

(Pune Bench)

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
WESTERN ZONE BENCH, PUNE**

[THROUGH PHYSICAL HEARING (WITH HYBRID OPTION)]

**MISC. APPLICATION NO.03 OF 2023 (WZ)
[Earlier O.A. No.63 OF 2022 (PB)]
IN
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO.478 OF 2018**

The Goa Foundation,
through its Secretary Dr. Claude Alvares,
Age : 73 years, Having Regd. Office
at Room No.7, Above Mapusa Clinic,
Mapusa, Goa – 403 507

.... Applicant

Versus

1. The State of Goa,
Through its Chief Secretary,
c/o Secretariat, Porvorim,
Goa – 403 521
2. The Review Committee on Private Forests,
Through its Chairman, the Chief Conservator
Of Forests, Forest Department,
Government of Goa,
'Van Bhavan', Altinho, Panaji,
Goa – 403 001
3. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests,
'Van Bhavan', Altinho, Panaji,
Goa – 403 001
4. Confederation of Real Estate
Developers' Association of India
(CREDAI), Goa Chapter,
Having office at 315, 3rd Floor,
Gera Imperium-II, Patto Plaza,
Patto, Panaji – 403 001,
Represented by its Authorised
Representative Mr. Nilesh Sinai Salkar,
s/o Damodar Sinai Salkar,
Age : 55 years, Married, Indian National,
R/o H.No.4, Susheela F.L. Gomes Road,
Vasco Da Gama, Mormugao - Goa
5. John Alfredo Nazareth,
H No.154, Bairro Alto,
Assagao, Bardez, Goa – 403 507
6. Antonio Agnelo Nazare,
H. No.154, Bairro Alto,
Assagao, Bardez, Goa – 403 507

....Respondents

APPEARANCE :

Applicant : Ms. Norma Alvares, Advocate along with
Mr. Om D-Costa, Advocate

Respondents : Mr. Nalin Kohli, Senior Advocate i/b and with
Mr. Harsha Peechara, Ms. Harshita Gupta,
Mr. Anshal Malik and Mr. Anunay Shrivastava,
Advocates for R-1 to R-3
Mr. Shivan Desai, Advocate along with
Mr. Shivshankar Swaminathan, Advocate
for R-4
Mr. J.E. Coelho Pereira, Senior Advocate i/b
and with Mr. Vinod Korgaonkar, Advocate for
R-5 and R-6

**CORAM: HON’BLE MR. JUSTICE DINESH KUMAR SINGH, JUDICIAL MEMBER
HON’BLE DR. VIJAY KULKARNI, EXPERT MEMBER**

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Reserved on : 10.08.2023

Pronounced on : 12.09.2023

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JUDGMENT

1. This matter was earlier moved in the form of Original Application No.63 of 2022 but later on was permitted to be converted into Misc. Application No.03 of 2023 (WZ) by us because this Tribunal considered it not appropriate to entertain a fresh Original Application in the matter which has already been decided by previous Bench of this Tribunal in Original Application No.478 of 2018.
2. This application (M.A.) has been filed with the prayers that four interim reports, which have been filed by respondent Nos.1 to 3, should be quashed; the methodology adopted for identification and demarcation of the private forest should also be quashed; the survey numbers of Salvador-do-Mundo, which were identified as private forest under the NGT orders, be reinstated as private forests and likewise all the survey

numbers of villages Dabolim, Chicalim, Sancoale and Cortalim be reinstated.

3. The facts of this case, in brief, are that the applicant has been pursuing meticulously the progress of implementation of the order dated 12.12.1996, passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of **T.N. Godavarman** for last 25 years. Pursuant to that order, the Government of Goa had set up Sawant Committee to demarcate private forests in the State of Goa vide Gazette Notification dated 06.02.1997, annexed as Annexure-1 Colly (we do not find the entire notification to have been annexed). The said Committee identified 47 sq.kms. of private forest, whereafter the State Government set up another Committee namely "Karapurkar Committee" vide Notification dated 04.09.2000 to review the work done by the Sawant Committee. The Hon'ble Apex Court restrained Karapurkar Committee from reviewing the work done by the Sawant Committee by its order dated 04.05.2001 passed in Writ Petition 181/2001 (Goa Foundation vs. State of Goa and Ors.) (annexed as Annexure-2). Thereafter, the Karapurkar Committee restricted its work to identification of new areas only. A total 67.02 sq.kms. of private forest area was identified by these Committees i.e. Sawant Committee and Karapurkar Committees (for short, "S&K Committees") in the final report dated 16.12.2002. No demarcation of private forest area (i.e. with pegs on the ground) was done by either of the two Committees.

4. Thereafter, on 02.07.2003, pursuant to an order passed by the Hon'ble High Court in a PIL filed by the applicant, the Forest Department commenced the demarcation of the private forest areas, which had been identified by the S&K Committees, which was completed in five years on 30.06.2008, reducing the private forest from 67.02 sq.kms. to 41.20 sq.kms. The exclusion of 20 sq.kms. area was again challenged by the

applicant in writ petition, which was subsequently transferred to this Tribunal and was numbered as Original Application No.18 of 2013.

5. Thereafter, by Notification dated 03.05.2018, the State of Goa – respondent No.1 appointed a Review Committee by name “Deepshikha Sharma Review Committee (“RC-I”, for short) to cross check the reports of S&K Committees, together with the demarcation report of Forest Department. From the record, we do not find copy of the said Notification dated 03.05.2018, rather Notification dated 23.04.2018 is found to be there at page 30 of the paper-book.

6. In the year 2020, RC-I finalized the private forest area as 46.11 sq.kms.

7. Thereafter, the State of Goa – respondent No.1 appointed another Committee, headed by the Revenue Officer, called D’Souza Committee, to review the work of RC-I (Deepshikha Committee), which sought to reduce the private forest area but its report was neither recognized nor accepted by this Tribunal. On 18.08.2020, the NGT accepted the RC-I report which finalized the private forest area as per S&K Committees as 46.11 sq.kms. and disposed of the above Original Application. Against the said order, the State Government filed SLP, which too was rejected by the Hon’ble Apex Court by order dated 01.02.2021 (annexed at Annexure-3) (We find Civil Appeal No.1 of 2021 instead of SLP and the order passed therein is annexed at page 39 of the paper-book).

8. Since the work of S&K Committees was admittedly incomplete, the applicant had to move the Hon’ble Supreme Court and thereafter filed writ petition in 2006 before the Hon’ble High Court for additional committees to be constituted to complete the implementation of the Hon’ble Apex Court’s order dated 12.12.1996.

9. Accordingly, vide Notification dated 27.11.2012, the State Government set up two district level expert committees, one each for

North Goa district and South Goa district, headed by ex-forest officers namely Shri V.T. Thomas and Shri Francisco Araujo, respectively (hereinafter referred to as “T&A Committees”). A copy of the said Notification is annexed as Annexure 1 Colly at pages 28 and 29 of the paper-book. The said Notification appointed these two Committees had extensive terms and conditions and besides requiring identification of balance areas of the private forests, not covered by S&K Committees, it also included the procedure for demarcation of the private forest area. The said Notification records the deputation of field surveyors to survey and demarcate the forest areas identified by the Committees on survey maps as well as with pegs on the ground. These two Committees also comprised experts from outside the Forest Department as well as members of environmental organizations, which reflects that the work of identifying and demarcating the balance forest area was to be finally completed by them.

10. The applicant pursued the work of these Committees with the Tribunal after the writ petition was transferred to it, which was numbered as Original Application No.16 of 2013. After much pursuance by the applicant, process could be got expedited and five progress reports were filed before this Tribunal 01.07.2015, 28.12.2015, 17.06.2016, 31.01.2017 and 16.08.2017. The summary of these five progress reports is given in tabular form in paragraph No.13 of the application.

11. After the matters were taken up by the Principal Bench, a 6th interim report was also filed in Original Application Nos.477 of 2018 and 478 of 2018 (earlier O.A. No.14 (THC)2013/WZ) and Original Application No.16 (THC)/2013 (WZ), on 04.10.2018, bringing additional forest areas on record pursuant to further work of both the Committees. A copy of the said report is annexed at Annexure 4. By an affidavit dated 04.10.2018, the NGT was informed by respondent Nos.1 to 3 that both

the expert committees (i.t. T&A Committees) were overnight disbanded by order dated 23.04.2018, notified on 03.05.2018, annexed as Annexure I (we find the Notification dated 23.04.2018 at page 30 of the paper-book).

12. Vide order dated 12.10.2018, the Principal Bench of NGT disposed of O.A. Nos.477/2018 and 478/2018 and directed the work to be completed by March 2019 and to file compliance report. Subsequently, the Committees submitted their (T&A Committees’) final reports in December 2018 (annexed as Annexure 5 Colly).

13. The important data culled out from the above two Committees’ reports are given below in tabular form:

Thomas Committee	Araujo Committee
Notified on 27.11.2012 Disbanded on 23.04.2018 Period :5 years 5 months Work stated to be completed The Committee had 134 meetings/field inspections	Notified on 27.11.2012 Disbanded on 23.04.2018 Period : 5 years 5 months Work stated to be incomplete The Committee had 188 meetings of which 71 were field inspections.
Total area provisionally identified:1662.72 ha of which 326.51 ha (3.26 sq.km.) was demarcated and finalized as private forest (i.e. surveyed, demarcated and pegs fixed)	Total area provisionally identified is unquantified (but) the specific areas are indicated with GPS locations). The finally demarcated private forest area is 538.600 ha (5.38 sq km) i.e. forest lands surveyed, demarcated and pegs fixed.
Total number of survey nos. covered: 792	Total number of survey nos. covered : 2403 The Committee visited 68 villages in 6 talukas in South Goa

14. Thereafter, by Notification dated 21.01.2020 (Annexure 1 at page 31 of the paper-book), the State Government – respondent No.1 appointed a second Review Committee (RC-II) this time to review the reports of T&A Committees with the terms and conditions that it shall examine the

`provisionally identified' survey numbers in the review and was allotted three months time to complete the work but till date, the RC-II is yet to complete the same.

