

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

Original Application No. 1116/2024

News Item titled “रणथंभौर के जंगल में लम्जरी गाड़ियों की घुसपैठ, वीडियो हुआ वायरल” appearing in Zee Rajasthan dated 16.08.2024

Date of hearing: 30.08.2024

**CORAM: HON’BLE MR. JUSTICE PRAKASH SHRIVASTAVA, CHAIRPERSON
HON’BLE DR. AFROZ AHMAD, EXPERT MEMBER**

ORDER

1. This original application is registered *suo motu* on the basis of the news item titled “रणथंभौर के जंगल में लम्जरी गाड़ियों की घुसपैठ, वीडियो हुआ वायरल” appearing in ‘Zee Rajasthan’ dated 16.08.2024.

2. The news item relates to a case of illegal entry of a dozen luxury vehicles in Ranthambore National Park located in Sawai Madhopur. As per the article, some influential individuals entered the forest not in the contracted gypsy or canter but in vehicles such as Scorpio and Thar to do safari in zone number 8 of Ranthambore National Park. The news item states that in the viral video, people can be seen getting out of their cars and walking inside the Ranthambore forest, where there is a lot of movement of tigers. The article alleges that it is not possible to go to this place without permission from the Forest Department. It raises the question of how these individuals, riding in a dozen luxury cars reach zone number 8 of the National Park for a safari. Furthermore, Ranthambore National Park is closed for three months during the rainy season and only contracted vehicles can be sent to visit the park between zone numbers 6 to 10 with the permission of the forest department, but

vehicles like the Scorpio, Thar seen in the video are not allowed to enter the forest at all.

3. The article claims that these vehicles can't enter the Ranthambore forest without the connivance of the forest department officials, because Ranthambore has a surveillance system and anti-poaching system, through which the forest department keeps a close watch on the entire Ranthambore and keeps an eye on every movement happening in the forest. As per the video, all the vehicles entered the National Park from Balas Chowki and came out of the forest via Hindwad, while this entire area comes under Critical Tiger Habitat. No one is allowed to enter and exit this place under any circumstances.

4. The news item raises substantial issues relating to compliance with environmental norms.

5. The power of the Tribunal to take up the matter *suo-motu* has been recognized by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of "*Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai vs. Ankita Sinha & Ors.*" reported in 2021 SCC Online SC 897.

6. Hence, we implead the following as respondents in the matter:

- (1). Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, HoFF, Rajasthan Forest Department, Government of Rajasthan, Van Bhawan, Vaniki Path, Jaipur, (Rajasthan) – 302 005.
- (2). Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt. of Rajasthan, Van Bhawan, Vaniki Path, Jaipur-302005, Rajasthan.
- (3). Ministry of Environment and Forest, through its Regional Office, Integrated Regional Office, Jaipur, A-209&218, Aranya

Bhawan, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Jhalana Institutional Area,
Jaipur – 304002, Rajasthan.

(4). District Magistrate, Sawai Madhopur, 28, Collector S.
Madhopur.

7. Issue notice to the above respondents for filing their response/reply by way of affidavit before the Central Zonal Bench of the Tribunal at least one week before the next date of hearing. If any respondent directly files the reply without routing it through his advocate, then the said respondent will remain virtually present to assist the Tribunal.

8. Since the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the Central Zonal Bench of the Tribunal, therefore, the OA is transferred to the Central Zonal Bench, Bhopal for appropriate further action. Let the original record of the OA be transferred to the Central Zonal Bench, Bhopal.

9. List before the Central Zonal Bench at Bhopal on 16.10.2024.

Prakash Shrivastava, CP

Dr. Afroz Ahamd, EM

August 30, 2024
Original Application No. 1116/2024
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