

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI
Original Application No. 1117/2024**

IN THE MATTER OF:

News Item titled "From oasis to forsaken Where did" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated 16.08.2024

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FILED BY:



NEW DELHI
DATED: 26.11.2024

(JYOTI MENDIRATTA)
Advocate for the Respondent No. 5
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Response on behalf of Respondent No. 5- Geospatial Delhi Limited (GSDL) in compliance of Order dated 30.08.2024 passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal

Most Respectfully Showeth:

1. That the above-mentioned matter i.e., OA No. 1117/2024 was registered suo motu by this Hon'ble Tribunal based on the news item titled "From oasis to forsaken Where did" appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 16.08.2024. The article *inter-alia* highlighted a significant reduction in the number of water bodies in all urban centres including in Delhi. The news item further stated that nearly half (49.1%) of the city's 1,367 recorded water bodies have either disappeared been encroached upon or are present on paper but missing on the ground, leaving only 656 intact.
2. That this Hon'ble Tribunal was thus pleased to array the answering respondent as one of the parties vide its Order dard 30.08.2024 and directed the Respondents including Geospatial Delhi Limited ("GSDL") to file their respective response.



3. That the answering respondent, GSDL is a company, wholly owned by Govt. of Delhi which provides GIS services to the Government of Delhi and creates GIS data and maintain the same for the mostly Departments of Govt. of Delhi.
4. That GSDL has been actively supporting Wetland Authority of Delhi (WAD) through its expertise in GIS-based data services, specifically, by facilitating the mapping of water bodies and provides geospatial data and information support to WAD, like providing satellite imagery and base maps, as well as analytical assessments, all derived from data inputs provided by WAD.
5. That the provision of such data/information support using data inputs from WAD includes various analyses utilizing satellite imageries and base maps already available with GSDL. The work concerning mapping of water bodies and wetlands was undertaken by the GSDL in collaboration with the WAD and other concerned departments.
6. That GSDL received a dataset comprising **1045 inland water bodies** from WAD with geographic coordinates (latitude/longitude) through Letter No. 5(03)/WA/GSDL/2020-21/681-683 dated 04-05-2022 and Email dated 21-09-2023. The mapping of these water bodies was



completed and the status communicated via email dated 06-05-2022, *inter-alia* as under:

- a. A Comprehensive Water Bodies List of 1004;
 - b. 13 Duplicate Water Bodies List which were mentioned twice over;
 - c. 30 Water Bodies which were not found due to unavailability/incorrect of geo-coordinates; and
 - d. **344 additional potential water bodies** identified using satellite imagery and visual interpretation.
7. Thereafter, after ground truthing exercise was carried out by the Revenue Department. After the field inspection, the following data was received by GSDL from Central and West Districts:
- a. **Central District:**
 - i. Received a list of **23 inland water bodies** post-field inspection.
 - ii. Of these, **19 were successfully mapped**, while 4 water bodies could not be identified on the ground (on account of lack of geo-coordinates).



- iii. A map after plotting the said 19 mapped water bodies, with satellite imagery as the backdrop, was shared with both the Central District and WAD.

b. **West District:**

- i. Received a list of **71 inland water bodies** post-field inspection.
- ii. All **71 water bodies were mapped**, and maps with satellite imagery were shared with the West District and WAD.

8. It is humbly submitted that the role of GSDL in this process is limited to providing technical assistance and geospatial data. The responsibility for survey, ground truthing, physical verification of the water bodies, and further actions lies with the water body owning agencies and other concerned government departments and the Revenue Department for the concerned Districts.

9. That as such, GSDL serves solely as a technical facilitator, providing high-quality technical geospatial support in alignment with its defined scope of work such as

- a) Mapping and geospatial analysis; and
- b) Preparing maps with satellite imagery for visualization purposes.



However, GSDL does not:

- a) Participate in decision-making regarding the status, classification, or encroachment of water bodies and wetlands; or
- b) Conduct ground verification, validation, or authentication of data.

Therefore, as far as Data Ownership and Validation is concerned,

- i. All locational data, including latitude and longitude coordinates, are provided by WAD or other concerned departments.
- ii. GSDL uses this data to perform a desktop-based GIS analysis within its lab, leveraging base maps and satellite imagery.
- iii. Verification, validation, and ground-truthing or authentication of wetland and water body information is responsibility of WAD and/ or the concerned respective departments including the revenue department.

Date: 25.011.2024



Respondent No. 5
Company Secretary,
Geospatial Delhi Limited (GSDL)

THROUGH

NEW DELHI
DATE: 26.11.2024



JYOTI MENDIRATTA
ADVOCATE FOR GNCTD

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AFFIDAVIT

I, Shashi Kumar Taneja, S/o N. L Taneja do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:

1. That I am the Company Secretary, Geospatial Delhi Limited (a Government of NCT of Delhi Company) and in that capacity, I am conversant with the facts and circumstances of the case and competent to swear this affidavit.
2. I have read and understood the contents of the accompanying Reply which has been drafted by my counsel and filed under my instructions. I state that the same are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and believed by me to be correct.

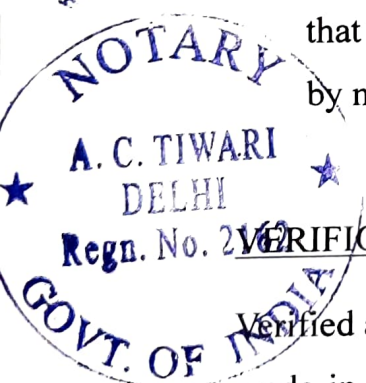
SK Taneja
DEPONENT

VERIFICATION: Verified at New Delhi on this day of November, 2024 that the contents made in the abovementioned affidavit are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and from information received by me which I believe to be true and correct and are also nothing material has been suppressed or concealed therein.

ATTESTED
[Signature]
NOTARY PUBLIC
(DELHI INDIA)
25 NOV 2024

SK Taneja
DEPONENT

I identify the deponent who has signed in my presence.



25 NOV 2024