15. Thereafter, the applicant filed an E.A. No.21/2021 in the disposed of O.A. No.478/2018, as the time of submission of final reports by the T&A Committees had expired without any reports being submitted. The Forest Department repeatedly sought extension of time for completion of task of review exercise, which this Tribunal was compelled to grant. Ultimately, on 30.11.2021, the Tribunal decided to give a quietus to the issue by disposing E.A. No.21/2021, directing the Forest Department to submit final report by 30.04.2022. In the meantime, the Forest Department has produced four interim reports of RC-II i.e. first three reports together in December 2021 and fourth report at the end of January 2022. It is these four reports, which are challenged in the present Application as well as the Government orders to accept these reports.

16. Further it is mentioned that the minutes of the meeting of RC-II recorded that the T&A Committees identified total 32 sq.kms as private forests (16 sq.kms. in North Goa and approximately 16 sq.kms in South Goa). The applicant disputes the correctness of these figures, more particularly in respect of South Goa since the final reports of the T&A Committees were submitted to this Tribunal on 16.08.2017 in O.A. No.18/2013 and had stated that the Araujo Committee had provisionally identified 19.76 sq.kms. of private forest in South Goa as of June 2017. More would have been undoubtedly added by the time the Committee was disbanded on 23.04.2018. It is further submitted that despite the fact that 32 sq.kms. area was provisionally identified by the T&A Committees, out of which the two Committees also demarcated and finalized some private forest areas as well. These finalized areas were not subject of

review by the RC-II. The private forest area finalized and demarcated by T&A Committee was 8.64 sq.kms. (3.26 sq.kms. by the Thomas Committee and 5.38 sq.kms. by the Araujo Committee). These survey numbers could not have been reviewed by the RC-II whose Terms of Reference (TOR) was to review only the provisionally identified areas, meaning thereby after deleting 8.64 sq.kms. from 32 sq.kms, only around 23.36 sq.kms area had to be reviewed by the RC-II.

17. The four interim reports of the RC-II would reveal that it had to examine a total of 91.83 sq.kms. (i.e. 9183 ha) identified by the two committees, out of which it has so far examined 68.56 sq.kms. (6856 ha). Out of this vast area, the RC-II has finalized only small area of 2.89 sq.kms. (289.7 ha) as private forest area till this date. Where has the figure of 91.83 sq.kms. come from, is not cleared because the RC-II had itself recorded that the total area identified as forest by the two expert committees was 32 sq.kms. only.

18. It is further submitted that the first major departure made by the RC-II is the procedure adopted by it in identifying the private forests, which was based entirely on Forest Survey of India (FSI) maps indicating areas of green cover in Goa. Though it is not the case that FSI maps had not been used by earlier Review Committees, however, earlier they were taken only as mere guiding indicators and not defining indicators of private forest lands. If the FSI maps alone were enough to indicate private forest, there was no need for the State Government to have even appointed the expert committees which it did from 1997 onwards.

19. As per the procedure adopted by RC-II, it obtained digital maps from the FSI in respect of the areas of green cover that are 5 ha and above in size, having canopy density of 0.4 and above in the State of Goa. The applicant has also annexed as Annexure-6 the FSI document, titled, "Forest Cover Mapping of Goa Using High Resolution Satellite Data".

Next, the survey numbers identified by T&A Committees (which were digitized) were superimposed on the FSI maps. All the survey numbers, which did not fall within the FSI patches, were simply discarded. The total number of survey numbers identified by T&A Committees was 3195, out of which only 1833 survey numbers could qualify for private forest as per FSI maps. The balance 1362 survey numbers were simply removed from consideration by RC-II adopting their procedure. There were no ground visits or enumeration of canopy and tree species undertaken in these areas. This exercise of deletion was done by the Forest Department located in Panjim within three months' time – a purely desk job, without any ground verification, thereby substantially discarding nearly 50% of the work of T&A Committees, carried out over a period of five years. The balance survey numbers only have been kept for consideration of RC-II. Notices were issued in the local newspapers calling for objections from the owners of the plots. The plots were visited for ground truthing and sampled at 5% of the vegetation to establish forest species. If there was objection from the land owner, then the plot vegetation was enumerated at 100%.

20. Further it is submitted by the applicant that the above procedure adopted by RC-II was absolutely unacceptable. Most, if not many, of these survey numbers have already been visited by the T&A Committees and ground truthing carried out. Therefore, now to compel the Committee's identification to fall in line with the FSI maps has never been the methodology to identify private forests, nor was the said procedure approved by the NGT. Moreover, the FSI itself admits that its report suffers from the weakness on account of no ground truthing having been done. They are only approximations. These maps of FSI have also been used to wipe out the ground truthing exercise carried out by the Committees over five years. There is no justification for the wholesale

exclusion of the areas identified by the T&A Committees and that the exercise of RC-II stands completely vitiated. The applicant has also provided two examples in order to establish as to how the T&A Committees' reports have been torn to shreds by the RC-II. The second objection set up by the applicant is that RC-II has deviated entirely from the ToR . The RC-II was required to examine only those areas "provisionally" identified by the T&A Committees as forest and not the areas which had been finalized by it, particularly when there was clear distinction made by the Committees provisional and final areas.

21. It is further submitted that Thomas Committee report contains "actual survey and demarcation by wooden pegs were taken up in the provisionally identified areas by a team of surveyors from the Directorate of Settlement and Land Records since 2015. Out of 1661.72 ha (approx.) of provisionally identified forests, an area of 326.51 ha was surveyed and demarcated." Likewise, Araujo Committee report records that "prospective forests were located in eight villages of Mormugao Taluka. The Committee could survey only part of these forests in three villages i.e. Cortalim, Sancoale and Dabolim. Some patches or parts of patches in these villages remain to be demarcated. Prospective forest in villages of Issorcim, Chicalim, Cuelim and Quelossim are yet to be demarcated and surveyed. The total area of private forests identified by this Committee in three villages i.e. 5386504.56 m² (5.386 sq.kms.) (although the Committee used the words "identified above" in the table that followed, it clarifies that 5.3 sq.kms. is the finalized, demarcated private forest areas).

22. It is further submitted that RC-I was appointed to examine the disputed survey numbers between S&K Committees and Forest Department. RC-I restricted its work to only disputed survey numbers and not the entire S&K Committees' report afresh. It may also be noted

that when respondent No.1 had appointed Karpurkar Committee to review Sawant Committee's report (because of some objections from the public), the Hon'ble Supreme Court restrained it from doing so. Therefore, the findings of every Committee appointed to carry out the Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 12.12.1996 should be given weight and respect because they comprise senior forest officers, who are well acquainted with the forest trees in Goa and capable of assessing the criteria set out by the State Government for identifying the private forests.

23. Our attention is also drawn by the applicant to the subsequent notification of respondent No.1 dated 18.09.2020 (pages 30 to 35) whereby the State Government constituted a total of 14 inspection teams (6 in North Goa and 8 in South Goa) to carry out the site inspection of the properties in respect of the private forest areas identified by the T&A Committees in their respective reports. The ToR of the inspection team was to delineate the provisionally identified areas of private forest on the ground, survey the area inside the boundaries, collect data on the percentage of forest species and thereafter prepare geo-referenced maps to be forwarded to RC-II. The above said ground truthing exercise was to be conducted by 3-member committees whose composition is provided in the notification dated 24.09.2020 (annexed at Annexure-I pages 32 to 35 of the paper-book). Each team comprises of a person from the Survey Department, one person who is the village Talathi (revenue) and the Range Forest Officer (RFO). It is this team that confirms forestry species on the plots as a result of ground truthing exercise. It is therefore clear that only provisionally identified areas had to be looked into and not finalized and demarcated forest areas.

24. Further it is mentioned that T&A Committees were headed by experienced forest officials having 30 years long experience, whose work

is now to be scrutinized by largely non-forest officials, as a result of which most of the areas surveyed and found to be forest areas are now removed from the purview of private forests, which has resulted in overreaching hardwork of T&A Committees in five and half years. Respondent No.1 attempted an exercise to appoint Anthony D'Souza Committee to review the findings of Deepshika Sharma Committee (RC-I) despite the fact that RC-I comprised of foresters and independent members of civil society whereas D'Souza Committee was headed by a revenue official. Therefore, the NGT had rejected the report of D'Souza Committee on various grounds and accepted the findings of Deepshika Committee.

25. Another objection raised by the applicant is that the FSI maps which have been used by RC-II in the process are of later period i.e. 2014-15 to 2019-20 while the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court was passed on 12.12.1996. Hence, it appears that the applicant wants to say that the maps of the date closer to 1996 should have been used in identification of private forest area. The apprehension is expressed by the applicant that by later date, the vegetation might have been removed. The applicant has cited some specific examples in order to show how RC-II's methodology has undermined the work of T&A Committees.

