th Day of Nov-2024


C. SHIHABUDDIN YASIR
ADVOCATE & NOTARY
A & N ISLANDS