26. It is submitted that in the case of Salvador-do-Mundo village in North Goa, the earlier identified and demarcated private forests have been excluded in the interim reports of RC-II on specious grounds. This Tribunal was seized of the issue of protection of private forest areas in the said village in O.A. No.166/2013. The said village comprises substantial hilly region and is by-and-large thickly forested with scarce habitation on the upper slopes of the plateau. With the constant monitoring by the NGT, the private forest in this village was identified survey-wise on the ground using a team of forest officials and the entire area of forest of the

village was mapped. The map contained all forest details, which was prepared and submitted by the Forest Department to the NGT under the signatures of V.T. Thomas, chairperson of the North Division Committee in October, 2014. Total 92 survey numbers were demarcated as forest, in full or in part. The Original Application was then disposed of on 14.10.2014. The relevant documents are annexed at Annexure-7 Colly. Further it is submitted that as the forest of the said village has been confirmed by the NGT, the same could not have been reviewed by any Committee without the leave of the NGT. Surprisingly, in 2016, the Thomas Committee issued an advertisement in the newspapers calling for objections to 92 survey numbers identified and defined as forest. Thereupon Thomas Committee deleted around 50 survey numbers from its list which was submitted before the NGT and in its final report submitted to the Government of Goa in 2018, it listed only 43 survey numbers (some part, some full) and added some new survey numbers. The forest area of this village was then reduced in Thomas Committee report submitted to the Government in 2018 to 50 survey numbers. The Government of Goa did not bother to seek the leave of the NGT, nor informed the applicant of the changes made in final order of NGT. The dropping of survey numbers after they having been identified by the Committee four years earlier under NGT's order, ought to have been reviewed by the Review Committee, if at all. Further it is submitted that instead, the RC-II took upon itself to examine the survey numbers in the Thomas Committee report submitted to the Government all over again. First, the RC-II checked them against the FSI maps following its new methodology of imposing the survey numbers on FSI identified green cover maps, nearly 80 % of the survey numbers got discarded. Only 12 survey numbers were listed by RC-II in newspaper advertisement dated 05.06.2021 calling for objections. Despite the fact that the Thomas

Committee had already issued an advertisement on 05.05.2016 calling for objections. Therefore, it makes it clear that the Government of Goa was almost begging the owners to object to their areas being identified as private forest. In the meantime, due to lethargy, felling of the trees continued unabated on these lands, which now stood at 10 survey numbers. The interim report of RC-II so far indicates that around 6 survey numbers have been deleted as “not qualified”. How many more will go is difficult to project. None of these survey numbers in this village appear to have been approved as private forest till date by the RC-II. It is evident, therefore, that the private forest areas finalized by the Thomas Committee under the supervision of NGT has been reduced from 92 survey numbers to just 12 survey numbers before the RC-II and four out of these have been deleted. This rendered the judgment in O.A. No.166/2013 infructuous by the RC-II.

27. The other example given is that of South Goa regarding which it is submitted that the Araujo Committee reports on three categories of work that had carried out i.e. (i) the finalized and demarcated private forests; (ii) forest areas provisionally identified and (iii) villages where it has not been able to visit as yet for identifying private forests. It is further mentioned that this application is concerned only with the first category of work i.e. demarcated forest area of 5.3 sq.kms. At pages 38 to 61 of the report, the Committee has listed five large patches of natural forest in the villages of Dabolim, Sancoale and Cortalim, which it had demarcated on the ground, including boundary, as private forest. The RC-II has excluded several of these survey numbers solely on the basis that they were not found listed on the FSI maps. Some of these areas are subject matter of High Court/Tribunal proceedings. The limited area has been examined by the ground truthing and for hearing of the objections of the public. As a result of this, finalized area of the private forest in these

villages as per the Araujo Committee have been reduced by more than 75%, leaving the field open for large number of real estate projects and consequent wholesale destruction of natural environment and local ecosystem.

28. Further it is submitted that survey nos.4, 9, 13, 23, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 43, 44 and 46 were finalized by the Araujo Committee as private forest in Dabolim village, which have been excluded by the RC-II. Of these, survey No.43 was subject matter of PIL before the Hon'ble High Court since 2010, where housing project has been stayed as the Forest Department and a site visit of the MoEF&CC identified it as forest area. Later, it was transferred to the NGT where the Expert Committee, ordered to conduct a special site inspection, again identified and marked the plot as a private forest, after detailed site inspection, enumeration and hearings. It underlines the flawed nature of the exercise conducted by the RC-II. Similarly, it is pointed out that survey No.13 is before the Hon'ble High Court regarding which the order has been issued to the effect that no further development would be permitted on the plots without leave of the Court.

29. The Government of Goa appears to be hostile to the idea of assuming responsibility for private forests in Goa considering it to be an additional burden on it and that it only prefers to deal with Government's own forest and wild life sanctuaries.

30. The Forest Department has also issued Circular dated 10.11.2021 stating that the survey numbers that have been excluded by RC-II and which have an area less than 1 Ha can be cleared for the purpose of development. Further, those areas which are below 5 ha and canopy density is above 10%, even though they were excluded by the Review Committee, none-the-less they would still be covered by the Hon'ble Supreme Court prohibition of 04.02.2015 banning any conversion of

lands in excess of one ha which have a canopy density of 10%. The said Circular is annexed as Annexure-9. Regarding this Circular, the applicant has stated that it has no faith in such circulars and attention is drawn to earlier Office Memorandum (O.M.) dated 18.06.2021 (annexed as Annexure 10), which absolved persons owning plots below one ha from even getting clearance from the Forest Department for conversion purpose, but fortunately this Circular has been stayed by the Hon'ble High Court in Writ Petition filed by the applicant, vide order dated 28.10.2021 (annexure at Annexure 11).

31. Further it is mentioned that RC-II does not comprise any independent members of civil society. Hence, its exercise has been turned into a purely departmental exercise, making it subject to interference of higher-ups, politicians and real estate developers. It shows that there is a calculated drive to eliminate much of the private forests identified and demarcated by T&A Committees. Civil Society members have always been the members of these Committees in Goa.

32. In view of above, the NGT must halt the work of the RC-II immediately and must order a status quo to be maintained of all survey numbers identified in the report of T&A Committees till it has examined the issues raised in this application.

33. From the side of **respondent Nos.1 to 3, the stand** taken is that the Government in order to identify the private forest has adopted the following criteria:

- (i) 75% of the tree composition should be of forestry species;
- (ii) The area should be contiguous to the Government Forest and if in isolation, the minimum area should be 5 ha.
- (iii) Canopy density should not be less than 0.4

The Committees followed the above criteria as adopted by the State of Goa in 1991 based on the judgment of the Hon'ble High Court of Bombay

in *Writ Petition (C) No.162/1987 titled Sivanand Salgaonkar Vs. Tree Officer & Ors.*

34. The reports of the Sawant Committee and Karapurkar Committee have been reviewed by the Review Committee (RC-I), headed by Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF) and the same has been accepted by the NGT vide order dated 18.08.2020 passed in Original Application No.479/2018. Due to the time constraint, RC-I could not review the reports of T&A Committees, though it was mandated to review it. RC-I was constituted by order dated 23.04.2018.

35. In order to review the private forest areas provisionally identified by the T&A Committees, the Government of Goa, vide Notifications dated 21.01.2020 and 18.06.2020, constituted a Review Committee (RC-II), headed by the Chief Conservator of Forests, which comprised of four officers from the Forest Department, two from the Revenue Department and one each from Survey and Land Reforms Department.

36. It is further submitted that after identifying the provisional private forests, T&A Committees had prepared plans for some survey numbers and excluded some of them entirely on ocular basis without any strong scientific basis and methodology, due to the grievances received from private citizens and NGOs regarding inclusion and non-inclusion of certain areas of private forest and also to adopt the uniform approach, the Government disbanded T&A Committees with immediate effect on 23.04.2018 before submission of final report by them and mandated RC-I to review the survey numbers identified by T&A Committees also, besides reviewing the survey numbers identified by S&K Committees. Since the RC-I undertook review of S&K Committee's report on priority and could not undertake review of T&A Committees' work, RC-II was formed in 2020. The T&A Committees submitted their final report on 10.12.2018 and 28.12.2018, respectively, eight months after their disbanding,

which was not accepted by the Government. Resultantly, the entire exercise done by T&A Committees was provisional, which were to be reviewed by RC-II as per the ToR given in Notification dated 21.01.2020. Therefore, it cannot be said that RC-II exceeded its ToR.

37. Further it is mentioned that RC-II issued an advertisement inviting objections, publishing the list of provisionally identified Survey numbers on 15.02.2020 and 14.03.2020, which was also put up by the Forest Department on its website. Since the applicant was closely following the matter, they were quite aware about this information. The list included Survey numbers demarcated on ocular basis by T&A Committees. Hence, raising this matter after two years, towards the end of the review exercise, is not accepted.

38. The answering respondents have submitted five interim reports which have been accepted by the Government. At the time of submission of these reports, it was apprised that the survey numbers finalized by the T&A Committees have also been reviewed as earlier they had been finalized on ocular basis and this had been approved by the Government. Therefore, it is quite evident that the answering respondents have worked as per prescribed mandate. The three interim reports were uploaded on the website of the Forest Department on 13.09.2021. In these reports, specified detailed methodology was mentioned along with the mention of review of the area demarcated on ocular basis by T&A Committee. A detailed methodology was placed before the NGT on 26.11.2021, a copy of which was also provided to the applicant. The applicant was fully aware of this, but did not raise any objection. But when the exercise neared completion, it has decided to approach this Tribunal challenging the methodology adopted by RC-II along with five interim reports, putting at risk the entire work of the Committee done so far.

39. The ground is also set up by the answering respondents that the application is time barred as per the provision of Section 14 sub-clause (3) of the National Green Tribunal Act and that no substantial question relating to environment is made out in the present matter. In the case in hand, the cause of action first arose when the interim reports were uploaded on the website of the Forest Department i.e. on 13.09.2021 while the present Original Application is filed on 06.04.2022 after 202 days. Therefore, it is liable to be dismissed being time barred.

40. It is further submitted that the T&A Committees had made the demarcation of private forests on ocular basis and not with scientific technology being employed. In the 9th meeting of RC-II, discussion and deliberation was made in detail regarding the areas whose demarcation was finalized by the T&A Committees and it was unanimously agreed that all survey numbers will be reviewed by RC-II through field verification and final decision shall be taken as per the field report. Further, in its 10th meeting, it was also decided that all those survey numbers which were identified and later excluded in its final report by T&A Committees, will be reviewed by RC-II (the learned counsel for the applicant has raised objection against this decision saying that this was not within the domain of RC-II because ToR did not contain verification of the already finalized survey numbers).

41. Further it is mentioned by the answering respondents that some of the survey numbers finalized by Thomas Committee were at variance with the survey numbers finalized by DCF (Working Plan) Committee (RC-I) in O.A. No.478/2018, which has been accepted by the NGT. For an example of this, Survey Nos.106/1 and 107/1 of Talaulim, demarcated area is 99 Ha as per Thomas Committee whereas it was found to be 33.72 Ha as per RC-1 report (Annexure R-6). Further it is mentioned that the applicant has accepted this without challenging the findings of RC-I's

report in this respect. Therefore, if plan prepared by Thomas Committee on ocular basis is accepted by RC-II, then it would be in violation of the order of NGT in O.A. No.479/2018.

42. It is further submitted by the answering respondents that the RC-II has adopted similar technology, which was adopted by RC-I, report of which has already been accepted by the NGT. Moreover, to strengthen the procedure of survey, the RC-II used LISS IV Forest Cover maps, which has a resolution of 5.8 m against standard FCM of 23.5 m, obtained from Forest of India, Dehradun to identify the areas with canopy density of 40% and above, which is more scientific and unbiased. In fact, RC-I report accepted by NGT included two parts of private forest areas finalized using different methodology. The 46.11 sq.kms. area accepted by the NGT included 41.2 sq.kms. area demarcated by the State level demarcation team and 4.91 sq.kms. area demarcated by RC-I, which had used satellite image. As the methodology of RC-I was an improvement over the methodology followed by the state level demarcation team, the methodology followed by RC-II is an improvement over that followed by RC-I, making it more technically sound and freer from human biases. The said methodology has been duly approved by the Government of Goa, of which the applicant was also well aware since long.

43. Further it is submitted that in both T&A Committees' reports, it is mentioned that the crop composition and canopy density were judged on ocular basis wherein numerous survey numbers were also excluded by the said Committee arbitrarily in its final report without ground verification, though the same is contested by the petitioner. The DCF (North) and DCF (South) both have also reported that the plans prepared by T&A Committees were on ocular basis. The RC-II had mandated to review all provisionally identified survey numbers. Both the Committees i.e. T&A Committees had also included already finalized survey numbers

in O.A. No.479/2018, which has been disposed of by this Tribunal based on work of RC-I. The excluded survey numbers were also being taken for review by RC-II as exclusion was also done by the T&A Committees on ocular basis without ground verification or justification. For example, survey number 204 at Soccorro village under Bardez taluka was provisionally identified as private forest and later, 204/1 and 204/4 were excluded arbitrarily by Thomas Committee. However, when RC-II reviewed the survey numbers with FSI map and field verification by sub-committee, it was found that part of the survey numbers was fulfilling the criteria of private forest and reported so in 5th interim report (Annexure R-7), submitted to the NGT. Further it is mentioned that as there is substantial curtailment of rights due to identification of any land as private forest, wherein Forest Conservation Act, 1980 would be applicable, it is not fair to declare any area as private forest merely on ocular basis. In view of this, RC-II decided to review ocularly finalized areas i.e. all those areas for which plans prepared as well as excluded on an ocular basis by T&A Committees, following the same methodology through which other areas are reviewed as the answering respondents could not discriminate between finalized survey numbers and non-finalised survey numbers. Further it is submitted that RC-II has reported that after enumeration through sampling, approximate area qualified for private forest is 25 sq.kms. It has separately indicated the area finalized in all respects as 2.87 sq.kms.(in 4th report). This is an ongoing process. After the 5th report, the area finalized in all respects has increased to 3.32 sq.kms. For the remaining area, as per approved methodology, scrutiny, hearing of affected persons and 100% enumeration, if affected persons insist is required before finalizing it.

44. Further it is submitted that RC-II comprised of four officers from Forest Department of CCF rank as the Chairman, DCF rank officer as its

Member Secretary and two ACF rank officers as members of Forest Department, two Deputy Collectors from Revenue Department and two Head of Departments, one each from Director rank officers from Survey and Land Reforms Department and Agriculture Department. Thus, four out of eight members of the RC-II belong to various Departments of high rank. The ground enumeration in the field is conducted by 14 sub-committees consisting of Range Forest Officers of Forest Department, Inspector of Survey and Land Records, Directorate of Land and Survey Department and village Talathi of Revenue Department. Since the review exercise involved survey and demarcation, identification of survey numbers as well as identification of forestry and non-forestry species, involvement of concerned Department officials was required.

45. It is submitted that T&A Committees provisionally identified in-all 154 survey numbers and later, excluded them, in its final report without any ground verification, which also included some survey numbers which were finalized by RC-I and accepted by the NGT. The said Committees did not have authority, after their disbandment, to submit the report.

46. Regarding reliance on FSI Maps of 2014-2015, it is submitted that T&A Committees had taken up the field verification during the period 2012 to 2017. Therefore, the satellite data of 2014-2015 of Forest Cover Maps/classified images of FSI were used to superimpose the digitized maps of provisionally identified survey numbers, for the assessment of criteria of private forest. The Forest Survey of India certified after field verification that data provided by them is correct and accurate. The FSI report is at Annexure R-8.

47. It is further submitted that the FSI map has been relied for canopy density as the same is found to be unbiased and highly scientific using modern technology supported by ground truthing with FSI having more than 30 years experience in preparing forest map. Manual canopy density

analysis is not only subjective and arbitrary besides consuming lot of time. The species composition cannot be obtained from FSI map of India and hence, field verification of all survey numbers qualifying the other two criteria are being taken up with 16 sub-committees.

48. Further it is submitted that since the area and canopy criteria has been determined by FSI map, if any survey number is not found fulfilling area and canopy criteria, it will not be private forest area. Thus, in such case, need for field verification, which is required for checking enumeration criteria for deciding of forest species, does not arise. The answering respondents submitted that this Misc. Application is liable to be dismissed.

49. **Respondent No.4 – CREDAI** has submitted that the latest FSI data and maps shall be more relevant to the present status of the lands and for preparation and finalization of private forests. The interim reports of the Forest Department cannot be construed as vitiated for using the latest data available with the FSI. Further it is submitted that the issue of identification of private forest in the State of Goa is pending for last more than twenty years. Therefore, it is in the interest of all stakeholders involved in the real estate industry that the issue attains closure at the earliest. The real estate industry is grappling with the issue of identification of private forest for a long time. A lot of uncertainty is there in the investment climate in the State of Goa. Because of this, the applicant has been challenging practically every report/action taken by the Forest Department on account of which inordinate delay has taken place and therefore, this application should be dismissed at the very initial stage.

50. The applicant has submitted rejoinder dated 11.03.2023, wherein it is submitted that RC-II is not a Review Committee, rather it is a new Committee with fresh mandate. As per minutes of the third meeting of

this Committee, from the forest identified by T&A Committees, it amounted to 32 sq.kms., the RC-II has commenced its work with potential forest identification of some 92 sq.kms. Therefore, it is hardly meaningful to claim that RC-II is a Committee reviewing what the previous Committee (RC-I) had not been able to complete for want of time.

51. Further it is submitted by the applicant that respondent Nos.1 to 3 have omitted to take this fact into consideration that all the work done on private forest identification, thus far, had been based on ocular exercise. In fact, the forest identification exercise including demarcation work, which the Forest Department carried out on the basis of S&K Committees' reports, was nothing but ocular. The principal findings of Deepshika Committee (RC-I) did not review the ocular decisions of the Forest Department, on which there was no dispute. It only sought to review some areas excluded by the Forest Department Committee, of which it confirmed that 4.7 sq.kms. had to be included as forest. This Tribunal upheld mainly ocular report in the form of accepting Deepshika Review Committee's (RC-I) report.

52. Further it is submitted that it is incorrect to state that T&A Committees did not do scientific sampling of the plots examined by them and that the involvement of major real estate firms led to the disbandment of these Committees. These S&K Committees were headed by senior forest officers having expertise in forestry and extensive knowledge of plants and trees. Therefore, the work of these Committees must be looked at with respect. If the State Government was not satisfied with the work of T&A Committees, it should have appointed two new Committees. To call the present Committee a Review Committee, which is then proclaiming that it had nothing to review as the work of T&A Committees was worthless, is hardly doing service for protection of the

forest. It is scandal that a small state like Goa cannot complete identification of its forest areas despite gap of 25 long years.

53. Further it is submitted that the laches are being attributed on the part of the applicant, which is groundless when the fact is that all the five reports submitted are interim reports. Therefore, the public, including the applicant had to consider them as interim. At the most, a better claim could have been made by the respondents that the application is premature one as the final report is yet to be presented, which reality still appears to be two years away. What has forced the applicant to seek the intervention of this Tribunal is the fact that it has come to know that State authorities have been surreptitiously granting Conversion Sanads and Development Permissions for some of the plots excluded from forest by the interim reports, which cannot be permitted unless and until this Tribunal approves the consolidated report as and when it is available and submitted for consideration. Till such time, none of the survey numbers can be divested of their status of private forest. The final view must come from this Tribunal in the matter. In fact, this Tribunal is the only true Review Committee. It has already rejected the findings of D'Souza Committee as recorded in its judgment dated 18.08.2020 which was a doubtful review committee hastily appointed by the Government to exclude plots belonging to the lobbies. It is true that the RC-I constituted vide order dated 23.04.2018 was mandated to review the entire reports of T&A Committees as well as the reports of S&K Committees as per Notification in the Gazette. The RC-II was not given any power to re-examine those survey numbers declared as forest by the T&A Committees. In doing that, the RC-II has exceeded its mandate by reviewing the finally identified areas of forests. Respondent Nos.1 to 3 have justified this exercise relying on two grounds that the final reports were not accepted by the Government and RC-II was continuing the work

of RC-I of reviewing the entire work, which the earlier Committee was unable to complete fully due to paucity of time. It is denied that the final reports dated 10.12.2018 and 28.12.2018 of the T&A Committees were not accepted by the Government. The order dated 23.04.2018 establishing the RC-I clearly states that the T&A Committees are disbanded as the work of identification of private forests is complete. Neither this order nor any subsequent order establishing RC-II dated 21.01.2020/18.06.2020 recorded even a whisper of the decision of the Government to reject the reports of the T&A Committees. Therefore, the said averment is contrary to the record. It is a settled principle of law that reasons or statements cannot be read into orders subsequently when such reasons do not form part of the original order itself.

54. As regards saying that RC-II is simply completing the work left unfinished by RC-I, it is submitted that the same is contrary to the record. The order dated 21.01.2020 establishing the RC-II defines the mandate as being the exercise of reviewing only the private forests provisionally identified by the T&A Committees. Anything beyond that is a breach.

55. It is further submitted that the T&A Committees had explicitly identified 3.26 sq.kms and 5.3 sq.kms., respectively after field survey and demarcation on ground, which was termed as 'finally identified private forest area'. In contradiction, these Committees separately identified large extent of private forest provisionally, but could not carry out final survey and demarcation of these areas, which areas were termed as 'provisionally identified private forest areas'. Thus, the total identified area by these Committees amounted to 32 sq.kms.

56. It is submitted that while in case of RC-II it was explicitly laid down in the terms and conditions that it would review only provisionally identified forests by the T&A Committees, but in contrast, the RC-I did

not have limited jurisdiction regarding the scope of its work only to the provisionally identified private forests.

57. Further it is submitted that the applicant does not have any objection to the advertisements inviting objections as they explicitly termed the survey numbers mentioned as being part of the provisionally identified forest areas by the T&A Committees. Further it is mentioned that even assuming that the applicant had objection to such advertisements, the State would take up the defence that the review exercise was ongoing and that any grievance with the review proceeding sans a final report would not be justifiable.

58. Further it is submitted that much emphasis has been laid by respondent Nos.1 to 3 that the work of T&A Committees was done on ocular basis. In this regard, it is submitted that the applicant fails to understand how the State is now faulting the T&A Committees on the ground that the work was done on ocular basis when the State has itself in the order constituting the said Committees explicitly asked them to judge private forests on ground 'ocularly in conformation with crop composition (75% or more of the trees to be of forest nature and canopy density (0.4 or more)).'

59. Further it is submitted that the claim of respondent Nos.1 to 3 that the decision of the RC-II to review the finalized survey numbers has been approved by the Government is erroneous because no approval or order to that effect has been placed on record. This claim on their part contradicts the claim that the State Government has not accepted either of these two Committees' reports. Even if it is presumed that such approval exists, the same would not have effect of overriding the mandate by RC-II as is specified in order dated 21.01.2020 which laid down that its domain was limited to the survey numbers provisionally identified by T&A Committees as private forests. Moreover, since all the survey

numbers are considered incorrect or unacceptable by RC-II, it had nothing to review. The objections of the applicant regarding methodology adopted by RC-II are common to all the four reports. It would be incorrect to reckon the date of uploading of the first three reports as the starting point for the purposes of computing the limitation in terms of Section 14 sub-clause (3) of the NGT Act. The applicant is not before this Tribunal challenging a particular survey number identified as forest in the first three reports. On the contrary, the applicant is aggrieved by the methodology adopted by RC-II in carrying out the present exercise of review of forest areas. Therefore, the cause of action is initially arising on 13.09.2021 from the date of uploading of these three reports and subsequently stands revived with filing of each further interim report by RC-II, which is still continuing with the same methodology. With regard to these reports being called 'interim' by the Forest Department so long as the final report is not approved, it is submitted that it is equivalent of continuing nuisance or violation. The applicant has approached this Tribunal because without approval by this Tribunal, no survey number can be divested of the status of 'forest'.

60. The **stand taken by respondent Nos.5 and 6** in their affidavit dated 09.08.2022 is that as regards the formation of the Committees earlier for identification/demarcation of the private forest land pursuant to the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 12.12.1996 passed in **T.N. Godavarman's** case, the same facts have been repeated which have already been stated by the applicant as well as respondent Nos.1 to 3 in their affidavits mentioned above. In addition to that, the answering respondents have stated that the issue of determining private forest within the State of Goa was finally determined by this Tribunal in Original Application No.479/2018 wherein this Tribunal accepted the report of the Committee appointed by the State Government pursuant to

the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. In paragraph 9 of this affidavit, it is stated that even the State Government has submitted in their affidavit that the methodology which was adopted by RC-I in respect of finalization of the private forest area earlier, the same has been adopted by RC-II as well. The methodology adopted by RC-II is an improvement over the methodology followed by RC-I, making it more technically sound and free from human biases. The property belonging to the answering respondents being Survey No.128/9 and 128/10 do not qualify to be forest as the record discloses that the property bearing Survey No.128/9 admeasuring 1550 sq.mtrs has been shown as Garden which is cultivable and Survey No.128/10 admeasuring 200 sq.mtrs is shown as cultivable land.

61. Heard the arguments of the learned counsel for the parties and perused the record.

62. Based on the arguments made by the respective learned counsel, following issues are being framed by us for determination of the dispute involved herein:

Issues :

- (i) Whether the present Application is time barred ?
- (ii) Whether RC-II exceeded its mandate by undertaking review of forest areas finalized by Thomas and Araujo Committees ?
- (iii) Whether the methodology adopted by RC-II was appropriate ?
- (iv) What should be the methodology for finalization of the private forest and what should be its outer time limit ?

Findings :

Issue No.(i) :

63. As per this issue, we have to decide as to whether the present application is time barred. In this regard, at the very outset, we would like to indicate that from the side of none of the respondents, this issue

has been vehemently pressed as no arguments were made in this regard. Even then, we deem it appropriate to give finding on this issue because the issue of limitation is a legal issue and that this Tribunal should take into consideration the facts involved and the law under which it may be found to be time barred.

64. The present application has been filed under the provisions of Section 14 of the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010, seeking quashing of the four interim reports submitted by respondent Nos.1 to 3 relating to identification/demarcation/determination of the private forest area in the North Goa district and South Goa district in the State of Goa. By the time this application was filed, only four interim reports had been filed and that the work was still in progress. Since filing of this application, two more interim reports have been filed by respondent Nos.1 to 3. Therefore, it is quite evident that respondent Nos.1 to 3 themselves are admitting this fact that these are not the final reports as process of declaring the area to be private forest is still in progress. It is only partially that some area has been found to be finally demarcated as forest area. In this background, we find that the applicant has reckoned the date of limitation from December, 2021 and January, 2022, which are said to be the months of preparation of the reports by the respondents, while the application has been filed on 06.04.2022. Six months' period is prescribed during which the application can be filed as per sub-section 3 of Section 14 of the NGT Act. The same would lapse, in the present case, in the month of June, 2022.

65. From the side of respondent Nos.1 to 3, it is submitted that since the first three reports were brought in public domain on 13.09.2021 as they were uploaded on its website and that the applicant being a person who was diligently pursuing the matter, would certainly be attributed the knowledge of the said date, the reckoning of the period of limitation of six

months should begin from that date under Section 14 sub-clause (3) of the NGT Act, which would lapse on 12.03.2022.

66. In rejoinder, it has been made clear by the applicant that the limitation should be computed from the date of uploading of the first three interim reports because these three reports are being called interim reports. Therefore, so long as the final reports are not submitted by the Forest Department and those do not get approved by this Tribunal, the applicant would be treated to be suffering and there would be continuous cause due to violation being made on various grounds in finalization of the private forest area. The reliance is also placed on the decision of this Tribunal (Principal Bench) in ***Forward Foundation Vs. State of Karnataka and Ors; 2015 ALL(1) NGT Reporter (2)(Delhi)81***, which lays down that the recurring cause of action is distinct and completed occurrence made of a fact or blend of composite facts giving rise to a fresh legal injury, fresh right to sue and triggering a fresh lease of limitation. In the case in hand, 4th interim report was uploaded on 28.02.2022 while this application was filed on 06.04.2022, which was within the prescribed period of limitation. We are completely in agreement with the arguments of the learned counsel for the applicant that the reports submitted to the Government are only interim reports as of now and the area of private forest is in process of being determined and therefore, this will give rise to the continuous cause of action to the applicant in case when the infirmity is pointed out in any of these reports. It is also evident from the facts of the case that the objections which have been raised by the learned counsel for the applicant with respect to the domain of RC-II having unauthorizedly touched upon those areas which had been finalized as private forest by the T&A Committees which was not their domain according to the Notification issued by the Government and that methodology adopted for determination of the

private forest by RC-II while reviewing the work done by T&A Committees is also assailed on various counts. Therefore, this kind of assailing the process will give rise to the continuous cause of action arising in favour of the applicant. Hence, we find that this application does not suffer from limitation and we hold that the application is filed well within the prescribed period of limitation and is not time barred. This issue is decided accordingly.

Issue No. (ii) :

67. As far as this issue is concerned, we have to decide as to whether RC-II has exceeded its mandate by undertaking review of the forest areas finalized by Thomas and Araujo Committees ? Before making final opinion on this issue, it would be appropriate to give in brief the past history in this matter in chronological order.

68. Pursuant to the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in **T.N. Godavarman**, dated 12.12.1996, the Government of Goa, vide Notification dated 06.07.1997, constituted Sawant Committee to demarcate private forests in the State of Goa, which identified 47 sq.kms. private forest. Thereafter, the State Government set up Karapurkar Committee vide Notification dated 04.09.2000 to review the work of Sawant Committee, but pursuant to the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 04.05.2001 in Writ Petition No.181/2001, the said Committee was restrained from reviewing the work of Sawant Committee. Thereafter, Karpurkar Committee was restricted to identify new areas only. Both the above Committees, in total, identified 67.02 sq.kms. of private forest and submitted final report on 16.08.2002. But no demarcation of this private forest was done by these Committees. Thereafter, pursuant to the order of the Hon'ble High Court dated 02.07.2003 passed in a PIL, these Committees commenced the work of demarcating private forest and found that on 30.06.2008, the Forest

Department completed the demarcation of the private forest area, which was reduced from 67.02 sq.kms. to 41.21 sq.kms. This exclusion of 20 sq.kms forest was again challenged by the applicant in a writ Petition, which was transferred to NGT as O.A. No.18/2013. Thereafter, vide Notification dated 03.05.2018, the State Government appointed RC-I by name Deepshikha Committee to cross check the work done by S&K Committees and finalized private forest area of 46.11 sq.kms., which stands finalized pursuant to the judgment and order of this Tribunal dated 18.08.2020 passed in O.A. No.18/2013, which stood confirmed upto the Hon'ble Supreme Court as SLP against it was rejected vide order dated 01.02.2021.

69. Because of the work of demarcation of private forests being incomplete, the applicant had moved the Hon'ble Supreme Court initially and thereafter, the Hon'ble High Court in 2006 for constitution of additional Committee to implement the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 12.12.1996 in totality. Accordingly, by Notification dated 21.11.2012, the State Government set up V.T. Thomas and Francisco Araujo Committees (T&A Committees), in which procedure for demarcation of the private forest was also indicated. The said procedure involved deputation of field surveyor to survey and demarcate the forest areas identified by the Committees on survey maps as well as with pegs on the ground. Out of these two Committees, the Thomas Committee provisionally identified 8.64 sq.kms. area, out of which 3.26 sq.kms. was demarcated and finalized as private forest, while the Araujo Committee finalized demarcated 5.38 sq.kms. as private forest. It was done on the basis of survey and demarcation with pegs.

70. The Government thereafter issued Notification dated 23.04.2018 in which it was recorded that the Government of Goa had constituted the North Goa and South Goa Forest Division Committees by Notification

dated 27.11.2012 for identification of private forests. As the work of identification of private forests is completed, the said Committees are hereby disbanded with immediate effect.

71. The Notification dated 27.11.2012, by which V.T. Thomas Committee and Francisco Araujo Committee were constituted for North Goa Forest Division and South Goa Forest Division, respectively, states that the Terms of Reference and other conditions of the Committees shall be as under:

- (i) *The Committees shall identify the balance areas of private forests in North Goa Forest Division and South Goa Forest Division, respectively that have not been covered by the Sawant Committee Report and Karapurkar Committee Report.*
- (ii) *The Committees shall locate the private forests on ground individually, and judge them ocularly in conformation with crop composition (75% or more of the trees to be of forest nature) and canopy density (0.4 or more).*
- (iii) *The DSLR/Revenue Officer shall immediately estimate, through the Land Surveyors, the geographical areas of such forests.*
- (iv) *If such forests are found to be satisfying the three criteria (i.e. geographical area 5 ha. or more if not contiguous to Government forests, crop composition of 75% or more trees of forest species and canopy density 0.4 or more) by the Committees, the DSLR & Revenue Officers shall get such identified private forests surveyed, plotted them on the map and incorporated them in the plans of the respective Survey Numbers.*

For enabling this, the respective District Collectors, in co-ordination with the Director of Settlement and Land Records, shall depute a team of necessary and sufficient number of field surveyors to be at the disposal of the DSLR's officers in the Committees.

- (v) *The Committees shall demarcate such identified private forests from the non-forest area on the ground by pegs and on the maps as well.*
- (vi) *The Committees shall submit their monthly progress report to the Additional Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests, in the format at Annexure 1.*

72. In view of the fact that the grievances are received from private citizens and NGOs regarding inclusion and non-inclusion of certain areas of private forest and also to ensure an uniform approach to the issue, a new Committee (RC-II) was constituted on 23.04.2018 to review the identified private forest area by these two Committees and those identified by earlier S&K Committees in pursuance of the order dated 07.01.2016 passed by this Tribunal in Application No.18(THC)/2013 (WZ), which have been finally surveyed. The terms of Reference (ToR) of the Private Forest Review Committee, were as under:

- (i) *The Committee shall review digitized maps of private forest areas which have been prepared using the Revenue Department/Directorate of Settlement and Land Records and overlaid on the satellite imageries of the Forest Survey of India for assessment of Forest cover in Goa, conforming to the three criteria.*
- (ii) *Technical expertise of Forest Survey of India (FSI), Bangalore could be taken in order to ascertain the composition and canopy density of the identified areas, if there is any dispute.*
- (iii) *The Dy. Conservator of Forests of the concerned territorial divisions will then carry out ground verification in respect of such cases which are in doubt or having ambiguity in order to prepare final report on Private Forest areas in the State.*

73. Next it is found to be pertinent to mention here is that the Terms of Reference (ToR) of RC-II, have been given in the Notification dated 23.04.2018, by which the said RC-II was set up and in the said Notification, it is mentioned that a Committee comprising of following members (names of eight members are given therein) is hereby constituted to review the private forest areas provisionally identified by the North (Thomas) and South (Araujo) Goa Forest Division Committees, constituted vide Notification dated 27.11.2012. The Committee shall get the methodology approved by the Government within 15 days for

reviewing the private forest areas provisionally identified by the North (Thomas) and South (Araujo) Goa Forest Division Committees.

74. Much emphasis has been laid by the learned counsel for the applicant that the constitution of this Committee itself shows that it was directed to review the private forest areas which were provisionally identified by the T&A Committees and not those areas which had been finally determined to be treated finally identified forest areas i.e. 3.26 sq.kms. by Thomas Committee and 5.38 sq.kms. by Araujo Committee. They were not to be touched while reviewing the work of T&A Committees' work. This Committee i.e. RC-II has exceeded its domain by reviewing the entire work of T&A Committees, which included the finally identified forest areas as well as the provisionally identified forest areas. Apart from this, it is also vehemently objected by the learned counsel for the applicant that the methodology which has been adopted by this Committee was inferior to the methodology adopted by the T&A Committees. Therefore, when the area which had been determined as private forest areas by the T&A Committees by employing better technology, which included also ocular technique and site visit verification, the said work should not have been allowed to be overturned by the subsequently appointed Committee i.e. RC-II. This is an arbitrary act on the part of the Committee, which decision they have taken on their own without any approval from the Government. This has resulted in taking away lot of area which was finally determined as private forest by the T&A Committees, in order to help the persons involved in real estate business.

75. On the other hand, from the side of respondent Nos.1 to 3, it is vociferously argued by Mr. Kohli, learned senior counsel that the T&A Committees were disbanded by the Government on 23.04.2018 by Notification because of the completion of work of the said Committees of

identification of private forest areas. Thereafter, the Government had received various grievances from private citizens as well as NGOs regarding the areas being included/excluded from the private forest areas erroneously which led to the constitution of the RC-II to ensure adoption of uniform approach in review of the identified area of private forests by the T&A Committees and also the area identified by earlier Committees i.e. Sawant and Karapurkar Committees. It is further emphasized by the learned senior counsel that when the T&A Committees were disbanded on 23.04.2018, till then the reports of these Committees were not submitted, rather they were submitted about eight months thereafter, for which they were not empowered. Therefore, whatever work is found to have been done by these two Committees will be treated to be entirely provisional work of identification of the private forest area and that the Government had all power vested in it to order a review of the work conducted by the said Committees. Because of this reason only, in the Notification dated 21.01.2020, issued by the Government, it has been provided that the RC-II was reviewing the private forest areas provisionally identified. By words “provisionally identified”, it would mean that the entire work of the T&A Committees was required to be appraised again, in view of the grievances received from the private citizens and NGOs regarding the errors committed and because of the same, the said Committees had no jurisdiction to file reports eight months after their disbandment.

76. In our view, the Authority from which the power emanates to the Committee herein is the Government of Goa, which had constituted the T&A Committees for identification of the private forest laying down in the notification the procedure to be adopted, which is quite extensive, but even then the errors being there, could not be ruled out. Therefore, in case some complaints were received from some corners, for their correction, it cannot be said that the Government would not have power

vested in it to constitute a fresh Committee for the evaluation of the work done by the earlier Committees afresh.

77. One more aspect has been asserted by the learned senior counsel for respondent Nos.1 to 3 that the reports of the T&A Committees were never accepted by the Government. Therefore, to say that they should be presumed to have accepted that an area of 3.26 sq.kms. and 5.38 sq.kms. should be treated to have been finally identified and demarcated as private forest area, would be incorrect. The Government was of the view that the said area entirely was to be reviewed by RC-II in the backdrop of various grievances having been received. The learned counsel for the applicant hammered the point that there is no order on record placed by respondent Nos.1 to 3 in support of their case that these reports were rejected/not accepted by the Government. But in this case, we are of the view that respondent Nos.1 to 3, which included the Government of Goa, when submit an affidavit and says something on oath, unless there is something shown contrary, the averment made in the said affidavit to the effect that the reports of the said Committees were not accepted, cannot be disbelieved. Therefore, review of the entire area i.e. 3.26 sq.kms and 5.38 sq.kms., which had been identified as private forest by the T&A Committees, was also within the domain of RC-II along with other areas which were said to be provisionally identified by these Committees. Hence, we find that RC-II has not exceeded its mandate by undertaking review of the forest areas finalized by Thomas and Araujo Committees. Issue No. (ii) is decided accordingly.

Issue Nos.(iii) and (iv) :

78. As per these issues, we have to decide as to whether the methodology adopted by RC-II was appropriate? and what should be the methodology for finalization of the private forest and what should be its outer limit ? In this regard, the learned counsel for the applicant submits

that the T&A Committees' work was not based solely on ocular basis because the details stated in the action taken report by the Thomas Committee, which is at page 50 of the paper-book, mention as follows:

- (i) *Prospective areas were located by using Regional Plan 2021 with respect to already identified and demarcated private forests, natural cover and Govt. forests. Village maps along with google maps were also used for locating potential private forests. Extensive field inspections were carried out to verify the field condition in respect of composition of existing tree cover, density and areas likely to exceed 5 ha. Such areas were brought under provisional list of private forest.*
- (ii) *The Committee met on 134 occasions/days for field meetings/field inspections. The list of provisionally identified forest is enclosed as Exhibit-I.*
- (iii) *Actual survey and demarcation by wooden pegs were taken up in the provisionally identified areas by a team of Surveyors from the Directorate of Settlement and Land Records since 2015.*
- (iv) *Out of 1661.72 ha. (Approximately) of provisionally identified forests, an area of 326.51 ha was surveyed and demarcated. A list of which is enclosed as Exhibit – II. Before the final survey and demarcation, the concerned land owners were intimated and their objections/representations were evaluated with site inspections and genuine cases were considered for deletion and necessary changes were made in the final survey plan. List of such areas which were deleted is mentioned in Exhibit – I.*
- (v) *These finalized survey plans were submitted to the DCF, North for taking up final demarcation in the field with permanent boundary marks. The final survey maps submitted for final demarcation is enclosed as Exhibit – III.*
- (vi) *The committee also attended to many representations made by various NGOs and willing land owners for inclusion into private forest list. Such areas which were fulfilling the criteria of private forest, were also inspected and deserving cases were included to the provisionally identified list. A list of such areas included into list of Private Forest is also mentioned in Exhibit – I.*

These lists of survey numbers appear to have been mentioned in column No.7 of Exhibit – 1 against names of several villagers.

78. Similarly, regarding South Goa Forest Division, Araujo Committee has submitted its final report and the methodology adopted by it is mentioned at Point No.2.3 of the report, which says that in the very first meeting of the Committee, the members took stock of the work to be carried out and the resources available to the members. Other than the criteria listed in the Terms of Reference of the South Goa Forest Division Committee, which are enumerated from paragraph no. 2.2.1 to 2.2.7, there were no other guidelines or precedents to follow. Therefore, it was decided by the Committee that it shall evolve its own methodology and the work strategy. Accordingly, the guidelines were decided after considering the Court's orders also as recommended by the Karapurkar Committee, it decided to hold a meeting with the stakeholders before start of demarcation and survey so that the stakeholders were aware whether or not their lands were affected. The work was carried out in three stages. Stage I ocular estimation for locating prospective/potential forests; (ii) Stage II demarcation of the forest patch on the ground by a two meter wide boundary line, and survey to prepare the map/plan; and (iii) Stage III where petitions of the stakeholders and any other issues were decided and the plan identifying private forests was finalized and intimated to the appropriate authorities.

79. The Committee also decided upon the guidelines for the purpose of demarcation of forests, which were followed by the staff carrying out the demarcation of boundary line, which were as follows:

“2.3.5.1 *Minimum distance between 2 consecutive boundary stones shall be 20 mts.*

2.3.5.2 *The width of the boundary line to be cleared will be 2 mts.*

- 2.3.5.3 *The boundary line running between private Forest and habitation shall be 10 mts. away from the end wall of the habitation.*
- 2.3.5.4 *The boundary line running between forest land and agriculture land.*
- 2.3.5.5 *The boundary line running between forest land and horticulture shall be the outward canopy edge of the horticultural trees.*
- 2.3.5.6 *The boundary line between forest land and plantation like teak and bamboo, issue will not arise as these are forestry species.*
- 2.3.5.7 *Tree crops like acacia, eucalyptus (exotics) and Rubber are non-forestry, and hence taken as horticulture.*
- 2.3.5.8 *Houses in ruins : Any house in ruins, overcome with vegetation lying inside private forest shall be treated as habitation if it is shown in the cadastral survey plan and setback of 3 mts. allowed on all sides.”*

80. Further in point No. 2.3.6, it is mentioned that to start the work of ocular estimation, the Committee needed information of existence of patches of forests, since the information with the Committee on this aspect was limited. A Public Notice was published on 29.12.2012 in three local papers, informing the stakeholders about the work of the Committee and calling for information about patches of forests on private lands. In response to this, information was received from NGOs, forest officers and other citizens, which was found helpful by the Committee. After ocular estimation, before demarcation and survey of the forest area was undertaken, the Committee called a meeting of its stakeholders in respective villages to inform the people about the limits of private forest and the work of demarcation should be undertaken. The stakeholders were subsequently requested not to stop the work of demarcation, rather to give their representations, if any about doubt or displeasure about demarcation, for the Committee to decide.

81. The Committee had physically visited the areas of forest and found the patches of private forest existed. It observed that the crop composition and canopy density were meeting the criteria. After having found the patches, the Committee recorded their survey numbers which could be co-related to the ground features as per the plan available and as far as possible to see.

82. In stage II, demarcation of the forest from the non-forest area was undertaken by clearing a demarcation line by the personnel of the Forest Department as per the guidelines decided by the Committee listed in para 2.2.2 above. The demarcation was necessary since the stakeholder should know the limits of private forest and the non-forest area of his holding, to avoid contravening the FCA, due to lack of knowledge. During the demarcation, representations given by the stakeholders were considered. The Forest officers conducting the demarcation were directed to delineate the boundary by making boundary trees, or objects of permanent nature, existing near the pegs, initially wooden pegs were fixed during survey and later iron nails with washers were fixed. In difficult places, paint marks were put on nearby rocks. The survey of the demarcation line was done by the surveyors of the DSLR using total station. The outline surveyed was then superimposed on the google map having cadastral survey numbers incorporated. The head surveyor provided the Committee a plan/map of the patch of forests, the area of the patch and a statement showing the area falling in the private forests and the area outside the private forests in respect of each sub-division. The Committee stressed that the same format and legend should be used as in the maps of cadastral survey by the DSLR.

83. The Committee then scrutinized the plan/map, to check for any noticeable discrepancies. Next representations/petitions were processed and wherever it was felt necessary to verify the demarcation on site, the

stakeholders were informed about the date and time of field visit, during which the grievances were resolved and the demarcation was changed as per the decision of the Committee. Accordingly, a revised plan was prepared through the Head Surveyor and was placed before the Committee. Once all the representations were decided, the same was certified by the Committee members. The map/plan was forwarded to the Working Plan Division for final demarcation with stones. Another set was forwarded to the Deputy Collector for incorporating the information in the Revenue Records. The report was furnished to the PCCF.

84. It is also clear from this report that the court orders of this Tribunal, the orders in the case of **T.N. Godavarman** were also taken into consideration.

85. Based on above procedure, a list of prospective (provisional) survey numbers was prepared, details of which have been given at pages 90 to 107.

86. Thereafter, the Committee finally identified 10 patches of forest in Mormugao Taluka, which are given at pages 108 and 109 at 6.2.1 in tabular form. Having drawn our attention to this, the learned counsel for the applicant argued that if one goes through the procedure adopted by the T&A Committees, which has been produced by us above, it would find that a meticulous exercise was undertaken by these two Committees in order to identify the provisional forest area and thereafter, they finalized the private forests to the extent of 3.26 sq.kms and 5.38 sq.kms. Therefore, these areas which were finalized by these Committees were not required to be interfered with by the subsequently appointed RC-II because the methodology adopted by RC-II was no-way superior with the methodology adopted by T&A Committees.

87. Visa-a-vis the methodology adopted by T&A Committees, it would be appropriate for us to evaluate as to what methodology has been employed by RC-II for identification and demarcation of the forest area by it. So far, the RC-II has submitted five interim reports and we find that the methodology adopted by it is laid down in the first report at pages 1472 to 1477 of the paper-book, as under:

- (i) The Committee invited objections/representations from affected private forest owners on 15.02.2020 by publishing advertisements in local dailies with due date of submission within one month's notice initially. However, due to prevailing COVID conditions, the timeline was extended from time to time to give sufficient time for convenience of affected persons for filing their representations/objections. It has been decided with approval of the government that considering existing COVID – 19 pandemic conditions, objections received after the due date will also be considered by the Review Committee. Total objections received as on date are 8062 nos.

Data entry, sorting, scrutiny and tabulation of large number of objections received started in March, 2020 and continued till July, 2020. Additional manpower was deployed for scrutiny and tabulation of data during the period considering the huge volume of information. All the objections have been sorted & tabulated and details of objections are uploaded on the departmental website for public information and also sent to Sub-Committees formed in the matter/North and South Goa Divisions for inviting objectors during field visit for enumeration and survey.

- (ii) All the survey numbers (more than 3195 nos.) included by the two Forest Division Committees (North and South Goa) – Thomas &

Araujo Committee were digitized using the Regional Plan of Town & Country Planning Department, Government of Goa and records of Directorate of Survey & Land Records Department. Considering a large number of Survey numbers to be digitized, the work started soon after formation of the review committee in January, 2020, additional manpower trained in digitization work were deployed for work. Digitisation work was mainly affected due to lockdown and COVID – 19 pandemic conditions. However, with all efforts, 100% digitization of all survey numbers was completed in September, 2020.

- (iii) As a part of approved methodology the review committee in coordination with National Remote Sensing Centre and Forest Survey of India (FSI), a high quality LISS IV Satellite image was specially analysed for preparation of Forest Cover Map as per the Private Forest criteria (Canopy density & Area criteria) by Forest Survey of India. Forest Survey of India was consulted on formation of the review committee and approval of methodology. However, due to COVID – 19 related lockdowns FSI could start their work on time effectively and started only in May, 2020. Satellite image of 2014-15 was used as it coincides as the mid term period of working of North and South Goa Divisions (Thomas and Araujo) Committees. COVID – 19 lockdown and restrictions have severely delayed the preparation of special forest cover maps by FSI. The Forest Cover Map (PCM) of 2014-15 from FSI could only be received on 15.10.2020.

The Forest Cover Map (FCM) of 2014-15 prepared by FSI constitutes polygons with more than 40% canopy and area more than 5 Ha and less than 5 Ha. with later analysed for proximity to

Government Forest. Digitised Survey numbers of North and South Goa Divisions (Thomas and Araujo) committees have been superimposed on FCM maps/polygons of FSI for analysis.

(iv) The details of the preparation of maps and how the area was identified are given as below:

- *183 maps are prepared of Survey Numbers qualifying area and canopy criteria (Patch Areas with more than 5 hectare & Canopy density more than 40%) admeasuring 9138 Ha (91.38 sq.km.) approximately and sent for ground verification & enumeration by sub-committees under supervision of concerned DCF (Sending of maps started simultaneously from end of October, 2020)*
- *27 maps are prepared of survey numbers qualifying area and canopy criteria (Canopy density > 40% & being adjoining Government Forests) measuring 45 Ha (0.45 Sq.Kms.) and similarly sent for ground verification & enumeration by sub-committees under supervision of concerned DCF.*
- *Additional 82 nos. of maps primarily with details of Survey Numbers not meeting the criteria of canopy density and area as per LISS IV FCM of 2014-15, have also been prepared and details were sent to Divisions for seeking history details regarding felling permission, offences, court cases if any, in those Survey Numbers etc for further analysis including google timeline analysis as per approved methodology.*
- *After receipt of this information from Divisions, analysis on Google Time Series has been undertaken and corroboration with satellite based Forest Cover Map of FSI for the relevant period was done wherever required.”*

(v) Since out of the three criteria of Private Forests in Goa, the first criteria i.e. 75% of the tree composition should be forestry species composition, which cannot be ascertained by using Forest Cover Map/Classified image but through ground verification only. The enumeration of 9183 Ha (91.83 Sq.Kms) approximate area is being carried out by 14 Nos. Sub-committee consisting of Range Forest

Officers of Forest Department, Inspector of Survey and Land Records, Directorate of Land and Survey Department and Village Talathi of Revenue Department, which are working under direct supervision of concerned territorial DCF.

- (vi) The ground verification and enumeration has commenced from November, 2020 after the end of monsoon which is still in progress. The sub-committees are inviting objectors, plotting sample plots (5% sampling intensity), marking and enumerating trees, preparing reports, preparing maps after survey for area qualifying. The Deputy Conservators of Forests are directly supervising and also providing support of equipment, manpower etc. As on date, the team has completed enumeration of an area of 2417 Ha and it is anticipated to complete another 1500 Ha of area before the onset of monsoon. The owners of the property are given opportunity to remain present during enumeration and all trees present therein were enumerated. The Division Office/sub-committee have been provided with details of objections filed by the owners to ensure that the objectors are informed to remain present during field survey/enumeration work. But looking to the huge tract of land involved for enumeration, only 5% sampling intensity method has been started (Similar method was adopted by earlier review Committee in its report, which was accepted by NGT in O.A. No.479/2018). After conducting the public hearing, if the objectors were not satisfied with sampling results, they were provided an opportunity for 100% enumeration of area qualifying for the private forest. The sub-committees through territorial DCF have submitted final field survey plan of areas qualifying the species criteria to the Review committee and they have also to submit the field enumeration results of the areas not qualifying

along with details of offence/tree felling, permissions etc for taking final decision of such non-qualifying survey numbers. Further it is mentioned that the ground verification is a complex, extensive, time consuming activity. Hence, it is taking time.

- (vii) Based on the Forest Cover Map/Classified image as well as ground verification report and survey, the Review Committee is hearing the affected persons to dispose of their objections. Considering large number of objections (more than 8000), it has been decided to hear only with respect to objectors whose area qualifies all the criteria for the area to be identified as private forest. At the public hearing, the objectors are also given a provision for 100% enumeration whose area qualifies all the criteria for the area to be identified as private forest and where sampling has been adopted.
- (viii) The Committee has been conducting meetings on various dates which are mentioned in paragraph No.7 at page 1478 of the paper-book and also conducted meetings with the sub-committee members for monitoring progress and sorting out field issues, if any on regular basis.
- (ix) The NGT had directed the exercise to be completed within three months by order dated 07.01.2021. But looking to the fact that during monsoon period, the work cannot be conducted and that enumeration work consumes lot of time, it may require around one year's time to complete the work (which time has already expired).

88. We find from the reply-affidavit of respondent Nos.1 to 3 in paragraph No.15 thereof that by employing the above method, RC-II has finalized in all respects 3.32 sq.kms area as the private forest area. Subsequently, after conclusion of the arguments, from the side of respondent Nos.1 to 3, written submissions have been filed wherewith there is a Notification No.7/4/2023-FOR/213 dated 10.08.2023 wherein

it is recorded that in pursuance of the National Green Tribunal order, the Government of Goa hereby notifies the part final report on Private Forest encompassing an area of 455.1081 Hectare which has been reviewed and finalized in all respects by the Review Committees till its 6 (Six) Part Final Reports, as Private Forest in the State of Goa.

89. Having stated the methodology adopted by the T&A Committees and the RC-II Committee, we find that the methodology adopted by RC-II is a scientific methodology in keeping with the developments in the field of Forest Cover Map. Besides that, we find that it involves physical verification as well. Therefore, in our estimation, the methodology adopted by RC-II is scientific one and the demarcation of the private forest area done/being done by it is found to be appropriate. Thus, we decide issue Nos.(iii) and (iv) accordingly.

Issue No. (iv) :

90. Looking to the fact that the procedure which is being adopted by RC-II is quite extensive and time consuming, which would require huge number of manpower as well, it is likely that the completion of the work would take some time. We expect that the Committee should complete its task within one year.

91. We are of the view that in order to take extreme precaution that no-one suffers on account of errors in identification of the private forest area, the areas, which were finally identified as private forest area by the T&A Committees, if any area out of that is required to be excluded as per review being made by RC-II, the said area should be got verified physically with respect to all three criteria laid down for determination of the private forest cited above by us. Till the final decision is taken with respect to whether the area being excluded from the list of being treated as final forest land by the RC-II which was finalized by T&A Committees

as private forest, in keeping with our direction, no permission shall be granted by the State Government for any kind of development work, in the said survey numbers. This exercise shall be completed within three months of uploading of this order.

92. With above directions, we dispose of this Misc. Application. No order as to costs.

Dinesh Kumar Singh, JM

Dr. Vijay Kulkarni, EM

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023
M.A. NO.03 OF 2023 (WZ)
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